

## **DC110-407 FOUNDATIONS OF CINEMA FOR MAJORS**

Autumn Quarter 2016

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 11:50AM-1:10PM

14 E. Jackson Rm. 214

Instructor: Eric Marsh

Office Hours: CDM Center, Rm. 522, Mondays 12:00PM - 5:00PM or by appointment

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**Course Description** - This course deals with visualization and cinema literacy skills. Drawing heavily on a wide array of historical examples, the course will examine the many expressive strategies potentially usable in the creation of moving image art forms: image construction and manipulation, editing, composition, sound, narrative, and performance. An emphasis will be placed on story and storytelling. In addition to analyzing the works of others, students will also produce their own projects - putting theory into practice. Please Note: This course teaches concepts rather than technology. Filmmakers will take the concepts learned in DC 110 to better communicate their ideas in Digital Cinema Production I (DC 210) and beyond.

**Course Objectives** - The course is designed as a practical look at cinematic form for filmmakers. By the end of the course students should understand cinematic language and be able to incorporate structure, the framed image, sound, and editing into their own creative work.

The following topics will be covered:

- Analyze how cinematic techniques function to tell a story or convey a 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 production language

**Required Text** - *Film Art: An Introduction (11th Edition)* by David Bordwell & Kristin Thompson. Supplemental readings will be provided and shared on D2L.

### **Required Software/Hardware -**

- Still and Video Camera, Audio Recording Equipment (available for check-out from CDM Equipment Center):
- Editing Software: CDM Computer Labs are available for software use outside of class
  - CDM labs offer Adobe Creative Cloud on PC and Mac operating systems.
  - Supplemental instruction at LYNDAL.COM may be helpful. It is available at the library and by (free) subscription. Make sure you're logged into Campus Connect before clicking on the Log into Lynda.com link on the page.

Information on rooms, production equipment, rules & guidelines, etc:

<http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/Production-Resources.aspx>

## **Basis for Evaluation**

Responses (4) .....	20%
Projects (4) .....	60%
Attendance & Participation .....	20%
TOTAL .....	100%

A = 100 – 94, A- = 93 – 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.

## **CLASS SCHEDULE & COURSE OUTLINE**

\*Readings should be completed by the date they are listed on the class schedule

<b>WEEK 1</b>	TH	9/8	Introduction & Syllabus Discussion: What is Cinema? Assign: Intro Response
<b>WEEK 2</b>	TU	9/13	Early Cinema: Basic Concepts (Lumiere/Melies) In-class: Silent Short Projects
	TH	9/15	Filmmaking Process: Modes & Terminology Read: B&T, Ch. 1, "Film as Art" Screen: Silent Short Projects
<b>WEEK 3</b>	TU	9/20	Film Form Read: Durgnat, "The Mongrel Muse" (D2L) Read: B&T, Ch. 2, "The Significance of Film Form"
	TH	9/22	Narrative: Plot, Story, Character Read: B&T, Ch. 3, "Narrative Form" Assign: Narrative structure response
<b>WEEK 4</b>	TU	9/27	Mise-en-scene Read: B&T, Ch. 4, "The Shot: Mise-en-Scene"
	TH	9/29	Screening: <i>Repo Man</i> (Alex Cox, 1984) Assign: Mise-en-Scene response
<b>WEEK 5</b>	TU	10/4	Cinematography Read: B&T, Ch. 5, "The Shot: Cinematography" Due: Mise-en-scene response
	TH	10/6	Discussion: The Image & Meaning Read: Brown, "Visual Language" (excerpt) Assign: Photomontage & City Symphony projects

<b>WEEK 6</b>	TU	10/11	Editing Read: B&T, Ch. 6, "Relation of Shot to Shot: Editing"
	TH	10/13	Sound Read: B&T, Ch. 7, "Sound in the Cinema" Due: Photomontage Projects
<b>WEEK 7</b>	TU	10/18	Style as a Formal System Screening: <i>Citizen Kane</i> (Orson Welles, 1941) Read: B&T, Ch. 8, "Summary: Style and Film Form"
	TH	10/20	<i>Citizen Kane</i> (cont.) Assign: Scene analysis Due: City Symphony Projects
<b>WEEK 8</b>	TU	10/25	Screen & Critique: Projects Assign: Final Projects
	TH	10/27	Film Genres & Other Ways of Understanding Screening: <i>Halloween</i> (John Carpenter, 1978)
<b>WEEK 9</b>	TU	11/1	Discussion: Types of Films Read: B&T, Ch. 9, "Film Genres"
	TH	11/3	Due: Final Project Concept & Pitches
<b>WEEK 10</b>	TU	11/8	Challenging Classical Cinema Screening: <i>Computer Chess</i> (Andrew Bujalski, 2013)
	TH	11/10	Challenging Classical Cinema Discussion: Breaking the Rules Due: Final Project Script & Pre-production
<b>WEEK 11</b>	TU	11/15	Documentary & Experimental Read: B&T, Ch. 10, "Documentary & Experimental Films"
<b>FINAL</b>	TU	11/22	FINAL PROJECT SCREENINGS (11:30AM) Discussion: What is Cinema? Part II

**Content & Schedule Changes** – The syllabus is subject to change depending on class progress, time constraints, or material availability. This goes for the screenings as well. The overall workload, however, will not change. Make sure you pace yourself accordingly. You will be notified of any changes in the syllabus in a timely fashion.

