

DC 222 Classic Hollywood Film Structure

DC 222-501 (In-Class) and DC 221-510 (Online)

Summer 2016

Time: M/W 1330-1645

Campus: Loop

Room: 14EAS 214

Instructor: Ronald Eltanal (Associate Professor), MFA-University of Southern California

Office: CDM 501

Office Hour: See CDM Website

Phone: (312) 362-7309

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Course Description

A critical analysis of three-act film structure as well as an introduction to alternative narrative structures including, but not limited to, dual protagonist, ensemble, and non-linear structures. Films of various genres and eras will be examined. Students will develop a cinematic language with which to discuss films as well as a toolbox of techniques to use when making films.

Prerequisites

None

Learning Domain Description

DC 222 Classic Hollywood Film Structure is included in the Liberal Studies program as a course with credit in the Arts and Literature domain. Courses in the Arts and Literature domain ask students to extend their knowledge and experience of the arts while developing their critical and reflective abilities. In these courses, students interpret and analyze particular creative works, investigate the relations of form and meaning, and through critical and/or creative activity, come to better understand the original audience that witnessed a work of art and how its meaning and significance changes over time. These courses focus on works of art or literature, however the process of analysis may include social, cultural, and historical issues. Genres covered in this domain include literature, the visual arts, media arts, the performing arts, music, and theater.

Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:

- Explain, in well-written prose, what a work of art is about and/or how it was produced
 - Articulate and explain the “content” of that work and/or its methodology of production.
- Comment on the relationship between form and content in a work.
 - How does the 14-line sonnet both enable and inhibit its practitioner, for example?
 - What are the generic expectations of a particular form?
 - How does an artist complicate, enrich, or subvert such expectations?
- Assess the formal aspects of their subject and put those qualities into words, using, when appropriate, specialized vocabulary employed in class and readings.
- Contextualize a work of art.
 - Do so with respect to other works of art in terms of defining its place within a broader style or genre.
 - Contextualize a work of art in terms of contemporaneous aesthetic, social, or political concerns, discussing how these might shape the work’s reception and how that reception might differ amongst various peoples and historical periods.

How Learning Outcomes Will Be Met: Weekly responses to films, a midterm, and a final paper will assess and develop student learning across these objectives.

Writing Expectations: A minimum of 5-7 pages of writing for courses in the Arts and Literature domain (including studio courses) is required. This class requires a minimum of 8 pages in response papers, and a final paper of 5-7 pages.

Course Management System – D2L

Software (if required)

None

Textbooks and Printed Resources

Required Texts:

All required texts will be provided online as PDFs. See “Content” on D2L to download.

- Daniel Handout
- Field Handout
- Snyder Handout
- Vogler Handout
- Hard Eight Screenplay
- Coherence Handout

Recommended:

Screenplay by Syd Field

Save the Cat by Blake Snyder

The Writer’s Journey by Christopher Vogler

The Hero With a Thousand Faces by Joseph Campbell

Grading

Grading Scale

A: 93-100, A-: 90-92, B+: 87-89, B: 83-86, B-: 80-82, C+: 77-79, C: 73-76, C-: 70-72, D+: 67-69, D: 63-66, D-: 60-62

Discussion Response Papers: 40 %

Midterm Exam: 25%

Final Paper: 35%

Course Assignments

LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Discussion Question Response Papers:

After each film, a set of discussion questions will be posted under "Dropbox" on D2L. Write a minimum one-page (250 words total for ALL questions, and I will check word count) response paper, and upload the .doc or .pdf to D2L. There will be a total of eight of these assignments in the course.

For online students ONLY, a “secret phrase” will be given at some point of the lecture or discussion on the class prior to the response paper’s due date. Failure to include the secret phrase will result in a grade deduction for the paper. The point of the secret phrase is to ensure that online students watch and listen to the entire lecture and discussion, as if they were in class. If you cannot find the secret phrase, you may be multitasking and should try focusing on only the class recording. Hence, I will not provide the phrase (as I would not give the answer to a midterm question).

DO NOT SHARE THE SECRET PHRASE WITH YOUR CLASSMATES. Doing so constitutes cheating, and will result in a 0 for the assignment. To discourage cheating, I will give extra credit to any student who forwards me e-mail or any such missive soliciting cheating.

Discussion question responses are due on the class after they are assigned.

Midterm Exam:

There will be a midterm exam. Online students will have the option of attending the midterm in the regularly scheduled class, or will need to schedule a proctored midterm (an e-mail with details on the midterm for online students will be forthcoming). Please let me know if you need any exam accommodations (for example, if you are working with DePaul's Center for Students with Disabilities), as soon as possible. Makeups will only be allowed for excused absences.

Analysis Paper:

In lieu of a final, you will write an analysis paper, 5-7 pages long. The prompt for the final paper will be posted on D2L's Dropbox.

Course Policies (Class Attendance, Participation and E-mail)

For In-Class Students only: No Electronics. As with several writers' rooms in the Industry, no computing or mobile telephony devices may be used in class. Lecture notes and presentations will be posted on D2L. If you wish to take notes, you may use the Luddite tools of pen/pencil and paper/notebook. Talk to an elder if you don't know what these are.

E-mail: I will respond to e-mails on the next business day from which you send the e-mail (if you e-mail on Friday, I will not respond until Monday).

Attendance and Participation: For In-Class Students only: Although class discussion is not an official component of your grade, it affects my memory of you during grading, and may affect your final grade. Attend class and participate as much as you can (it is the Point of College).

Comedy: As Paul Thomas Anderson said, "You have to put on a good show first." In order to increase class engagement, I may employ comedic techniques. As with any attempts at comedy, there is inherent risk of offense. If you are offended by any comedic or other comments made by me, please accept my apology in advance, and talk to me as soon as possible. It will certainly not affect your grade or your esteem in my eyes; in fact, I will think more highly of your pluckiness.

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.

Week-by-week Assignments/Readings

Class 1

July 18

Topic: Drama; Dual Protagonists

Screen in class: *About a Boy*

Assignment: *About a Boy* Response Paper

Class 2

July 20

Topic: Structure and Frank Daniel

Screen in class: *Raiders of the Lost Ark*

Read: Daniel handout

Assignment: *Raiders of the Lost Ark* Response Paper

Class 3

July 25

Topic: Structure and Syd Field

Screen in class: *Chinatown*

Read: Field handout

Assignment: *Chinatown* Response Paper

Class 4

July 27

Topic: Structure and Joseph Campbell

Screen in class: *Whiplash*

Read: Vogler handout

Assignment: *Whiplash* Response Paper

Class 5

August 1

Topic: Structure and Blake Snyder

Screen in class: *When Harry Met Sally*

Read: Snyder handout

Assignment: *When Harry Met Sally* Response Paper

Class 6

August 3

When Harry Met Sally Discussion

MIDTERM EXAM

Class 7

August 8

Topic: Character and Psychology

Screen in class: *Babadook*

Assignment: *Babadook* Response Paper

Class 8

August 10

Topic: Writing without a Script

Screen: *Coherence*

Read: James Ward Byrkit interview on "The Dissolve"

Assignment: *Coherence* Response Paper

Class 9

August 15

Topic: Multiple Stories

Screen: *21 Grams*

Assignment: *21 Grams* Response Paper

Class 10

August 17

Topic: Greatest Films/Screenplays of All Time?
Screen: *All About Eve*

FINAL PAPER:

Final Paper Due to D2L, before Monday, August 22, at 1:30 PM

College Policies

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: cdm.depaul.edu/enrollment.

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

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