

DC100 Intro to Cinema: The Art of Making Movies

Fall Quarter 2016

Section 102: Mon/Weds, 2:40-4:10 pm, Levan 305

Section 111: Online only

Instructor: Kevin Endres

Office: JTR209 or STDC332

Office hours: 8:00-9:00am, M/Tu and by appointment

Email: kendres@cdm.depaul.edu

Phone: 773-325-7844

Course Description — This lecture-based course will introduce students to the art of cinema from the point of view of the filmmaker. Through screenings of contemporary and classic films, students will gain an appreciation of the various crafts involved in the making of movies, such as: acting, directing, producing, screenwriting, cinematography, production design, editing, sound, or visual effects. This course is not intended for students who plan to major or minor in Digital Cinema. No prerequisites.

Learning Domain Description — DC 100 Introduction to Cinema: The Art of Making Movies 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 — After successful completion of this course students will be able to:

- Understand and discuss film as an artistic medium
- Analyze and discuss the craft and technique of specific members of the filmmaking process (i.e. cinematographer, editor, writer, etc.)
- Analyze and discuss visual communication and storytelling as used by filmmakers

Learning outcomes will be achieved through in-class discussions and exercises as well as four writing assignments, each of which will require students to think critically and analyze a specific aspect of filmmaking in a given film. Students are

expected to write 8 pages this quarter in accordance with the Arts and Literature domain requirement.

Textbook — There is no required textbook for this class. Reading assignments will be made available through D2L.

Online Course Management System — We will use D2L as our online course management system. You can log in at <<https://d2l.depaul.edu>>. Course documents, updates to the course, lecture slides, and important information and news will be posted there.

If you do not turn something in through D2L, *you will not get credit*. Please do not email me any homework assignments or important documents.

Film screenings

All films that we screen will be posted on ColTube, DePaul's video management system, located at <coltube.cdm.depaul.edu>. You may watch the films in their entirety there after logging in with your CampusConnect credentials.

Grading:

Attendance and participation: 10%

Homework assignments: 50%

Midterm quiz: 15%

Comprehensive quiz: 25%

Grade scale:

93 - 100: A

90 - 92: A -

87 - 89: B +

83 - 86: B

80 - 82: B -

77 - 79: C +

73 - 76: C

70 - 72: C -

67 - 69: D +

60 - 66: D

Standards for Achievement:

Grade A:

Student performs in an outstanding way. Student exhibits achievement and craftsmanship in all work. Criteria are exceeded and student challenges him/herself in project development. 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 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.

Homework — All homework must be submitted via D2L on the Dropbox page. The dropboxes where you submit your assignments close automatically so *no late work will be accepted*. Technical difficulties are not acceptable excuses for not turning in your assignments on time.

- Homework assignments will be two page response papers on the lecture topics and screenings. The goal of the responses is for you to *demonstrate that you understand the topics covered in class and can apply them to the films we watch*. This means you should use vocabulary/concepts/points from the lectures and readings in your responses. Do not simply summarize the film or the lecture.
- For every assignment, some suggested response topics will be posted in the dropbox where the assignment is due. You are free to come up with your own prompt if the suggested ones don't appeal to you, as long as you write about the films and concepts we're covering in class. Please only write about one film per assignment. A rubric and example of an A paper will be posted on D2L.
- Your assignments should be typed, double spaced, 12 point font, and preferably Georgia or Times New Roman typeface.
- They should be two *full* pages (not 1 1/2 pages and not 2 1/2 pages).
- You *must* submit your assignments as Word Docs or PDFs. No other file types can be processed by D2L. ****Do NOT submit .pages documents.****
- Your homework assignments should follow formal writing conventions. You will lose points for spelling and grammar mistakes or for unclear, vague writing. Your paragraphs should be cohesive and focused.

- Do NOT simply summarize the plot of the film or of a given scene. You must have an analysis or interpretation and use elements from the film to support it.
- You are *forbidden* from using the following words in your homeworks: “interesting,” “literally,” and “actually.” These meaningless words are weeds in the English language. See my in-class rant for more details.

Writing Help— Because half of your final grade comes from writing assignments, I *strongly* encourage all students to make use of the University Center for Writing-based Learning (aka The Writing Center). It is a free service provided by the University that will help ensure your assignments are of the highest quality. To learn more about what they offer, visit their website: <http://condor.depaul.edu/writing/what/Writing%20Center/wc.html>

Notes:

-All lectures will be recorded and available on D2L. They should be posted about two hours after the class period ends on Mondays and Wednesdays, i.e. 6pm-ish.

-*****Online students** have three discussion post assignments that will make up the participation portion of their grade.*** See the weekly schedule below.

-*****Online students** are required to send me an email before **9/14** to show that you actually read the syllabus. All you need to do is type the title of your favorite movie in the body or subject of the email.***

-All lecture slides will be posted to D2L as PDFs. Clips and other media files used in class will be made available for download on D2L as well.

-All readings will be available on D2L on the Content page under the week they are assigned.

