

**DePaul University**  
**School of Cinema and Interactive Media**

**DC 222 401/410: Hollywood Film Structures**

Weds. 1:30-4:45 PM, 14 East Jackson Lower Level Theater and Online

Professor Brad Riddell: briddell@cim.depaul.edu, 312-362-5212

Office Hours: W, 10AM-1 PM, 4:45-5:30 PM in CDM 506 and by appointment.

**Description:**

This course explores how and why movies are sewn together the way they are.

We will develop critical analysis skills with respect to narrative structure in cinema. Films of various genres and styles will be examined, as will several common structural paradigms used to create and evaluate cinematic narratives.

**Objectives:**

To change the way you look at movies we will:

- examine the relationship between character and story structure
- develop familiarity with *Three Act Structure* and *The Hero's Journey*
- explore the manner in which story structure is influenced by genre
- build a cinematic vocabulary with which to discuss films critically

**Outcomes:**

One long essay and four shorter online assignments will assess and develop student learning across the objectives above. Assignments will be drawn from the films screened in class, course lectures, and the reading material posted online. Students will be expected to watch additional films not screened in class. Four extra credit projects will be made available throughout the quarter.

**Course Management:**

This course is housed and managed on **D2L**. There, you will find each week's recorded lecture (available after 5:30 PM on Wednesdays), the required reading material, most of our assignments, and, as the semester progresses – your current grade. Also posted on D2L will be a weekly discussion forum for questions and thoughts concerning the films, lectures, assignments and the course itself.

The films screened in class, as well as those which require individual viewing, are available on **CoITube** – an online DePaul video player available for Mac and PC.

**<http://coltube.cdm.depaul.edu/CoITube/Home/>**

## **Schedule:**

### **Character and Three-Act Structure**

Week 1: Course introduction, story terms and concepts, clip reel

ASSIGNMENT ONE DUE (*on reading/scenes*) BY NOON ON FRIDAY SEPT. 20

Week 2: *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*

Week 3: *Tootsie*

ASSIGNMENT TWO (*on Mean Girls*) DUE BY NOON ON FRIDAY OCT. 4

### **The Hero's Journey**

Week 4: *The Silence of the Lambs*

Week 5: *Moon*

ASSIGNMENT THREE (*on Gladiator*) DUE BY NOON ON FRIDAY OCT. 18

### **Ensemble**

Week 6: *Little Miss Sunshine*

Week 7: *Do The Right Thing*

ASSIGNMENT FOUR (*Lars and the Real Girl*) DUE BY NOON ON FRIDAY NOV. 8

### **The Sequence Approach and Save the Cat**

Week 8: *Thelma and Louise*

### **Alternative Narrative**

Week 9: *Memento*

Week 10: *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*

ASSIGNMENT FIVE (*Comprehensive*) DUE BY NOON ON **FRIDAY NOV. 22**

## **Grading:**

ASSIGNMENTS: There are five assignments, each worth 100 points. Assignments will be posted on D2L. Late work will not be accepted without an excuse that I determine to be legitimate (especially for a class about story-telling), and advance notification from you that it will be late.

A = 95	C+ = 78	
A- = 92	C = 75	
B+ = 88	C- = 70	
B = 85	D+ = 69	
B- = 80	D = 65	These values are minimums for each grade.

## **Laptops/Cell Phones:**

If your computer and the mind attached to it drift away from class, and I so much as suspect you of online activities not related to the task at hand, you will lose laptop privileges for the entire semester. Phones must be silenced and stowed.

## **Integrity:**

Plagiarism will earn you an immediate F in this course. Work done for this course must adhere to the University Academic Integrity Policy, which you can review in the *Student Handbook* or by visiting <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu>.

**Disabilities:**

Students who feel that they need accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss their needs as soon as possible.

**Alterations:**

The professor reserves the right to alter the syllabus at any time. Students will be apprised of any and all changes with clear instructions should they occur.