

Global Cinema: Moroccan Cinema and Arabic Language

Peter Limbrick, Film & Digital Media

Propose Course(s):

"Film 168: National Cinema and Culture", Film and Digital Media, 5 units. Upper-division elective. (My syllabus will be a modified, summer-abroad version, specifying Morocco. I have titled it 168M for now).

Course Objectives

- 1) What are the campus learning objectives of the course(s)?*
- 2) What are the international education learning objectives of the course?*

This proposal is for a summer abroad program consisting of two courses: Arabic Language instruction (at the appropriate level for each student, either beginner or intermediate) and Film 168M: Moroccan Cinema and Culture in the Maghrib.

Film 168M:

This upper-division elective course would involve a minor and tailor-made revision to our existing Film 168: National Cinema and Culture, to focus it on study in Morocco. It will fulfill the following Film and Digital Media Learning Outcomes for FDM students:

1. Demonstrate their ability to employ research skills, including the use of appropriate print and technology sources in the discipline, to construct effective arguments.
5. Demonstrate broad knowledge of film and media history internationally.
6. Demonstrate scholarly writing skills appropriate to the discipline of film and digital media.
7. Demonstrate an ability to analyze, interpret, and critique films and media from a variety of theoretical perspectives using the critical vocabulary and methodologies of the discipline.

In addition, it will fulfill the following General Education Requirement (which Film 168 already carries):

CC (Cross-Cultural Analysis)

A second course for the summer program would be:

Arabic:

Arabic Language study in the program will consist of taking either MSA100 or MSA200 at CCLT, our proposed host institution. With the restarting of Arabic language classes at UCSC, currently anticipated for Fall 2019, some students will already have completed a year of Arabic 1,2,3 at UCSC, enabling them to progress to MSA200 in Morocco. It is expected that this will form the equivalent of one quarter of study at UCSC. Those students entering the program with no Arabic will take MSA 100, which should prepare them for Arabic 2 on their return to UCSC. CCLT and I will coordinate the curriculum for both Arabic courses with our new Arabic Languages faculty to make sure that the courses articulate correctly and that appropriate UCSC course credit can be given.

What are the international education learning objectives of the course?

The international objectives are to allow students to study Moroccan cinema and culture in the dynamic international environment of Rabat, Morocco, where they will meet filmmakers and producers, see production facilities, and learn about the history of cinema in the country before and after the colonial period. In addition, the program allows them to begin or to continue Arabic language studies in a way that is tied to their explorations of film and culture. This will be an opportunity for students to learn one of the most important and widely spoken languages in the world and to experience the ways that it can extend their research on and critical and historical appreciation of world cinema.

Selection of Participants

- 1) Who is the target audience for the course(s)?*
- 2) Who will be eligible to apply for the course(s)?*
- 3) On what criteria will students be selected?*

a. Who is the target audience for this course?

The target audience crosses a range of intersecting constituencies: Film and Digital Media majors who are interested in Arab, North African, or international cinemas; Arabic language students wishing to further enrich their study with language, film, and culture in Morocco; French language students wishing to better understand the culture of a Francophone country, and Literature and History of Art and Visual Culture (HAVC) students with an interest in postcolonial or comparative literature, art, and culture. If space permits, I would also be happy to do outreach among other UC campuses which teach Arabic and cinema (especially UC Berkeley, UC Santa Barbara, and UCLA).

b. Who will be eligible to apply for the course?

Sophomores and above. For FDM majors, there would be a prerequisite of Film 132A or B, per our program of study; for others, some experience of film/art/culture and/or Arabic language study (by consent of instructor).

c. On what criteria will students be selected?

Previous study, describe above, and/or demonstrated interest.

Implementation

- 1) How will the course achieve the stated objectives?*
- 2) How does the course diversify and broaden pathways to timely completion of major requirements?*

a. How will the course achieve the stated objectives?

