

WRITING THE TELEVISION SPEC SCRIPT – AUTUMN 2013

DC 400 / Section 701

TUESDAYS (5:45 – 9:00) September 17 – November 19, 2013; Final Project Due November 26, 2013

CDM 218

Instructor: Christopher Parrish

Office Hours: Wednesdays 11:30 am – 1:00 pm

Office: CDM434

cparris6@cdm.depaul.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

In this class, students will learn the basic teleplay structures for both half-hour and hour-long television shows. Students will choose an existing show and write a spec episode, practicing the skills of matching character voice, structure, and tone.

PREREQUISITE(S): DC 101, DC 201, or DC 501

To be specific, there are two main parts to this course – A.) learning the overall structure, format, style, tone and dialogue of various current, primetime network television shows, with an emphasis on situation comedies and one-hour dramas and B.) **Completing an individual spec episode of an existing primetime situation comedy or one-hour drama currently on-the-air**, including the complete first draft of a teleplay, an outline and a “beat sheet.”

The instructor will guide students on how to strike the delicate balance between writing an episode that embodies the characters, structure, tone, and dialogue of an existing show while expressing the student’s own creative voice, point of view and style.

The class will survey programs and scripts of various types, including single-camera sitcom, multi-camera sitcom, one-hour drama and animation. They will verbally pitch plot ideas of episodes for their favorite show to their peers and instructor. Like professional screenwriters working on an actual series, student writers will go through the entire process within our mock “Writer’s Room” and take turns as the designated “Showrunner.” As the course progresses, students will engage in their own “punch-up” sessions.

Over the course, each student will have their teleplay or script read aloud in class by “casting” their classmates in the roles for a “Table Reading.” Constructive criticism and active participation is mandatory, as is assigned homework.

Students will also have the opportunity for a classroom Q&A (via Skype) with Hollywood professionals who have written for and/or been involved with primetime network sitcoms and/or hour-long dramas.

REQUIREMENTS:

No writer improves without receiving feedback on his or her work. You and your classmates will engage in an unofficial and mutually beneficial contract with one another by reading each other's work and giving respectful and constructive criticism.

Should it become apparent that students are not living up to their end of the contract, **the Professor reserves the right to collect WRITTEN NOTES from every in-class student on every submitted writing assignment of their peers.**

So let's avoid such a drastic measure by doing the reading and coming to class prepped to speak your mind. Class participation is 20% of your grade.

DEADLINES:

Just as if you have been hired to write on assignment for a television series, **MEETING YOUR DEADLINE IS ABSOLUTELY VITAL.** Without a valid medical excuse or legitimate family emergency, assignments must be turned in on time or no points will be awarded for your work. (And, no, your cat going to that great litter box in the sky doesn't qualify as a legitimate excuse.)

ASSIGNMENTS:

All written assignments (scripts, treatments, outlines, beat sheets, etc.) must be typed in 12 pt. Courier font in a pdf file. Scripts must also be free of spelling, grammatical and punctuation errors, unless the dialogue or storyline otherwise calls for it. All scripts and scenes are to be done in proper screenwriting format. Most professionals use Final Draft or Movie Magic. Before purchasing either software, inquire with your seller about student discounts. **Please make certain all assignments include your name, the course title and number and the date of the assignment due.**

EMAILS:

Please sign your first and last name with every email you send. I check my email every day before 10am and will have a response for you within 24 hours. **My email is cparris6@cdm.depaul.edu**

THE NO, ZILCH AND ABSOLUTE ZERO TOLORANCE POLICY ABOUT NEGATIVE CRITICISM:

When new and aspiring writers share their work with others, it can be an emotionally charged situation leaving the writer feeling very vulnerable. Throughout your screenwriting careers, you will inevitably receive catty, insulting, idiotic and nonproductive criticism of your work. However, in our classroom, absolutely none of it will be tolerated. If and when there is something you dislike

about a classmate's writing (and you will), it is your obligation to express it. But more importantly, it is your responsibility to express why it is you think so respectfully, and ideally, suggest a way to fix it. At the same time, the person receiving constructive criticism from their peers will do so in a polite, non-defensive and professional manner.

