

Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur

Proposal for a New Course

1. Course No: ART4**
2. Course Title: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE CINEMATIC ART OF CHINA.
3. Per Week Lectures: 3 (L), Tutorial: 0 (T), Laboratory: 0 (P), Additional hours: (0-2): 0 (A),
Credits (3*L+0*T+0P+A): 5. Duration of Course: Half Semester (Modular).
4. Proposing Department/IDP: Humanities and Social Sciences.

Other Departments/IDPs which may be interested in the proposed course: None.

Other faculty members interested in teaching the proposed course: None.

5. Proposing Instructor(s): Ritwij Bhowmik
6. Course Description: Please see enclosed documents for information under No. 6. & 7.

A) Objectives:

B) Contents (preferably in the form of 5 to 10 broad titles)

S. No	Broad Title	No. of Lectures
1.		

C) Pre-requisites, if any (examples: a- PSO201A, or b- PSO201A or equivalent):

D) Short summary for including in the Courses of Study Booklet

7. Recommended Books:

Textbooks:

Reference Books:

8. Any other remarks: None.

Dated: January 1, 2026 Proposer: Ritwij Bhowmik

Dated: January 1, 2026 DUGC/DPGC Convener: _____

The course is approved / not approved

Chairman, SUGC/SPGC

Dated: _____

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE CINEMATIC ART OF CHINA

(Course Proposal)

Proposed by: Prof. Ritwij Bhowmik

6. Course Description

This is a theoretical visual culture course that introduces the concept of visual communication through cinema to undergraduate students. They will explore the domain of Chinese Cinematic art, including major filmmakers, noteworthy genres, and their historical and cultural context in a distinctive way.

This course offers a study of Chinese cinema, examining it both as a creative art form and as a medium of visual communication. The course will broadly orient students to the nitty-gritties of visual culture. There is no prerequisite, but fluency in the English language and an inclination towards the visual arts are absolutely necessary. All readings, course materials, lectures, and evaluations in the course will be in English; no Chinese language skills are required, although memorizing Chinese names is essential. The course evaluation will include regular written quizzes, as well as end-of-module examination.

A) The Objective of this course:

- i. The primary objective of this course is to introduce students to the art and visual culture of Chinese Cinema.
- ii. The lecture topics aim to enhance visual perception and foster a deeper appreciation of cinema as an artistic medium for expression, transcending the boundaries of diverse languages and cultures.
- iii. This course, along with the other similar undergraduate elective courses (ART410 and ART404) and the postgraduate course (ART707), will present a comprehensive picture of the art and culture of the East Asian region for IIT students.
- iv. Along with the selective readings from the textbooks, the substantial section of the lectures and class discussion will be aligned with the primary film screening and additional reference texts themselves.

B) Contents:

Sl. No.	Board Titles	Number of Lectures
1.	Introduction to the Chinese Cinematic Art	1
2.	Early Cinema of China	2
2.	Chinese Cinema in the Post-1949 Era	3
3.	Cultural Revolution and Scar Drama	4
4.	Understanding Zhang Yimou and the Fifth Generation Cinema	4
5.	Onset of the Sixth Generation Cinema	3
6.	Chinese Cinema in the 21st Century	3

C) Pre-requisites: None.

D) Short summary for including in the Courses of Study Booklet:

Chinese Cinema is a crucial part of world cinema. Within its short span, this theoretical visual culture course will provide an opportunity for senior undergraduate students of IIT Kanpur to gain an understanding of Chinese cinema. With a careful selection of key filmmakers, notable genres, and their historical and cultural context, the course will present a holistic view of the Chinese Cinematic Art. Moreover, it will also offer a comparative study of Chinese cinema, examining it both as an artistic form and as a medium of visual communication. All readings, course materials, lectures, and evaluations in the course will be in English; no Chinese language skills are required, although memorizing Chinese names is essential.

7. Recommended books

Text Books:

Vick, Tom. *Asian Cinema: A Field Guide*. Perennial, 2008.

Reference Books:

Dikötter, Frank. *The Cultural Revolution: A People's History, 1962—1976*. Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, 2017.

Global Art Cinema: New Theories and Histories. edited by Rosalind Galt and Karl Schoonover, Oxford University Press, 2010.

Gray, Gordon. *CINEMA: A Visual Anthropology*. Routledge, 2010.

Lim, Song Hwee, and Julian Ward. *The Chinese Cinema Book*. 2nd edition ed., BFI Publishing, 2020.

Martin, Sean. *New Waves in Cinema*. Kamera Books, 2013.