

SCHOOL OF CINEMATIC ARTS
SPRING QUARTER - 2014-2015
DC 210 – DIGITAL CINEMA PRODUCTION 1

INSTRUCTOR:	Brian Zahm	SECTION:	60
OFFICE HOURS:	WED 12:00-4:30	CLASS #:	30241
OFFICE LOCATION:	CDM 455	CLASS TIMES:	THUR 1:30-4:45 PM
E-MAIL:	bzahm@cdm.depaul.edu	CLASS LOCATION:	14EAS LL107

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to DC 210 a.k.a. Production I. This course is a beginning workshop in film production. The course provides an introduction to the fundamentals of cinema, including camera and lens technology, composition, lighting, directing and sound recording. This class is an opportunity to learn the basics of the art, craft, trade and community of film (except we're all digital). It's an intense storm of information and exercises to prepare you for further study in digital cinema. What do you want this experience to be? It's you who ultimately define this for yourself. So take chances. Take it seriously, but don't forget that cinema is an insanely dicey and challenging field; if you don't enjoy it, harbor some passion for it somewhere inside you that tingles your spine at the thought of all you can possibly do with this thing called "Filmmaking", you're probably wasting your time. Unlike a murky pond, the best way to test these waters is to just dive in. You're not alone, but ultimately your success is up to you.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- » Understand the language of cinema and employ basic shooting and editing techniques to express a story visually.
- » Be able to successfully operate video cameras and non-linear editing programs in order to create a total of three required projects.
- » Enter more advanced courses with a solid foundation of technical proficiency as well as the development of an individual style and expression.
- » Students will be able to produce material for their demo reels

PREREQUISITES

DC 220 – Editing 1 (Should not be taken concurrently!)

REQUIRED TEXT

- » **THE FILMMAKER'S HANDBOOK** by STEVEN ASCHER & EDWARD PINCUS (ISBN 978-0-452-28678-8). This book is an indispensable reference/learning guide and hopefully rife with inspiration. This book will heavily supplement the class lectures and demos and contains essential knowledge for you to have success in this course, advanced production courses and in your careers.
- » **ON DIRECTING FILM** by DAVID MAMET (ISBN 978-0-452-28678-8). This book is one man's take on the art of film directing.
- » **DESIRE2LEARN** (D2L): Some additional readings will be posted on D2L under CONTENT in folders that correspond to the class number. These mandatory readings are meant to supplement the textbooks and lectures.

REQUIRED SUPPLIES

- » **EXTERNAL HARD DRIVE:** You will need some form of external drive to store your project files on. You will need at least 500gb of free space. CDM's classroom computers have USB & Thunderbolt ports, so I would suggest your drive is compliant. I would recommend a Thunderbolt connection, a Firewire 800 to Thunderbolt connection via adapter, and/or USB 3.0. A USB 2.0 connection will likely not be fast enough to edit much of what you create in this class. If it is an HDD drive, I would recommend it being 7200 rpms. You will use this drive for this class and beyond. *Also, please note, you are responsible for backing up all of your work (on set and off)!*

SUGGESTED SUPPLIES

» YOU **WILL NEED GLOVES** TO HANDLE LIGHTING EQUIPMENT. And I would highly recommend (but this is not required) having on set, at the very least, a MULTI-TOOL, FLASHLIGHT, GAFF TAPE, BLACK WRAP, COLOR-CORRECTION GELS and DIFFUSION for general lighting/grip work. On set, for any sort of camera work, I would recommend LENS TISSUE, LENS FLUID, LENS CLOTH, LENS BLOWER BULB, FLASHLIGHT, ALLEN WRENCH, GAFF TAPE, PAPER TAPE, SHARPIE and your own memory devices to record to, especially if you're using an SD or CF CARD! With your SD cards for any sort of camera/audio recording, you should make sure the card has a "Class 10" Rating.

ADDITIONAL COSTS

Producing digital content is rarely a cheap endeavor. Such costs will potentially include items for art direction (costumes, make-up, set decoration), production (gaff tape, black wrap, camera media), post-production (primary external hard drives and a back-up) and general necessities (transportation costs and on-set food/drinks). All project budgets should include a 10% contingency fee that will help account for cost overruns.

