

DC222 Classic Hollywood Film Structure Syllabus

Spring 2013 | Thursday 10:10 – 1:25pm | 14 East Jackson LL105

Instructor: James Choi

Office Hours: Thursday 1:25 - 3:00pm or by appointment | 14 East Jackson LL105

Email: james@beachwoodpics.com

Learning Outcomes:

Students will learn to analyze films focusing on the filmmakers's strategy for:

- *Crafting an effective, engaging story
- *Introducing his or her principle character
- *Creating and maintaining tension
- *Manipulating the audience's emotional response

Prerequisite: No previous knowledge of cinema or screenwriting is assumed or necessary.

Course Description:

The purpose of this class is to enable you to study feature films from the professional's point of view and to familiarize you with both the problems screenwriters face in the development of a script and the tools they have at their disposal to solve these problems. In short, it will familiarize you with the common language professionals use to communicate their ideas in the development and production of feature films -- the language of cinematic storytelling.

The course includes in-depth analyses of ten "successful", well made feature films. Students will also have weekly writing assignments related to either the films viewed in class or films students will have to watch on their own.

Two papers will be written during the course of the term: a script-to-film comparison paper and a final paper on a film of the student's choosing.

Texts: Screenplay for Paper. (Handed out in class or available on COLWeb.)

Suggested Readings:

The Tools of Screenwriting by David Howard and Edward Mabley

The Hero With a Thousand Faces by Joseph Campbell

Screenplay by Syd Field

Save the Cat by Blake Snyder

Grading:

(30%) Weekly Writing Exercises

(15%) Attendance

(15%) Script/Film Comparison Paper

(40%) Final Paper

Late Assignments:

All assignments must be typed. Assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class (10:10am on date due). No late work is accepted.

Online Instructor Evaluation

Evaluations are a way for students to provide valuable feedback regarding their instructor and the course. Detailed feedback will enable the instructor to continuously tailor teaching methods and course content to meet the learning goals of the course and the academic needs of the students. They are a requirement of the course and are key to continue to provide you with the highest quality of teaching. The evaluations are anonymous; the instructor and administration do not track who entered what responses. A program is used to check if the student completed the evaluations, but the evaluation is completely separate from the student's identity. Since 100% participation is our goal, students are sent periodic reminders over two weeks. Students do not receive reminders once they complete the evaluation.

Email

Email is the primary means of communication between faculty and students enrolled in this course outside of class time. Students should be sure their email listed under "demographic information" at Campus Connect is correct.

Academic Integrity Policy

This course will be subject to the faculty council rules on the university's Academic Integrity Policy, available online. Please be familiar with this policy.

Plagiarism

The university and school policy on plagiarism can be summarized as follows: Students in this course, as well as all other courses in which independent research or writing play a vital part in the course requirements, should be aware of the strong sanctions that can be imposed against someone guilty of plagiarism. If proven, a charge of plagiarism could result in an automatic F in the course and possible expulsion. The strongest of sanctions will be imposed on anyone who submits as his/her own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report, or other assignment which has been prepared by someone else. If you have any questions or doubts about what plagiarism entails or how to properly acknowledge source materials be sure to consult the instructor.

Incomplete

An incomplete grade is given only for an exceptional reason such as a death in the family, a serious illness, etc. Any such reason must be documented. Any incomplete request must be made at least two weeks before the final, and approved by the Dean of the College of Computing and Digital Media. Any consequences resulting from a poor grade for the course will not be considered as valid reasons for such a request.

Resources for Students with Disabilities

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential.

To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact the instructor as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of class), and make sure that you have contacted either:

- PLS Program (for LD, AD/HD) at 773-325-4239 in SAC 220
- The Office for Students with Disabilities (for all other disabilities) at 773-325-7290 Student Center 307

CLASS SCHEDULE

Week 1 – April 4: Structure

In-Class: Review Syllabus

In-Class: Structure Presentation & Discussion

In-Class: Watch Film 1

Week 2 – April 11: Character

***Due: Film 1 Structure Breakdown**

In-Class: Discuss Film 1

In-Class: Character Presentation & Discussion

In-Class: Watch Film 2

Week 3 – April 18: Theme/Tension

***Due: Film 2 Structure Breakdown / Character Analysis**

In Class: Discuss Film 2

In-Class: Theme/Tension Presentation & Discussion

In-Class: Watch Film 3

Week 4 – April 25: Camera/Rhythm

Due: Film 3 Structure Breakdown / Theme Analysis

In-Class: Discuss Film 3

In-Class: Camera/Rhythm Presentation & Discussion

In-Class: Watch Film 4

Week 5 – May 2: Non-Linear/Ensemble Films

Due: Film 4 Structure Breakdown / Ensemble Analysis

In-Class: Discuss Film 4

In-Class: Non-Linear/Ensemble Films Presentation & Discussion

In-Class: Watch Film 5

Week 6 – May 9: Script to Screen

Due: Film 5 Structure Breakdown / Ensemble Analysis

In-Class: Discuss Film 5

In-Class: Script to Screen Presentation & Discussion

In-Class: Watch Film 6 (and read script)

Week 7 – May 16: Blake Snyder's *Save the Cat*/A different approach to principles of structure

Due: Paper #1: Script to Film Comparison

In-Class: Discuss Film 6 and script

In-Class: Blake Snyder Presentation & Discussion

In-Class: Watch Film 7

Week 8 – May 23: Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey

Due: Film 7 Blake Snyder Approach Analysis

In-Class: Discussion of *Film 7*

In-Class: Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey Presentation & Discussion

In-Class: Watch Film 8

Week 9 – May 30: Non-Structured/Experimental

Due: Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey Analysis

In-Class: Discussion of Film 8

In-Class: Non-structured/Experimental Presentation & Discussion

In-Class: View Film 9

June 6 - Week 10: Orson Welles' *Citizen Kane*

Last week we will screen AFI's #1 film, *Citizen Kane*. It is a film regarded by numerous "best of" film lists to be the best film ever made.

Due: Non-Structured/Experimental Analysis

In-Class: Discussion of Film 9

In-Class: Viewing of *Citizen Kane*

EXTRA CREDIT (replace one of your lowest assignment grade)

One paragraph response to whether or not you feel this film is worthy of being regarded as the best film ever made. **DUE 12am Midnight WEDNESDAY OF FINALS WEEK**

June 13 – FINALS

Due: Final Papers due on COL by 12am Midnight