

FTT Course Descriptions Fall 2020

Current students, visit [insideND Class Search](#) for more detailed information about credits, class meeting times, pre- or co-requisites, and cross-listings.

For information on previous FTT course offerings, visit the [Course Description Archive](#).

FTT 10101/20101: Basics of Film and Television

Christine Becker

This class is designed to enhance your understanding and appreciation of film and television. It operates on the philosophy that the better we understand how film and television texts work, the more intelligently and perceptively we will be able to consume them, which is an invaluable skill to have in our media-saturated world. You will learn about the basic elements that distinguish films and television programs from other aesthetic forms, such as editing, cinematography, sound and set design, and how these components work together to develop stories and characters. We will also work with interpretive frameworks that uncover deeper meanings and patterns in film and television, such as genre theory, the idea of authorship, political economy, and ideological analysis. Finally, you will acquire the skills and tools needed to write your own educated analyses of film and television texts. The class screenings present a range of films, from Hollywood classics to independent and international films, as well as television shows both old and new. This course is required for all concentrators in Film and Television.

FTT 10720/20720: Collaboration: The Art of Making Theatre

Kevin Dreyer

Collaboration: The Art of Making Theatre explores the roles of the artists who create the material world in which a performance exists, and most importantly, the collaborative nature of those relationships. Students will be challenged to understand the thinking behind the work of the designers, writers, directors, and off-stage personnel who bring stories to life on stage. Incorporating hands on projects as well as lecture/discussion formats, students will experiment with storytelling through the visual elements of scenery, costumes, lighting, etc. Collaboration: The Art of Making Theatre is an excellent entry point to the Theatre Concentration.

FTT 13182: Fine Arts University Seminar

01: Marcus Stephens 02: Tarryn Chun 03: Susan Ohmer 04: Matthew Payne

University seminars will address a variety of topics in the history of art depending on the interests of the professor. These courses require several short papers as well as a final written exercise appropriate to the material.

FTT 20320: Play Like a Champion

Matthew Payne

It has long-been a part of Notre Dame's Saturday football tradition. As uniformed players leave the locker room and descend a tight stairwell to the field below, they reach up and touch the iconic "Play Like a Champion Today" sign. Countless players, students, and fans have touched the sign over the years, hoping to imbibe some illusive and ineffable Fighting Irish magic. But

what does it mean to "play like a champion today" ... or any day, really? More simply, what does it mean to play? Play is an inescapable and essential part of the human condition. And, yet, the experience's core liminality defies easy definition and explanation. This course provides an introduction to the study of human play primarily through the lens of analog and digital games. It is designed for first- and second-year students from a range of backgrounds and disciplines. Given the variety of play practices across human history and cultures, this class strives to equip students with a critical vocabulary and interpretive framework to help them make sense of play in its many forms. This class will pay particular attention to how rules, goals, game mechanics, and narratives offer reliable and compelling structures for gameplay, and what ludic activities reveal about social power.

FTT 20801: Acting for the Non-Major

Anton Juan

This course introduces the non-theatre major to the basic elements of the art and craft of acting. The student will explore the spaces of memory, the body in an external space, voice and diction, and the choices they have to make, through the observation and imagination of realities. They will explore the process of looking for the sense of truth and urgency in expressing a dramatic text and a character's will and action. This course is participatory and will involve students' scene study presentations as well as written textual analysis to introduce scene studies.

FTT 21001: Acting: Process

Carys Kresny

Acting Process introduces the student to the core techniques of acting for the stage. The course engages both the analytical and the creative mind as students use research and analysis to support their physical, vocal and imaginative approaches to creating compelling scripted and improvised scenes. Students will rehearse and prepare scenes outside of class (with a partner and solo) for in-class performance. All students must see two live theatrical performances and turn in a reflection for each.

FTT 30006: Creating Character

Rick Donnelly

Creating Character Through Costume Design is a practical and hands-on design class that will explore characters from different art forms and create costume designs for them. The class will explore how to take cartoon and animated characters and costume those characters for live action. The class will include costume designs for and from theatre, film, art, computer game scenarios, and other art forms. Students will need to provide their own drawing and art supplies.