GRADE BREAKDOWN:

Produced Episode Beat Sheet: 10%

Plot Pitches: 10%

Original Episode Beat Sheet/Main Character Bios: 10%

Story Outline: 20% (Midterm)

Completed Script: 25% (Final)

Class Participation: 20%

COURSE CALENDAR:

Class 1 – Tuesday, September 17th: Greetings, Syllabus & Structure

Welcome to the Writers' Room. Class introductions.

Who are you and what do you want out of the course?

What's your writing history - your scripts, stories, etc.? What's mine?

What shows are Must See/Binge Viewing/Top DVR Priority for you?

What show(s) do you absolutely hate? Why?

What currently running show would you like to take a crack at?

The syllabus. What have you gotten yourself into? What are we doing and why?

A very brief rundown on how TV shows are written, produced and staffed.

Why you need to write a TV spec to break into the business.

What shows to avoid when writing a spec script. What shows to consider.

What is the shelf life of your spec script in Hollywood?

Breaking it all down: TV EPISODE DISSECTIONS

What are the beats?

Structure. How many acts in a sitcom and a drama?

Is there an average number of scenes?

Act breaks. When do they come?

What about an animation script?

How long should my script be?

How long should my scenes be?

Storylines and running gags.

For your viewing and deconstructing pleasure:

My Name is Earl: "Joy's Wedding" Written by Greg Garcia.

Freaks & Geeks: "Beers & Weirs" Written by J. Elvis Weinstein & Judd Apatow

(**Episodes are subject to change**)

HOMEWORK: 5 BEAT SHEETS FROM 5 DIFFERENT TELEVISION EPISODES. Begin browsing for the television show you want to write. This is just a vetting process. You do not yet have to commit to that series yet. Watch a minimum of five produced episodes of the series of your choice (ideally, including the pilot and the most current episode.) -OR- You have the option of doing two separate series with a minimum of two episodes per series = **5 BEAT SHEETS IN TOTAL.** **Each beat sheet should be (double-spaced, 2 pages each episode.)**

Email all beat sheets to me at cparris6@cdm.depaul.edu, including the title of the series and episode titles. All assignments should include a cover page with your full name, the full title of the course, your instructor's name and the due date of the assignment.

DEADLINE (FOR IN CLASS AND ONLINE STUDENTS): Tuesday, September 24th at 5:00 PM C.S.T.

IN CLASS STUDENTS: Bring your beat sheets to class and be prepared to discuss the series you watched and to read your beat sheets aloud.

Class 2 – Tuesday, September 24th: Series Types, Themes & Settings

A brief history of the sitcom and one-hour drama.

What were the first?

How have they evolved?

Let's examine popular television show types that stand the test of time.

Popular Sitcom Types

Family Comedies

Workplace Comedies

Romantic Comedies

High-Concept / Science Fiction Comedies

Star Vehicles

Spin-Offs

What show titles fall in to these types?

Popular Drama Types

Police Procedural/ Private Detective

Courtroom

Medical

Science Fiction/Fantasy

Slice of Life
 Antihero/Life of Crime
 Nighttime Soap
 Adventure

Name some others?

What types of shows are virtually extinct (Hint: one involves a horse and the other rhymes with “manthology.” What has remained the same?

What is the type of the show you want to write?

POPULAR SITCOM THEMES

Parenthood
 Buddies / Gal Pals
 Opposites Attract
 Culture Clash
 Looking for Love in the Big City

POPULAR DRAMA THEMES

High School
 Organized Crime
 Buddy Cops
 Prison Life
 Politics
 Spying /Anti-Terrorism
 Showbusiness/Price of Fame
 The Supernatural

What are some others?

What is your show’s theme or themes?

