



DePaul University

College of Computing & Digital Media

School of Cinematic Arts

DC 490 – 801

DIRECTING

Instructor:	Alireza Khatami	Quarter:	Winter 2017
Office Hour:	TUE from 16:00 to 17:30	Section:	801
Office Location:	CDM 406	Class#:	22603
Email:	akhatami@depaul.edu	Class Time:	TUE from 17:45 to 21:00
Phone:	(312) 3626 723	Class Location:	14EAS 00507 Loop Campus

Course Description

This is a course in directing actors in motion pictures. Topics include casting, rehearsals, the basic relationship between the director, actor, and script, script breakdown, camera placement, and shooting for continuity editing. Each student will produce and direct a scene study and a short narrative scene.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course students will:

- Learn how to do a scene analysis and beat breakdown;
- Identify the spine, objective, obstacle and subtext of a scene;
- Understand the importance of casting as ‘the first direction’;
- Communicate effectively with actors;
- Prepare for and carry out rehearsals;
- Understand the relationship between camera and performance.

Prerequisites

DC 461

Texts

- DIRECTING ACTORS: Creating memorable Performances for Film and Television by Judith Weston. **The class will use this as the major reference.**
- THE FILM DIRECTOR'S INTUITION: Script Analysis and Rehearsal. SANFORD MEISNER ON ACTING by Sanford Meisner
- ON FILM DIRECTING by David Mamet.
- MOVIE MAKING by Sidney Lumet KAZAN ON DIRECTING by Elisa Kazan.

- DESIRE2LEARN (D2L): Some additional readings and web links will be posted on D2L.

Assignment and Grading Opportunities

- **Active Participation: 20% (Individual)**
Students learn more when they participate in the process of learning, whether it's through discussion, practice, review, or application. Be an active listener, ask relevant question, engage in the class discussion and volunteer to help your classmates' project outside the class.
- **Monologue Performance: 10 % (Individual)**
Perform a 2-minutes monologue from a contemporary play and film it in a one M.L.S static shot.
- **Directing Scene I: 10 % (Individual)**
Direct the assigned scene and film it in a L.S., static camera. Submit the movie and script analysis.
- **Directing Scene II: 10 % (Individual)**
Direct the assigned scene and film it through multiple camera set-ups and edit the footage. All the camera positions must be static. You can use pan and tilt. Submit the movie and script analysis.
- **Directing Scene III: 15 % (Individual)**
Direct the assigned scene and film it in one long take using handheld camera. Submit the movie and script analysis.
- **Final Scene Pre-Production: 20% (Individual)**
Submit your character descriptions, sides, casting call and casting video of your best 4 auditions.
- **Final Scene Performance: 20% (Individual)**
Direct the assigned narrative scene, shoot and edit. You must have a clear audible sound. The instructor must approve the choice of the scene.

Course Schedule

- **Week 1**
 - Review: Syllabus & Assignments
 - Lecture: Character Creation
Result Directing
- **Week 2**
 - Lecture: Directing Techniques I: To Be or to Do?
Script Analysis & Re-writing process
 - **Assignment Due: Monologue Performance**
 - Critique & Peer Review
- **Week 3**
 - Lecture: Directing Techniques II
 - Workshop: Scene I Analysis
 - Screening: Capote
- **Week 4**

- Lecture: Directing Techniques III
- Assignment Due: Directing Scene I
- Critique & Peer Review
- **Week 5**
 - Lecture: Casting + Decision Making
 - Screening: Ida + Songs from Second Floor
- **Week 6**
 - Lecture: Rehearsals I + Locations
 - Assignment Due: Directing Scene II
 - Critique & Peer Review
- **Week 7**
 - Lecture: Rehearsal II + Props & Costume
 - Workshop
- **Week 8**
 - Lecture: Performance and Collaboration
 - Assignment Due: Directing Scene III
 - Critique & Peer Review
- **Week 9**
 - Lecture: Working with None-Actors
 - Guest Speaker
 - Screening: Ten
 - Assignment Due: Final Scene Pre-Production
- **Week 10**
 - Assignment Due: Final Scene
 - Critique & Peer Review

Grading Policy

- Professional filmmakers must adhere to strict deadlines. Therefore students are expected to turn in all assignments by the established deadlines. **LATE WORK WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**
- Technological failure is not an excuse. Back up your work and do not leave your work until the last second! This is your warning ☺
- A = 100-95, A- = 91-94, B+ = 88-90, B = 85-87, B- = 81-84, C+ = 77-80, C = 73-76, C- = 69-72, D+ = 65-68, D = 61-64, F = 0-60. "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.

