

**SCHOOL OF CINEMATIC ARTS**  
**SPRING QUARTER - 2014-2015**  
**DC 470 – ADVANCED TOPICS IN CINEMA**  
**“THE ART OF EDITING”**

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<b>INSTRUCTOR:</b>	Brian Zahm	<b>SECTION:</b>	902
<b>OFFICE HOURS:</b>	WED 12:00-4:30	<b>CLASS #:</b>	37831
<b>OFFICE LOCATION:</b>	CDM 455	<b>CLASS TIMES:</b>	WED 5:45-9:00 PM
<b>E-MAIL:</b>	bzahm@cdm.depaul.edu	<b>CLASS LOCATION:</b>	CDM 708

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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Welcome to THE ART OF EDITING! This course will explore the art and technique of editing motion picture media. We will examine how every cut works due to the culmination of decisions made (in many cases) by a large creative team, from writers, to producers, to directors, to cinematographers, to production designers, to sound designers—all of which are funneled through the editor to tell a story in the most emotionally evocative way—from surface to subtext. Through screenings, lectures, readings and presentations, students will come to understand this powerful art form. This course will examine narrative films, documentaries, commercials, music videos, serialized television and video games to demonstrate how consistent editing techniques and philosophies are utilized to bring a cinematic story to life. Ultimately, students will learn that knowing why an edit works and how it informs the viewer, is arguably the most valuable skill to master in the field of motion picture media production.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- » Students will be able to analyze the way an individual cut informs the story on the surface and through subtext.
- » Students will be able to analyze how the editing rhythms effect storytelling pace and emotional impact.
- » Students will be able to analyze how decisions from the entire creative team inform each frame and push a story forward.
- » Students will be able to apply this knowledge to make intelligent decisions in the creation and critique of media.

### **PREREQUISITES**

DC 220 – Editing 1

### **REQUIRED TEXT**

- » **FILM EDITING: GREAT CUTS EVERY FILMMAKER AND MOVIE LOVER MUST KNOW** by GAEL CHANDLER (ISBN 978-1-932907-62-9). This book is an indispensable reference/learning guide about the building blocks of modern media.
- » **CUTTING RHYTHMS: SHAPING THE FILM EDIT** by KAREN PEARLMAN (ISBN 978-0-240-81014-0) This book is imbued with Zen-like knowledge found in editing.
- » **DESIRE2LEARN (D2L):** Some additional readings will be posted on D2L under CONTENT in folders that correspond to the class number. These mandatory readings are meant to supplement the textbooks and lectures.

### **REQUIRED SUPPLIES**

» The only thing required for this course will be a method of presenting your Film Scene Presentation. Most students will use DVDs for their presentations. Some will present from the actual DVD while many students “rip” the film and present from a hard-drive or flash drive (this is the recommended method). **PRESENTATIONS CANNOT BE MADE FROM ANY FORM OF INTERNET STREAMING DUE TO PROBLEMS THAT INVARIABLY GO ALONG WITH THIS.**

## ASSIGNMENTS/GRADING\*\*\*

### » ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION: 15%

You must attend class for your benefit, and to support and learn from your peers. Every class is going to be covering a lot of ground, and missing a class will be detrimental to your exam and presentation success.

### » READING EXAM: 15%

The readings will supplement the lectures, and are essential to your understanding of the edited form. This test will help reinforce the key concepts presented in the readings and will relate these concepts to the in-class screenings.

### » FINAL EXAM: 30%

There will be a final test based on the screenings, readings and lectures to help reinforce and solidify your understanding of the art of editing.

### » SCENE PRESENTATION: 40%\*\*\*

The cornerstone of this class will be a 25-minute presentation of editing techniques utilized in a scene (1-3min) from a movie (narrative or documentary) you will be assigned. Students are expected to discuss the construction of all audio and visual elements from a section of the film. If approached with thorough intent, this assignment could be the most valuable of your college careers if you intend to pursue the creation of media.

*\*\*\*GRADUATE STUDENTS will need to have an analytical paper accompanying this presentation, complete with a shot-by-shot breakdown of all cuts utilized in your selected scene.*

A = 100-93, A- = 92.9-90, B+ = 89.9-87, B = 86.9-83, B- = 82.9-80, C+ = 79.9-77, C = 76.9-73,  
C- = 72.9-70, D+ = 69.9-67, D = 66.9-63, D- = 62.9-60, F = 59.9+Below.