Last day to withdraw (without penalty): 9/20/2016

Last day to withdraw (with penalty): 10/25/2016

Weekly schedule

Week 1

09/07 — Syllabus, Introductions, Cinema overview

Reading: *Story* introduction by Robert McKee (**DUE 09/14**)

Week 2

9/12 — Screen: *American Movie* (Chris Smith, 1999, 107 minutes)

9/14 — Screenwriting

Reading: “Best Job in the World” excerpt by Sidney Lumet (**Due 09/19**)

Online students: Discussion post and replies about reading (**DUE 09/19**)

Week 3

9/19 — Directing

9/21 — Screen: *Vertigo* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1960, 128 minutes)

Reading: *A Free Replay* by Chris Marker (**DUE 09/26**)

Reading: Cinematography excerpt by Sydney Lumet (**Due 09/26**)
Homework 1: Directing, Screenwriting, *Vertigo* (**DUE 09/26**)

Week 4

9/26 – Cinematography

9/28 – Screen: *The Fall* (Tarsem Singh, 2006, 117 minutes)

Reading: “Art Direction and Clothes” excerpt by Sidney Lumet (**DUE 10/03**)

Week 5

10/3 – Mise-en-scène/Production design

10/5 – Screen: *Mad Max: Fury Road* (George Miller, 2015, 120 minutes)

Reading: *In the Blink of an Eye* excerpts by Walter Murch (**DUE 10/10**)

Online students: Discussion post and replies about the reading (**DUE 10/10**)

Homework 2: Cinematography, Mise-en-scène, *The Fall*, *Mad Max* (**DUE 10/10**)

Week 6

10/10 – Editing

10/12 – Screen: *We Need to Talk About Kevin* (Lynne Ramsay, 2011, 112 minutes)

Reading: “Sound of Music” excerpt by Sidney Lumet (**Due 10/17**)

Midterm quiz: On D2L (**Opens 10/14 at noon, Due 10/17 at 2:40pm**)

Week 7

10/17 – Sound design and music

10/19 – Screen: *WALL-E* (Andrew Stanton, 2008, 98 minutes)

Reading: Intro excerpt from *New History of Documentary* (**DUE 10/24**)

Online students: Discussion post and replies about the reading (**DUE 10/24**)

Week 8

10/24 – Documentary

10/26 – **Screen:** *The Act of Killing* (Joshua Oppenheimer, 2012, 115 minutes)

Reading: New Wave excerpt by David Cook (**DUE 11/2**)

Homework 3: Editing, Sound, Documentary, *We Need to Talk About Kevin*, *Wall-E*, *Act of Killing* (**DUE 10/31**)

Week 9

10/31 – **Screen:** something spooky...

11/2 – New Wave and Independent cinema

Reading: TBD

Week 10

11/7 – **Screen:** *Breathless* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1960, 90 minutes) or *Killer of Sheep* (Charles Burnett, 1978, 83 minutes)

11/9 – Experimental, nontraditional, and art cinema

Homework 4: Documentary, New Wave/Indy, Experimental, *Act of Killing*, *Spooky film*, *Breathless* (DUE 11/14)

Week 11

11/14 — **Screen:** *Chungking Express* (Wong Kar-Wai, 1994, 102 minutes)

Comprehensive final quiz (DUE 11/21 at 11:59pm)

Quiz will be open on D2L from Friday, *November 18th at noon to Monday, November 21st at 4:45 pm* (which is the end of our scheduled exam period were we to have an in-person final exam).

****Note**:** Course content, assignments, screenings, and due dates are subject to change at any time. Any changes will be communicated clearly in class, on D2L, or by email. As such, it is important for you to read emails and come to class to stay apprised of any changes to the syllabus. The most current version of the syllabus will always be available via D2L.

My policies

Attendance — *For in class students:* Attendance is mandatory for *all* class periods. After three absences, each unexcused absence will reduce your final grade by one whole letter. More than five absences will result in an automatic failing grade.

If you are more than 15 minutes late or if you leave more than 15 minutes before the end of class you will be considered absent. If you come in late, please let me know after class so you aren't accidentally marked absent.

*****Online students** are required to view recordings of *all lectures*. You can watch the films directly on ColTube.*** Not watching a lecture will affect your participation grade.

Sleeping — Do not sleep in class. Just don't do it. If you sleep for more than 15 minutes you will be considered absent.

Participation — Do participate in class. Just do it. We'll all have more fun if everyone contributes to the conversations.

Respect — Please be respectful of everyone's opinions, tastes, and beliefs. We do not have to agree on everything but we should be able to discuss anything civilly. This is not the comments section of YouTube.

Please respect the films we'll watch, some of which have mature themes and situations. During screenings, please do not talk and keep all comments/observations to yourself.

Email — The best way to contact me is through email. I usually respond to emails received Monday through Friday within 24 hours. Emails received Saturdays and Sundays may not be returned until Monday.

Computer and cell phone use — Computers, cell phones, and tablets may NOT be used during class. If you have a documented learning need or disability that requires you to use a laptop, exceptions will be made. Otherwise, no screens in class. Computer or cell phone use will affect your participation grade.

All phones must be kept *silent*. Please do not have a phone that is constantly buzzing in your backpack.

I understand that emergencies happen and you may need to be available by phone. If that's the case, please tell me at the start of class if you know you may need to take a call. In any event, if you do need to use your phone during class please step outside quietly and answer your phone in the hallway. *There is no such thing as a text message emergency.*

Grade disputes — Any disputes or challenges to an assignment's grade must be made in writing (email is fine) within 48 hours of receiving your grade. You must state why you are challenging the grade and provide evidence to support your claim. Challenges to your final grade should follow the University's policy on grade challenges, which can be found in the student handbook:
<http://www.depaul.edu/university-catalog/academic-handbooks/undergraduate/undergraduate-academic-policies/Pages/challenges-to-grades.aspx>

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

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.

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 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

TTY: (773)325.7296

Incompletes — Students can read about requesting or receiving an incomplete grade at <http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/Grading-Policies.aspx>

Excused absences — Students can read about the procedures for getting an excused absence at <http://offices.depaul.edu/student-affairs/support-services/academic/Pages/absence-notification.aspx>