Project File Labeling Policy

- Label all files as such (ex. Student is John Ford. He is submitting the "Directing" PROJECT): Ford_Directing
- Projects NOT labeled properly or submitted in any other format will be automatically rejected and a grade of zero will be automatically awarded. This is your warning!

Accepted Formats

- All motion pictures should be submitted in **QuickTime format with H.264 codec.**
- Text files must be submitted in PDF only.

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 be awarded zero credit for that particular assignment.
- The first project file that is submitted will be graded. 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 submission until the last second—upload several hours before the deadline to be safe! Again, no late work is accepted! It is your responsibility to always double-check that your file has been successfully uploaded to D2L.

Attendance Policy

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. You are expected to be on time, and if you plan on missing or being late to a class are expected to e-mail 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. If you want to question a recorded absence or tardiness, it must be done within a week of the recorded occurrence.

Computer/Cellphone/i-Pad Electronic Device Policy

If you are using any personal or school electronic equipment during class, **you will be asked to leave and will be counted as absent for that class.**

Required Supplies

Memory drives [Min. 4 GB].

Production Resources

- A great place to obtain ROYALTY FREE MUSIC for student work is at FreePlayMusic.com. Simply put your selected music in the shopping cart and select STUDENT or YOUTUBE project and it's FREE!
- A great actor resource is through DePaul's ACTOR DATABASE. [http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current Students/Pages/Production-Resources.aspx](http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/Production-Resources.aspx)- under CASTING & CREW.
- Breakdown Express - This is an interactive on-line casting tool that enables you to send out a casting notice to regional Chicagoland actors and set up/manage audition appointments on-line. See the production office staff for help setting this up.
- DePaul has negotiated a great rate with ADOBE CREATIVE CLOUD, a tremendous production resource. Find out more information here: <http://offices.depaul.edu/is/services/Software/Pages/Software-for-Personal-Computers.aspx>

Suggested online Resources

- **CineFix**: A useful, entertaining and inspiring YouTube channel for video essays, interviews. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCVtL1edhT8qqY-j2IIndMzg>
- **Every Frame I am painting**: Tony Zhou's video essays on variety of aspects of art of filmmaking. <https://www.youtube.com/user/everyframeapainting>

- **Must See Films:** A stimulating collection of video essays that helps you see films differently. <https://vimeo.com/user15233185>
- **Fandor:** Another informing source for video essays. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCkeB0lrsqk0Eylwg-hHs7MA>
- **Raccord:** In-depth analysis on master directors. <https://vimeo.com/raccordcollective>
- **Lynda:** A useful collection of video tutorials specially for learning various software programs. All DePaul students have free access to Lynda. <https://www.lynda.com/>
 - It is highly recommended that you watch the essential training on Adobe Pr CC. This course requires you to use non-linear editing programs. <https://www.lynda.com/Premiere-Pro-tutorials/Premiere-Pro-CC-Essential-Training-2015/371692-2.html>

Safety during Production

- Any taped or filmed footage, which reveals an action, or stunt that puts actors and/or crew and bystanders in physical danger will result in the student's automatic failure of the assignment. The instructor will determine those actions that are defined as unsafe.
- **THE USE OF GUNS AND WEAPONS IS FORBIDDEN** in this class and results in the student's automatic failure of the assignment. Any realistic depiction of a gun, whether or not the gun is real or a replica, whether the gun can fire real bullets, blanks, is disabled, or even if it is a toy, is forbidden for any production related to this course.
- Using moving vehicles of any kind involving actors or stunt in any shot is not allowed and will result in the student's automatic failure of Assignments.

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 **DC 490 Directing** in the subject 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

General Note

- Please note that this course requires you to view films outside of class time.
- Readings should be prepared for the day on which they are listed on the course schedule.
- Please bring the reading(s) to class. Read with a pencil or pen: annotate your text: indicate points that seem important, cross-reference examples from screenings, and pose questions. Come to class ready to discuss and ask questions. This will be a discussion-oriented course; your questions and ideas matter, so please bring them with you to class.
- Readings may be occasionally changed or swapped to accommodate speaker visits or course flow. Should you miss class, it is your responsibility to find out from a colleague whether any changes were made to the syllabus that day.
- Students are expected to be able to use Power Point or similar presentation software to deliver their presentations.

Film & Video Content Warning

In this course you are expected to watch selections of movies, fiction and non-fiction that deals with diverse and challenging social, political and cultural issues.

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. **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 here: [http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current Students/Pages/PoliciesandProcedures.aspx](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.
- 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 after any absence (50pts). 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.

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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.