POPULAR SHOWS SETTINGS/LOCATIONS

Middle Class Household
 Bar/Restaurant
 Courtroom
 Law Firm
 Police Department
 Hospital
 Detective Agency
 High School/College
 Small Town America

Mean Metropolitan Streets
 Spaceship
 The Suburbs
 White Collar Office
 Mansion/Penthouse/Castle
 War Zone
 Radio/TV Station

What popular shows fit into these settings? What are some other settings not mentioned? Examples.

Why do some many shows take place within these environments? Are these good places to find conflict? If so, what are bad locations to look for conflict?

Is there an average number of sets for a show?
 What's a swingset? (Hint: You don't actually swing on it.)
 Why do animated series often stick to the same sets, too?

From The Goldbergs to The Goldbergs -or- The next wave of Hawaii 5-0
 The more things change, the more they stay the same.

For your viewing pleasure. Comparing and contrasting series.

SITCOM: *The Goldbergs* (1949). *The Goldbergs* (2013).

What are some tired and clichéd plots that shows frequently explore?
 What is "Jumping the shark?"

CLASS EXERCISE #1: IT'S TIME TO PLAY, "NAME THAT DVR PLOT." Class divides into groups. Instructor reads random episode plots of hour-long dramas and sitcoms. Groups attempt to beat the clock by guessing the correct series titles.

For your viewing pleasure. Comparing and contrasting series.

DRAMA: *Dragnet* (1967). *L.A. Dragnet* (2003) - HULU

CLASS EXERCISE #2:

Going around the room, in 30 words or less, tell us the plot of a possible episode you might like to write. Don't worry. This is brainstorming. It's supposed to be rough.

HOMEWORK: Learn your show inside and out. Binge view as much as possible. Search TV.com, IMDB.com and Netflix for synopsis of all past episodes. Read scripts (posted online by the instructor, if available, of the show you want to do.)

Plot Pitches

Come up with ten separate episode plot pitches for the series you wish to write. If you're still on the fence with choosing a show, you can do different

plot pitches for more than one show. However, it must be ten plot pitches in total. Write up each pitch. Thirty words or less per plot pitch. And be prepared to pitch them aloud to the class. Please keep in mind that this is a brainstorming exercise. They don't have to be perfectly polished.

ONLINE STUDENTS' HOMEWORK: Email your ten pitches by 5:00 pm C.S.T. on Tuesday, October 1st. We will read aloud your plot pitches in class and class will give feedback.

Class 3 – Tuesday, October 1st: Tone, Character & Plot Pitches

*****TODAY IS THE DEADLINE TO DECIDE ON YOUR TELEVISION SERIES*****

CLASS ACTIVITY/ASSIGNMENT: AND HERE'S THE PITCH!

Students pitch their ten plot pitches to the class. The class will deliver immediate feedback.

TONE

The tone of a series sets the mood and should immediately give the audience/reader an idea of what to expect or not expect. Tone is a show's flavor. Some are sweet (Sam & Cat, Touched by an Angel, Full House.) Some are spicy (Swingtown, Sex & the City.)

How would you describe your show's tone or tones?

POPULAR TONES IN SITCOMS

Quirky (Arrested Development, The Office)
 Goofy (Married with Children, Reno-911) slapstick
 Irreverent (Veep, Curb Your Enthusiasm) – no sacred cow is safe-
 Raunchy (Eastbound & Down)
 Witty (Frasier)
 Satirical (South Park)
 Family Friendly (The Middle)
 Romantic (Dharma & Greg, Mike & Molly)

Other examples?

POPULAR TONES IN DRAMAS

Gritty (Deadwood)
 Intense (24, Breaking Bad)
 Eerie (Lost, Carnivale, American Horror Story)

Warm-Spirited (Parenthood, Thirtysomething, Ed)
 Cynical (Boardwalk Empire, The Sopranos)
 Lavish (Game of Thrones, Spartacus)
 Sincere (Touched by an Angel, Highway to Heaven)
 Tense (CSI, Law & Order) –won't rest til we get this done-
 Cerebral (The Newsroom, The West Wing)

For your viewing pleasure: Similar themes, different tones

The West Wing & Veep

E/R & Scrubs

(Episodes are subject to change)

What are the differences and similarities? How does the tone manifest itself?