PRODUCTION RESOURCES

A great place to obtain ROYALTY FREE MUSIC for student work is at **FreePlayMusic.com**. Simply put your selected music in the cart and select STUDENT or YOUTUBE project and it's FREE!

A great actor resource is through DePAUL's ACTOR DATABASE. Working with friends is one thing, but working with trained actors can take your work and your experience to the next level. Simply go here: <http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/Production-Resources.aspx> - under CASTING & CREW

DePaul has negotiated a great rate with ADOBE CREATIVE CLOUD, a tremendous production resource. Find out more information here: Students can purchase Creative Cloud for about \$10 here: <http://offices.depaul.edu/is/services/Software/Pages/Software-for-Personal-Computers.aspx>~~http://offices.depaul.edu/is/services/Software/Pages/Purchasing-Software-for-Personal-Computers-Kivuto-Students.aspx~~

ASSIGNMENTS/GRADING***

» **ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION**: 15% (Individual)

You are required to attend class and participate in the day's activities. This active engagement will ensure you get the most from the class. You will be working in small groups most of the time, and cooperation is key. Your Group Evaluations will factor into this grade.

» **LOCATION PORTRAIT**: 15% (Individual)

Create a cinematic documentation of the location of your choice.

» **SOUND MAP**: 5% (Individual)

Map the sounds from you bedroom to the nearest street corner.

» **INTERVIEW CHALLENGE**: 10% (Group)

Using 3-pt Lighting and Double-System Location Sound Recording, students must successfully record a series of interviews.

» **THE ROOM “PITCH” PRE-VISUALIZATION PACKET:** 10% (Individual)

Pitch a pre-visualization of “The Room” project to be produced by your group. This will consist of a synopsis, a script, and a photographic storyboard (featuring the pictures and important sounds—dialogue and sound effects).

» **THE ROOM:** 25% (Group)

The crescendo of this class will be the narrative story of one person in one room doing one thing. You must use double-system production techniques along with 3-pt lighting to successfully complete this scene. Do not underestimate the power and potential of this assignment! Some great directors’ (Christopher Nolan and Martin Scorsese) most famous short films evolved from this same assignment.

» **FINAL EXAM:** 20% (Individual)

This exam will test the totality of information gained from the readings, lectures, and class demonstrations.

A = 100-93, A- = 92.9-90, B+ = 89.9-87, B = 86.9-83, B- = 82.9-80, C+ = 79.9-77, C = 76.9-73, C- = 72.9-70, D+ = 69.9-67, D = 66.9-63, D- = 62.9-60, F = 59.9+Below.

“A” indicates Excellence, “B” indicates Very Good, “C” indicates Satisfactory, “D” indicates Poor, “F” indicates the student has NOT accomplished the objectives of the course.

GRADING POLICY

Students are expected to turn in all assignments by the established deadlines. LATE WORK WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. I will not accept the excuse of technological failure or absent-mindedness (you all have phones...set alarms for due dates!). *Back up your work and do not leave your work until the last second!* This is your warning. All grades will be kept current on D2L. Students who do not take tests or do their presentations when scheduled will receive a failing grade for the test or presentation.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

You are expected to be on time, and if you plan on missing or being late to a class are expected to notify the instructor BEFORE that particular class. The instructor reserves the right to determine whether an absence or tardy is “excused.” Unexcused absences or tardiness will negatively affect your grade. *Please see **Course Policies as Suggested by the Dean of Students Office** at the end of the syllabus to see how your grade will be affected.* Attendance will be kept current on D2L. If you want to question a recorded absence or tardiness, it must be done within a week of the recorded occurrence. **DO NOT COMPLAIN** about your final grade if you have skipped class and your final grade was reduced. This is your warning!

COMPUTER/CELLPHONE/I-PAD ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY

If you are using any personal or school electronic equipment during class for anything other than class-related work, *you will be asked to leave and will be counted as absent for that class. For the record, it’s incredibly obvious (not to mention distracting) when someone is using a computer/PDA for anything other than taking notes.*

E-MAIL POLICY

You are expected to read all e-mails from the class instructor because you are responsible to know the information they contain. *So, you should check your e-mail at least once every 24 hours!*

Type **PRODUCTION 1** in the subject of all e-mails to the instructor about this class. Please DO NOT JUST REPLY to my all-class e-mails because your response might get lost in the shuffle—*Send me an individual e-mail. I will do my best to get back to you in short-order, but please allow up to 24hrs for the instructor to respond.*

