

## **COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT**

**NOTE:** ANY CHANGES TO A CSD MUST GO THROUGH ALL OF THE RELEVANT APPROVAL PROCESSES, INCLUDING LTPC.

**Academic School/Department:** Communications, Arts and Social Sciences

**Programme:** Film Studies

**FHEQ Level:** 5

**Course Title:** Adaptations: Literature and Cinema

**Course Code:** FLM 5405

**Course Leader:** John Chua

**Student Engagement Hours: 120**

Lectures: 22.5

Seminar / Tutorials: 22.5

Independent / Guided Learning : 75

**Semester:** Fall, Spring or Summer

**Credits:** 12 UK CATS credits

6 ECTS credits

3 US credits

**Course/Course Description:** This course deals with adaptations from literary texts, in the broad sense – novels, plays and comic books – to cinema and television. It engages with issues around the transition from one medium to another, debating questions of authorship and the relative advantages of different forms. Adaptations are discussed in terms of their historical and cultural contexts, and ‘faithful’ versions contrasted with ‘free’ adaptations which retain the tone and spirit of the original while deviating from the letter of the text.

**Prerequisites:** COM 4100, COM 4200, FLM 4200 or FLM 4205.

### **Aims and Objectives:**

This course aims to examine a wide variety of literary texts and how they are adapted for the screen. It poses questions about how we transition from one artistic medium to another and how meaning is created, transmitted and transferred. Throughout the course we deal with questions of authorship and authenticity, and the aesthetic potential of different art forms. We will also engage in critiques and analyses of intra- and inter-cultural adaptations and study the interplay between

cinema and literature and their cultural and historical contexts. By the end of the course, successful students will have:

- A critical understanding and knowledge of the theories and approaches of screen adaptation, including forms, processes and contemporary practices.
- An awareness of the historical formation of this subject, including major authors, directors, texts, and themes of cinema and literature in key aesthetic, theoretical, and historical contexts.
- Further developed a range of skills to research, assess and evaluate a wide range of source materials, including primary, secondary, literary and visual materials, and learn to coherently synthesize this information with critical analysis and to develop effective skills of academic argument, structure and expression.
- Further developed a range of practical skills in relations to: critical writing and clear communication, the ability to link theory, evidence and social issues, and effectively manage time and independent study.

**Programme Outcomes :**

5A(i); 5A(iii); 5B(iii); 5C(i)

A detailed list of the programme outcomes are found in the Programme Specification.

This is located at the archive maintained by the Academic Registry and found at:  
<http://www.richmond.ac.uk/content/academic-schools/academic-registry/program-and-course-specifications.aspx>

**Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of this course, successful students should be able to:

- Demonstrate critical engagement with major thinkers, debates and theories in the field of screen adaptation, especially issues regarding how literary and cinematic texts construct social and cultural realities, cultural maps, as well as frames of reference.
- Develop a detailed understanding of how screen adaptations reveal the relationship between discourse, culture and identity.
- Formulate and synthesize arguments cogently, with independent analysis, effective selection of sources, application of appropriate methodologies and use of critical judgment.

**Indicative Content:**

- Key definitions of screen adaptations
- Modernism versus postmodernism

- Historical and cultural contexts of adaptations
- Ownership of cultural narratives
- Intra- and inter-cultural adaptations
- Authorship and originality
- 'Faithful' versus 'free' adaptations
- Adapting from fictional and non-fictional sources

**Assessment:**

This course conforms to the Richmond University Standard Assessment Norms approved at Academic Council on June 28, 2012.

**Teaching Methodology:**

The course consists of interactive lectures and discussions of assigned work and screenings of extracts from feature films and short films. Because the film screenings are integral to the course and lectures will include material that builds on the readings, it is vitally important that students complete all the set reading for each week beforehand in order to participate fully in class discussion. There will be additional assigned films to watch outside of class time. Student work is assessed through a variety of ways using both formative and summative approaches. Feedback is intended to help improve student approach to learning and achieve better results.

**Bibliography:**

See syllabus for complete reading list.

***IndicativeText(s):***

- Andrew, Dudley. 'Adaptation.' Film and Literature: an Introduction and Reader. Ed. Timothy Corrigan. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1998. Print.
- Barthes, Roland. 'From Word to Text.' Trans. Stephen Heath. London: Fontana Press, 1987. Print. Also available at < <http://evans-experientialism.freewebspace.com/barthes05.htm>>
- Cartmell, Deborah and Imelda Whelehan. Adaptations: From Text to Screen, Screen to Text. London: Routledge, 1999. Print.
- Stam, Robert. "Introduction: the Theory and Practice of Adaptation." Literature and Film. Ed. Robert Stam and Alessandra Raengo. Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 2004. Print.
- Stam, Robert. Literature Through Film: Realism, Magic, and the Art of Adaptation. Oxford: Blackwell, 2005. Print.

***Journals***

*Cinema Journal*

*Film Comment*

*Screen*

*Sight & Sound*

