

**DC 390 Topics in Directing: Directing Actors**  
**Spring Quarter 2013**  
**R 5:45 - 9**  
**CDM 924**

**Instructor:** Shayna Connelly  
**Office:** CDM 408  
**Office Hours:** 10:30 – 12:30 & R 4:30 -5:30

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This is a course in directing 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 film. This course has an additional fee.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

The key to great directing is practice. Topics in Directing challenges students to experiment with a variety of tools to become a more effective communicator. Students will learn about director's preparation, casting, rehearsing and using camera to enhance performance by directing actors in short scenes and shooting a micro-short film. Effective directing can shape how techniques such as cinematography, sound and editing are used within a film, thereby creating a more cohesive director's vision.

Prerequisites: DC 220, DC 310

**LEARNING GOALS:**

By taking 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.

**TEXTBOOKS AND READINGS:**

*Directing Actors* Judith Weston (required)  
*The Visual Story* Bruce Block (recommended)

## CASTING RESOURCES

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.

<http://www.breakdownexpress.com/>

Username: X19062 Password: depaul

The notice will ask you at the BOTTOM of the form where to submit the breakdown. Our affiliation is with the LOS ANGELES Office, not Vancouver, Toronto or New York. Also – clearly state YOUR contact information on the breakdown and in special instructions.

Production Office – 14 East Jackson Blvd., Lower Level 108  
Monday – Friday: Noon – 5:00 pm

<http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/Production-Resources.aspx>

Spring casting session – Friday, April 26<sup>th</sup> from 12 - 3

Screenwriters Forum: <http://dcc.cdm.depaul.edu/Pages/ScreenwriterForum.aspx>

## GRADING

Grades will be given for each assignment. Late work will not be accepted for grading. An assignment worth 10 points (10%) is equal to one full letter grade. In my experience, students who neglect to turn in even one assignment have difficulty passing the class.

### GRADE BREAKDOWN:

Active Participation	20%
Open Scene Analysis	5%
Open Scene	10%
Scene Two Analysis	10%
Scene Two Rehearsal & Performance	20%
Final Preparation	15%
Final Rehearsal & Screening	20%

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.

## WEEK 1

### Start looking for 2-3 page scenes to direct

**4/4** Introduction to class. Can directing be taught?

**Assign:** Open Scene Analysis

**Read:** Weston, Avoiding Result Direction, Moment to Moment and Listening and Talking (I, II & III)

## WEEK 2

### Assign groups for Open Scene.

**4/11** Analysis. Beat Breakdown Exercise.

**Assign:** Choose scene for #2

**Read:** Weston, Script Analysis (VII)

**Due:** Open Scene Analysis

## WEEK 3

### Start thinking about casting for scene 2 and final

**4/18** Open Scenes

**Assign:** Scene 2 Preparation, Choose Final Scene, Gather 100 images

**Read:** Weston, Actor's Choices and Structure (IV & V)

**Due:** Choice for scene #2

## WEEK 4:

**\*\*\* Spring casting session Friday, April 26<sup>th</sup> from 12 -3 in the CDM theater\*\*\***

**4/25** Casting, Rehearsing, Improvisation. 100 images - Vision vs. Visualization.

**Assign:** The Director's Vision

**Read:** Weston, Casting & Rehearsal (VIII & IX)

**Due:** Scene 2 Preparation, Final Scene Choice, 100 images

**WEEK 5:**

**5/2** Scene #2 Rehearsal in class

**Read:** Weston, Moment By Moment, Listening and Talking (II & III)

**Due:** Choose final scene & Director's Vision

**WEEK 6:**

**Rehearsal outside of class prior to final performance**

**5/9** Scene #2 Final Performance in class

**Read:** Actor's Resources and Training (VI)

**Assign:** Final Scene Analysis

**WEEK 7:**

**Work on preproduction for final scenes**

**5/16** Directing for Camera. Shooting Scripts.

**Assign:** Final Scene Preproduction

**Read:** Handout

**Due:** Final Scene Analysis

**WEEK 8:**

**5/23** Individual meetings

**Due:** Final Film Preproduction

**WEEK 9**

**5/30** Rehearse final scenes in class

**Assign:** Shoot Final Scenes

**WEEK 10**

**6/6** Shoot & edit final scenes

**WEEK 11/ FINALS WEEK:**

**6/13** Screen & critique final scenes

**COURSE POLICIES:**

In addition to the DePaul University course policies (see student handbook), the following policies apply to this course:

**STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES** – Students are responsible for meeting the expectations in the syllabus. The instructor will not remind students of assignment deadlines. In the event of an absence it is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor for homework assignments. You are still responsible for getting the assignment details and turning it in on time.

**DEADLINES** – Late assignments will not be accepted for grading and written feedback will be given at the instructor's discretion. You will not be eligible for an A in the class unless you turn in all assignments on time.

**ATTENDANCE** – Attendance and attention in class are mandatory. Any absence (missing more than 15 minutes of class time per session) will impact your grade. Each student is allowed ONE absence (equal to two tardies) before your grade is affected.

**ILLNESS** – Do not attend class if you are ill (heavy cough, fever, vomiting) or think you might be coming down with something. If you show up visibly sick, you may be asked to go home. In order to prevent a consequence with the attendance and deadline policies, contact me by email prior to missing a class due to illness and continue to keep me posted until you return. As long as I am aware of your situation and you take an active role in catching up, allowances will be made for your situation. Every situation will be handled according to individual circumstance at the instructor's discretion. Students with long-term illnesses should contact the Dean of Students office to inquire about a medical withdrawal. **Absolutely no consideration will be given for those who request special treatment without advanced notice, even with a doctor's note.**

**INCOMPLETES** – No incompletes will be given.

**COMPUTER/SMART PHONE USE** – I can tell the difference between using your laptop to take notes and using it for other purposes. Turn off your phone during class.

**PLAGIARISM** – Plagiarism on assignments or cheating on exams are serious offenses and earn the student a failing grade for the class and can lead to an Academic Integrity Violation.

**READING ASSIGNMENTS** – The assigned readings supplements the lectures. Lectures will introduce material not available in the readings, and the readings will explore concepts not mentioned in class. The exam will cover both lecture and reading materials. At least one essay question on the required Mamet reading will be on the final exam.

**INSTRUCTOR AVAILABILITY** – Please email any time you have a question or concern about the class. If you do not hear back from me within 24 hours, it means I did not receive your message so please check the address and contact me again. If you are unable to meet during my office hours, contact me to make other arrangements.

**CONTENT CHANGES** – This syllabus may be amended as the course proceeds. You will be notified of all changes.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES** – Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential. To ensure that you receive the most appropriate reasonable accommodation based on your needs, contact me 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 +1 (773) 325-1677, Student Center #370.

**ADDITIONAL ACCOMMODATIONS** – This course includes instructional content delivered via audio and video. If you have any concerns about your ability to access and/or understand this material in its default format, please notify me within the first week of the course so accommodations can be made.

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential. To ensure that you receive the most appropriate reasonable accommodation based on your needs, contact me 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 +1 (773) 325-1677, Student Center #370.

**ADDRESSING THE INSTRUCTOR** – Please call me by my first name in both emails and in person. If my kids' friends call me Shayna (rhymes with Dana), you can, too.