
DC 423

Pre-Production for Cinema

(Winter 2016)

14 E Jackson Room 210
(THUR 5:45PM – 9:00PM)

Assistant Professor: Tim Peterne
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Office: CDM 471
Office Hours: Thur 11 am- 2pm

Course Description

This course will cover the pre-production phase of short and feature-length filmmaking, including fundraising, breaking down scripts, scheduling, budgeting and pre-visualizing. Professional scheduling, budgeting and pre-visualization software will be utilized. Additionally, the roles of the creative producer, line producer and assistant director will be examined.

Prerequisite(s): DC 210 or DC 460 or DC 409

Course Goals

The purpose of this class is to introduce the student to the key steps in pre-production, focusing on the following objectives for the quarter:

1. Students will learn the role of the creative producer in the areas of story rights acquisition, project packaging, and film finance.
2. Students will learn how to schedule a screenplay by lining a script, creating breakdown sheets, schedule production boards and DOOD.
3. Students will develop an understanding of film budgeting such that they will be able to confidently analyze and build a budget.
4. Students will analyze the roles of the line producer, 1st AD, and other key crew on a production.

Course Overview

This class will consist of a hybrid of lectures, lab workshops, assignments, and guest speakers. Each week the class will have a power point lecture covering the topics off the syllabus and readings. During the quarter the class will have lab workshops to work on the scheduling and budgeting assignments on the Movie Magic software. There will be guest speakers either on Skype or in-class to discuss the software and or their particular area of expertise. The guest speakers are TBD subject to their schedule and availability.

Class Schedule

Note: This schedule is subject to change.

Week 1 January 7

Introduction to Pre-Production for Cinema & each other.

Review syllabus and class requirements.

Lecture: LLC's, Rights Acquisitions, Offers, & Options.

Reading: Planning the Low-Budget Film - Intro, Chapters 1

Week 2 January 14

Lecture: Film Packaging, Talent Offers, Film Finance

Reading: Planning the Low-Budget Film - Chapters 2,3,5

Assignment: Read & Visualize Class Workshop Screenplay (Due 1/21)

NOTE: Bring two color highlighters, pencil, and ruler to next class.

Week 3 January 21

Lecture: Scheduling the Film, The Shooting Sequence, Lining the Script.

Workshop: In-Class Lining of Class Workshop Screenplay.

Reading: Planning the Low-Budget Film - Chapter 6

Assignment: Finish Lining the Class Workshop Screenplay (due 1/28)

Week 4 January 28

Lecture: Intro. Movie Magic Scheduling, Breaking Down the Script.

TDB Workshop: Create Breakdown Sheets from Lined Class Workshop Screenplay.

Reading: Planning The Low-Budget Film – Chapters 4,7,8,9

Week 5 February 4

Midterm Quiz

Lecture: Scheduling the Board, Locations, Creating the Day-Out-Of Days.

TDB Workshop: Cont. Breakdown Sheets from Lined Screenplay.

Reading: Planning the Low-Budget Film - Chapters 12,13,14,15

Assignment: Finish Breakdown Sheets from Lined Class Workshop Screenplay (Due 2/11)

Week 6 February 11

Lecture: Intro. To Movie Magic Budgeting, The Top Sheet, Above The Line.

TBD Workshop: Create A Production Board Schedule for Class Workshop Screenplay & DOOD.

Reading: Planning the Low-Budget Film - Chapter 16

Week 7 February 18

Graded Breakdown Sheets Returned.

Lecture: Budgeting Production - The Shooting Period.

TBD Workshop: Cont. on Production Board Schedule & DOOD.

Reading: Planning the Low-Budget Film - Chapter 17

Assignment: Finish Creating A Production Board Schedule & DOOD (Due 2/25)

Week 8 February 25

Lecture: Budgeting Post Production

TBD Workshop: Begin Working on Finals Project.

Reading: Planning the Low-Budget Film - Chapters 18,19, 20

Week 9 March 3

Graded Production Boards & DOOD returned.

Lecture: Budgeting, Other Expense, Tracking The Film's Progress,

TBD Workshop: Cont. Working on Finals Project.

Reading: Class Handouts

Week 10 March 190

Lecture: Pre-Visualization, Final Thoughts.

TBD Workshop: Cont. Working on Finals Project.

Week 11 Thursday, March 17

Finals Project Workshop

Evaluation

Midterm Quiz	15%
Scheduling Assignments	25%
Budgeting Assignments	25%
Finals Project	25%
Class Participation	10%

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. A indicates excellence, B indicates good work, C indicates satisfactory work, D indicates unsatisfactory work, and F is a failure to demonstrate an understanding of course concepts.

Textbooks

Required Text

Planning The Low-Budget Film (2nd Edition), Robert Latham Brown

Recommended Text

The Complete Film Production Handbook (4th Edition) Eve Light Honthaner

Recommended Software

Movie Magic Scheduling

Movie Magic Budgeting

Course Policies

Attendance: Classroom attendance is MANDATORY. More than one “excused” absence (doctor’s note, Bears game, etc) will result in a lowering of grade per each absence.

Deadlines: Strict Adherence to deadlines is expected. Materials presented or posted late will result in a negative grade for the particular assignment.

Other: Screenings, script readings, and handouts as assigned by the instructor TBD per class.

School policies:

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!

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:

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)325.729

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.

