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# DC 481/381

## Distribution And Exhibition

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(Winter 2018)

CDM Center 708 (Loop)  
(Weds 5:45 PM – 9:00 PM)

Assistant Professor: Tim Peternel  
E-Mail: [tpeterne@cdm.depaul.edu](mailto:tpeterne@cdm.depaul.edu)  
Phone: 312-362-6479  
Office: CDM 514  
Office Hours: Thurs: 12:45 pm-3.

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### Course Description

Conventional and emerging modes of motion picture distribution with special emphasis on digital streaming and exhibition.

### Course Goals

The purpose of this class is to introduce the student to how film distribution and exhibition operates, focusing on the following objectives for the quarter:

1. Students will be able to analyze the various revenue streams a film generates through its distribution windows cycle.
2. Students will develop a solid understanding of the film exhibition business.
3. Students will become familiar with the key deal points of film distribution and sales agreements.
4. Students will study new release platforms and revenue sources in the digital online world and other key ancillary markets.

### Course Overview

This class will consist of a hybrid of lectures, individual and group assignments, and guest speakers. As the quarter proceeds each class will begin with a discussion of the weekend box office results and any current industry news and events. Each week the class will have a power point lecture covering the topics off the syllabus and readings. There will be guest speakers either on Skype or in-class to discuss the industry and their particular area of expertise. The guest speakers are TBD subject to their schedule and availability.

## Class Schedule

**Note: This schedule is subject to change. Please review weekly D2L Updates.**

### **Week 1 - January 3rd**

Introduction to course and each other. Review syllabus and class requirements.

Lecture: Film Financing and Pre Sales (time permitting)

Reading: *The Movie Business Book Chapter 1 & 36, Class Handouts*

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### **Week 2 - January 10<sup>th</sup>**

Lecture: Film Festivals & Markets

Reading: *The Movie Business Book Chapter 24, Class Handouts.*

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### **Week 3 - January 17<sup>th</sup>**

Lecture: The Distribution Deal

Reading: *The Movie Business Book Chapters 25&26, Class Handouts*

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### **Week 4 - January 24<sup>th</sup>**

Lecture: Revenue Streams

Reading: *The Movie Business Book Chapter 27& 28, Class Handouts*

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### **Week 5 – January 31<sup>st</sup>**

Midterms

Lecture: Studio & Independent Distribution

Reading: *The Movie Business Book Chapters 29& 30, Class Handouts.*

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### **Week 6 - February 7<sup>th</sup>**

Weekend Box Office Report

Lecture: Theatrical Exhibition

Reading: *The Movie Business Book Chapters 22&23, Class Handouts.*

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## **Week 7- February 14<sup>th</sup>**

Weekend Box Office Report

Lecture: P&A (Film Marketing)

*Reading: The Movie Business Book Chapter 31, Class Handouts.*

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## **Week 8- February 21<sup>st</sup>**

Weekend Box Office Report

Lecture: Home Entertainment Platforms

*Reading: The Movie Business Book Chapter 32,33,34, Class Handouts.*

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## **Week 9 - February 28<sup>th</sup>**

Weekend Box Office Report

Lecture: DIY

*Reading: The Movie Business Book Chapter 35, 37, Class Handouts.*

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## **Week 10 - March 7<sup>th</sup>**

Weekend Box Office Report

Lecture: Consumer Products & China

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## **Week 11 - March 14<sup>th</sup>**

## **FINALS TEST**

## Evaluation

Midterm Quiz	20%
Finals Test	30%
Sundance Film Festival Tracking Paper	15%
Berlin Market Tracking Paper	15%
Trades Discussion	5%
Weekly Box Office Estimates	5%
Class Participation & Class Assignments	10%

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 indicates unsatisfactory work, and F is a failure to demonstrate an understanding of course concepts.