FTT 30013: Shadow Puppetry and Modern Performance

Marcus Stephens

We will explore the rich cultural history of shadow puppetry and its translation into modern theatrical performance. Through lectures and workshops students will shepherd their ideas from the classroom to a final public performance.

FTT 30022: Acting: Physical Theatre & Wit

Carys Kresny

This course introduces students to some of their artistic ancestors, including Commedia Dell'Arte, Absurdism, and American Vaudeville, as a scaffold-format for investigating comic acting traditions, leading to meeting the demands of heightened characterization and style in both classic and contemporary theatre work. The class is designed to help actors overcome the anxiety that comes from a sense of obligation to be funny and to develop a comedic point of view: emphasis is on the need to approach comedic material with the same process and commitment appropriate to any other acting challenge. Class exercises and scene study focus on continuing the discovery and development of imaginative and technical skills gained in previous class(es) to enable the student to discern the living world of a play and to embody a vibrant character within it.

FTT 30025: Ars Robotica

Ken Cole

From Shelley to Kubrick and beyond, robots have played a pivotal role in film, television, and theatre. This course will examine and reflect upon the ways in which non-human constructs are used on the stage and screen and how they inform us of what it means to be human. Warning: Interaction with automatons is expected.

FTT 30125: The Animation Course

Jeff Spoonhower

Animation is everywhere. In feature films, video games, visual effects sequences, live-action shows, Saturday morning cartoons, documentaries, television ads, mobile phone apps, websites, movie trailers, title sequences, social media content, roadside billboards, art installations, and more - we are surrounded by animation and it permeates our visually-oriented world. Now more than ever, it is important to understand what animation is, its origins, the multitude of forms it can take, how it represents diverse cultures and ideas, and of course - how to create it. We will learn the history of the art form from the late 19th century to present; different techniques used in its creation, including hand-drawn, experimental, stop-motion, and computer-generated; and how it represents a variety of global cultural perspectives. We will approach these topics critically, and then apply what we learn toward animation production projects using Adobe Photoshop, Premiere, and After Effects. Through critical reading assignments, video essays, film screenings, and hands-on production assignments, we will gain a holistic understanding and appreciation of animation as an art form as well as practical skills that can be applied to a variety of higher level courses and creative careers. This is a hybrid critical studies and production course, and as such, we will "learn by doing" in both lecture and lab settings.

FTT 30201: Global Cinema I

Edward Barron

Students will explore the major phases of development of the international phenomenon of the motion pictures from the invention of cinematography in the late 19th century to the diffusion of film through the 1940s War years. We'll study the historical and cultural contexts of cinema production, dissemination, and reception. Among the questions to be explored are: How did film evolve as a medium for telling stories through motion pictures and sound? What was the

relationship between films and the global societies that produced and watched them? How did the movies' distinguishing features such as the star system and genres (Slapstick, Musicals, etc.) become part of the institution we call classical Hollywood? How did world cinema develop in relation to American economic dominance? One goal is to learn how to do historical research and writing, which are communication skills. Another goal is simply to become well informed and articulate about important enduring ideas and aspects of our society. For film- and media makers, the cinema movements, national cinemas, and film techniques we'll study will offer a vast range of ideas, inspirations, and models for what can be done, what already has been done - and what not to do again. For students in history, American Studies, and international area studies, the course will provide in-depth context for understanding how the movies contributed to national cultures in Asia and Europe, as well as in the Americas.

FTT 30238: Writing the Short Film

Terrance Brown

This course is an introduction to the theory and craft of dramatic screenwriting. The class explores how a script is developed from concept to final written form. Through lectures, film viewing, and weekly exercises, emphasis is placed on plot and story structure, the adaptation of ideas into cinematic forms, how to tell a story with images, character, plot, and dialogue development. Each student writes two short 8-12 page scripts developed within the context of the workshop.

FTT 30410: Intro to Film & TV Production

Ted Mandell

An introductory course in the fundamentals of shooting, editing, and writing for film and video productions. This is a hands-on production course emphasizing aesthetics, creativity, and technical expertise. The course requires significant amounts of shooting and editing outside class. Students produce short video projects using digital video and DSLR cameras and edit digitally on computer workstations. The principles of three-camera studio production are also covered. Material fees required. Cannot have taken FTT 30405 or FTT 50505.

