

**DC 224-301/310: Script to Screen**

Spring Quarter 2019

Sect. 301: Mo 1:00pm - 4:15pm

Sect. 310: Online

Location: Levan Center, Room 305

**Instructor Information**

Jef Burnham

Email: [jburnha1@depaul.edu](mailto:jburnha1@depaul.edu)\*

Office: LPC Student Center, Tutoring Room 332

Office Hours: Mondays 11:15am-12:45pm (or by appointment)

\*If you do not receive a response from me within 24 hours, assume I did not get your email.

**Course Description**

This analytical course examines the screenplay's evolution to the screen from a writer's perspective. Students will read feature length scripts of varying genres and then perform a critical analysis and comparison of the text to the final produced versions of the films. Storytelling conventions such as structure, character development, theme, and the creation of tension will be used to uncover alterations and how these adjustments ultimately impacted the film's reception.

**Prerequisites:** None**Course Objectives:**

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the basic components of crafting a screenplay including structure, character development, and the creation of tension.
- Evaluate how various elements of screenplays are translated to the screen through a range of filmmaking techniques.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the feature film development process in the movie business and how this process affects a story's journey from screenplay to final film.

**Learning Domain Description**

This course 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**

Students will be able to:

- Explain, in well-written prose, what a work of art is about and/or how it was produced
  - Articulate and explain the “content” of that work and/or its methodology of production.
- Comment on the relationship between form and content in a work.
  - How does the 14-line sonnet both enable and inhibit its practitioner, for example?
  - What are the generic expectations of a particular form?
  - How does an artist complicate, enrich, or subvert such expectations?
- Assess the formal aspects of their subject and put those qualities into words, using, when appropriate, specialized vocabulary employed in class and readings.
- Contextualize a work of art.
  - Do so with respect to other works of art in terms of defining its place within a broader style or genre.
  - Contextualize a work of art in terms of contemporaneous aesthetic, social, or political concerns, discussing how these might shape the work’s reception and how that reception might differ amongst various peoples and historical periods.

## **Required Textbooks:**

All required readings will be provided on D2L under Content in PDF format and readings must be completed by the date specified in the course schedule below.

## **Grading Scale**

A	93-100 %
A-	90-92 %
B+	87-89 %
B	84-86 %
B-	80-83 %
C+	77-79%
C	74-76 %
C-	70-73 %
D+	67-69 %
D	60-66 %

## **Grade Breakdown**

Response Papers (5 points each)	40 points
Final Paper	40 points
Attendance/Participation	20 points
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100 points possible</b>

## **Response Papers**

Between weeks 2 and 10, students will write a weekly response paper exploring the changes made to a film between the week’s assigned screenplay and the final filmed version of that

script.\* The paper must explore how the changes from script to screen improved or weakened the story. Papers should place an emphasis on concepts from the corresponding week's lecture material, but may also explore other topics related to character, tension, theme, or whatever piques your interest, so long as it is relevant to the course. These responses must be 500 words in length and presented in Times New Roman 12 pt. font—approximately one single-spaced typed Word document page. File names should appear in the following format:

**LastName\_FirstName\_Assignment**

Response Papers must be submitted to the appropriate D2L Submission Folder in PDF format by the due date/time listed in the Course Schedule below.

\*To coincide with the Adaptation & Remakes lecture, students will watch a film and *then* read an adapted screenplay, writing their responses on the alterations made from the film to adaptation instead.

### **Final Paper**

For this paper, you will choose to write about one of a selection of unproduced feature film scripts provided by the instructor. You will write a 4- to 6-page paper that explores the ways in which your chosen script would fail to satisfy audience expectations for a narrative feature film. This should NOT be a retelling of the story, but instead an essay in which you present an argument about the screenplay and defend it. This argument should be presented objectively (no “I feel” or “I think,” which are implied) and must draw on the cinematic storytelling conventions discussed throughout the course.

