

# Foundations of Cinema Syllabus

Winter 2016

Monday and Wednesday

10:10 - 11:40 am

CDM 708

Instructor: Andrew Stasiulis

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Office: CDM 408

## Summary

This course will examine the craft, technology, and aesthetic principles of media production. Drawing on a wide array of historical examples, the course will look at the many expressive strategies potentially usable in the creation of moving image art forms: the importance of story and controlling ideas, storytelling with images, the basics of composition and editing, and an examination of narrative, documentary, and experimental approaches. In addition to analyzing the works of others, students will also produce their own projects thus, putting theory into practice. The following topics will be covered: the importance of story and expressing ideas; storytelling with images and sound; the basics of image composition and editing; narrative, documentary, and experimental approaches and their intersections. Please Note: This course is not a production course. Rather, it is an exploration of the aesthetics of cinema. For students who want to get an introduction to digital cinema production, the course to take is DC 210 Digital Cinema Production I.

## Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course students will:

- \* Analyze how cinematic techniques function to convey a story or theme
- \* Synthesize cinematic techniques in the production of their own creative work
- \* Identify how techniques function in multiple genres and forms
- \* Create a project from concept to exhibition
- \* Utilize basic film language

## Texts

Film Art: An Introduction 10<sup>th</sup> Edition  
Authors: David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson

Various Supplemental Readings Posted Online

### Assignments & Grading

Silent Short Project = 10%

Composition Project = 10%

Scene Analysis 1 = 20%

Scene Analysis 2 = 20%

Final Short Film = 20%

Attendance & Participation = 20%

### Foundations of Cinema Week by Week Autumn Quarter 2015

Week 1:

January 4<sup>th</sup>

Introduction of Course. Overview of Syllabus and Expectations.

What is Cinema?

The Lumiere Brothers vs. Melies.

Week 2:

January 11<sup>th</sup>

Silent Short Project.

Week 3:

January 18<sup>th</sup>

Cinematography: The Shot

Sound: Possibilities and Problems

Screen and Discuss Silent Shorts

Week 4:

January 25<sup>th</sup>

Editing: Ordering the Image in Time. Two Approaches: D.W. Griffith and Sergei Eisenstein

Mise-en-Scene: The Plastics of the Image

Week 5:  
February 1st  
Citizen Kane

Week 6:  
February 8th  
Scene Analysis 1 Due  
Storytelling: The Classical Hollywood Approach

Week 7:  
February 15th  
Storytelling: Challenging Classical Cinema.  
Neo-Realism and the New Wave.  
Independent Cinema?

Week 8:  
February 22nd  
Screen and Discuss Photomontage Projects

Week 9:  
February 29th  
Screen and Discuss New Wave Film

Week 10:  
March 7th  
The Rise and Fall (and Rise) of the Blockbuster  
High Concept Cinema.  
Big Pictures. Big Business.  
What is Cinema?  
Scene Analysis 2 Due

### Attendance

Attendance and participation is mandatory. An absence, which is defined as not showing up to class or arriving more than 10 minutes late to class, constitutes a reduction in your overall grade.

### D2L

You will be using D2L extensively in this course. To log on, go to:

HYPERLINK "https://login.depaul.edu/cas/login?service=https://d2l.depaul.edu/d2l/orgtools/CAS/Default.aspx" <https://login.depaul.edu/cas/login?service=https://d2l.depaul.edu/d2l/orgtools/CAS/Default.aspx> and enter using your campus connect logon and password. Once you are logged on, click on the course number link and you

will find links to the syllabus, course outline, video lectures, discussion forums, weekly assignments, etc.

### 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

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### Online Course Evaluations

Instructor and course evaluations provide valuable feedback that can improve teaching and learning. The greater the level of participation, the more useful the results. As students, you are in the unique position to view the instructor over time. Your comments about what works and what doesn't can help faculty build on the elements of the course that are strong and improve those that are weak. Isolated comments from students and instructors' peers may also be helpful, but evaluation results based on high response rates may be statistically reliable (believable). As you experience this course and material, think about how your learning is impacted. Your honest opinions about your experience in and commitment to the course and your learning may help improve some components of the course for the next group of students. Positive comments also show the department chairs and college deans the commitment of instructors to the university and teaching evaluation results are one component used in annual performance reviews (including salary raises and promotion/tenure). The evaluation of the instructor and course provides you an opportunity to make your voice heard on an important issue – the quality of teaching at DePaul.

### Changes to the 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.

### Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

This course will be subject to the academic integrity policy passed by faculty. More information can be found at <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/>. The university and

school policy on plagiarism can be summarized as follows: Students in this course 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 any 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.

### Withdrawal

Students who withdraw from the course do so by using the Campus Connection system (<http://campusconnect.depaul.edu> . Withdrawals processed via this system are effective the day on which they are made. Simply ceasing to attend, or notifying the instructor, or nonpayment of tuition, does not constitute an official withdrawal from class and will result in academic as well as financial penalty.

### Retroactive Withdrawal

This policy exists to assist students for whom extenuating circumstances prevented them from meeting the withdrawal deadline. During their college career students may be allowed one medical/personal administrative withdrawal and one college office administrative withdrawal, each for one or more courses in a single term. Repeated requests will not be considered. Submitting an appeal for retroactive withdrawal does not guarantee approval.

### Excused Absence

In order to petition for an excused absence, students who miss class due to illness or significant personal circumstances should complete the Absence Notification process through the Dean of Students office. The form can be accessed at <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/dos/forms.html>.

Students must submit supporting documentation alongside the form. The professor reserves the sole right whether to offer an excused absence and/or academic accommodations for an excused absence.

### Incomplete

An incomplete grade is a special, temporary grade that may be assigned by an instructor when unforeseeable circumstances prevent a student from completing course requirements by the end of the term and when otherwise the student had a record of satisfactory progress in the course. CDM policy requires the student to initiate the request for incomplete grade before the end of the term in which the course is taken. Prior to submitting the incomplete request, the student must discuss the circumstances with the instructor. Students may initiate the incomplete request process in [MyCDM](#).

- All incomplete requests must be approved by the instructor of the course and a CDM Associate Dean. Only exceptions cases will receive such approval.
- If approved, students are required to complete all remaining course requirement independently in consultation with the instructor by the deadline indicated on the incomplete request form.

- By default, an incomplete grade will automatically change to a grade of F after two quarters have elapsed (excluding summer) unless another grade is recorded by the instructor.
- An incomplete grade does NOT grant the student permission to attend the same course in a future quarter.

### 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:

Student Center, LPC, Suite #370

Phone number: (773)325.1677

Fax: (773)325.3720

TTY: (773)325.7296