DC 310 - Digital Cinema Production II Syllabus - Spring 2019 - Brian Mellen

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Office hours: M 12:15pm to 1:15pm Cinespace Camera Vault - **By Appt. Only**
           M 4:30pm to 5:00pm Cinespace Rm. 201

Summary of Course:

This course expands on topics covered in DC 210: Production I. Students will refine their skills in the areas of line-producing, pre-production, cinematography, lighting, sound recording, and post production work flow.

       Prerequisites: DC 215 and DC 275, ideally DC 210 as well

The goal of this course is to help students develop their own individual style and voices as filmmakers through constant practice of the craft on a variety of projects.

Students will collaborate and produce several short films in a manner that mimics industry expectations with highly accelerated timetables. These short film assignments are designed to push students in terms of creativity and project management. Students will engage in repeated and swift pre-production processes, including but not limited to: script workshopping, script breakdowns, budgeting, storyboarding, assembling a crew, location scouting, etc. Every student will be required to serve in a capacity integral to the creation of a film (if not directing, then producing, editing, sound/lighting and shooting).

In a workshop environment, students will also be expected to constructively critique the projects of their classmates and the work of their fellow team members. A highly challenging and rigorous course, this class will require solid time management, teamwork, communication, organization and problem solving skills.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course will:
- Develop essential pre-production materials to support a project
- Ability to produce and complete several short films that demonstrate an understanding of story and genre conventions, technical proficiency, creative ambition and an increasing understanding of camera, editing, lighting and sound aesthetics
- Knowledge of resources and industry infrastructure within Chicago needed to create a professional film
- Knowledge of industry standard budgeting and scheduling software needed to effectively and accurately budget a short film, from pre-pro through post

Suggested Textbooks and printed resources:

Filmmaking in Action: Your Guide to the Skills and Craft, Leipzig, Weiss, Goldman,
      Bedford/St. Martin's, 2015. ISBN 13: 9780312616991

On Directing Film, Mamet, Penguin USA, 1992. ISBN: 978-0140127225

Required Supplies:

You must have your own external drive for your project work for this and other DC classes. The University cannot guarantee that media or projects left on lab computers will be safely maintained.

Portable hard drive (USB 3.0/Thunderbolt)

1 USB 3.0 for project backups

Software needed to complete assignments:

Editing platform - Premiere Pro or other editing software
Celtx, Final Draft, or some kind of screenwriting software

Drop Dates:

Friday, April 5: Last day to add (or swap) classes
Friday, April 12: Last day to drop classes with no penalty
Friday, May 17: Last day to withdraw from classes

Assignments and Grading Opportunities:

Active Participation: 10% (Individual)

Students learn more when they participate in the process of learning, whether it's through discussion, practice, review, or application. Be an active listener, ask relevant question, engage in the class discussion and volunteer to help your classmates' project outside the class.

Professionalism: 10% (Individual)

This should go without saying but you must maintain a professional attitude and decorum toward the instructor as well as your fellow students when working with your group and conducting yourself in class. You may have disagreements during this course but it's important that you communicate your concerns in a respectful manner.

Also, no one in your group is allowed to take over positions that aren't theirs. If this happens it will be addressed with the student directly and will potentially affect your grade in this class. Unless someone in your group asks for help, it's important that you stay focused on your assigned job for each project and avoid interjecting yourself into positions that aren't yours. Doing this in the professional world isn't tolerated on set and could potentially cost your jobs and your reputation. It's important you practice good habits now.

Other inappropriate conduct will not be tolerated and will also be addressed with individual group members if necessary. Try to address concerns with your group members directly, but if needed, the instructor of the course can provide mediation.

Short Film #1: 15% (Group)

A short 2 to 4 minute live-action film driven by visual storytelling and intelligent sound design. The main plot will be assigned.

Short Film #2: 15% (Group)

A short 2 to 4 minute live-action film driven by visual storytelling and intelligent sound design. The main plot will be assigned.

3rd Short Film: 15% (Group)

A short 2 to 4 minute live-action drama film shot entirely in one continuous take. Students must demonstrate meaningful camera movements and actors blocking.

Final Script: 5% (Group)

A 4 to 10 page script that will be due by Week 8 and will be used as the material for the Final Short Film.

Video Storyboard: 10% (Group)

A complete video storyboard of the final script that clearly shows all the shots, actors' blocking and dialogues. The participation of cast is not mandatory but highly encouraged.

Final Short Film: 20% (Group)

Open (No restrictions) A short 4 to 10 minutes live-action film that tells a complete story.