CHARACTER

POPULAR CHARACTER PERSONALITIES

Antihero
 Alphadog
 Underdog
 Bad Boy
 The Slob
 Voice of Reason
 Tormented Soul
 Hopeless Romantic
 Crusader
 The Grump
 Boy Next Door/Girl Next Door
 Career Woman
 Nemesis
 Nerd/Geek
 Business Titan
 Dutiful One
 Loose Cannon
 Psycho
 Weasel

What popular characters fall into these character types?

Other types?

Who are the main characters of your chosen series?

How would you describe them? Loves? Hates? Friends? Enemies? Greatest dream? Worst fear?

How would you describe their relationships with one another?
 How have they changed over the duration of the series? If so, how?

EMBRACE CHARACTERS' FLAWS & VULNERABILITIES

In comedy and drama, the most flawed characters frequently deliver the best conflict. Even on procedural shows like *Law & Order* and *CSI*, when the stakes get personal and the characters reveal their personal demons, the stories always tend to deliver more of an emotional impact.

HOMEWORK: Part I: Original Episode Beat Sheets

Compose a beat sheet for your own original episode script, based on the television series of your choosing. As before, your beat sheet should not exceed two pages, double-spaced. Email them to me by Friday, October 4th at 8:00 PM C.S.T. You will receive your fellow students' beat sheets via email. READ ALL OF THEM and be prepared to discuss them in class.

HOMEWORK: PART II: Character Bios

Write up separate one-page descriptions of two of your show's main characters. Character Bios due before Class 4 Commences on October 8th.

ONLINE CLASSMATES' HOMEWORK: Read your classmates' beat sheets and provide polite feedback with constructive criticism. Also CC your instructor your comments, too. Due before the beginning of Class 4 with Character Bios on Tuesday, October 8th.

Class 4 – October 8th: BEAT SHEETS, FORMATS, DIALOGUE & OUTLINES

CLASS WORKSHOPPING: BEAT SHEETS

A review and open critique of submitted beat sheets. Discuss what elements are strong, what could be stronger. Possible suggestions of storylines and character motivations.

Do the stories track with the established characters and tone?

Is there greater potential for conflict?

For dramas, is there tension and are the stakes the best they can be?

Regarding sitcoms, can you top the existing comedy?

Are the various storylines tracking?

Is your new episode too similar to one that has already been produced? If so, it's not much use to you as a writing sample to potential agents, managers, producers or television executives.

FORMATTING TELEPLAYS

The instructor will show various script samples of network sitcoms and dramas, making note of act breaks, scene length, action, how characters are introduced, scene headings, etc.

DIALOGUE

For most television shows, dialogue is everything. It is what establishes and differentiates a character. It is what expresses exposition. And in sitcoms, it is what most often delivers the jokes. Your spec script lives or dies by your ability to convincingly mimic how the established characters speak, behave, interact with one another and see the world around them.

Following is a list of other things to keep in mind when writing dialogue of any character.

- Attitude
- Mood
- Accent
- Slang
- Poor or eloquent use of language
- Profanity or lack of it
- Catchphrases
- How they argue
- Verbal diarrhea
- How quickly or slowly they speak
- Verbal pauses
- Speed in which they speak

COMEDIC DIALOGUE STYLES:

- Brutal truth and putdowns
- Flip flopping
- The contradiction
- Disproportionate responses
- Volume

METHODS OF DIALOGUE PUNCH UP:

- Table reads (we do them in class)
- Condensing (less is always more)
- End on the punchline or dramatic punch
- Reality check (is it true to that universe and character)

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: GETTING INTO CHARACTER

Each student will pick a character from their chosen show, come up to the front of the class and, as that character, pretend to leave a brief, annoyed voicemail or written message to someone else on the show who has angered them. Bad

impressions are welcome. No impressions are fine, too. It's all about capturing the characters' voices.

OUTLINES

Instructor will provide samples of outlines used in television episodes.

HOMEWORK: STORY OUTLINES - YOUR OUTLINE IS YOUR MIDTERM!

