

DePaul University
School of Cinema and Interactive Media

DC 222 502/511: Hollywood Film Structures

Th, 1:30-4:45 PM, 14 EAS LL105 & Online

Professor Brad Riddell: briddell@cim.depaul.edu, 312-362-5212

Office Hours: Th, 10AM-1 PM, 5:00-5:30 PM in CDM 506 and by appointment.

Description:

This course provides critical analysis of successful films and their narrative structures from the perspective of the screenwriter. Films of various genres and eras will be examined, as will multiple structural approaches to developing story.

Objectives:

- understand the relationship between character and story structure
- grasp the differences and similarities between story structure systems
- explore the manner in which story structure is influenced by genre
- develop a cinematic language with which to discuss films critically
- discover writing and filmmaking techniques for use in future student work

Outcomes:

A midterm and final, plus three intermediate assignments will assess and develop student learning across these objectives.

Schedule:

- Week 1: Lecture: *What is a movie?* In-class screening: *Lars and the Real Girl*.
- Week 2: Lecture: *Character*. Discuss *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*.
- Week 3: Lecture: *Three Act Structure & Tools*. Discuss *Mean Girls*.
 - **Assignment 1 due online before class.**
- Week 4: Lecture: *The Hero's Journey*. Discuss *The Ring*.
- Week 5: Lecture: *Save the Cat*. Discuss *Thelma and Louise*.
 - **Midterm due online before class.**
- Week 6: Lecture: *Sequence Structure*. Discuss *Star Wars*.
- Week 7: Lecture: *Three in One*. Discuss *Gladiator*.
 - **Assignment 2 due online before class.**
- Week 8: Lecture: *Ensemble & Theme*. Discuss *Do The Right Thing*.
- Week 9: Lecture: *Nonlinear Narrative*. Discuss *Eternal Sunshine*.
 - **Assignment 3 due online before class.**
- Week 10: Lecture: *Course Review*. In-class screening: *Midnight Run*.
- **Final due online at 2:00 PM on 3/21/2013.**

Procedures:

Classes will begin with a lecture. Unless noted above, you are expected to have watched the film being discussed each week *before* class on ColTube or DVD. Required reading will be posted on D2L the week before it is to be discussed.

Grading:

ASSIGNMENTS: There will be three assignments to be completed outside of class, and each is worth 20% of your grade. They are due on D2L before class begins in **weeks 3, 5, and 9**. Each assignment will be posted on D2L after class the week before it is due.

MIDTERM and FINAL: each are worth 20% of your grade. The midterm is due on D2L before class begins **week 5**, and the final on is due on D2L at the conclusion of our allotted final exam time (TBD). Both tests will be posted on D2L one week before they are due.

Late work will not be accepted without an excuse that I determine to be legitimate, and advance notification from you that it will be late.

A = 92	C+ = 78	F = 0	
A- = 90	C = 72		
B+ = 88	C- = 70		
B = 82	D+ = 68		
B- = 80	D = 60		These values are minimums for each grade.

Attendance (for Section 502):

Tardiness and absences are counterproductive to your goal of being a great student and my goal of being a great teacher. Email me ASAP if you will be late or absent. You are allowed one unexcused absence or tardy. Each absence or tardy beyond the first will reduce your final grade by half a letter (A to A-, etc.).

Laptops/Cell Phones:

If your computer and the mind attached to it drift away from class, and I so much as suspect you of online activities not related to the task at hand, you will lose laptop privileges for the entire semester. Phones must be silenced and stowed.

Integrity:

Plagiarism will earn you an immediate F in this course. Work done for this course must adhere to the University Academic Integrity Policy, which you can review in the *Student Handbook* or by visiting <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu>.

Disabilities:

Students who feel that they need accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss their needs as soon as possible.

Alterations:

The professor reserves the right to alter the syllabus at any time. Students will be apprised of any and all changes with clear instructions should they occur.