The film course will enable students to achieve a deep understanding of some of the issues germane to Moroccan cinema and culture and, by extension, to other artistic and cultural forms in North Africa that are also formed in the intersecting histories of colonialism, post-colonial nationalism, Arab culture, and indigenous North African (Amazigh/Berber/Kabyle) culture. Students will go beyond cinema to also consider visual arts and literary expression in Morocco. For example, the course will cover histories of cinematic production including colonial documentaries, postcolonial documentary and short fiction, contemporary Moroccan film production and Hollywood and transnational film production in Morocco. It will do so through visiting film archives in Morocco (the Centre Cinématographique Marocain), film production facilities at Ouarzazate (where major Hollywood productions like *The Last Temptation of Christ* (Scorsese) and *Gladiator* (Ridley Scott) were filmed) and by speaking with representatives of the newly revived Marrakesh International Film Festival, which attracts international luminaries every year. Rabat is home to several national institutions such as the Bibliothèque Nationale du Royaume du Maroc (National Library), the Cinéma-thèque Marocaine (where a prominent female filmmaker was recently appointed to the role of director), the Mohamed VI museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, and the Moroccan National Theatre. In the independent art scene, I have strong personal connections to the Apartment 22 experimental art space and Kulte Gallery and Editions, a small publisher and art gallery. Students will have easy access to all these institutions and their staff via the professor's contacts. Further afield, they will visit the Atelier Observatoire in Casablanca, where local artists and archivists work on aspects of historical and contemporary Moroccan art and cinema, the Cinéma-thèque de Tanger, long a hub for international art cinema in Morocco and a center for young Moroccans to learn filmmaking; the Tangier American Legation Museum and cultural center (the only US national historical landmark outside of the USA), which contains many items related to American writer Paul Bowles, and the Librairie des colonnes bookstore in Tangier, where the legacy of Moroccan writers and American beat poets thrives.

Students will thus expand their classroom learning with site visits that will make real the issues and histories they study.

The Arabic language course for beginners will let newcomers begin to see the richness of the Arabic language and culture in a way that will be tangible everyday: learning to read and speak basic Arabic deepens the impact of what students see around them. Intermediate students will actually be able to use written and spoken materials that will connect their language learning and their film/culture learning more directly. CCLT language courses are taught by highly experienced instructors who have a history of working with American students.

b. How does the course diversify and broaden pathways to timely completion requirements?

The course will provide FDM students the opportunity to take an upper-division elective course over the summer, one that has historically not been offered during summer session.

International Advantage

- 1. How will the chosen international site extend and strengthen campus learning objectives?*
- 2. What kind of international experience/training does the program provide to students?*
- 3. Please provide a preliminary list of program excursions and cultural visits. Describe the academic relevance of the excursions and/or cultural visits to the course and learning objectives.*
- 4. Does this course provide opportunities for students to build inter-cultural competencies?*

a. How will the chosen international site extend and strengthen campus learning objectives?

Morocco has a long history of cooperation with and mutual recognition of the US and by studying there, students will extend their appreciation of other cultures and languages outside the US in a welcoming environment.

b. What kind of international experience/training does the program provide to students?

Upper-division film/culture study and language study in an environment that will extend students' understanding of the world. Morocco is a vibrant, dynamic, intellectually and sensually stimulating place that is best experienced with time to really engage the people and places that it offers. To do so with appreciation or experience of local language and culture makes it infinitely more rewarding than experiencing it as a tourist.

c. Please provide a preliminary list of program excursions and cultural visits. Describe the academic relevance of the excursions and/or cultural visits to the course and learning objectives.

Rabat:

Centre Cinematographique Marocain (CCM) and Cinematheque marocaine : <http://www.leseco.ma/culture/72486-narjiss-nejjar-martin-scorsese-est-le-parrain-de-la-cinematheque-marocaine.html>

History and production of Moroccan film.

Musée Mohamed VI <http://www.museemohammed6.ma>

Art and cultural history of Morocco

Kulte Gallery and Editions <http://www.artkulte.com/>

Apartment 22 <https://www.appartement22.com/>

Contemporary art, experimental practice in Morocco; publishing and new writing and criticism in Morocco.

Tangier:

Cinematheque de Tanger <https://www.cinemathequedetanger.com/en/>

Tangier American Legation Museum and Cultural Center <http://legation.ipower.com/blog/>

History of US diplomatic relations in Morocco, history of American literature in Morocco.

Librairie des colonnes <http://www.librairie-des-colonnes.org>

Moroccan and foreign writers.

Paul Bowles's Apartment
Walking tour of Tangier cinemas with filmmaker Moumen Smihi.

Fes:

Moroccan Cultural Studies Center, Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdallah University (Profs. Khalid Bekkaoui and Sadik Rdadd). Contemporary Moroccan cultural studies.
Karaouine University Library: oldest university in the world, library recently renovated by Moroccan female architect.

Casablanca:

Moroccan Jewish Museum; history of Jews in Morocco.
L'Atelier de l'Observatoire <http://www.atelierobservatoire.com> with curator Lea Morin

Marrakech:

École Supérieure des Arts Visuels (ESAV) Marrakech-class visit with Prof. Roland Carrée.
esavmarrakech.com/en/
Moroccan film and culture students of the same stage as the UCSC students.
Yves Saint-Laurent Library and Gardens, visit with librarian <https://www.museeyslmarrakech.com/en/bibliotheque/>
Contemporary library and cultural center.
Dar el Ma'mun Library and Translation Center
<http://www.fellah-hotel.com/dar-al-ma-mun/>

Ouarzazate:

Atlas Film Studios: international film production.