Please note: Each film must be submitted with a production binder that includes: Script, Script Analysis, Storyboard, Crew List and Call Sheet.

Guns and Weapons: The use of guns and weapons are forbidden in this class and will result in the student's automatic failure of the assignment. Any realistic depiction of a gun, whether or not the gun is real or a replica, whether the gun can fire real bullets, blanks, is disabled, or even if it is a toy, is forbidden for any production related to this course. This applies to weapons of any sort as well. Using children and animals are also highly discouraged.

Casting: Students must cast professional actors for their Final Short Film.

Grading:

Attendance & Participation	10%
Professionalism	10%
Short Film #1	15%
Short Film #2	15%
Short Film #3	15%
Final Script	5%
Video Storyboards	10%
Final Short Film	20%

LATE WORK WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Grading Scale:

A = 100-93, A- = 92-90, B+ = 89-87, B = 86-83, B- = 82- 80, C+ = 79-77, C = 76-73, C- = 72-70, D+ = 69-67, D = 66-63, D- = 62-60, F = 59-0.

A indicates excellence, B indicates good work, C indicates satisfactory work, D work is unsatisfactory in some respect, F is substantially unsatisfactory work

Assignment Submission Policy:

All work submitted for this class should be original work made specifically for this class. If you are found to be submitting work you have made for another class, you will be awarded zero credit for that particular assignment.

Check and double-check the work you are submitting. Do not submit the wrong file, an incomplete file, a corrupted file, etc. Submit the correct project file by each deadline.

Attendance & Participation:

This course demands class participation - attendance is mandatory. Students arriving more than 15 minutes late, or leaving before class is dismissed will be considered absent. You are allowed ONE (1) unexcused absences. After that, a one letter deduction for each absence will be taken from your final course grade. Excessive tardiness will also be penalized.

Computer/Cellphone Use in Class:

If you bring a cell phone to class, it must be off or set to a silent mode during lectures or screenings. Should you need to answer a call during class, students must leave the room in an non-disruptive manner. Out of respect to fellow students and the professor, phone or computer use is never allowed in lectures or screenings. **Notes need to be taken by hand**. If you are required to be on call as part of your job, please advise me at the start of the course.

Using the computer during class time will have a negative impact on your participation grade and if it's a really consistent problem, you will be asked to leave and will be marked as absent.

Student responsibilities:

Each student is responsible for their time management and for 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 an assignment sheet detailing any homework. If an assignment is listed on the syllabus you are still responsible for completing the assignment on time.

Video production requires strict adherence to deadlines, therefore late assignments will not be accepted for grading and written feedback will be given at the instructors discretion. You will not be eligible for an A in the class unless you turn in all assignments on time.

Assignments and Exercises:

This is a production class. That means you must participate in all productions. You must be at the shoot, actively contributing to the project (not standing around looking at your phone). Failure to do so will lead to a 0 on that assignment. Though some pre and post-production is required, you cannot do that instead of being a part of the production process.

In most cases, the group's grade on a project will also be your individual grade for the assignment- - assuming equal work was done by all. In order to ensure that each group member is contributing equally, you will turn in a group evaluation form for each assignment. This form will be made available on D2L prior to your first project being due. You will evaluate yourself, and each member of your group for each project. How you evaluate yourselves and your group members directly impacts your individual grades.

These forms must be uploaded to D2L when your assignment is due. **I do not want them emailed to me. Emailed submissions will not be given credit.** Only I will see them, so be honest. These forms are also a way to identify any group dynamic issues that may be developing. Please note, if this form falsely represents work by one or more members of the group it will be considered an academic integrity violation and must be reported to the university. If an evaluation form does not accompany your assignment your grade will be reduced by at least one letter grade.

Group Evaluations:

Most of the assignments in this class will require you to work in a team. At the end of the quarter, each group member is required to turn in a written evaluation of their team members. If all evaluations are uniformly positive, all group members will share the grades; if evaluations are negative, the grades of the group member in question will be docked.

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 and I will help mediate/resolve the situation, however, I will only help if you've addressed the issue with your

group directly and it's not getting resolved. I encourage you to come to me early and often. A big part of your success in this class will be your ability to work with your group. If there is an issue we need to address it right away.

Class Attire:

Come dressed for work. Certain clothing is required for production. Depending on the day you might be climbing ladders, picking up hot lamps and lifting heavy equipment, therefore no open toe shoes, NO FLIP FLOPS.

