**Syllabus: MIT, Summer 2011**

**Creative and Critical Thinking about Dreams and Dreaming**

During this class we will explore the different theories of where dreams come from and consider the psychology of the dream and the dreamer.By the end of the class you will be able to interpret dreams using these various theories. You will also be able to identify archetypical images and metaphors in dreams, music, art and film. Using film theory you'll learn to reflect on the quality of a film's oneiric imagery, auteurism and cinematography. During the last two sessions students will hold a Dream Council, using what you have learned to interpret the dreams of your fellow classmates.

**Week One: Thinking and dreaming**

Introduction to Course

 Lecture: Brains, Minds, Communication, Memory

Class Discussion: How computers and people are alike and how they are different

Art/Music/Films: Art: Chagall. Music: Nocturne. Films: The Cell, Minority Report

 **Week Two: Neuroscience: Perception, REM sleep and the brain**

Opening Question: If a tree falls in your dream, why is there sound?

Lecture: Biology/neuroscience of sleep and the brain. History of Dreams. Artemidorus. Comparison of dream theorists: Calvin Hall, Plato, Hobson and Perl’s Gestalt.

Class Discussion: Categories of Dreams

Art/Music/Films: Rousseau; Films: The Matrix (which reality is real?)

**Week Three:** **Freud and Jung**

Opening Question: What is your Persona? Is it a myth or a metaphor?

Lecture: The Psyche: Freud and Jung dream theory. **The house as a metaphor. Doors windows, halls and stairs as metaphors.**

Class Discussion: Interpretations of dreams, myths, metaphors and meaning, in culture and dreams. Oneiric Film Theory: the metaphor in films of **travel, including car, trains, planes, boats or flying as oneself. Water.**

Art/Music/Films: Art: Magritte. Music: River of Dreams, Wishes and Stars. Film: Kurosowa: Sunshine through the Rain, clips from Waking Life or Stranger than Fiction

**Week Four:** **Psychology of Dreams**

Opening Question: Is a nightmare a dream or is it something else? What makes a dream or a nightmare epic?

Lecture: Carl Jung dream theory. The Astral Plane/Collective Unconscious in different cultures. Plato. Shamans/Indians. Cayce and New Age. **Synchronicity.**

Class Discussion: Jung’s Red Book. Stevenson’s Jekyll and Hyde. Lewis Carroll’s Alice in Wonderland. Barrie’s, Peter Pan.

Art/Music/Films: Art: Red Book. Music: Dream Weaver, Riders in the Sky. Film: Kurasowa's Crows. Clips from Avatar or Shutter Island

**Week Five: Einstein’s Brain**

Opening Question: The word vision has three different meanings. How are they different, why, and how do they correlate, especially when we think about dreams?

Lecture: Einstein’s Brain; innovation and critical thinking.

Class Discussion: Lucid Dreams

Art/Music/Films: Now We Are Free, Free Falling, Film: clips from Waking Life. Inception or The Matrix

**Week Six: Oneiric Theory**

Lecture: What is oneiric theory, the art of a dream and the tools used by filmmakers to simulate a dream state? In what way do movies help us see the fine line between reality and imagination, or does it blur?

Class Discussion: Kurosowa, The Tunnel, Shutter Island

**Week Seven: Dream Council, Dream Interpretation**

Opening Question: Any questions from previous discussions or lectures?

Lecture: quick outline/review of how to interpret dreams using tools and theories we’ve learned in class including Artemidorus, Jung archetypes, Freud’s four components;

Activity: Class splits into two dream councils, and one person sits for counseling, time per person as needed, or just movie and class discussions

Music/Films: Film Theory: Opening scene of Inland Empire; clips from Waking Life or The director uses flashbacks and dream sequences in Shutter Island to make us think these scenes are real to the dreamer, - do you think this is true in life as well as movies?

**Week Eight: Dream Council, Dream Interpretation**

Activity: Class splits into two dream councils, and one person sits for counseling- with time allotted per person as needed, or just movie and class discussions

Class Discussion: How dreams and films are similar, and the ways in which a cinematographer adds an oneiric quality. For example, in what ways can "Days of Heaven" be considered oneiric?

Music/Films: Oneiric Film theory: Ground Hog Day or Tarkovsky, The Mirror