Papers must be double-spaced, written in Times New Roman 12 pt. font, and have one-inch margins on all sides with file names formatted: **LastName\_FirstName\_Assignment**. Papers must be uploaded to the D2L Submissions Folder **in PDF format by June 10, 2019 at 4:45pm.**

### ***Notes on the Evaluation of Student Work:***

Grading rubrics according to which written assignments are assessed will be available on D2L under Content. In order to obtain the desired grade on any assignment, students must review and adhere to these guidelines. In general, written work will be evaluated according to the clarity of your writing, adherence to assignment guidelines, and basic mechanics (i.e. spelling, grammar, and punctuation). Please allow up to 7-10 days for the return of graded materials.

### **Course Policies**

#### **Class Format**

Each meeting will consist of a discussion of the previous week's film and a lecture to contextualize topics related to the current week's screenplay and film for use in your Reflection Papers. Following that, a film will be screened weekly. Attendance at screenings is mandatory for the 224-301 in-class section (even if you have already seen the film) and failure to remain in

class for screenings will affect your grade as detailed in the Attendance/Participation section below. *No technology is allowed during the screenings.* Notes on films should be taken on paper.

[**DISCLAIMER:** *Films screened WILL include graphic language, violence, & sex.*]

Students in the 224-310 online section:

You are required to view the discussion/lecture portions of the class, which will be available to you on D2L each Monday evening. You are also required to view the films watched in class. Films will be made available to you (1) via [COLTube](#), (2) via a link to the film as legally found elsewhere online, or (3) it will otherwise be available on Netflix.

**Attendance/Participation [224-301 (in-class)]:**

Each week's class consists of a combination of lectures, screenings, and class discussions and/or group exercises. Attendance is mandatory and participation in all discussions and exercises is expected. I assess both the quality and quantity of participation in class to elevate collective learning. Group exercises may require outside preparation be completed and students will receive ample notice. Students who are absent obviously cannot participate in class.

For the purposes of this class, an absence is defined as not attending class, sleeping in class, or showing up 15 minutes late or more for a class. All absences will result in a deduction of 2 points from your overall Attendance/Participation grade; **if you are absent more than two times, you fail the course.**

(Note: Excused absences may be obtained *from the Dean of Students Offices* under certain circumstances and given the proper documentation.)

**Attendance [224-310 (online)]:**

Online students are required to view the recordings of the on-campus discussions/lectures that take place each Monday. To ensure online students view the lectures, I will, throughout each session, provide online students with 1-3 *Lecture Keywords* that you must take note of.

In order to prove that you have viewed the lecture, you will then enter these keywords into the appropriate Lecture Keyword Submission quiz (found on D2L under More>Quizzes) **by 11:59pm CT on the Sunday concluding the week the lecture was recorded.** Failure to submit lecture keywords by the assigned time for any lecture each week will result in a deduction of 1 point from your overall Attendance/Participation grade in the course.

**Participation [224-310 (online)]:**

Online students are required to participate in weekly discussions on the D2L Discussion Board forums. Substantive participation in these discussions is required prior to **Noon each Monday** beginning Week 2. Discussion topics will relate to assigned screenplay readings, assigned screenings, or any other topic the instructor deems worthy of conversation in these forums. Individual topics will be dictated in each week's discussion prompt. Failure to participate in the Discussions in a given week will result in a deduction of 1 point from your overall Attendance/Participation grade in the course.

**Late Work:**

Assignments must be completed and uploaded to D2L in PDF format by the date and time specified in the Class Schedule. **No late work will be accepted**, unless instructor approval is granted prior to the due date/time. Printed submissions or submissions by email will not be accepted. I also suggest backing up work with a Cloud file storage service, as computers crash.

**Technology Statement:**

Laptops/tablets may be used during lectures/discussions **ONLY** to take notes.\* Also, texting, etc. on your cell phone is not allowed, as it is distracting to your fellow students as well as the instructor. You are asked to keep yours on vibrate and may excuse yourself to the hallway if there is an emergency call you must take. If you are expecting such a call, please let the instructor know in advance.

**No technology use of any kind will be allowed during film or clip screenings.** Use of technology during screenings may result in you being asked to leave and being marked as absent.