Using your beat sheet (and the notes you've received on your beat sheet), students will expand their episodes into detailed story outlines. Scenes should typically be at least a paragraph each. Unless specifically important, give the broad strokes of your dialogue. **Outlines should be 5 to 7 pages, single spaced, 12 point Courier font.** Outlines are to be emailed to instructor by Saturday, October 5th at 8:00pm, C.S.T.

You will receive an email with your classmates' outlines. READ THEM ALL and be prepared to discuss them in the next class.

ONLINE STUDENTS: Read your classmates outlines and provide feedback, cc-ing instructor before Class 5, on October 15th.

OUT OF CLASS EXERCISE: By now, you've watched several episodes of the series you've chosen. Tonight, play another episode. But this time, CLOSE YOUR EYES FOR THE ENTIRE EPISODE AND ONLY LISTEN TO IT. Be prepared to discuss your experience with classmates and instructor during Class 5.

Class 5 – October 15th: Again, with the outlines?

Class discussion and feedback on outlines.

Discussion of the benefits of rewrites and effective rewriting tools.

Rewrite questions:

Can I beat that joke?

How do we up the stakes?

Can I start the scene later and/or leave the scene earlier?

Are the characters' personalities standing out?

Is there something specific I can show in dialogue or action to convey "I really get this guy or girl?"

As a writer, can I find more opportunities to infuse my voice and point of view without clashing with the tone of the show?

Can I have less incidental characters?

Can I condense scenes?

Midterm grades handed out.

HOMEWORK: Second Draft of your Outline. Utilizing feedback from your class and instructor, do a second draft of your outline. Please Note: Failure to implement

changes of a second draft because you believe there is nothing wrong with the first one is failure in this assignment. Even if you are just fine with your first draft, you need to embrace pulling your story apart and seeing how it might work otherwise. And after this course is over, if you end up coming back to what your original vision was, that's fine. But you have to see it from different angles. That's the point.

Second Draft Outlines are Due on Friday, October 18th by 8:00pm C.S.T. and must be emailed to me by that time.

You will receive an email with your classmates' Second Draft Outlines. READ THEM ALL and be ready to discuss them during the next class.

ONLINE STUDENTS' HOMEWORK: Read your classmates' Second Draft Outlines and provide feedback via email. As usual, cc your comments to me before Class 6 commences.

Class 6 – October 22nd: LIVE FROM THE WORLD OF SITCOMS: IT'S THE SKYPE MYSTERY GUEST!!!

Guest to be determined. Our Skype guest will be a professional working in network television sitcoms (Possible Screenwriter, Producer, Director, Television Executive, Agent, Manager or Actor.) Instructor will interview Guest followed by Student Q&A.

Discussion of notes received by students on revised outlines. What have you changed? What has stayed the same? Why?

CLASS WORKSHOP: THIS SCENE SUCKS – THE REWRITE

Class will break into smaller groups and work together in their own "Writer's Room" with an appointed "Showrunner" and rewrite a truly horrible scene the instructor has cooked up based on a popular television series. Scenes will be from both sitcoms and dramas. At the end of class, students will present their rewritten scene to the class with a "Table Reading."

HOMEWORK: Time to start writing your script! Email page 1–10 from all students (including your title page) to me by 1:00 PM C.S.T. on Wednesday, October 23rd.

ONLINE STUDENTS: Read your classmates' pages 1-10 and provide feedback via email. CC your notes to me, before Class 7 commences on October 29th.

Class 7 – October 29rd: LIVE FROM THE WORLD OF PRIMETIME DRAMA: IT'S THE SKYPE MYSTERY GUEST – PART 2!!!

Guest to be determined. Our Skype guest will be a professional working in network television dramas (Possible Screenwriter, Producer, Director, Television Executive, Agent, Manager or Actor.) Instructor will interview Guest followed by Student Q&A.

TABLE READ: Class will split off into Comedy and Drama groups, if instructor deems necessary. Students assign speaking roles to classmates and take turns reading one another's first ten pages aloud, including description. Afterward, classmates will give critiques. Instructor will float around the room monitoring table reads.

