COURSE DESCRIPTION
Feminist film theory and practices mirror debates that have engaged the feminist movement as a whole. As critic Laura Mulvey points out, film has been “the crucial terrain” on which feminism’s debates over culture, identity and representation have been fought. ‘Are positive images enough?’ ‘Is Freudian theory useful?’ Is there a ‘feminine vision,’ ‘feminine pleasures’? What role do other identities such as class, race, ethnicity and sexuality play in women’s cinema? Do we still need to promote a separate women’s filmmaking?’ and “Is sexual display always inimical to feminism?” are questions that have been addressed by feminist theorists and filmmakers alike since the 1970s. In class discussions, group presentations, journals and papers, students will explore these questions and engage in the debates. The particularity of film as a medium to address these questions will form the perspective of our study. Weekly screenings of films by women – both classic and contemporary – will focus the seminar discussions.

REQUIRED READINGS
Additional articles will be available on reserve in the library or online.

Note: Readings will average from 40 to 50 pages per class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
30% Journal:
An academic (i.e. not personal) journal of notes on the readings, and thoughts on the films and videos viewed in class. Due in three installments comprising 3 pages/class meeting –1½ pages on the readings, 1½ pages of responses to the films and videos.

25% Group Presentation:
An oral presentation based on the week's readings and/or topics of discussion. The subject will be chosen in conjunction with the instructor and completed by two students per topic (15 min in length). An outline of the presentation and a bibliography of the works consulted must be submitted to the instructor at the beginning of the class on the day of the presentation.

30% Term Paper:
A critical paper, 8-10 pages in length, relating the work of a woman director viewed in and outside of class and the concepts discussed in the readings. The choice of topic is up to the student, but the topic must be developed in a submission approved by the instructor.

15% Participation:
Includes regular class attendance, doing the required readings and coming to class prepared to join actively in discussions.

NOTE: All work must be submitted on time; late papers will be penalized. Three or more unexcused absences could result in failure of the course.

Prerequisite: 60 credit hours including two women’s studies courses, one of which must be WS 101 or 102. Students who have taken WS 312 or WS 412 under the title Women and Film may not take this course for further credit.

Graduate Students: In addition to the above assignments, graduate students will have additional discussion meetings with the instructor, will lead the class in a discussion of one week’s readings (date to be chosen in consultation with the instructor), and submit a longer final paper (15-17 pages) on a topic approved by the instructor.

THE DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN’S STUDIES ENCOURAGES CLARITY OF THOUGHT AND EXPRESSION AND GOOD WRITING. STUDENTS WILL BE EVALUATED ON THESE SKILLS IN ALL COURSES GIVEN BY THE DEPARTMENT.