FTT 30416: 3D Digital Production for Animation and Video Games Jeff Spoonhower

Are you interested in the world of feature animation, visual effects, and video games? This course will be your first step in learning the tools and techniques of 3D digital content creation, which can be applied to a variety of professional industries, graduate school programs, and higher-level production courses at Notre Dame. You will learn the basics of modeling, texturing, animation, lighting, virtual cinematography, and rendering using the industry-standard application, Autodesk Maya. Through weekly tutorials and projects using Maya, you will receive hands-on, practical experience in the core facets of 3D digital production. Through weekly lectures, group discussions, critical studies reading assignments, and film screenings, you will learn the foundational principles of 3D computer graphics, computer animation, and visual storytelling, and gain a broader understanding and appreciation of the cultural and historical contexts that surround the creation and reception of this art form. This is a hybrid critical studies and production course, and as such, you will "learn by doing" in both lecture and lab settings.

FTT 30455: Critical Approaches to Television

Mary Kearney

This course offers an introductory survey of the primary critical approaches used to analyze television, and thus serves as a foundation for other TV-specific courses within the major. Through an examination of pioneering and contemporary studies of television, we will explore how television has been analyzed as a communication medium, a technological apparatus, a commercial industry, and a cultural forum, as well as a form of recreation, education, and social bonding. We will also consider critical approaches that focus on how television shapes our personal identities and values. While examining methods developed to study TV production, reception, and texts, we will explore such concepts as publicness, liveness, quality, art, and representation. In addition to discussing how television was analyzed in the past, we will consider how both television and TV studies have changed as a result of globalization, industrial convergence, digital media, and participatory culture.

FTT 30456: Critical Approaches to Screen Cultures

Pam Wojcik

In this course, students will learn different theories, methods, and approaches to understanding and writing about screen cultures. We will explore approaches that consider aesthetics/style, narrative, authorship (directors, show runners, stars), genre (e.g. the musical, horror), history (history of film/media industries, history of visual spectacle, historical context for films/media, etc.), technologies (sound, color, digital technologies, etc.), identities (considerations of gender, sexuality, race, nation, age, etc.), and audience (reception, fandom). Students will: Read theories that articulate and advocate each approach; consider the parameters, value, and appeal of that approach, as well as its limitations; practice each approach in written exercises; and research and write a final paper using one or more of these approaches. Students may also use video essays or other media as tools of analysis and critique. This is a course in academic criticism, not journalistic reviewing. Strong emphasis will be placed on argumentative writing.

FTT 30461: History of Television

Michael Kackman

Television has been widely available in the United States for only half a century, yet already it has become a key means through which we understand our culture. Our course examines this vital medium from three perspectives. First, we will look at the industrial, economic, and technological forces that have shaped U.S. television since its inception. These factors help explain how U.S. television adopted the format of advertiser-supported broadcast networks and why this format is changing today. Second, we will explore television's role in American social and political life: how TV has represented cultural changes in the areas of gender, class, race, and ethnicity. Third, we will discuss specific narrative and visual strategies that characterize program formats. Throughout the semester we will demonstrate how television and U.S. culture mutually influence one another, as television both constructs our view of the world and is affected by social and cultural forces within the U.S.

FTT 30491: Debate

Susan Ohmer

This course will focus on research of current events and the efficacy of proposed resolutions toward the alleviation or reduction of societal harms. It will also involve discussion of debate theory and technique. Permission required.

FTT 30501: Media & Presidential Elections

Susan Ohmer

Presidential elections afford us an opportunity that is rare in U.S. politics: the experience of direct participation. Though our votes are needed to select a candidate, our experience of the election process is mediated through representational forms such as film, radio, television and digital media. This course examines how print, film and electronic media have functioned in U.S. elections since we began choosing presidents in the late 18th century. We will look at how journalists' ideas about their roles have changed, from the partisan coverage of the 18th and 19th centuries, through the commitment to "objectivity" in the 20th century, to the renewed partisanship of today. We will also analyze how candidates have used various media forms to construct representations of themselves, their parties and their platforms. We will examine the narrative strategies and verbal and visual codes by which media present candidates, issues, and the political process itself to us, the voters. This course is offered during a presidential election to allow us to connect this broader history with current events.

