

FOUNDATIONS OF CINEMA FOR MAJORS

FILM101-404 | DEPAUL UNIVERSITY | AUTUMN QUARTER 2023-24

TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS | 10:10AM - 11:50AM

CDM Center Room 222

Instructor: Eric Marsh | marsh@cdm.depaul.edu

Virtual Office Hours: Fridays, 9AM-2PM, by email appointment only

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. Note: This course teaches concepts rather than technology. Filmmakers will take the concepts learned in FILM101 to better communicate their ideas in Film Production I (FILM110) and beyond.

Learning Outcomes - 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* [12th Edition] by David Bordwell & Kristin Thompson (Note: Earlier editions are also acceptable). Supplemental readings will be made available as PDFs.

Course Management System: D2L - The course materials for this course such as syllabus, announcements, course documents, and assignments will be available to you on [D2L](#)

Basis for Evaluation

RESPONSES 40%
PROJECTS 50%
ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION 10%

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 and Course Outline

WEEK 1	TH	9/7	Introduction. What is Cinema?
WEEK 2A	TU	9/12	Film and Reality
WEEK 2B	TH	9/14	Film as Art: Creativity, Technology, Business
WEEK 3A	TU	9/19	Making the Movie: Film Production 101
WEEK 3B	TH	9/21	Introduction to Film Form
	F	9/22	CLASS FIELD TRIP 2PM: <i>Fremont</i> @ Music Box Theatre
WEEK 4A	TU	9/26	Form and Meaning
WEEK 4B	TH	9/28	The Elements of Mise-en-scene
WEEK 5A	TU	10/3	Mise cont., Intro to Cinematography
WEEK 5B	TH	10/5	Cinematography: Framing
WEEK 6A	TU	10/10	Editing
WEEK 6B	TH	10/12	Sound
WEEK 7A	TU	10/17	Direction
WEEK 7B	TH	10/19	Narrative: Story, Plot, Character
WEEK 8A	TU	10/24	Project Screenings
WEEK 8B	TH	10/26	Final Project Pitches
WEEK 9A	TU	10/31	In-class screening: <i>Halloween</i> (1978)
WEEK 9B	TH	11/2	Film Genres
WEEK 10A	TU	11/7	Non-Fiction
WEEK 10B	TH	11/9	Experimental/Avant-Garde
WEEK 11	TU	11/14	What is Cinema? in the 21st Century

Assignment Breakdown & Due Dates

WRITTEN RESPONSES (40%)

- Response #1 - Introduction (5pts) – due 9/12
- Response #2 - Form & Meaning (5pts) – due 9/26
- Response #3 - Mise-en-scene (5pts) – due 10/3
- Response #4 - Cinematography (5pts) – due 10/10
- Response #5 - Scene Analysis (15pts) – due 10/17

PROJECTS (50%)

- Project #1 - Photo Montage (15pts) – 10/12
- Project #2 - City Symphony (15pts) – 10/24
- Project #3 - Final Project (25pts) – 11/16

Screening List (subject-to-change)

Symbiopsychotaxiplasm: Take One (1968, d. William Greaves)
Sherlock Jr. (1924, d. Buster Keaton)
The Fits (2015, d. Anna Rose Holmer)
All That Heaven Allows (1955, d. Douglas Sirk)
Citizen Kane (1941, d. Orson Welles)
Halloween (1978, d. John Carpenter)
Hale County This Morning, This Evening (2018, d. RaMell Ross)
The Grand Bizarre (2018, d. Jodie Mack)
Hill of Freedom (2014, d. Hong Sang-soo)

Content/Trigger Warnings

Films, lectures, and discussion in this course may engage with potentially sensitive or traumatizing material. I will note especially graphic/intense content and do my best to foster a classroom in which we can relate courageously, compassionately, and contemplatively with difficult and important material each week.

Films hosted on D2L will have triggers identified under the “Description” of each film. If you believe the film may be potentially triggering to you, I will happily search for a replacement film for you to view and write about. Additionally, if you would like specific or personalized triggers identified throughout the course, please let me know.

Weekly Updates

Every week I will post an update (or two) on the D2L homepage detailing the class business for that week: assignments, readings, screenings, etc. If you want to keep up with the course, you *must* follow the updates and make sure you're on track. No excuses.

Content and Schedule Changes

The syllabus is subject to change depending on class progress, time constraints, material availability, etc. 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.

Screenings

Films screened at home are required "texts" for the course, and as such, are *mandatory*. You will be assigned films to watch at home and will use them in your responses and our discussions. All films and relevant clips will be made available to stream on D2L thru Panopto.

Reading Assignments

Reading assignments are *mandatory*. The textbook readings supplement and inform the lectures and discussions and will be crucial in a broad understanding of cinema as well as writing your responses. 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 and made available on D2L as PDFs.

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. Failure to turn in even one assignment has a significant impact on your grade. I will grant extensions if requested but please contact me BEFORE the assignment is due.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory (and 10% of your grade). However, if you do need to miss class for any reason, excused or not, please let me know ahead of time. All I ask is that you

communicate with me and keep an open line of communication. Every situation will be handled according to individual circumstances and the instructor's discretion.

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 **films and reading assignments**. Students must keep up with the readings and films to participate in class discussion.

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.

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, or over, others when the instructor or another student is speaking, mocking classmate's opinions, cell phones ringing, or anything else that could be considered a distraction. If this becomes an issue the professor will work with the Dean of Students Office to navigate any such issues or problems.

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](#)

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. DO NOT: copy any source without proper acknowledgement, paraphrase another's work or ideas without acknowledgement, self-plagiarize, submit someone else's work, or attempt to pass off AI-generated work as your own. You should familiarize yourself with behavior that constitutes plagiarism by reviewing the University's policy regarding academic dishonesty [HERE](#).

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.

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.

COVID-19 Health & Safety Precautions

Faculty and staff should take proper precautions to safeguard their health. It is important for everyone at DePaul to monitor yourself for COVID-19 symptoms, test when you feel sick and stay home to avoid exposing others if you are sick.

[Health & Safety Practices](#)

[Health Monitoring](#)