ONLINE STUDENTS: Read students' first ten pages and email notes. CC instructor your notes before Class 8 commences.

HOMEWORK: Pages 11 – 20 from all students. Email pages to instructor by 5:00 pm C.S.T. on Tuesday, November 5th.

Class 8 – Tuesday, November 5th: TABLE READ

Read pages 11 – 20 aloud in your groups. Change up the groups for fresh eyes and new opinions of your work. Table Read online classmates' work.

ONLINE STUDENTS: WATCH LECTURE and take notes given by your class.

HOMEWORK: Write pages 20 – 30 and email to instructor by 5:00 PM C.S.T. on Tuesday, November 12th. Also bring in hard copies of scene or scenes for Class 9 giving you the most difficulty writing. Make sure you bring in enough copies for each classmate in the room.

ONLINE STUDENTS: Email notes to classmates and cc the notes you're giving to instructor. Also email the scene troubling you most to instructor and classmates before class 9 commences.

Class 9 – November 12th: Table Read Trouble Shooting

will table and discuss. Utilize punchup and rewrite methods introduced earlier in the course.

HOMEWORK:

(DRAMA WRITERS): Email pages 30 – 40 to Instructor.

(SITCOM WRITERS): Email pages 30 – 40 to Instructor. If script runs less than 40 pages, send all pages from 30 up to the end, along with your most recently rewritten scene(s) to fulfill 10 page homework assignment quota. Assignments must be submitted by 5:00 PM C.S.T. on Tuesday, November 19th.

Class 10 – Tuesday, November 19th: FINAL TABLE READ

Groups conduct a final Table Read.

FINAL EXAM: YOUR COMPLETED SPEC TELEVISION SCRIPT

Partial grading of your Final Exam will reflect how well you incorporate the notes and feedback from your instructor and peers into the completed script. Please note the feedback you receive may very well alter the script you've laid out. So prepare to roll with the changes. That's a big part of what it is to be a working television writer.

Your completed script/final exam must be emailed to me at cparris6@cdm.depaul.edu by **5:00 PM, C.S.T. on Tuesday, November 26th**. No extensions. No exceptions.

DEPAUL UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

Online Instructor Evaluation

Evaluations allow students to provide feedback of their instructors and the courses they teach. Detailed feedback enables the instructor to revise, update and tailor their teaching tools, methods and course material to meet a course's learning goals and the students' academic needs. Evaluations are required of you and considered a key resource to provide students with the highest quality of teaching possible.

These evaluations are strictly anonymous. Neither the instructor nor the administration track who entered what responses. Although software automatically determines if a student has completed the evaluations, they always remain separate from the student's identity. Participation by all students is the university's goal. To insure this as best as possible, periodic reminders will be sent to students until their evaluations are completed. Students complete evaluations online at <https://mycti.cti.depaul.edu/mycti>

Email

Email is the primary means of communication between faculty and students enrolled in this course outside of class time. Please make certain your email listed under "demographic information" at CampusConnect is correct.

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!

Your Instructor on Plagiarism

Even though Hollywood is plagued with remakes upon remakes (*Hawaii Five-0*, *Dallas*, *Parenthood*, *90210*) passing somebody else's script off as your own won't fly. To play it safe, research the story synopsis of every episode from the show you have chosen.

Please contact your me if you if you aren't clear about what plagiarism is or how to acknowledge your source materials in an acceptable manner. For example, having your characters sing lyrics to a popular song in your script is not plagiarism. Submitting a *Seinfeld* spec script where Jerry visits a bratty boy, who lives in a plastic bubble is.

DePaul University's Official Word on 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:

Autumn Quarter: Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent winter quarter

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)325.7296

Additional Information:

Attendance: Students are expected to attend each class and to remain for the duration. Coming 15 minutes late or leaving 15 minutes early constitutes an absence for the student. The overall grade for participation drops one-third after any absence. Three absences for any reason, whether excused or not, may constitute failure for the course.

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.