FTT 30706: Musical Theatre History

Stacey Stewart

The American musical, with its roots in the minstrel show, is America's one truly indigenous dramatic genre. Often considered merely frivolous entertainment, the musical has nevertheless always served a critical social function. This course examines the musical theatre both as an industry and as a site of aesthetic debate and political and social change. Students will acquire historical, theoretical, and critical knowledge both to inform and to support their choices as artists.

FTT 30708: Performance Techniques

Matt Hawkins

The intention of this course is to provide you with a context within which to understand the techniques of musical theatre performance and the foundational skills needed to personally inhabit these techniques. This course will give you the tools to "act a song." You will work on analysis and performance of five songs from the following categories: Golden Age, Modern, Rock, Pop and any other kind of song you love. These songs are assigned by era sequentially so that we may simultaneously introduce the context of this material within the genre-at-large. You will also apply your growing knowledge of technique and context to intelligently observe and comment on the work of your peers within a structured setting. Throughout the course we will incorporate short group exercises to better explore performance technique and promote a deeper understanding of the differences between traditional script/text analysis and score/lyric analysis. There will be reflection papers due after the exploration of your songs.

FTT 30715: World Theatre II

LaDonna Forsgren

This course examines world theatre history from 19th century popular entertainment performance practices to the present. Students learn techniques of script analysis, performance analysis, and independent research as tools for analyzing theatre from the literary, aesthetic, and historical perspectives. Throughout, the course emphasizes the importance of cultural context and historiography to understanding the creation and transformation of theatre as an art form. Each semester will be a stand-alone course and can be taken in any order. Students are encouraged to enroll in adjacent semesters. At least one semester of this sequence is a prerequisite for the upper-level electives required to complete the major.

FTT 30802: Lighting Design

Kevin Dreyer

This class will teach you what is involved in creating and executing a lighting design. We will cover lighting equipment and safety. You will design and draft a light plot, and you will learn how to write and use paperwork. Most importantly, the goal of this class will be to teach you how to see light. There will be lectures, videos, projects (take-home and in-class), hands-on training, and required attendance at TWO performances. The semester culminates with a final design project, as well as written components.

FTT 30805: Historic Fashion

Richard Donnelly

This course is a survey of historic fashion from the Greek culture through the Victorian era. The course will look at the ever-changing trends in clothing and provide an understanding of the cultural and historical effects of those changes. The class will investigate how fabric, style, color, and the psychology of clothing reflects personal choice, cultural impressions, and historical perspectives of clothing.

FTT 30809: Story Structure

Anne Garcia-Romero

Story Structure is designed to engage students in exploring a variety of approaches to playwriting and screenwriting structure. The course will delve into structural analysis utilizing models from contemporary world theater and film with the aim to present a variety of paths toward creating new, vibrant plays and screenplays. Students will write one act plays and short screenplays throughout this course, which culminates in a public reading of their work. This course is ideal for any student interested in writing for theater and film.

FTT 31125: Acting Shakespeare

Siiri Scott

Acting Shakespeare is an active and participatory exploration of the works of the world's greatest playwright from the perspective of the actor. You will be acquainted with basic analytical, physical and vocal techniques for unlocking the meaning and emotional content of Shakespeare's texts. The structure of this course allows you the opportunity to create and present multiple roles through the performances of monologues and scenes.

FTT 35501: FTT Internship

Christine Becker

Students who successfully complete at least two of the following courses, FTT 30410, FTT 30462 or FTT 30463, may be eligible for an internship at a television station or network, radio station, video production company, film production company or similar media outlet. Interns must work 10-15 hours per week and compile 150 work hours by the end of the semester (120 hours for the summer session) to obtain three credits. Interns will complete a project, mid-semester progress report and a final evaluation paper. NOTE: This course does not count as an upper level course toward the FTT major.

FTT 37600: Notre Dame Film Society

Christine Becker

The Film Society is a film screening-and-discussion group that meets once a week in the Browning Cinema to watch an independent, foreign, or classic film. Students can take the course for either zero credit or one credit. Those taking it for one credit will have a minimum attendance and writing requirement. The meeting times and requirements may vary from semester to semester. Contact the sponsoring professor for more information. NOTE: This course does not count as an upper level course toward the FTT major.

