

## Critical Theory In A Digital Age

7.1 Module Overview									
<b>Module Number</b>		<b>Module Title</b>	Critical Theory in a Digital Age						
<b>Stage of Principal Programme</b>			<b>3</b>	<b>Semester</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Duration.</b> <i>(Weeks F/T)</i>	<b>12</b>	<b>ECTS</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Mandatory / Elective (E)</b>	E	<b>Hours of Learner Effort / Week</b>	<b>2</b>						
Analysis of required hours of learning effort									
<b>Teaching and Learning Modalities</b>						<b>✓if relevant to this module</b>	<b>Approx. proportion of total (hours)</b>		
<b>Contact Hours.</b>									
In person face-to-face						✓	24		
Synchronous									
<b>Indirect/Non-Contact Hours</b>									
Asynchronous									
Work Based									
Other:									
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Independent reading, engagement with VLE, research and preparation of assessments</li> </ul>						✓	101		
<b>Total</b>							125		

<b>Pre-Requisite Module, if any. Module # and Title</b>	N/A
<b>Co-Requisite Module, if any. Module # and Title</b>	N/A
<b>Maximum number of learners per instance of the module</b>	20
Specification of the qualifications (academic, pedagogical and professional/occupational) and experience required of staff working in this module.	
<b>Role e.g., Tutor, Mentor, Lecturer, Research Supervisor, etc.</b>	<b>Qualifications &amp; experience required</b>
Lecturer	A minimum level 9 qualification in Philosophy or closely cognate area
	<b>Staff - Learner Ratio X:Y</b>
	1:20

Assessment Techniques – percentage contribution				
<b>Continuous Assessment</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>Proctored Exam – in person</b>		<b>Practical Skills Based</b>
<b>Project</b>		<b>Proctored Exam - online</b>		<b>Work Based</b>
<b>Capstone (Y/N)?</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>If Yes, describe</b>		

7.2 Minimum Intended Module Learning Outcomes (MIMLOs)	
<b>MIMLO</b> <b>On completion of this module a learner will be able to:</b>	<b>Related MIPLO #</b>
1. Communicate a detailed familiarity with core texts from the Frankfurt School through written, verbal, and digital means.	<b>2, 3</b>
2. Demonstrate an awareness of the socio-cultural contexts from which those writings emerged.	<b>1, 3, 6, 7</b>

3. Understand the enduring relevance of Critical Theory in a world dominated by prevailing forms of digital media.	1, 2, 5
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### 7.3 Indicative Module Content, Organisation and Structure

This module aims to introduce learners to the history, principles, and concepts of Critical Theory as developed by the Frankfurt School. It develops skills of analysis, critical reflection and argumentation through close engagement with primary texts that were written by prominent members of the Frankfurt School. By way of underscoring the practical efficacy of such writings, the core ideas of that School are used to investigate the prevailing practices of the entertainment industry that are employed by digital media sources throughout the globe.

Critical Theory in a Digital Age provides close and rigorous analyses of seminal writings from the Frankfurt School that specify the ways in which the entertainment industry perpetuates stereotypical representations of societal roles based upon presuppositions about categories such as gender, socio-economic status, ethnicity, and race. This module provides learners with the analytical skills needed to recognise the prevalence of profiling within various forms of modern media, and identifies the criteria by which we can distinguish between cultural products that merely consolidate discriminatory depictions from those that subvert them.

### 7.4 Work-based learning and practice-placement *(if applicable)*

N/A

### 7.5 Specific module resources required *(if applicable)*

N/A

### 7.6 Application of programme teaching, learning and assessment strategies to this module

The content of this module is covered in lectures. The lecturer outlines seminal aspects of Critical Theory through background contextualisation and textual analysis and affords opportunities for learners to deepen their theoretical knowledge and cultivate their analytical skills within individual and group sittings. The lecturer will also endeavour to provide the opportunity for learners to engage in close reading of primary texts and to acquaint themselves with their applicability to contemporary trends within the entertainment industry.

In adhering to the principles of UDL, material will be made available via a range of sources through the VLE such as texts, videos, and podcasts. Such material will appear on the lecturer's slides that will be uploaded to Moodle in advance of lectures.

Assessment for the module consists of continuous assessment (90%) and attendance (10%).

#### **Continuous Assessment:**

The presentation will enable learners to demonstrate their understanding of the fundamental ideas of Critical Theory and their applicability to the use of various forms of digital media by the entertainment industry (MIMLO 2). The presentation will then serve as the basis for the themes that will be explored by the critical analysis piece. Here the feedback that the learner will receive from the lecturer and their fellow learners will prove formative to the development of core arguments and their conclusions. (MIMLO 1-3)

The attendance mark will benefit those learners who will engage with themes through critical dialogues with their lecturers and their peers.

