
DC 489

The Motion Picture Industry

(Fall 2018)

14 EAS 105 at Loop Campus
(Weds 5:45 PM – 9:00PM)

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Office Hours: Weds: 2 pm-4pm

Course Description

This course introduces students to the role of the producer in the film business. Students will study organizations crucial to producers such as the studios, talent agencies, and unions. There will be an emphasis on preproduction with a focus on story rights, film packaging, and fund raising.

Course Goals

- Students will become familiar with the importance of a clear chain of title for film distribution and how to option a property.
- Students will analyze the international film market and understand how foreign pre-sales is utilized in non-studio financed films
- Students will be able to analyze studio distribution reports for the purpose of understanding how film revenues are allocated.
- Students will be able to master the concepts of backend participation such as net points, gross points, box office bumps, and deferrals.

Class Schedule

Note: This schedule is subject to change.

Week 1 Wednesday, September 5th

Introduction to Big Picture course and each other. Review syllabus and class requirements.

Lecture: The Role of the Producer.

Reading: *The Movie Business Book 4th Edition – Chapters 1,2, 34, Class Handouts*

Week 2 Wednesday, September 12th

Students Trades Discussions

Lecture: Story Development - COT.

Reading: The Movie Business Book 4th Edition – Chapters 5,6,8. Class Handouts

Week 3 Wednesday, September 19th

Students Trades discussions

Lecture: Film Packaging / Talent Deals

TIFF Tracking Assignment Due.

Reading: The Movie Business Book 4th Edition – Chapters 2, 4, 16. Class Handouts

Week 4 Wednesday, September 26th

Weekly Students Trades discussions

Lecture: Independent Financing.

Reading: The Movie Business Book 4th Edition – Chapters 9,10,15,33,36,37. Class Handouts.

Week 5 Wednesday, October 3rd

Midterm Quiz

Students Trades discussions

Lecture: The Studio System – The Disrupters.

Reading: The Movie Business Book 4th Edition – Chapters 7,12,13,14. Class Handouts

Week 6 Wednesday, October 10th

Students Trades discussions

Lecture: Production (Bonds, Insurance)

Reading: The Movie Business Book 4th Edition – Chapter 18. Class Handouts.

Week 7 Wednesday, October 17th

Students Trades discussions

Lecture: Distribution and Exhibition

Reading: The Movie Business Book 4th Edition – Chapters 24,27,28. Class Handouts.

Week 8 Wednesday, October 24th

Students Trades discussions

Lecture: Revenue Streams (Windows, Studio Accounting)

Reading: The Movie Business Book 4th Edition – Chapters 25,26. Class Handouts.

Week 9 Wednesday, October 31st

Students Trades discussion

Lecture: Film Marketing (P&A)

Film Deck Project Presentations

Reading: The Movie Business Book 4th Edition – Chapters 22, 23, 24

Week 10 Wednesday, November 7th

Students Trades discussions

Lecture: TBD

Film Deck Project Presentations

Week 11

FINALS TEST --- 11/14/2018

Evaluation

Students Trades Discussions	5%
Midterm Quiz	25%
TIFF Tracking Assignment	10%
Finals Test	30%
Film Deck Project	20%
Class Participation & Class Exercises	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 / Kindle Digital Edition

The Movie Business Book 4th Edition, Jason E. Squire

Recommended Text / Kindle Digital Edition

The Big Picture, Edward Jay Epstein

Required Websites

Deadline Hollywood

Hollywood Reporter

Box Office Mojo

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.

Class Assignment Details

Trades Discussions

Evaluation:

This assignment is worth 5% of your final grade.

Assignment Description

Each week the Professor will email 2-3 students to choose a news article from the trades (Deadline Hollywood, Hollywood Reporter, Box Office Mojo etc.) that interests them.

The students will then give a 5-minute presentation approximately at the beginning of class and open it up to discussion with the rest of the students and Professor.

Note: Please email the Professor the night before class a link to the story, and a short paragraph as well why you have chosen it for class discussion.

TIFF Tracking Assignment

Evaluation:

This assignment is worth 15% of your final grade.

Due: September 26^h.

Assignment Description

Over the next two weeks follow the various trades and Internet sites covering film deals at the Toronto Film Festival. Then afterwards write up a two to three double spaced paper summarizing some of the major deals (3-5 films approx.) that occurred at the festival. The paper should include details about what type of films (genre) were picked up and were they first time directors with unknown stars and great reviews / awards or seasoned directors with stars in the film? Who were the major buyers and how many films did they acquire at the festival? Find out any published details about the terms of the distribution deals such as how much did the film sell for, what territories (domestic, international), and any release information (P&A deals) available. Also include any overall impressions from this year's festival such as who were the award winners and did the buyers and critics feel about the quality films at the festival.

Please post paper on D2L under Dropbox section.

MPI Film Deck Project

Due Date

Film Deck Project presentations will be presented to class last two weeks of quarter.

Evaluation

This assignment is worth 20% of your final grade.

Assignment Description

Please partner with another classmate (3 max) and create a “Deck” for a real or virtual independent film project (see worksheet). Students will present their decks in class during a ten-minute presentation approximately, and are allowed to use any form of media (power points, video, etc.) to exhibit their deck.