### **Assignment Breakdown & Due Dates**

Specific parameters for the assignments and due dates will be given in class and posted to D2L.

## RESPONSES

Intro response (5pts). Due 9/13.

Narrative structure response (5pts). Due 9/27.

Mise-en-scene response (5pts). Due 10/4.

Scene analysis (5pts). Due 10/20.

## PROJECTS

Silent Short Projects (5pts). Due 9/13 (will be completed in-class).

Photomontage Project (15pts). Due 10/13.

City Symphony Project (15pts). Due 10/20.

Final Short Film Project (25pts). Due 11/22.

1- Concepts/pitches. Due 11/3.

2- Pre-Production (script, storyboards, etc). Due 11/10.

3- Completed short film. Due 11/22.

**Grading** - Grades and/or written feedback will be given for each assignment. In order to be accepted for grading, assignments must be turned in on time (all deadlines are on the syllabus and on D2L). Late work will receive zero points for grading. An assignment worth 10 points (10%) is equal to one full letter grade. Failure to turn in even one assignment has a significant impact on your grade.

**Course Policies** - In addition to the DePaul University course policies (see student handbook), the following policies apply to this course:

**Attendance** - Each class consists of lecture, screenings, and discussion. Class time is most productive when everyone arrives promptly and comes prepared to discuss that week's reading and film screening. Clips and short films shown in class may not be available outside of class, and you are responsible for all of the class material. Therefore it is important for you to attend the class sessions and screenings regularly. Absences will result in a major reduction of the participation grade.

**Deadlines** - Media production requires strict adherence to deadlines, therefore late assignments will not be accepted for grading and written feedback will be given at the instructor's discretion. You will not be eligible for an 'A' in the class unless you turn in all assignments on time.

**Illness** - If you are sick, please contact me by email prior to missing a class due to illness and continue to keep me posted until you return. As long as I am aware of your situation and you take an active role in catching up, absences may be excused and extensions may be granted. Every situation will be handled according to individual circumstance at the instructor's discretion. Absolutely no consideration will be given for those who request special treatment without advanced notice, even with a doctor's note.

**In-Class Screenings** - The screened films are required "texts" for the course, and as such, are not to be missed. If you miss a screening, you are responsible for seeking out the film on your own. Students should come to class prepared to discuss the screened films.

**D2L & COLTUBE** - The course materials for this course, such as syllabus, announcements, course documents, and assignments will be available to you through D2L site at <https://d2l.depaul.edu/>. Please make sure you have access to D2L. Films screened in class will be made available to stream afterwards on <http://coltube.cdm.depaul.edu/> as a resource for your writing.

**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(<http://offices.depaul.edu/student-affairs/student-life/leadership-opportunities/Pages/socially-responsible-leadership.aspx>). 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.

**Computer/Smart Phone Use** - This course involves a mixture of lecture, discussion, as well as screenings and as such, it requires your full attention (we watch movies with our eyes, ears, and minds!). There will be no phones or computers allowed during class. Exceptions will be made on an individual basis. If you bring a phone to class it *must* be on silent mode or turned off. 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.

**Grading** - Grades and/or written feedback will be given for each assignment. In order to be accepted for grading, assignments must be turned in on time. *Late work will receive zero points for grading.* An assignment worth 10 points (10%) is equal to one full letter grade. Failure to turn in even one assignment has a significant impact on your grade.

**Reading Assignments** - Reading assignments are *mandatory* and will be assigned weekly. The textbook readings supplement and inform the lectures and discussions and will be crucial in a broad understanding of cinema. Lectures may introduce additional material not available in the readings, and the readings may explore concepts not mentioned in class. *Supplemental readings will also be assigned & discussed in-class.* They will be available on D2L.

**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](http://cdm.depaul.edu/enrollment)

**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** - Plagiarism is dishonest behavior and therefore violates collegiality as well as University policy. Any cases of plagiarism will automatically receive a zero and be reported to departmental and University officials for disciplinary action. You should familiarize yourself with behavior that constitutes plagiarism by reviewing the University's policy regarding academic dishonesty at: <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/Resources/Students/index.html>

**Special Needs** - 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).

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