Cinespace:

Our workshop/Lab time will be held at Cinespace. Let's take good care of this fantastic space. There is no eating or drinking allowed on the stage. Wrap all equipment when finished and return to the designated area. The entire class will be held responsible to return the stage to the order it was in when found. NO STUDENT LEAVES CLASS until the stage is in the proper condition, even if your group has finished first.

Guns and Stunts:

DePaul has a very strict policy concerning guns and/or stunts in student productions. No guns of any kind are allowed in a student production unless a proper permit has been obtained by the City of Chicago, and a police officer is present on your set. This includes toy guns! If you have a gun that fires blanks, you must also have a trained firearm handler on your set. No live ammunition is ever allowed. No stunts will be performed without a licensed stunt coordinator. If I see a gun of any kind, or a stunt performed in your film and I have not seen and signed off on your permits, you will automatically receive a failing grade for this class. No exceptions.

Certificates:

If the location you are shooting at requires that you get a certificate of insurance, or you plan to rent equipment that requires an insurance cert, please plan WAY ahead. The school can provide you with proof of insurance but it takes 2-4 weeks. I recommend you choose locations that are not going to call too much attention to your shoot and avoid having to show the formal paperwork. Places to avoid: The CTA, parks and streets.

Equipment:

Reserve your equipment really far in advance. There is a high demand for the equipment at this school, and you do not want to be left shooting with an inferior camera.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT:

Audio- Closed Back Headphones (no earbuds)
G&E- Multi-tool, Flashlight, Gaff Tape, Black Wrap, Gels, Diffusion
Camera - Lens Tissue, Lens Fluid, Lens Cloth, Lens Blower Bulb, Allen Wrench tool, Paper Tape, Sharpie, MEMORY CARDS

Production Resources:

• A great actor resource is through DePaul's ACTOR DATABASE http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/ Current Students/Pages/Production-Resources.aspx - under CASTING & CREW.

• Breakdown Express - This is an interactive on-line casting tool that enables you to send out a casting notice to regional Chicagoland actors and set up/manage audition appointments on-line. See the production office staff for help setting this up.

Safety During Production:

• Any taped or filmed footage, which reveals an action, or stunt that puts actors and/or crew and bystanders in physical danger will result in the student's automatic failure of the assignment. The instructor will determine those actions that are defined as unsafe.
• THE USE OF GUNS AND WEAPONS IS FORBIDDEN in this class and results in the student's automatic failure of the assignment. Any realistic depiction of a gun, whether or not the gun is real or a replica, whether the gun can fire real bullets, blanks, is disabled, or even if it is a toy, is forbidden for any production related to this course.

Email Policy:

• You are expected to read all emails from the class instructor because you are responsible the information emails contain. So, you should check your e- mail at least once very 24 hours!
• Type DC 310 in the subject of all e-mails to the instructor about this class.
• Please DO NOT JUST REPLY to my all-class e-mails because your response might get lost in the shuffle—Send me an individual e-mail. I will do my best to get back to you in short order.

Note on Requirements (and the Syllabus in General):

This syllabus is subject to change as necessary during the quarter. If a change occurs, it will be thoroughly addressed during class. These guidelines are established to ensure all students know what is expected of them, and so all students are treated equally by being held to the same standards.

CLASS SCHEDULE

* Syllabus schedule is subject to change

Week One 04/01

Lecture: Introduction, Syllabus Review, Grouping,

Workshop: Short Film #1 Script Development

Short Film #1 Script Due 04/08

Week Two 04/08

Lecture: Location Scouting

Workshop: Production I

Short Film #1 Due 04/15

Week Three 04/15

Workshop: Short Film #2 Development

Screening: Short Film #1

Critique & Peer Review

Short Film #2 Script Due 04/22

Week Four 04/22

Lecture: Short Film #3 Development

Workshop: Production II

Short Film #2 Due 04/29

Week Five 04/29

Screening: Short Film #2

Critique & Peer Review

Short Film #3 Script Due 05/06

Week Six 05/06

Workshop: Production III

Short Film #3 Due 05/13

Week Seven 05/13

      Screening: Short Film #3

          Critique & Peer Review

Final Short Film Script Due 05/20

Week Eight 05/20

      Workshop: Table Reading

          Critique & Peer Review

Video Storyboards Due 05/27

Week Nine 05/27

Memorial Day - NO CLASS

Final Short Film Rough Cuts Due 06/03

Week Ten 06/03

      Screening: Final Short Film Rough Cuts

          Critique & Peer Review

Week Eleven 06/10

Revised Final Short Film Due by 2:30pm

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
TTY: (773)325.7296

Content Changes:

Depending on time factors, the assignments projected for the term may require slight alteration or rescheduling.