"A" indicates Excellence, "B" indicates Very Good, "C" indicates Satisfactory,  
"D" indicates Poor, "F" indicates the student has NOT accomplished the objectives of the course.

## GRADING POLICY

Students are expected to turn in all assignments by the established deadlines. LATE WORK WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. I will not accept the excuse of technological failure or absent-mindedness (you all have phones...set alarms for due dates!). Back up your work and do not leave your work until the last second! This is your warning. All grades will be kept current on D2L. Students who do not take tests or do their presentations when scheduled will receive a failing grade for the test or presentation.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

You are expected to be on time, and if you plan on missing or being late to a class are expected to notify the instructor BEFORE that particular class. The instructor reserves the right to determine whether an absence or tardy is "excused." Unexcused absences or tardiness will negatively affect your grade. *Please see **Course Policies as Suggested by the Dean of Students Office** at the end of the syllabus to see how your grade will be affected.* Attendance will be kept current on D2L. If you want to question a recorded absence or tardiness, it must be done within a week of the recorded occurrence. **DO NOT COMPLAIN** about your final grade if you have skipped class and your final grade was reduced. This is your warning!

## COMPUTER/CELLPHONE/I-PAD ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY

If you are using any personal or school electronic equipment during class for anything other than class-related work, you will be asked to leave and will be counted as absent for that class. *For the record, it's incredibly obvious (not to mention distracting) when someone is using a computer/PDA for anything other than taking notes.*

## **E-MAIL POLICY**

You are expected to READ ALL E-MAILS FROM THE CLASS INSTRUCTOR because you are responsible to know the information they contain. *So, you should check your e-mail at least once every 24 hours!*

Type **ART OF EDITING** IN THE SUBJECT LINE OF ALL E-MAILS to the instructor about this class. Please DO NOT JUST REPLY to my all-class e-mails because your response might get lost in the shuffle—*Send me an individual e-mail. I will do my best to get back to you in short-order, but please allow up to 24hrs for the instructor to respond.*

## **PROJECT FILE LABELING + FORMAT POLICY**

Please Label all Files as Such (ex. Student is QUENTIN TARANTINO and he is submitting the "PRESENTATION" SCENE ASSIGNMENT): **TARANTINO\_PRESENTATION.pdf**

*All Projects should be submitted in PDF format! Projects NOT submitted in the proper format or not labeled correctly WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. THIS IS YOUR WARNING!!!*

## **ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION POLICY**

All work submitted for this class should be original work made specifically for this class. If you are found to be submitting work you have made for another class you will receive zero credit for that particular assignment.

I will grade the first project file that is submitted. Check and double-check the work you are submitting. Do not submit the wrong file, an incomplete file, a corrupted file, etc. Submit the correct project file by each deadline. Most work will be submitted through D2L Dropbox. Do not leave this until the last second—upload several hours before the deadline to be safe! *Again, no late work is accepted!*

## **EXCUSES (i.e. LACK OF PROFESSIONALISM)**

My classes are designed to teach professional conduct and particular skill-sets. Time management skills are essential for all endeavors. The wonders of modern technology make it easy and simple to stay organized, on time and on task. Please remember, an excuse is just that—*an excuse*. Here are just a few examples of excuses for not meeting class obligations that I won't accept (and please do not add to this list):

- a. I have a life...
- b. I forgot...
- c. I didn't realize...
- d. I mixed up the dates...
- e. I don't "do" books...
- f. My alarm didn't go off...
- g. I was busy working on other projects...
- h. My job called me in so I had to work and couldn't do my assignment...
- i. I would have made the deadline if the deadline wasn't when it was...
- j. It's just easier to do it my way, so I did it my way...
- k. Other classes don't have me do it this way, so I did it their way...
- l. I was not aware of class policy...
- m. I was taking care of a sick friend so I couldn't...
- n. I didn't read the e-mail you sent out, so I didn't know...
- o. I scheduled dental surgery during the test/presentation so I can't...
- p. The Cage checked me out bad equipment, so I couldn't...
- q. My hard-drive crashed and I didn't back up my work...
- r. The internet was slow when I tried to turn in my project...
- s. I accidentally submitted the wrong project file, but it was on time...
- t. I didn't do the assignment as you asked, but don't worry, I got it all worked on in my head...
- u. I have to go on vacation...
- v. I was at a bar and...
- w. The weather...(when DePaul isn't cancelled due to weather)
- x. I didn't look on the syllabus...

## DC 342/470: COURSE SCHEDULE

All assigned readings are to be completed by the following class. All assignments have strict **DUE** deadlines noted in the schedule.