*\*If I receive complaints about the distracting nature of your technology use or if you are not paying attention, I will no longer allow your continued use of technology in class.*

**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.

**If the instructor finds a student has violated the Academic Integrity Policy/plagiarized their work, the student will fail the course, receiving an automatic F grade.** (Note: Turnitin is used to check the originality of submissions on D2L.) Actions taken by the instructor in this regard do

not preclude the university from taking further action, including dismissal from the university. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could also result in criminal or civil prosecution.

### **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>

#### **IMPORTANT DATES:**

April 5 by 11:59pm- Last day to add/swap classes

April 12- Last day to drop classes with no penalty, last day to select pass/fail option

May 17- Last day to withdraw from classes, receiving a grade of “W”

### **Preferred Name & Gender Pronouns**

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the quarter so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. Please also note that students may choose to identify within the University community with a preferred first name that differs from their legal name and may also update their gender. The preferred first name will appear in University related systems and documents except where the use of the legal name is necessitated or required by University business or legal need. For more information and instructions on how to do so, please see the Student Preferred Name and Gender Policy at <http://policies.depaul.edu/policy/policy.aspx?pid=332>

### **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](mailto:csd@depaul.edu).

Lewis Center 1420, 25 East Jackson Blvd.  
Lincoln Park Student Center 370, 2250 North Sheffield Avenue  
Phone number: (312)362-8002  
Fax: (312)362-6544  
TTY: (773)325.7296

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## Course Schedule

### Week 1 (4/1)

Reading Due: Screenplay 1

In Class: Review Syllabus/Film Schedule

Lecture: Feature Film Development

Assign: **Response Papers** (Due by Noon every Monday)

Screen Film 1

### Week 2 (4/8)

Reading Due: Screenplay 2

In Class: Discuss Film 1

Lecture: Cinematic Storytelling Conventions

Screen Film 2

**ASSIGNMENT DUE: Response Paper 1** (Due by Noon to D2L on 4/8)

### Week 3 (4/15)

Reading Due: Screenplay 3

In Class: Discuss Film 2

Lecture: Character

Screen Film 3

**ASSIGNMENT DUE: Response Paper 2** (Due by Noon to D2L on 4/15)

### Week 4 (4/22)

Readings Due: Screenplay 4

In Class: Discuss Film 3

Lecture: Theme

Screen Film 4

**ASSIGNMENT DUE: Response Paper 3** (Due by Noon to D2L on 4/22)

**Week 5 (4/29)**

Readings Due: Screenplay 5

In Class: Discuss Film 4

Lecture: Tension & Suspense

Screen Film 5

**ASSIGNMENT DUE: Response Paper 4** (Due by Noon to D2L on 4/29)

**Week 6 (5/6)**

Reading Due: Screenplay 6

In Class: Discuss Film 5

Lecture: Genre

Screen Film 6

**ASSIGNMENT DUE: Response Paper 5** (Due by Noon to D2L on 5/6)

**Week 7 (5/13)**

Reading Due: Screenplay 7

In Class: Discuss Film 6

Lecture: Alternative Approaches in Cinema

Screen Film 7

**ASSIGNMENT DUE: Response Paper 6** (Due by Noon to D2L on 5/13)

**Week 8 (5/20)**

Reading Note: Read Screenplay 8 *AFTER* screening Film 8

In Class: Discuss Film 7

Lecture: Adaptation & Remakes

Assign: **Final Paper** (Due by 4:45pm to D2L on 6/10)

Screen Film 8

**ASSIGNMENT DUE: Response Paper 7** (Due by Noon to D2L on 5/20)

**Week 9 (5/27): NO CLASS**

**Memorial Day (University Closed)**



**Week 10 (6/3)**

In Class: Discuss Film 8

Lecture: Stories from Development Hell

Screen/Discuss Film TBA

**ASSIGNMENT DUE: Response Paper 8** (Due by Noon to D2L on 6/3)

**FINAL PAPER DUE:** Upload to D2L by Monday, June 10, 2019 at 4:45pm