FTT 40017: Spectacular Asia

Tarryn Chun

From martial arts blockbusters to extravagant expos to space-age cityscapes, countries in East and Southeast Asia have achieved worldwide renown both for their affinity for mega-events and as spectacular backdrops for filmed narratives, multinational gatherings, and global tourism. But what forces are at work in the creation and dissemination of such spectacle? To what ends and for whom are these spectacles designed? How do different spectators interact with and interpret them? And what resistance, if any, has there been to the seeming excess and superficiality of extravaganza and its attendant mass-mediated images? This course examines recent works of performance, visual art, and film from China, Taiwan, Japan, the Koreas, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines in relation to the politics of spectatorship and theories of spectacle. Covering a period roughly from the mid-20th century rise of the "society of the spectacle" to the present, we will ask how different forms of spectacle--still and moving, mediated and live--come to represent Asian nations and shape viewers' experiences of Asian cultures. Doing so will enable us to better understand the dynamics of seeing and being seen on a global scale, as well as to explore how alternative modes of performance, visual culture, and viewership engendered by Asian contexts challenge established power hierarchies and modes of audience engagement.

FTT 40022: Musical Theatre Laboratory: Creating The Musical

Matt Hawkins

The intention of this course is to provide a collaborative space for students to create, develop and/or workshop a new musical. Throughout the process of creation we will explore how to collaborate as a creative team, including directors, writers, music directors, choreographers, actors and stage managers. This is an effort to allow class time to be rehearsal and development time for new artistic work. The hope of this class is to support the innovation of new work and prepare it for the possibility of heading towards production. Please contact the instructor directly for approval to take the course.

FTT 40043: The Great Dictators: The Weaponization of Cinema

Olivier Morel

Dictatorships and other authoritarian regimes need images. They depend to a great degree on stories, legends, slogans and choreographies, on music and spectacles. Dictators stage their own actions and persona and their public appearances are always carefully organized in order to dominate the audiovisual field. In this context, it is not incidental that the age of cinema is also that of societal control, of the standardization of masses, of the most criminal, dictatorial regimes on record. What is the relationship between cinema and power? Between cinema and sovereignty? Cinema and political oppression? Cinema and the great dictators? From early films (Chaplin...) to the present, our class aims to question the historical role of films in the invention of modern dictatorships. Our goal will also be to question the present and determine how our era is dealing with the subject of authoritarianism in politics. Two written assignments, oral presentations, and active participation in class sessions will constitute the basic requirements.

FTT 40106: Barn Stories

William Donaruma and Ian Kuijt

Visual Anthropology provides a powerful and engaging means of sharing historical and anthropological stories. This new course is based on the assumption that people think in terms of images, movement, and sound and that film can be used to create powerful and important human narratives. This class is designed to train students in how to research, design, manage and produce short documentary film projects using both state of the art production equipment and accessible forms of media capture such as iPhones and GoPros. As a graduate/undergraduate elective, this course thematically focuses on understanding and documenting the historical, social, economic and personal stories centered on 19th through 20th century Indiana local barns, and placing these in a meaningful cultural and historical context. Students will work in teams of two to research an assigned farmstead, focusing on the barn as a material setting and documenting the past through the integration of historical research, oral history, and digital video. Students will develop 2 minute videos for inclusion in a video book (as seen here <https://islandplacesislandlives.com/>) that touches on local history as well as a longer 8 minute video that explores the life, history, and social context of the barn. The result will be a collaborative effort that creates a body of work by the class exploring local history and linking Anthropology with filmmaking to tell stories. Department approval is required. This is designed to be an equal collaboration between Anthropology, History, and Film, Television, and Theatre students. Preference will be given to those with greater experience in respective areas as an advanced class.

