University of Gdańsk

Subject card

Subject name and code	Classic American Horror and Thriller Films, PG_00205058						
Field of study	American Studies						
Date of commencement of studies	October 2025		Academic year of realisation of subject	2026/2027			
Education level	Bachelor's studies		Subject group	Obligatory subject group in the field of study Optional subject group			
Mode of study	full-time studies		Mode of delivery	at the university			
Year of study	2		Language of instruction	English			
Semester of study	4		ECTS credits	2.0			
Learning profile	academic		Assessment form	credit			
Conducting unit	Division of American Studies -> Institute of English and American Studies -> Faculty of Languages -> Rector						
Name and surname of lecturer (lecturers)	Subject supervisor		dr Alicja Chmiołek				
	Teachers						
Lesson types	Lesson type	Lecture	Tutorial	Laboratory	Project	Seminar	SUM
	Number of study hours	0.0	30.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	30
	E-learning hours included: 0.0						
Learning activity and number of study hours	Learning activity	Participation in didactic classes included in study plan		Participation in consultation hours		Self-study	SUM
	Number of study hours	30		2.0		18.0	50
Subject objectives	During the course, students will learn about the theory of horror and thriller film, the various subgenres of these film genres and classic examples of films that represent them in American cinema. Selected films from 1931-1991 will be analyzed for their historical, socio-political, literary, psychoanalytic and cultural contexts.						

Learning outcomes

Course outcome	Subject outcome	Method of verification
[AMERL3_U03] is able to use acquired subject knowledge to identify, analyze, interpret and explain cultural phenomena and processes in North America, using concepts and methods from cultural and religious studies.	Is able to apply knowledge of classic American film to identify, analyze, interpret, and explain cultural phenomena and processes in the United States, using concepts and methods from the field of film studies	[SU2] presentation/project/paper/ report
[AMERL3_K01] is ready to critically evaluate his knowledge and skills, especially in American cultural and literary studies, as well as the basic contextual knowledge of American studies concerning history, social sciences, geography, linguistics and art and English.	Is prepared to critically evaluate their own knowledge and skills, particularly in the field of American film studies and the basic contextual knowledge of American studies pertaining to film genres.	[SK1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion [SK2] presentation/project/paper/ report
[AMERL3_U06] Able to communicate orally and in writing on issues related to American and British culture and literature, using specialized terminology in cultural and religious studies and literary studies.	Is able to communicate orally and in writing on topics related to classic American film, using specialized terminology from the field of film studies.	[SU1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion [SU2] presentation/project/paper/ report [SU3] text preparation/written work
[AMERL3_W07] Has advanced detailed knowledge of selected issues concerning cultural phenomena and processes in North America.	Has in-depth knowledge of American horror and thriller films.	[SW1] oral statement/ conversation/discussion [SW2] presentation/project/paper/ report [SW3] text preparation/written work
[AMERL3_W05] Has advanced knowledge of the basic conceptual and terminological apparatus of cultural and religious studies applicable to the study of cultural phenomena and processes in North America.	Has advanced knowledge of the basic conceptual and terminological framework of American film studies as it applies to research on American film genres.	[SW1] oral statement/ conversation/discussion [SW2] presentation/project/paper/ report [SW3] text preparation/written work

Subject contents

The subgenres and trends discussed will be: psychological horror, religious horror, surrealistic horror, ghost story, Gothic horror, slasher, psychological thriller, serial killer thriller, android thriller, home invasion thriller.

Prerequisites and co-requisites

Choosing the elective

Knowledge of English at the level of min. B2

Assessment methods and criteria

Subject passing criteria	Passing threshold	Percentage of the final grade
Short tests	51.0%	20.0%
Class activity	51.0%	40.0%
Class presentation	51.0%	40.0%

Recommended reading

Basic literature	1. Benshoff, Harry M., editor. *A Companion to the Horror Film*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2014. 2. Clarens, Carlos. *An Illustrated History of Horror and Science-Fiction Films. The Classic Era, 1895-1967*. New edition, Da Capo Press, 1997. 3. Clover, Carol J. *Men, Women, and Chain Saws. Gender in the Modern Horror Film*. First Princeton Classics edition, Princeton UP, 2015. 4. Grant, Barry Keith, editor. *Film Genre Reader III*. U of Texas P, 2003 5. Sipos, Thomas M. *Horror Film Aesthetics. Creating the Visual Language of Fear*. McFarland, 2010
Supplementary literature	1. Altman, Rick. *Film/Genre*. Reprinted, BFI Publishing, 2000. 2. Bordwell David, et al. *Film Art: An Introduction*. Twelfth edition. McGraw-Hill Education, 2020. 3. Wood, Robin. *Hollywood from Vietnam to Reagan... And Beyond*. Expanded and Revised Edition. Columbia UP, 2003
eResources addresses	

Example issues/ example questions/ tasks being completed

The Night of the Hunter (1955) and *The Omen* (1976) as examples of different varieties of religious horror.

The depiction of android characters in the films *Westworld* (1973) and *The Stepford Wives* (1975).

The origins of the slasher in the films *Psycho* (1960) and *Halloween* (1978).

Work placement

Not applicable