

DC 210-401 Digital Cinema Production 1
Fall 2016/17
Mondays and Wednesdays 11:50AM - 1:20PM
14 East Jackson LL107

Instructor: Josh Wolff

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Office: CDM 434

Office Hours: M T TH 10:55am - 11:40am W 11:00am - 11:45am

Summary of the Course

This course is a beginning workshop in narrative film production. This course will explore the fundamentals of production including: organization and preparation, camera and lens technology, composition, lighting, cinematography, sound recording, and directing. Utilizing digital technology, students will work together to produce several films with an emphasis on visual storytelling and personal expression.

PREREQUISITE: DC 220 Editing 1 – editing software is not taught in DC 210

Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:

- Describe the roles, responsibilities, and hierarchy of a working film production.
- Explain the language of film and video.
- Employ basic shooting and editing techniques to express a story visually.
- Create a finished short film using video cameras, lights, sound equipment, and non-linear editing programs.

Textbooks and Readings

On Directing Film David Mamet

The Filmmaker's Handbook Ascher and Pincus

Additional assigned readings provided by the instructor

COURSE MATERIALS TO BE OBTAINED BY THE STUDENT:

A portable Firewire, USB 3, or Thunderbolt drive for editing

SOFTWARE NEEDED TO COMPLETE ASSIGNMENTS:

Word Processing Program for written assignments

Computer/reliable internet access and D2L

Editing software, Premiere preferred, either at home or in a lab at school to edit assignments

GRADING

Grades will be given for each assignment. This class requires a time commitment outside of class hours. Please make a note of production weeks and in-class exercises.

Late work will not be accepted.

Grade Breakdown:

Attendance and Active Participation (in-class and group work) 20%

Frame It - Still Photo (Individual) 10%

Group Lighting Assignment 10%

Documentary 15%

48-Hour Midterm 15%

Casting Video 5%

Pre-Production Packet Final Narrative Project 5%

Final Narrative Project 20%

GROUP EVALUATIONS:

Most of the assignments in this class will require you to work in a team. Group/Self evaluations are due at the time of the final screening of each project. These evaluations will be HEAVILY factored into your grade for attendance and participation.

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.

STANDARDS FOR ACHIEVEMENT:

Grade A:

Student performs in an outstanding way. Student exhibits achievement and craftsmanship in all work. Design criteria are exceeded and student challenges him/herself in project design. Student exhibits commitment to expanding ideas, vocabulary and performance.

Grade B:

Student performs beyond the requirement of the project. Student exhibits above average progress and craftsmanship. A design criterion is exceeded. Student exhibits above average interest in expanding ideas, vocabulary, and performance.

Grade C:

Criteria of assignment are met, and all requirements are fulfilled. Student shows average quality work and minimum time and effort on projects. Student shows moderate interest.

Grade D:

Student performance is uneven and below average. Requirements for projects are only partially fulfilled. Minimal interest is shown and attendance, participation and involvement are inadequate.

Grade F

Student fails to meet minimum course requirements and shows no interest. Levels of participation and craftsmanship are extremely poor. Student's attendance is inadequate.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES – Each student is responsible for his/her time management and meeting the expectations in the syllabus. The instructor is not responsible for reminding students of assignment deadlines in class. In the event of an absence it is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor for details of the homework if 'assignment' is listed on the syllabus – you are still responsible for completing the assignment on time.

DEADLINES – Media production requires strict adherence to deadlines, therefore 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. Do not use class time to finalize your projects. All assignments are due BEFORE CLASS.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS: Must be typed.

DIGITAL ASSIGNMENTS: All assignments handed in digitally must have a slate with your name and title of assignment.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS: If you have any special considerations please see the instructor.

BACK UP YOUR WORK: Failure of computer software and/or hardware will not be accepted as an extenuating circumstance for late projects or incomplete grades so back up your work daily.

