



# Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - 2024-2025

## Exchange

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam offers many English-taught courses in a variety of subjects, ranging from arts & culture and social sciences, neurosciences and computer science, to economics and business administration.

The International Office is responsible for course approval and course registration for exchange students. For details about course registration, requirements, credits, semesters and so on, please [visit the exchange programmes webpages](#).

# American Film

|                     |                          |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Course Code         | L_ELBAELK208             |
| Credits             | 6                        |
| Period              | P2                       |
| Course Level        | 300                      |
| Language Of Tuition | English                  |
| Faculty             | Faculty of Humanities    |
| Course Coordinator  | dr. R.V.J. van den Oever |
| Examiner            | dr. R.V.J. van den Oever |
| Teaching Staff      | dr. R.V.J. van den Oever |
| Teaching method(s)  | Seminar                  |

## Course Objective

Students become acquainted with different theorizations of spectatorship in relation to film characters.

By the end of the course, students can:

- Explain selected concepts from film theory.
- Apply these concepts to the interpretation of selected films.
- Do all this in clear and concise written English.

## Course Content

Central to this course is the question: How do spectators relate to film characters? Film theory provides various answers, ranging from forced identification with a protagonist to reading against the grain of a film.

Theories and films discussed in previous years include:

- The male gaze and *Vertigo* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1958): spectators identify with a male protagonist who lustfully gazes at objectified women.
- Sentimental pedagogy and *Philadelphia* (Jonathan Demme, 1993): through emotional manipulation, films can enforce ideological beliefs onto spectators.
- Character engagement and *Psycho* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1960): spectators develop a cognitive moral evaluation of film characters.
- Queer connotation and *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (Howard Hawks, 1953): in response to Hollywood censorship, spectators read film characters as denotatively straight yet connotatively queer.

Both theories and films are subject to change.

## Additional Information Teaching Methods

- We meet once a week for four hours.
- Attendance is mandatory.
- Meetings are held on campus; no hybrid alternative is offered.
- Each meeting consists of group discussions, exam instruction/practice, and a lecture portion.
- Prior to each meeting, students complete a Canvas assignment.
- Devices with access to social media (this includes laptops) are not allowed in class. If an exception needs to be made for medical reasons, students must contact the academic advisor prior to the start of the course.

## Method of Assessment

- Successful completion of the course is contingent on timely submission of all Canvas assignments and attendance at all meetings.
- The full final grade for the course is based on a take-home exam consisting of short essay questions. The take-home exam will be held over three days in week 8 of period 2 (the week of 16 December 2024). **English writing proficiency is a key aspect of the assessment.**

## Entry Requirements

Students must have participated in the period 1 courses of either the Schoolvakminor English Literature or the minor package Gender and Diversity. No exceptions will be made.

## Literature

To be announced in the course syllabus, which will be posted on Canvas well in advance of the start of the course.

## Additional Information Target Audience

This course is part of the Schoolvakminor English Literature and the minor package Gender and Diversity.