WEEK/DATE	AGENDA	READINGS	NOTES
<b>WEEK ONE</b> WEDNESDAY 04/01	<u>LECTURE &amp; SCREENINGS</u> Syllabus/ Intro to The Art of Editing	<u>FILM EDITING</u> 1-86  <u>SYLLABUS</u> You Must Know and Understand The Course and Its Policies  <u>D2L</u> WEEK 01_Readings	<i>BUY Your Books!!!</i>  <i>UPLOAD your picture to D2L for Extra Credit (by 4/06)</i>
<b>WEEK TWO</b> WEDNESDAY 04/08	<u>LECTURE &amp; SCREENINGS</u> Screen Space: Guiding the Eye	<u>FILM EDITING</u> 87-176  <u>CUTTING RHYTHMS</u> 1-22, 153-212	
<b>WEEK THREE</b> WEDNESDAY 04/15	<u>LECTURE &amp; SCREENINGS</u> Screen Space: The Portrayal of Power	<u>CUTTING RHYTHMS</u> 23-80  <u>D2L</u> WEEK 03_Readings	
<b>WEEK FOUR</b> WEDNESDAY 04/22	<u>LECTURE &amp; SCREENINGS</u> Constructing Time: Pace, Rhythm & Visual Collision	<u>CUTTING RHYTHMS</u> 83-152	<i>Presentation Films Assigned &amp; Presentation Rubric Distributed</i>
<b>WEEK FIVE</b> WEDNESDAY 04/29	<u>LECTURE &amp; SCREENINGS</u> Sound Design: Sonic Portrayal & Subtext		
<b>WEEK SIX</b> WEDNESDAY 05/06	<u>LECTURE &amp; SCREENINGS</u> Production Design: Mise-en-scène & Dissecting The Message	<u>D2L</u> WEEK 06_Readings	
<b>WEEK SEVEN</b> WEDNESDAY 05/13	<u>READING EXAM</u> Test Covering All Readings		<b>EXAM:</b> Reading Exam
<b>WEEK EIGHT</b> WEDNESDAY 05/20	<u>PRESENTATIONS</u> Film Scene Presentation		<b>DUE:</b> Week Eight Presentations
<b>WEEK NINE</b> WEDNESDAY 05/27	<u>PRESENTATIONS</u> Film Scene Presentations		<b>DUE:</b> Week Nine Presentations
<b>WEEK TEN</b> WEDNESDAY 06/03	<u>GRADUATE PRESENTATIONS</u> Film Scene Presentations		<b>DUE:</b> Graduate Scene Presentations and Analysis Papers
<b>FINAL EXAM PERIOD***</b> WEDNESDAY 06/10 5:45-9:00pm	<u>FINAL EXAM</u> Test Covering Lectures, Readings, Handouts & Screenings		<b>EXAM:</b> Final Exam

### Note On Requirements (and the Syllabus in General)

This syllabus is subject to change as necessary during the quarter. If a change occurs, it will be thoroughly addressed during class and posted on D2L. AS A MEMBER OF THIS CLASS, YOU ARE REQUIRED TO KNOW AND FOLLOW THE GUIDELINES SET FORTH ON THE TOTALITY OF THIS SYLLABUS. These guidelines are established to ensure all students know what is expected of them, and so all students are treated equally by being held to the same standards.

### 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: <http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/PoliciesandProcedures.aspx>

### 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](mailto:csd@depaul.edu).

Lewis Center 1420, 25 East Jackson Blvd.

Phone number: (312)362-8002

Fax: (312)362-6544

TTY: (773)325.7296

## Course Policies as Suggested by the Dean of Students Office

**Attendance:** 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 Attendance & Participation drops one-third (50pts) 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.

**Attitude:** A professional and academic attitude is expected throughout this course. Measurable examples of non-academic or unprofessional attitude include but are not limited to: talking to others when the instructor is speaking, mocking another's opinion, cell phones ringing, emailing, texting or using the internet whether on a phone or computer. If any issues arise a student may be asked to leave the classroom. The professor will work with the Dean of Students Office to navigate such student issues.

**Civil Discourse:** DePaul University is a community that thrives on open discourse that challenges students, both intellectually and personally, to be [Socially Responsible Leaders](#). It is the expectation that all dialogue in this course is civil and respectful of the dignity of each student. Any instances of disrespect or hostility can jeopardize a student's ability to be successful in the course. The professor will partner with the Dean of Students Office to assist in managing such issues.

**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.