## Textbooks

### **Required Text / Kindle Digital Edition**

The Movie Business Book 4<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Jason E. Squire

### **Recommended Text / Kindle Digital Edition**

The Business of Media Distribution 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Jeffrey C. Ulin

Clearance & Copyright 4<sup>th</sup> Edition Michael C. Donaldson

## Required Websites

The Numbers

Box Office Mojo

Deadline Hollywood

Hollywood Reporter

## Course Management:

This course is housed and managed on **D2L**, where both the online and in--class sections are linked together. There, you will find each week's recorded lecture (available shortly after the in--class section meets), required reading material, checklists, a calendar, and all of your assignments. Also posted on D2L will be a weekly discussion forum for questions and thoughts concerning the films, the lectures, and assignments. The films screened in class, as well as those which require individual viewing, are available on **ColTube** – an online DePaul video player available for Mac and PC.

<http://coltube.cdm.depaul.edu/ColTube/Home/>

## Course Policies

**Attendance:** Classroom attendance is MANDATORY. More than one "excused" absence (doctor's note, Bears game, etc) will result in a lowering of grade per each absence.

**Deadlines:** Strict Adherence to deadlines is expected. Materials presented or posted late will result in a negative grade for the particular assignment.

**Other:** Screenings, script readings, and handouts as assigned by the instructor TBD per class.

### **School policies:**

### **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**

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. Don't miss this opportunity to provide feedback!

**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.

College office appeals for CDM students must be submitted online via MyCDM.  
The deadlines for submitting appeals are as follows:

Winter Quarter: Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent spring quarter  
Spring Quarter: Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent autumn quarter  
Summer Terms: Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent autumn quarter

**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)325.729

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.

# Trades Distribution Discussion Assignment

## Evaluation:

This assignment is worth 5% of your final grade.

## Assignment Description

Each week the Professor will email 2-3 students to choose a news article from the trades (Deadline Hollywood, Hollywood Reporter, Box Office Mojo, Numbers, etc.) about breaking industry news relating to film distribution or the entertainment industry. What new projects are being bought/sold? What films are being set up at studios? What films are smashing the box office or tanking big time?

The students will then give a 5-minute presentation approximately at the beginning of class and open it up to discussion with the rest of the students and Professor.

Note: Please email the Professor the night before class a link to the story, and a short paragraph as well why you have chosen it for class discussion.

# Weekly Box Office Estimates

## Evaluation:

This assignment is worth 5% of your final grade.

## Assignment Description

Each week the Professor will choose 2-3 students to make box office predictions for opening weekend films in wide release. The predictions will be based on creating “comps” for three similar films based on genre, stars, budget, release date, film reviews, and any other factors you choose to include to make your estimate.

The students will post their prediction on D2L under the Dropbox section by Friday 5:00 pm of that week, and then discuss the results of their predictions in the following class based on the trades analysis reports and their own opinions.



# Sundance Film Festival Tracking Assignment

## Evaluation:

This assignment is worth 15% of your final grade.

**Due: February 7<sup>th</sup>.**

## Assignment Description

Over the next two weeks follow the various trades and Internet sites covering distribution deals at the Sundance Film Festival. Then afterwards write up a two to three double spaced paper summarizing some of the major deals (3-5 films approx.) that occurred at the festival. The paper should include details about what type of films (genre) were picked up and were they first time directors with unknown stars and great reviews / awards or seasoned directors with stars in the film? Who were the major buyers and how many films did they acquire at the festival? Find out any published details about the terms of the distribution deals such as how much did the film sell for, what territories (domestic, international), and any release information (P&A deals) available. Also include any overall impressions from this year's festival such as who were the award winners and did the buyers and critics feel about the quality films at the festival.

Please post paper on D2L under Dropbox section.

# Berlin Film Festival Tracking Assignment

## Evaluation:

This assignment is worth 15% of your final grade.

**Due: March 7<sup>th</sup>.**

## Assignment Description

Over the next two weeks follow the various trades and Internet sites covering distribution deals at the Berlin Film Festival & Market. Then afterwards write up a two to three double spaced paper summarizing some of the major deals (3-5 films approx.) that occurred at the festival. The paper should include details about what type of films (genre) were picked up and were they first time directors with unknown stars and great reviews / awards or seasoned directors with stars in the film? Who were the major buyers and how many films did they acquire at the festival? Find out any published details about the terms of the distribution deals such as how much did the film sell for, what territories (domestic, international), and any release information (P&A deals) available. Also include any overall impressions from this year's festival and market such as who were the award winners and did the buyers and critics feel about the quality films at the festival and market.

Please post paper on D2L under Dropbox section.

