# Audio-visual Languages

## Prof. Alice Cati

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course aims to explore the key concepts for the analysis of audio-visual texts, in order to help students identify the fundamental elements of films and videos that are more and more influenced by the advent of new technologies and different consumption habits.

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

* Knowledge and understanding: use appropriate terminology, and key methodologies and tools for the analysis of audio-visual texts;
* Practical skills: identify and describe the different components of audio-visual language;
* Learning and communication skills: carry out the critical analysis of a audiovisual product.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course will explore not only the key elements of audio-visual language – with a focus on framing, editing, photography, and sound – but also more complex issues related to narration and film discourse, through the observation of the strategies adopted to represent space, time, characters, and different points of view. In particular, after introducing the key concepts and the different analytical methods, the first part of the course will adopt a both descriptive-structural and diachronic approach, allowing to reflect upon the historical evolution of the forms of expression that followed one another or coexisted in the different phases of the history of cinema, until the recent developments of the contemporary audiovisual production (TV and web series, videoclips, videos shared online, etc.).

The second part of the course, instead, will carry out an in-depth analysis of specific audiovisual products, fundamental for the understanding of the poetics, styles, and images that have become popular in the contemporary society, both from a *mainstream* and an alternative-independent perspective.

The analysis will also include some of the latest audio-visual products (e.g. digital channels and online platforms).

***READING LIST***

A. Cati, R. Eugeni, M. Locatelli, *Le forme dell'audiovisivo. Cinema, televisione, digital media*, Carocci, Rome, 2024.

N. Dusi, G. Grignaffini, *Capire la serie tv. Generi, stili, pratiche*, Carocci, Rome 2020.

V. Pravadelli, *Dal classico al postmoderno al global. Teoria e analisi delle forme filmiche,* Marsilio, Venice, 2019.

A course syllabus (containing essays and other useful material on the analysis of audio-visual texts) will be made available in class and/or on Blackboard. In addition, students will have to watch 10 films for each module, indicated on the lecturer’s webpage and available at the UCSC Library and/or online. All the teaching material will be made available on Blackboard.

Attending students will have the possibility to replace part of the teaching material for the final exam, with a selection of readings, individual and/or group works, and the writing of a paper.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Frontal lectures and practical activities based on the presentation of audio-visual material. In addition, students will be asked to carry out the analysis of films and audio-visual products, and then correct it with the rest of the class (or individually). All the teaching material – including the practical activities – will be made available on Blackboard.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The final exam will be structured as follows:

1. Two written tests, based on open-ended questions on the general part of the course (that is to say, the key concepts and methodologies for the analysis of audio-visual texts), explained during both module 1 and 2.
2. an oral exam, focused on the teaching material indicated in the reading list or the writing of a paper focused on the analysis of films/audiovisual products defined with the lecturer. In this occasion, particular attention will be paid to the ability to analyse a sequence according to the expressive codes, the narrative models, and the main stylistic paradigms; at the same time, students will have to make a reflection upon the theoretical-cultural coordinates on the basis of which a work must be interpreted.

At the end of module 1, attending students will be allowed to take a written interim test, based on open-ended questions on the topics explained in class.

The final mark will result from the average between the written tests (60%) and the critical-analytical skills emerged during the oral exam or from the paper (40%).

Furthermore, the students taking part to the group works activated during the academic year will be awarded with extra points (from 0.5 to 2) to be added to the mark obtained in the final exam.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Students are invited to check Blackboard on a regular basis, in order to receive important communications and updates related to the course.

In addition, students should have a good knowledge of the history of cinema (from its origins to the present day) and a basic knowledge of the history of contemporary art and culture.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.