FTT 40121/60121: Writing the Feature Film

Terrance Brown

This workshop focuses on the theory and craft of dramatic writing as it applies to feature screenplays. Through lectures, film viewing, and weekly exercises, emphasis is placed on plot and story structure, the adaptation of ideas into cinematic forms, how to tell a story with images, character, plot, and dialogue development. Students should come to class with 2 ideas for a feature script in hand and be prepared to develop one idea into the first half of a feature length screenplay (approximately 60 pages) at a minimum.

FTT 40411: Documentary Video Production

Ted Mandell

A hands-on creative course for the advanced production student interested in the production process and storytelling techniques of the documentarian. Emphasizing the cinema verite approach of filmmakers D.A. Pennebaker, Albert Maysles, and Frederick Wiseman, students learn the importance of capturing life's moments, being faithful to a subject, and understanding the filmmaker's point of view. The goal is to produce a short documentary film over the course of the semester which honestly portrays its subject(s), while at the same time, challenges its audience.

FTT 40433: Politics of Style

Michael Kackman

This course explores the media culture of 1980s America. We will explore such topics as the rise of "high concept" blockbuster Hollywood, prime-time television at the peak of the broadcast network era, the emergence of Fox, the widespread adoption of cable television service, the development of the 24 hour news cycle, and media industry consolidation. In addition to studying these dominant industry practices and media forms, we will also explore such secondary and alternative media cultures as independent cinema, music subcultures, and video games. Our emphasis throughout will be on the interplay between shifting technologies, industrial modes of production and distribution, and cultural practices.

FTT 40444: Sinatra

Pam Wojcik

This course examines the career and image of Frank Sinatra. As an entertainer who worked in numerous media - radio, the music industry, television, cinema, and live performance - Sinatra provides a lens through which to examine American 20th century media. Moreover, as an iconic figure, Sinatra enables an explanation of masculinity, American identity, ethnic identity, race, liberalism, and more. Sinatra will be paired with various other performers, especially Bing Crosby, Dean Martin, and Gene Kelly, to consider his star image comparatively. Sinatra will be situated within discourses on Italian immigration, urbanism, the Depression, prohibition and war. Students will listen to Sinatra music and radio programs, watch Sinatra films and TV shows, and read a wide range of materials - including contemporary accounts of Sinatra performances, analyses of his career and meaning, essays and articles about the star system, recording technology, film genre, acting styles, the mob, and more. Throughout, we will consider what model of American masculinity Sinatra embodies - ranging from early concerns that his female fans and lack of military service rendered him effeminate to his image as family man, and later incarnation as playboy. We will consider what Sinatra means today through analyses of his entertainment heirs, like George Clooney, parodies, like Joe Piscopo's, the use of his music in film soundtracks and advertising, and in performances like the Twyla Tharp's "Come Fly With Me."

FTT 40600: Shakespeare on the Big Screen

Peter Holland

This course explores the phenomenon of Shakespeare films designed for the "big screen." We shall be looking at examples of films of Shakespeare plays both early and recent, both in English and in other languages, and both ones that stick close to conventional concepts of how to film Shakespeare and ones that adapt at and to varying degrees of distance from his language, time

and plot, reaching a limit in versions that erase Shakespeare from the film. We shall also be considering the recent phenomenon of "Live from" screenings of theatre productions. The transposition of different forms of Shakespearean texts (printed, theatrical, filmic) and the confrontation with the specificities of film production have produced and will continue to produce a phenomenon whose cultural meanings will be the subject of our investigations. There will be required screenings of films each week in the Lab.

FTT 40702: Audition Seminar

Siiri Scott

Preparation for acting professionally and/or the advanced study of acting, directing and performance. A course of study is developed between the student and the faculty advisor(s) at the beginning of the semester. Students who are interested in taking this course but are not FTT majors should consult the instructor. Senior Acting majors only. Offered fall only.

FTT 41005: Acting Shakespeare

Siiri Scott

Students enrolled in Acting: Shakespeare at the 40K level will complete the scene work and assignments of the regular section in addition to coursework in creative scholarship including a dramaturgical research project.

FTT 46000: Acting Pedagogy & Practice

Siiri Scott

This course introduces the advanced Acting student to various methods of Acting training. In addition to directed readings, the student serves as the teaching assistant for Acting: Process or Acting: Character under the supervision of the instructor. The student is expected to attend all class meetings and supervise weekly rehearsals outside of class.