PROJECT FILE LABELING + FORMAT POLICY

Label all movie files as such (ex. Student is JIM JARMUSCH and he is turning in the LOCATION PORTRAIT): **JARMUSCH_LOCATION PORTRAIT.mov**

Label all Pre-Visualization Projects as such (ex. Student is ANDREA ARNOLD and she is turning in the Pre-Visualization Packet for “The Room”): **ARNOLD_PREVIZ.pdf**

All project movies should be submitted in **H.264.mov** format! All Pre-Visualization Packets should be submitted in **.PDF** format as **ONE SINGLE FILE!** **Projects NOT submitted in the proper format or properly labeled WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION POLICY

All work submitted for this class should be original work made specifically for this class. If you are found to be submitting work you have made for another class you will receive zero credit for that particular assignment.

I will grade the first project file that is submitted. Check and double-check the work you are submitting. Do not submit the wrong file, an incomplete file, a corrupted file, etc. Submit the correct project file by each deadline. Most work will be submitted through D2L Dropbox. Do not leave this until the last second—upload several hours before the deadline to be safe! *Again, no late work is accepted!*

EXCUSES (i.e. LACK OF PROFESSIONALISM)

My classes are designed to teach professional conduct and particular skill-sets. Time management skills are essential for all endeavors. The wonders of modern technology make it easy and simple to stay organized, on time and on task. Please remember, an excuse is just that—an *excuse*. Here are just a few examples of excuses for not meeting class obligations that I won't accept (and do not add to this list):

- a. I have a life...
- b. I forgot...
- c. I didn't realize...
- d. I mixed up the dates...
- e. I don't "do" books...
- f. My alarm didn't go off...
- g. I was busy working on other projects...
- h. My job called me in so I had to work and couldn't do my assignment...
- i. I would have made the deadline if the deadline wasn't when it was...
- j. It's just easier to do it my way, so I did it my way...
- k. Other classes don't have me do it this way, so I did it their way...
- l. I was not aware of class policy...
- m. I was taking care of a sick friend so I couldn't...
- n. I didn't read the e-mail you sent out, so I didn't know...
- o. I scheduled dental surgery during the test/presentation so I can't...
- p. The cage checked me out bad equipment, so I couldn't...
- q. My hard-drive crashed and I didn't back up my work...
- r. The internet was slow when I tried to turn in my project...
- s. I accidentally submitted the wrong project file, but it was on time...
- t. I didn't do the assignment as you asked, but don't worry, I got it all worked on in my head...
- u. I have to go on vacation...
- v. I was at a bar and...
- w. The weather...(when DePaul isn't cancelled due to weather)
- x. I didn't look on the syllabus...

WORK WITH CAUTION & RESPECT THE SCHOOL'S EQUIPMENT & POLICIES

Film/video production areas in general can be hazardous. First and foremost, make sure you work safely. Have spotters holding ladders, always making sure you have someone to help you out in rigging situations. And remember, the lights get extremely hot so wear gloves when working with them. And all lighting runs off of electricity (AMPS=Watts/Volts), so you must always look out for potentially hazardous situations. On set, make sure all cables are kept orderly and run along walls, under furniture, and are properly secured to ensure no harm comes to yourselves or the school's equipment. And never leave the equipment in a car. One it can get stolen, but two temperature extremes are very hard on equipment. *Remember, if you lose or damage the school's equipment, you will need to pay for its replacement (See-Check Out Policy).* And don't forget to turn in all equipment on time or you will be subject to fines! And please respect the school's property and your shooting locations. Mounting, rigging, taping etc. can all cause damage to property, so work with the utmost caution and care. And finally, there is a lot of heavy lifting in production, so lift with your knees and get some help—there's no need to be a hero. The bottom line is THINK BEFORE YOU ACT. Don't hesitate to ask me if you aren't sure about something, in or out of class. AND please treat all the equipment room employees with respect! They are busy folks trying to help ensure your shoot is a success. *FINALLY, you must re-read all equipment/school policies/procedures that you must follow that are posted on D2L (they include: 3 PDFs titled Firearms/Filming Policy/Check Out Policy).****

***You should avoid dangerous film activities such as using real weapons of any kind, and/or filming in or from moving cars unless you have clearance and professional supervision.

