REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS:

- Subscription to Netflix. Watching movies prior to class enables us to discuss the films more thoroughly and/or discuss more films. You also may purchase or rent the actual DVDs if you wish, of course. The Sacramento Public Library system is also a good source for video/DVD. I do recommend viewing the films for class more than once. Planning ahead is the key to doing this cheaply. Flexibility also is important, since Netflix sometimes removes instant videos; in that case, we’ll just revise! (Netflix is scheduled to revise their offerings at the end of January, so please be advised that we may well have to revise our schedule. I use Netflix to get as much done as possible and as cheaply as possible…)
- Access to SacCT for readings, discussion list, notes, and quizzes (online.csus.edu)

CATALOG DESCRIPTION: Study of major social issues confronting American women, examined through their images in film and other visual and literary arts.

Class description: This course is designed as a study of film and other art forms in relation to both socio-cultural and aesthetic concerns in American life. Most Americans are more than willing to be passively entertained by film. A major aim of this course is to encourage students to become more informed, active, and analytical viewers of film. American media simultaneously influences and reflects the values of American society, and therefore it is useful to examine it as a barometer of our society. Film, like other art forms, has a specific language for discussion of both technique and theory. We will be delving into this language in order to examine films visually and narratively in relation to the representation of American women.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of HRS 185, successful students will be able to:

- Describe female images in various art forms
- Analyze how the depiction of women in American art has corresponded to women’s changing roles in modern American society
- Demonstrate a basic understanding of film as an art form in order to explain how filmmakers communicate through the manipulation of formal elements
- Demonstrate visual literacy and accompanying skills in critical thinking.

CLASS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

E-mail: E-mail has exploded in the last decade, and it has become a major challenge to keep up with it. Please ask questions that you have regarding class content in class, if possible – often, they’re useful for everyone to hear. Personal issues should, of course, be reserved for e-mail or office hours visits. If your e-mail to me does not require a response, then I will not provide one. Please use standard written English in any correspondence and do not expect an immediate response. However, if you have an important question and have not heard from me within 48 hours, please do resend/remind me -- politely. It’s easy for mail to get lost in the shuffle.

Behavior: Respect for both one’s classmates and professor is appropriate to the college environment. This includes making a positive contribution to the course and not distracting from the learning of others: come on time, turn off all electronics, pay attention, don’t talk to others during class, and don’t leave during class. Tardiness and leaving during class are not acceptable since 1) it disrupts both other students and the professor as well as showing disrespect and 2) you may miss valuable information. Therefore, please do not enter the classroom if you are more than 5 minutes late. You may enter at break. Students should not leave class early unless they have a compelling reason and should, if at all possible, notify the instructor prior to class and sit near the doors. Students who use electronics in class or are otherwise disruptive will be asked to leave. Not
following the rules of conduct discussed above will result in penalties to one’s grade, including but not limited to the participation grade.

**Coursework:** There will be three essays and multiple quizzes. There also will be a discussion list on the SacCT site set up for this course to supplement class discussion as necessary.

**Participation:** See above. This class depends upon the full, regular, and informed engagement of students with the material and the class itself. Simply being in attendance does not qualify as participating in the class nor do short responses or summaries on SacCT. You CAN receive a failing participation grade even if you attend every class. Disruptive (and rude) behavior works against you in your participation grade.

**Attendance Policy:** It is very important to be present for a class such as this since we rely so much upon visual texts presented in the classroom with commentary. Quizzes and in-class assignments may not be made up.

**Academic Integrity:** Please turn in work that is solely your own. Appropriate credit must be given to the work of others, including DVD commentary. Credit includes the proper use of paraphrasing and quoting as well as citations within and at the end of the paper. If you are unsure about what this means, please come and speak with me. **PLAGIARISM HAS SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES, INCLUDING THE FAILURE OF THE ASSIGNMENT, FAILURE OF THE COURSE, AND/OR EXPULSION FROM THE COLLEGE. YOU WILL RECEIVE A ZERO FOR THE ESSAY AND THUS LIKELY FAIL THE COURSE IF YOU PLAGIARIZE. REWRITES WILL NOT BE ALLOWED.**