WORKING IN GROUPS – For Production Assignments in this course you will be working in groups. A major component of film production is teamwork. In this course many of you will be working as a creative team for the first time. Most student teams work very well together. But sometimes personality conflicts or creative conflicts can arise. It is your job as a team to work through these conflicts, because if you don't, your project will suffer. If things get really difficult you can come to me as a team and I will help mediate/resolve the situation.

ATTENDANCE – Attendance and attention in class are mandatory. Any absence (missing more than 15 minutes of class time per session) will impact your grade. Anyone who misses 3 classes will automatically drop a letter grade. Anyone who misses 4 classes can automatically fail.

ILLNESS – Please 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, absences may be excused and extensions may be granted. Every situation will be handled according to individual circumstance at the instructor's discretion. Absolutely no consideration will be given for those who request special treatment without advanced notice, even with a doctor's note.

SCREENS – Using computers, tablets or phones during class time is not allowed. Stow your phones in your bags. If I see them out I will ask you to put them away.

READING ASSIGNMENTS – The assigned readings offer an opportunity for independent learning that supplements the lectures. Lectures will introduce material not available in the readings, and the readings will explore concepts not mentioned in class.

FINAL FILMS & PRESENTATIONS

Students who are not prepared to present during the regularly scheduled time will receive a failing grade for the final unless they have contacted the instructor in advance to arrange to present early. Students contacting the instructor after the final presentation will not be allowed to make-up the points for any reason.

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. I 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. I will partner with the Dean of Students Office to assist in managing such issues.

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.

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 -- 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

Week by Week Outline

Week 1 9/7

In-Class:

- Introduction to students, syllabus & course goals
- Shot selection (shot sizes, angles)
- Storyboards and pre-visualization

Assignment:

- Shoot "Frame it" still exercise (individual) - Due Week 2, Monday 9/12 before class

Read for next class:

- Ascher & Pincus Chapter 1, 2
- Crew Position Handout

Week 2 9/12

DUE:

- "Frame it" still exercise

In-Class:

- The filmmaking process
- Core Production Roles
- Camera functions (Set-up, White Balance, Focus, Iris, Depth of Field)
- Principles of Cinematography
 - o Lenses / Depth of Field
 - o Camera Movement
 - o Continuity and the 180 degree rule
- Hands-on Camera

Assignment:

- Buy and bring gloves to next class

Read:

- Ascher & Pincus Chapters 3, 4

9/14

In-Class:

- Lighting Aesthetics, Types of Lights, controlling light, safety
 - o Character, Environment and Mood
 - o Three-Point Lighting set ups
- Bring Gloves
- Hands-on Camera and Lighting

Assignment:

- Group Lighting Project - Due Week 3, Monday 9/19 before class

Read:

- Ascher & Pincus Chapters 9, 12, 14

Week 3 9/19

DUE:

- Group Lighting Project

In-Class:

- Sound Aesthetics and Recording techniques
- Assign Groups for Documentary Project

Assignment:

- The Documentary - Due Week 4, Monday 9/26 before class

Read:

- Ascher & Pincus Chapters 10, 11

9/21

In-Class:

- Development
 - Treatment writing
 - Visual characters
 - Story/Plot
- Pre-production package
 - Breakdowns
 - Scheduling, Overheads, Shot Lists, Locations, etc.

Assignment:

- Work on Documentary Project - Due Week 4, Monday 9/26 before class
- Start brainstorming ideas for Narrative Project

Read:

- Ascher & Pincus Chapters 13, 15

Week 4 9/26

DUE:

- Documentary Project

In-Class:

- Screen Documentaries
- Directing: Casting, Working with Actors, Rehearsals
- In Class Demo: Breakdown Express
- Discuss Final Narrative Project and Select Groups

Assignment:

- Final Narrative Film Treatment & Pitch - Due Week 5, Monday 10/3 before class

9/28

In-Class:

- Development and Treatment Writing Meetings with groups for pitch

Assignment:

- Final Narrative Film Treatment & Pitch - Due Week 5, Monday 10/3 before class

Week 5 10/3

DUE:

- Final Narrative Film Treatment & Pitch

In-Class:

- Pitch Final Films
- Writing the Short Screenplay, Formatting, Tips, etc.