DC 210: COURSE SCHEDULE

All assigned readings are to be completed by the following class. All assignments have strict **DUE** deadlines noted in the schedule.

WEEK/DATE	AGENDA	READINGS***	NOTES
WEEK ONE THURSDAY 04/02	<u>LECTURE & SCREENINGS</u> Syllabus/Questionnaire The Production Process	<u>FILMMAKER'S HANDBOOK</u> Pg 1-38, 53-101, 102-121, 125-140 <u>SYLLABUS</u> You Must Know and Understand The Course and Its Policies	<i>BUY Books</i> <i>UPLOAD your picture to D2L for Extra Credit (by 4/06)</i>
WEEK TWO THURSDAY 04/09	<u>LECTURE & DEMONSTRATION</u> Composition Basics Camera Equipment Demo	<u>FILMMAKER'S HANDBOOK</u> Pg 141-184, 185-252, 304-320	ASSIGN: Groups ASSIGN: Location Portraits
WEEK THREE THURSDAY 04/16	<u>PRACTICAL EXERCISE</u> Camera Scavenger Hunt	<u>FILMMAKER'S HANDBOOK</u> Pg 767-774	
WEDNESDAY 04/22 by 9 PM	DUE: Location Portraits Uploaded to D2L		DUE: Location Portraits
WEEK FOUR THURSDAY 04/23	<u>SCREENINGS & CRITIQUE</u> Location Portraits	<u>FILMMAKER'S HANDBOOK</u> Pg 402-470 <u>D2L</u> WEEK 04_Readings	

WEEK FIVE THURSDAY 04/30	<u>LECTURE & DEMONSTRATION</u> Double System Sound Recording	<u>FILMMAKER'S HANDBOOK</u> Pg 471-520	ASSIGN: Sound Map
WEEK SIX THURSDAY 05/07	<u>LECTURE & DEMONSTRATION</u> 3 Point Lighting	<u>FILMMAKER'S HANDBOOK</u> Pg 321-401 <u>ON DIRECTING FILM</u> 1-55	DUE: Sound Map (Printed Version!!!)
WEEK SEVEN THURSDAY 05/14	<u>PRACTICAL EXERCISE</u> Interview Challenge	<u>ON DIRECTING FILM</u> 57-107	<i>NEXT WEEK: "The Room" Previz Packet is Due!!!</i>
TUESDAY 05/19 by 1pm	DUE: "The Room" Previz Packet Uploaded to D2L		DUE: "The Room" Previz Packet
WEDNESDAY 05/20 by 9pm	DUE: Interview Challenge Uploaded to D2L		DUE: Interview Challenge
WEEK EIGHT THURSDAY 05/21	<u>PITCHES & CRITIQUE</u> "The Room" Pitches Interview Critique		
WEEK NINE THURSDAY 05/28	<u>TABLE SCREENINGS</u> "The Room"		
WEDNESDAY 06/03 by 9pm	DUE: "The Room" Uploaded to D2L		DUE: "The Room" Uploaded to D2L
WEEK TEN THURSDAY 06/04	<u>SCREENINGS & CRITIQUE</u> "The Room"		DUE: Group Evaluations
FINAL EXAM PERIOD*** THURSDAY 06/11 1:30-4:45pm	<u>EXAM</u> Final Exam		EXAM: Final Exam

Note On Requirements (and the Syllabus in General)

This syllabus is subject to change as necessary during the quarter. If a change occurs, it will be thoroughly addressed during class and posted on D2L. AS A MEMBER OF THIS CLASS, YOU ARE REQUIRED TO KNOW AND FOLLOW THE GUIDELINES SET FORTH ON THE TOTALITY OF THIS SYLLABUS. These guidelines are established to ensure all students know what is expected of them, and so all students are treated equally by being held to the same standards.

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. Students complete the evaluation online in [CampusConnect](#).

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

This course will be subject to the university's academic integrity policy. More information can be found at <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/>. If you have any questions be sure to consult with your professor.

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 at: <http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/PoliciesandProcedures.aspx>

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: csd@depaul.edu.

Lewis Center 1420, 25 East Jackson Blvd.

Phone number: (312)362-8002

Fax: (312)362-6544

TTY: (773)325.7296

Course Policies as Suggested by the Dean of Students Office

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 Attendance & Participation drops one-third (50pts) 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.