

Film Studies Semester I SYLLABUS

Semester: I	
Course : Film Studies	
Paper Title: Foundations of Film Language and History	
Paper code: B1FS230111T	Credits: 4
Hours/week : 4	
Category: Core/MDC/SEC/VAC : Minor	
Theory / Practical / Composite : Theory	
No of Modules : 2	
<p>Course Overview: This course introduces students to the fundamentals of film language and film craft by examining cinema as an artistic, technological, and narrative medium. Module 1 focuses on core elements of film form—mise-en-scène, film time, and film space—while tracing the historical emergence of cinema during its first two decades. Through the study of early film forms, the development of narrative, and key concepts such as the cinema of actualities and cinema of attractions, students will engage with the works of pioneering filmmakers including the Lumière brothers, Georges Méliès, Edwin S. Porter, and D. W. Griffith. Module 2 shifts attention to the basics of film craft and offers an introduction to Indian silent cinema, exploring its early development from Dadasaheb Phalke to the formation of the studio system and the transition to sound. Together, the course provides a foundational understanding of how cinematic language, narrative, and production practices evolved in global and Indian contexts.</p>	
Course Outcome:	
1. Remember key terms, concepts, and historical developments related to film language, early cinema, major pioneering filmmakers, and the beginnings of Indian silent cinema.	
2. Understand how mise-en-scène, film time, film space, and early narrative forms function as foundational elements of cinematic expression in global and Indian contexts.	
3. Apply basic principles of film language and film craft to interpret early films and to conceptualize simple filmmaking or scene-analysis exercises.	
4. Analyze early cinematic texts by examining their formal structures, narrative strategies, technological conditions, and cultural contexts, including comparisons between Western and Indian silent cinema.	
5. Evaluate the contributions of early filmmakers and cinematic movements in shaping film form, narrative development, and production practices within the evolving studio system.	
6. Create informed critical responses—such as scene analyses, short visual studies, or reflective assignments—that synthesize historical knowledge of early cinema with an understanding of film language and craft.	
Prerequisites: Basic knowledge about any prior course	
SYLLABUS	

UNIT/Module	CONTENT	HOURS or NUMBER OF CLASSES	CO Mapping	COGNITIVE LEVEL
I.	<p>Fundamentals of Film Language The examination of film as art, a medium of sound, visual design, and performance through the study of the fundamentals of film language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mise-en-scene • Film Time • Film Space <p>Early Cinema The First Two Decades The development of the apparatus; historical perspective on the birth of cinema; examining the form of early films until the formation of the studio system; understanding of conceptual terms such as ‘cinema of actualities’, ‘cinema of attraction(s)’; Major directors to cover – Auguste and Louis Lumière, Georges Melies, Edwin S. Porter, and D. W. Griffith</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Film form • Development of Narrative 	2 classes per week	CO1 CO2 CO3 CO4 CO5 CO6	KI,K2,K3,K4.K5,K6

II.	<p>Fundamentals of Film Craft Understanding various techniques and concepts used in filmmaking.</p> <p>Indian Silent Cinema: An Introduction Early years of Indian cinema, from Dadasaheb Phalke to the establishment of the studio system and the coming of sound.</p>	2 classes per week	CO1 CO2 CO3 CO4 CO5 CO6	KI,K2,K3,K4.K5,K6
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Text Books

Suggested readings

- Barnouw, Erik. *Indian Film*. Oxford University Press, 1980.
- Bhaumik, Kaushik. *The Emergence of the Bombay Film Industry, 1913–1936*. D.Phil thesis, University of Oxford, 2001.
- Bhowmik, Someswar. *Behind the Glitz: Exploring an Enigma Called Indian Film Industry*. Thema, 2008.
- Bordwell, David, Kristin Thompson, and Jeff Smith. *Film Art: An Introduction*. McGraw-Hill Education, 2016.
- Burch, Noël, and Ben Brewster. *Life to Those Shadows*. University of California Press, 1990.
- Cook, David A. *A History of Narrative Film*. Norton, 1981.
- Gunning, Tom. “The Cinema of Attractions: Early Film, Its Spectator and the Avant-Garde.” *Theater and Film: A Comparative Anthology*, 1986, p. 39.
- Hill, John, and Pamela Church Gibson, editors. *The Oxford Guide to Film Studies*. Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Monaco, James, et al. *How to Read a Film: The Art, Technology, Language, History, and Theory of Film and Media*. Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Nowell-Smith, Geoffrey, editor. *The Oxford History of World Cinema*. Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Rajadhyaksha, Ashish. “The Phalke Era: Conflict of Traditional Form and Modern Technology.” *Interrogating Modernity: Culture and Colonialism in India*, edited by Tejaswini Niranjana, P. Sudhir, and Vivek Dhareshwar, Seagull Books, 1993.
- Rajadhyaksha, Ashish, and Paul Willemen. *Indian Cinema: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2016.

Web Resources

1. <https://monoskop.org/Monoskop>
2. <https://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/>

3. https://archive.org/
4. https://www.sensesofcinema.com/
Evaluation: Total: 100 marks CIA: 25 + 5 marks END-SEMESTER: 70 marks
Paper Structure for Theory Semester Exam Module: Module 1 One long question out of two options – 1x15 = 15 marks Two short questions out of four options – 2x10 = 20 marks Module 2 One long question out of two options – 1x15 = 15 marks Two short questions out of four options – 2x10 = 20 marks

Course outcomes (COs) and Cognitive Level Mapping

COs	CO Description	Cognitive levels
CO1	Remember key terms, concepts, and historical developments related to film language, early cinema, major pioneering filmmakers, and the beginnings of Indian silent cinema.	K1
CO2	Understand how mise-en-scène, film time, film space, and early narrative forms function as foundational elements of cinematic expression in global and Indian contexts.	K2
CO3	Apply basic principles of film language and film craft to interpret early films and to conceptualize simple filmmaking or scene-analysis exercises.	K3
CO4	Analyze early cinematic texts by examining their formal structures, narrative strategies, technological conditions, and cultural contexts, including comparisons between Western and Indian silent cinema.	K4
CO5	Evaluate the contributions of early filmmakers and cinematic movements in shaping film form, narrative development, and production practices within the evolving studio system.	K5
CO6	Create informed critical responses—such as scene analyses, short visual studies, or reflective assignments—that synthesize historical knowledge of early cinema with an understanding of film language and craft.	K6