7.7 Summative Assessment Strategy for this module		
MIMLOs	Technique(s)	Weighting
1-3	Essay	60%
2	PowerPoint Presentation illustrating how ideas formulated by members of The Frankfurt School are applicable to advertising strategies that are employed through various forms of digital media.	30%
N/A	Attendance	10%

7.8 Sample Assessment Materials
<p>Assessment will be composed of three parts;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Presentation: 7 min presentation, 7 min fielding questions. (30%)</li> <li>(ii) Analysis piece: 2000 – 2500 words. (60%)</li> <li>(iii) Attendance: 10%.</li> </ul> <p><b>Analysis:</b> You must choose a topic relating to the entertainment industry and analyse it using the methods and insights of Critical Theory that have been covered in our lectures. The topic can be focused upon a piece of art/cultural work (e.g. a particular painting, song, poem, band, film, sculpture, artist, or digital media source). You should consider how it confirms or subverts social and cultural stereotypes/expectations, and how it develops or inhibits the freedom of the individual). Please discuss the topic by me before you commence research.</p> <p>The analysis piece will be assessed using the Written Assessment Marking Criteria Guidelines. It should use the MHRA style for referencing. It should show some evidence of incorporating the questions and suggestions from the presentation into the analysis.</p> <p><b>Presentation:</b> The presentation will be assessed using the Dissertation Oral Presentation Criteria. All members of the audience should have some observation or question to offer on their colleagues' presentation that will help in sharpening the final analysis piece. Verbal feedback will be given in the presentation and written comments will be given the following week.</p> <p>Marking of assessments will be in line with the Marking Assessment Guidelines indicated above and available in Section 3.3 and 4.16 of the College's <a href="#">Regulations in Relation to Assessment and Standards</a>.</p>

7.9 Indicative reading lists and other information resources
<p><b>Indicative Core Reading:</b></p> <p>Adorno, Theodor, <i>Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments</i>, M. Horkheimer and T. W. Adorno, ed. G. S. Noerr, trans. E. Jephcott, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002)</p> <p>Habermas, J., <i>The Theory of Communicative Action: Reason and Rationalization of Society</i>, vols 1 and 2, (Boston: Polity Press, 1986)</p> <p>Held, David, <i>Introduction to Critical Theory: From Horkheimer to Habermas</i> (Boston: Polity Press, 198)</p> <p>Horkheimer, Max, and Theodor W. Adorno. <i>Dialectic of Enlightenment</i>. Translated by John Cumming (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972)</p> <p><b>Indicative Other Resources:</b></p> <p>Allmer, Thomas, <i>Critical Theory and Social Media: Between Emancipation and Commodification</i> (London: Routledge, 2015)</p> <p>Erhart, Julia, <i>Gendering History on Screen: Women Filmmakers and Historical Films</i> (London: I.B. Tauris, 2018)</p> <p>Fuchs, Christian, <i>Critical Theory of Communication: New Readings of Lukács, Adorno, Marcuse, Honneth and Habermas in the Age of the Internet</i> (London: University of Westminster Press, 2016)</p>

Gormley, Paul (ed.), *New Brutality Film: Race and Affect in Contemporary Hollywood Cinema* (New York: Intellect Books, 2005)

Hil, Sarah, *Young Women, Girls and Postfeminism in Contemporary British Film* (London: Bloomsbury, 2020)

Horkheimer, Max. *Critical Theory*. Translated by Matthew J. O'Connell et al. (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972)

Jay, Martin, *The Dialectical Imagination: A History of the Frankfurt School and the Institute of Social Research, 1923 – 1950* (CA: University of California Press, 1996)

Kac Vergne, Marianne, and Assouly, Julie (eds.), *From the Margins to the Mainstream: Women in Film and Television* (London: Bloomsbury, 2022)

Lindner, Katharina, *Film Bodies: Queer Feminist Encounters with Gender and Sexuality in Cinema* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017)

Tobing Rony, Fatimah, *The Third Eye: Race, Cinema, and Ethnographic Spectacle* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1996)

**Relevant Websites:**

Stanford University, *The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*: <https://plato.stanford.edu/>

BBC In Our Time Podcast Page: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qykl>

The Frankfurt Institute for Social Research: [Institute - Institut für Sozialforschung \(uni-frankfurt.de\)](https://www.uni-frankfurt.de/sozialforschung)