

FOUNDATIONS OF CINEMA FOR MAJORS

FILM 101-602 | DEPAUL UNIVERSITY | SPRING QUARTER 2024

TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS | 10:10AM – 11:40AM

CDM Center Rm 924

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

Virtual Office Hours: Fridays, 8AM-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	40%
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 and Course Outline

WEEK 1	TU	4/2	Introduction, Syllabus. What is Cinema?
	TH	4/4	Film as Art: Creativity, Technology, Business
WEEK 2	TU	4/9	Making the Movie: The Production Process
	TH	4/11	Introduction to Film Form
WEEK 3	TU	4/16	Form and Meaning
	TH	4/18	Narrative Form: Story, Plot, and Character
WEEK 4	TU	4/23	Elements of Mise-en-scene
	TH	4/25	Camera-Actor-Environment
WEEK 5	TU	4/30	Cinematography
	TH	5/2	Editing
WEEK 6	TU	5/7	Sound & Music
	TH	5/9	Directors, Directing, & Authorship
WEEK 7	TU	5/14	Group Discussion: <i>Citizen Kane</i>
	TH	5/16	Creating the Short Film
WEEK 8	TU	5/21	Project Screenings
	TH	5/23	Final Project Pitches
WEEK 9	TU	5/28	Film Genres
	TH	5/30	Project Workshop
WEEK 10	TU	6/4	Documentary & Experimental
	TH	6/6	What is Cinema? in 21st Century
FINAL	TH	6/13	FINAL PROJECT SCREENINGS (8:30AM – 10:45AM)

Assignment Breakdown & Due Dates

WRITTEN RESPONSES (30%)

Response #1 - Introduction/Reflection (5pts) – due 4/9

Response #2 - Form & Meaning (5pts) – due 4/16

Response #3 - Narrative Breakdown (5pts) - due 4/23

Response #3 - Mise-en-scene Analysis (5pts) – 4/30

Response #4 - Scene Analysis (10pts) – due 5/14

PROJECTS (50%)

Project #1 - Photo Montage (15pts) – 5/7

Project #2 - City Symphony (15pts) – 5/21

Project #3 - Final Project (20pts) – 6/13

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.

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.

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.

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 a film may be potentially triggering to you, I will happily find a replacement film for you to view/write about etc. If you would like specific or personalized triggers identified throughout the course, let me know.

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 do grant extensions based on individual circumstances but only if you request *before* the assignment is due.

Attendance – Attendance is mandatory. 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.

Computer/Phone Use – This course involves a mixture of lecture, discussion, and clips and as such, requires your full attention. There will be no phones or computers allowed during class. Exceptions will be made on an individual basis.

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 or use any source without proper acknowledgement
- Paraphrase another's work or ideas without acknowledgement
- Self-plagiarize (i.e. copy work from another class and submit to this one)
- Submit someone else's work or writing
- Use generative AI, AI-related tools 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](#). Remember: if you use Wikipedia or ANYTHING online, you have to CITE IT. I don't care whether you use MLA or Chicago style citations, but please be consistent. When in doubt, CITE THE SOURCE. I cannot stress this enough. Consequences for plagiarism are severe.

Writing Center – I strongly recommend you make use of the Writing Center throughout your time at DePaul. The Writing Center provides free peer writing tutoring for DePaul students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Writing Center tutors work with writers at all stages of the writing process, from invention to revision, and they are trained to identify recurring issues in your writing as well as address any specific questions or areas that you want to talk about. Visit www.depaul.edu/writing for more information.

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.