Instructor Preparation

- 1. Describe your connection with a host institution(s), including at least a description of preliminary efforts to gain commitment of logistical support from a partner institution.*
- 2. Describe your international experience and/or in-country and language experience that would facilitate development of the proposed course.*

I met Mohamed Baghdadi, the founder and director of the Cultural Center for Language and Training (CCLT) in Rabat in 2015 during a research visit. We were introduced by Prof. Jonathan Smolin, then director of the Dartmouth College summer abroad in Morocco program. Prof. Smolin was effusive about the work Mr. Baghdadi had done for Dartmouth, and I heard firsthand about his care for a student with a broken ankle whom he assisted during the summer program. He is responsible for every aspect of the Dartmouth program in Rabat, from organizing homestays in the medina to teach students to organizing field trips. I thought at the time that if UCSC ever restarted faculty-led programs, he would be the person to work with in Morocco. Three years later, I have finally had the opportunity. I approached him in December to see if he'd be interested, and received a very positive reply. We followed up with a Skype call on Jan 1 in which he was very confident of CCLT's ability to host us. You can read more about CCLT and Mr. Baghdadi at the link below.

<https://www.ccltmorocco.com/about-us/mohamed-baghdadi/>

Please also see Dartmouth's letter of recommendation for Mr. Baghdadi/CCLT here:

<https://www.ccltmorocco.com/cclt/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Jim-Recommendation-Mohamed-Baghdadi.pdf>

Instructor's international experience at Location:

I have been visiting Morocco since 2010 when I began research for the book which I have just finished (under review at UC Press). I have made approximately seven trips to the country and in 2017 I lived in

Rabat for 2.5 months with my then-10-year old daughter (which speaks to how safe I think it is). I speak French at a near-fluent level and have intermediate standard Arabic and beginner Moroccan Arabic (sufficient to create goodwill or start communication in the local language, while moving back and forth between local Arabic, formal Arabic and French). I am very familiar with the major cultural institutions in the country including all those listed here as site visits, and have a great deal of personal friends and colleagues in the country thanks to my research. These will facilitate a excellent opportunities for our students.

Location and Facilities

- 1. Describe the facilities and related resources of the host institution that are committed for course implementation.*
- 2. If interaction with environment/site is a course objective, how do local conditions facilitate such interactions?*
- 3. What specific cultural elements make it ideal to teach this course in the proposed setting?*
- 4. Are the resources adequate for the anticipated number of students?*

CCLT has its own facilities in downtown Rabat, just steps from the medina and many of the cultural centers listed in my program. These are described and pictured on their website.

<https://www.ccltmorocco.com/>

b. If interaction with the environment/site is a course objective, how do the local conditions facilitate such interactions?

Students will stay with host families close to the classroom facilities. The facilities are centrally located in a safe area of downtown Rabat. All planned cultural activities in Rabat are within approximately a mile's walk/taxi ride.

<https://www.ccltmorocco.com/about-us/cclt-center-and-location/>

c. What specific cultural elements make it ideal to teach this course in the proposed setting?

Homestays are a centerpiece of what CCLT organizes for visiting students, and these make it possible for students to gain a rich experience of everyday Moroccan life. Further, the center's location is ideal for many cultural aspects of the program.

d. Are the resources adequate for the anticipated number of students?

Yes. The UCSC program would be timed so as to overlap but not completely coincide with the Dartmouth program, and extra space in the building will be acquired to serve both programs.

Risk Analysis and Management

- 1. Describe the potential safety issues at the host institution and its surroundings.*
- 2. What cultural orientation will be provided to students pre-departure?*
- 3. Please describe your risk management plan. If your proposal is recommended by CIE and Study Abroad, program development will include more information on risk analysis, health and safety.*

This area of Rabat is very safe. Students would be encouraged to take the usual precautions they would in any city when traveling.

b. What cultural orientation will be provided to the students pre-departure?

An orientation with Prof. Limbrick would familiarize students with the setting and give them basic tips on arriving in and living in Morocco and Rabat.

c. Please describe your risk management plan. If proposal is recommended by CIE and Study Abroad, program development will include more information on risk analysis, health and safety.

I will be happy to develop such a plan in conjunction with CCLT and the university.