**Formatting of Essays:** Essays must be turned in via the online course delivery system in an MS Word attachment; you *also* may cut and paste it into the box on SacCT for added assurance. If you are uncertain whether your essay has posted, you may e-mail it to me on SacCT as well. If the essay is not in MS Word and/or if I cannot open it, your essay will not be counted as turned in and will receive a zero. Essays should be typed, double-spaced, and have 1” margins with Times New Roman 12 font and black ink. At the top of the first page, single-spaced, include a descriptive title for your paper in addition to tagging information (your name/my name/the date). If a hard copy is turned in for extenuating reasons: please staple your essays PRIOR to class. Don't use a cover or a folder. **Late essays will not be accepted unless permission is received from the professor in writing by the due date. In other words, don’t ask for an extension after the essay was due. Essays that receive extensions will be docked 5 points for each day late unless there are extenuating circumstances, such as death or severe illness. Documentation of such circumstances is required.**

**Grading:** The course syllabus indicates the dates of exams and due dates of papers. 100 points are available for the course. See below for grading rubric. Neither the course nor the assignments are graded on a curve. Additionally, extra credit is not available. If you are worried about your grade, you should come discuss it with me by midterm: THIS, not the end of the semester, is the appropriate time to take action.

Essays : 50 points; Discussion: 15 points (online and in class); Quizzes: 35 points

**SCHEDULE: NEXT PAGE**
SCHEDULE: (subject to change at discretion of instructor): articles and links may be found on SacCT. All Netflix films should be watched prior to the class for which they are assigned. Please note: quizzes designated for SacCT may be given in class as well as needed. Since this class is divided into two meetings per week, we will need to be flexible about our viewing assignments. We also will need to discuss some of our films online since Netflix has taken so many films off instant streaming. See above re: Netflix

Jan 27: Introduction to class and strategies of “reading” visual texts. Watch *Miss Representation* on Netflix on own for Jan 29. We may start one of the two films scheduled for the next class on Jan 27.

Jan 29: Cinematographic techniques, cont.; *Reel Women, Dreamworlds III* (watch in class). Trigger warning for *Dreamworlds III* for depiction of rape scene. Discuss *Miss Representation* and these two films. Take quiz before next class

Feb 3-5: Screwball Comedy: *His Girl Friday* [1940](Netflix; watch before class); Shumway, David R. “Screwball Comedies: Constructing Romance, Mystifying Marriage”; Turim, Maureen. “Women’s Films: Comedy, Drama, Romance”. Quiz on SacCT due Feb 3.


Feb 17-19: Noir: *Sunset Boulevard* [1950] (Netflix); Place, Janey. “Women in Film Noir”; Blaser, “Film Noir’s Progressive Portrayal of Women” Quiz on SacCT due Feb 17.


Mar 3-5: Horror and the Final Girl: *Alien* [1979] (in class); essays by Barbara Creed and Carol Clover. Quiz on SacCT.

Mar 10-12: Buddies: *Thelma and Louise* [1991] (in class) Trigger warning: attempted rape; Cooper, Brenda. “‘Chicks flicks’ as feminist texts: The appropriation of the male gaze in *Thelma & Louise*” Quiz on SacCT due Mar 10; Essay 2 due online Mar 12.

Mar 17: TBA; Quiz on SacCT

Mar 19: No class

Mar 24: Spring Recess

Mar 31: No classes/Cesar Chavez

Apr 7-9: The “Chick Flick”: *Sleepless in Seattle* [1993] (Netflix); Preston, “Hanging on a Star: The Resurrection of the Romance Film in the 1990s”. (If we have to cut a film, this is a likely target.)

Apr 14-16: Death and Women: Whedon, *Dr. Horrible’s Sing-Along Blog* [2008] (in class); Buckman, Alyson R. “‘Go Ahead, Run Away, Say It Was Horrible’: *Dr. Horrible’s Sing-Along Blog* as Resistant Text.” Quiz on SacCT due Apr 14.


Apr 28-30: Revising Horror: *Cabin in the Woods* [2011] (class); reading TBA; quiz due Apr 28.

May 5-7: Action: *The Avengers* [2012] (in class); selections from Stuller and Inness on action and women. Quiz on SacCT due May 5.

May 12-14: Fairy Tales and Their Revisionings: *Frozen* (in class) and *Once Upon a Time* (Netflix), episodes 1.1-2, 1.15.

May 19: Essay 3 and last quiz due online at 1:30pm.