Assignment:

- Final Narrative Film Script Draft I - Due Week 6, Monday 10/10 before class

10/5

In-Class:

- The Short Film
- Pre-Production Meetings with Groups and work on Scripts

Assignment:

- Final Narrative Film Script Draft I - Due Week 6, Monday 10/10 before class

Week 6 10/10

DUE:

- Final Narrative Film Script Draft I

In-Class:

- Review
- Feedback on Draft I Scripts
- Pre-Production Meetings with Groups and work on Scripts

Read:

- Mamet Chapters 1, 2

10/12

In-Class:

- Feedback on Draft I Scripts
- Mamet
- Pre-Production Meetings with Groups and work on Scripts

Assignment:

- Final Narrative Film Scripts Draft II - Due Week 7, Wednesday 10/19 before class

FRIDAY 10/14 @ 12pm MIDTERM 48 Hour Film Project DUE 12pm SUNDAY 10/16

Week 7 10/17

In-Class:

- Screen Midterm Projects
- Group work on Pre-Production Packet

Assignment:

- Final Narrative Film Scripts Draft II - Due Week 7, Wednesday 10/19 before class

10/19

DUE:

- Final Narrative Film Scripts Draft II

In-Class:

- Pre-Production Meetings with Groups
- Directing styles and tips

Assignment:

- Pre-Production Packets Final Narrative Film - Due week 9, Monday 10/31 before class
- Casting Session Videos - Due Week 9, Monday 10/31 before class

Week 8 10/24

In-Class:

- Pre-Production Meetings with Groups
- More Short Films

Assignment:

- Pre-Production Packets Final Narrative Film - Due week 9, Monday 10/31
- Casting Session Videos - Due Week 9, Monday 10/31

10/26

In-Class:

- Production Trouble-shooting roundtable
- Prepare for Casting sessions
- Review/Revise Pre-Production Packets

Assignment:

- Casting Session Videos - Due Week 9, Monday 10/31
- Pre-Production Packets Final Narrative Film - Due week 9, Monday 10/31

Week 9 10/31

DUE:

- Casting Session Videos
- Pre-Production Packets Final Narrative Film

In-Class:

- Meetings with Final Narrative Film groups
- Continuity editing vs Elliptical editing

Assignments:

- Final Film Rough Cut I - Due Week 10, Wednesday 11/9 before class

11/2

In-Class:

- Review any remaining Casting Videos
- Editing and Post-Production Workflow, Film Festivals, Digital Platforms, Distribution

- If time, meet with Final Narrative Film Group to go over shooting schedule

Assignments:

- Rough Cut I of Final Film - Due Week 10, Wednesday 11/9 before class

Week 10 11/7

In-Class:

- Meet with Final Narrative Film Groups/Edit Films if already shot

Assignment:

- Rough Cut I of Final Film - Due Week 10, Wednesday 11/9 before class

11/9

DUE:

- Final Film Rough Cut I

In-Class:

- Critique Rough Cut I

Assignment:

- Rough Cut II of Final Film - Due Week 11, Monday 11/14 before class

Week 11 11/14

DUE:

- Rough Cut II of Final Film

In-Class:

- Critique Rough Cut II

Assignment:

- Final Narrative Film Project FINAL CUT - Due Week 12, Monday 11/21 @ 11:30

****FINAL** 11/21 11:30pm - 1:45pm**

DUE:

- FINAL NARRATIVE PROJECT FINAL CUTS
- Should be submitted to D2L Dropbox before class as well as bring .mov of film into class

ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY. Missing final class will result in a grade of "F" on Narrative Project.