

DC 121 - The Art of Production Design Fall 2014-15

Instructor Prof. John Corba

Class Room: Lincoln Park Campus, Levan Center Rm 305

Class Time: Thursdays, 6:00-9:15pm

Course Web: <https://d2l.depaul.edu>

Email: jcorba@cdm.depaul.edu

My Website: www.jwcorba.com

Office hours: Levan Center Rm. 305

Thursdays / 5:00-6:00pm and after class

Or by emailed appointment at DePaul Cinespace Studios

Summary of Course:

The Art of Production Design is an introduction course and explores production design and art direction as narrative art forms in cinema. In this course we will examine the collaborative relationship between director, production designer, and cinematographer and the evolution of *mise-en-scene*. Using observational readings, screenings, screenplays, lectures, research, and discussion, students will study the fundamentals of a production designer's approach towards visualizing and conceptualizing story. Students will also gain a historical perspective of how the role of production design has evolved and how advances in technology have influenced the various crafts.

Textbooks:

Designs on Films

By Cathy Whitlock and The Art Directors Guild

ISBN 978-0-06-088122-1

Suggested but not required:

FilmCraft: Production Design

By Fionnuala Halligan

ISBN 978-0-240-82375-1

All other reading materials will be handed out in class or on the Desire2Learn site.

Objectives of course:

This course is designed to help students become more confident in understanding the role of production design and how it helps convey story in cinematic media. This course will also expose students to the various tradecrafts and positions that work with a production designer. By the end of the term, students should be able to:

- Identify historical and technological landmark achievements in production design.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the role of production design through written analysis and discussion.
- Develop interpretations for the aesthetics concerning production design and the affiliated crafts.
- Evaluate the execution of production design tradecraft.

Grading Scale:

A = 100-93, A- = 92-90, B+ = 89-88, B = 87-83, B- = 82-80, C+ = 79-78, C = 77-73, C- = 72-70, D+ = 69-68, D = 67-63, D- = 62-60, F = 59-0. A indicates excellence, B indicates good work, C indicates satisfactory work, D work is unsatisfactory in some respect, F is substantially unsatisfactory work.

Course Breakdown:

Attendance and Class Participation	40 points	40.0%
Analysis Papers (3)	30 points	30.0%
Midterm and Final Exams – (15 points each)	30 points	30.0%
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Total	100 points	100%

An expanded description of each follows:

Attendance and Class Participation - Class attendance is mandatory. Most of class time will be spent viewing and discussing films. Group discussions are a key component to the success of the class. Points will be taken off for absences and lack of contribution to class discussions.

Analysis Papers – Students will be assigned three analysis papers (3-4 pages in length), topics are directly linked to the course objectives and will be covered in class well in advance of due dates.

Midterm and Film Exams – The Midterm and Final Exam for this course will reflect a comprehension of reading assignments, class discussions and viewed materials.

Class Attendance and Discussion Policy:

Class Attendance: Each class consists of lectures, discussions, and screenings. Your attendance in the course is required. The class is participatory and the instructor's material and concepts are presented during class meetings. Students are expected to attend each class and to remain for the duration. Coming 15 minutes late or leaving 15 minutes early constitutes an absence for the student. The overall grade for participation drops after any absence. Three absences for any reason, whether excused or not, may constitute failure for the course.

Class Discussion: Student participation in class discussions will be measured in two ways. First, students are highly encouraged to ask questions and offer comments relevant to the day's topic. Participation allows the instructor to "hear" the student's voice when grading papers. Secondly, students will be called upon by the instructor to offer comments related to the reading assignments. Students must keep up with the reading to participate in class discussion.

Cell Phones/On Call: If you bring a cell phone to class, it must be off or set to a silent mode. Should you need to answer a call during class, students must leave the room in an undistruptive manner. Out of respect to fellow students and the professor, texting is never allowable in class. If you are required to be on call as part of your job, please advise me at the start of the course.

Changes to Syllabus

This syllabus is subject to change as necessary during the quarter. If a change occurs, it will be thoroughly addressed during class, posted under Announcements in D2L and sent via email.

Online Course Evaluations

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 three weeks. Students do not receive reminders once they complete the evaluation. Students complete the evaluation online in [CampusConnect](#).

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

This course will be subject to the university's academic integrity policy. More information can be found at <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/>. If you have any questions be sure to consult with your professor.

Academic Policies

All students are required to manage their class schedules each term in accordance with the deadlines for enrolling and withdrawing as indicated in the [University Academic Calendar](#). Information on enrollment, withdrawal, grading and incompletes can be found at: cdm.depaul.edu/enrollment.

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 the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at: csd@depaul.edu.

Lewis Center 1420, 25 East Jackson Blvd.

Phone number: (312)362-8002

Fax: (312)362-6544

TTY: (773)325.7296

Sept. 9, 2014

Week	Topic	Reading Homework	Films	Homework Due***
Week 1 Sept. 11	Intro Syllabus Expectations Student Intros	<i>Designs on Film</i> Pages 1-93	Trip to the Moon / The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari	
Week 2 Sept. 18	The 1920's William C. Menzies German Expressionism		The Thief of Bagdad / Metropolis	
Week 3 Sept. 25	The 1930's Art Deco Horror, Gangster	<i>Designs on Film</i> Pages 95-187	Our Dancing Daughters / Frankenstein / Little Caesar	
Week 4 Oct. 2	The 1930's <u>continued</u> The Golden Age		The Wizard of Oz / Gone with the Wind / Lost Horizon	Paper # 1
Week 5 Oct. 9	The 1940's Noir, Welles, & WWII	<i>Designs on Film</i> Pages 188-333	Casablanca / The Fountainhead / Rebecca	Midterm
Week 6 Oct. 16	The 1950's The Musical, The Western, and Hitchcock		North by Northwest / High Noon An American in Paris	
Week 7 Oct. 23	The 1960's The Epic, Kubrick, & James Bond		Lawrence of Arabia / Dr. Strangelove / Goldfinger	Paper #2
Week 8 Oct. 30	The 1970's Coppola, Lucas, & Spielberg,		The Godfather / Star Wars / Jaws	
Week 9 Nov. 6	The 1980's Sci-Fi & Greed		Bladerunner / Wall Street	
Week 10 Nov. 13	The 1990's Genre Redefined		Gattaca/ Unforgiven/ Meet Joe Black	Paper #3
Week 11 Nov. 20	Final Exam		***subject to revision	