

# **DePaul University School of Cinematic Arts**

## **DC 221 502/511: Film Structure for Majors**

Winter 2017/18

W 1:30-4:45 PM, 14 East Jackson LL105 and Online

Professor Anna Hozian: ahozian@depaul.edu, 312-362-5624

Office Hours: W 11:30-1:00 PM and TH 1:30 to 3:00PM in CDM 463

### **Summary of Course:**

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.

### **Learning Outcomes**

- Students will develop a solid understanding of the relationship between character and story structure.
- Students will be able to identify the various narrative tools available to filmmakers in the writing and producing process.
- Students will develop a cinematic vocabulary with which to discuss films critically.

PREREQUISITE(S): NONE

### **Outcomes:**

One eight-to-ten page paper and four short essays (three-to-four pages) will assess and develop student learning across the objectives above. Assignments will be drawn from the films screened in and out of class, course lectures, and the reading material posted online.

### **Course Management:**

This course is housed and managed on **D2L**, where both the online and in-class sections are linked together. There, you will find each week's recorded lecture (available shortly after 6 PM each day that the in-class section meets), required reading material, and all of your assignments. Also posted on D2L will be a weekly discussion forum for questions and thoughts concerning the films, the lectures, and assignments.

The films screened in class, as well as those which require individual viewing, are available on **ColTube** – an online DePaul video player available for Mac and PC.

<http://coltube.cdm.depaul.edu/ColTube/Home/>

### **Schedule:**

#### **Character and Three-Act Structure**

Week One, January 3rd, 2018: Course intro. Three-Act Structure overview. Direct/Indirect Conflict.

Screening in Class: *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*  
Assignment: Watch *Mean Girls*

Week Two, January 10th, 2018: Focus on character intros and development across three acts.  
Read: *Glossary, Screenwriting Tools, What is a Screenplay, Classic Screenplay Structure*  
Screen in Class: *Lars and the Real Girl*  
Assignment: *Short Essay (750 to 1000 words) - DUE Tuesday, January 16th by 11:59PM.*

### **The Hero's Journey**

Week Three, January 17th, 2018: The Hero's Journey Part I, plus discussion of exposition.  
Read: *Structure and Character, Schechter on Character*  
Screen: *The Silence of the Lambs*  
Assignment: Watch *Gladiator*

Week Four, January 24th, 2018: The Hero's Journey Part II, plus dramatic irony, suspense, mystery, and a perfect ending.  
Read: *Vogler: The Writer's Journey, J. Campbell*  
Screen: *Moon*  
Assignment: *Short Essay (750 to 1000 words) - DUE Tuesday, January 30th at 11:59PM.*

### **The Sequence Approach and Save the Cat**

Week Five, January 31st, 2018: Introduction to Sequences, plus plant and payoff.  
Read: *Gulino on Sequences, , Howard On Sequences*  
Screen: *Thelma and Louise*  
Watch: TDB

Week Six, February 7th, 2018: Save the Cat  
Read: *Save the Cat Intro* by Snyder  
Screen: *The Incredibles*  
Assignment: *Short Essay (750 to 1000 words) - DUE Tuesday, February 13th at 11:59PM.*

### **Ensemble Films**

Week Seven, February 14th, 2018: Ensemble Films and theme  
Read: *Willis and LoBrutto on DTRT*  
Screen: *Love, Actually* (independently)  
Assignment: Watch *Do The Right Thing*

### **Alternative Narrative, Adaptation, and the Anti-Hero**

Week Eight, February 21st, 2018: Alternative Narrative  
Read: Ghislotti on *Memento, Memento Mori* (short story)  
Screen: *Memento*  
Assignment: *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* and *Short Essay (750 to 1000 words) - DUE Tuesday, February 27th at 11:59PM.*

Week Nine, February 28th, 2018: Adaptation and the Anti-Hero  
Screen: *American Psycho*

Assignment: *Girl with the Dragon Tattoo (Swedish Version)*

Week Ten, Wednesday March 7th, 2018: Wrap-Up

Assignment: FINAL Paper (2000 to 2500 words) - **DUE, Wednesday, March 14th by 11:59PM.**

### **Assignments**

There are five required assignments: Four short essays (750 to 1000 words each) and a FINAL PAPER (2000 to 2500 words)

Assignment 1: Character development and Three-Act structure Essay

Assignment 2: The Hero's Journey Essay

Assignment 3: Sequences Essay

Assignment 4: Ensemble and Theme Essay

FINAL PAPER

### **Grading:**

Attendance and Participation: 20%

Short Essays: 40%

Final Paper: 40%

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** level writing demonstrates accurate, thorough comprehension of the material but also provides a unique take and excellent point of view. It offers clear, creative thought.

**B** level writing demonstrates mostly accurate, mostly thorough comprehension of the material and attempts to provide a creative take or point of view.

**C** level writing is not entirely accurate nor is it comprehensive. It does not present a notable creative approach to discussing the material.

**D** level indicates a serious lack of effort, a total failure to comprehend the material, and no effort toward an original point of view.

**F level writing is a failure to make any attempt.**

Work that contains grammatical errors, misspellings, or generally poor and unclear construction will rarely if ever achieve a grade of **A** or **B** no matter how good the actual thinking presented might be.

Late work will not be accepted.

### **Online Students**

In my experience, students taking courses online tend to fall behind more than those in seated sections. I strongly suggest you keep a rigid schedule when it comes to viewing films, doing the reading, watching the lectures, and completing the assignments. This is not hard course until you fall behind, at which point it becomes incredibly difficult to succeed.

### **Laptops/Cell Phones:**

In the seated section, if your computer and the mind attached to it drift away from class, and I so much as suspect you of online activities not related to the task at hand, you will lose laptop privileges for the entire semester. Phones must be silenced and stowed.

**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 issues arise, a student may be asked to leave the classroom. The professor will work with the Dean of Students Office to navigate such issues.

**Changes to the 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!

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**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:

Autumn Quarter:	Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent winter quarter
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)325.7296