

## **FILM101-408: FOUNDATIONS OF CINEMA SYLLABUS**

DePaul University | Autumn Quarter 2019

Tuesdays & Thursdays | 11:50AM - 1:20PM | CDM Center, Room 708

Instructor: Eric Marsh

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Office Hours: Fridays, 8AM - 1PM, CDM Center, Rm. 615, by appointment only

**Course Description** - This course deals with visualization and cinema literacy skills. Drawing heavily on a wide array of historical examples, the course will examine the many expressive strategies potentially usable in the creation of moving image art forms: image construction and manipulation, editing, composition, sound, narrative, and performance. An emphasis will be placed on story and storytelling. In addition to analyzing the works of others, students will also produce their own projects - putting theory into practice. Note: This course teaches concepts rather than technology. Filmmakers will take the concepts learned in DC 110 to better communicate their ideas in Digital Cinema Production I (DC 210) and beyond.

**Course Objectives** - The course is designed as a practical look at cinematic form for filmmakers. By the end of the course students should understand cinematic language and be able to incorporate structure, the framed image, sound, and editing into their own creative work. The following topics will be covered:

- Analyze how cinematic techniques function to tell a story or convey a theme
- Synthesize cinematic techniques in the production of their own creative work
- Identify how techniques function in multiple genres and forms
- Create a project from concept to exhibition
- Utilize basic film production language

**Required Text** - *Film Art: An Introduction (11th Edition)* by David Bordwell & Kristin Thompson. Note: earlier editions of *Film Art* are acceptable. Supplemental readings will be provided and shared on D2L.

### **Required Software/Hardware** -

- Still and Video Camera, Audio Recording Equipment (available for check-out from CDM Equipment Center)
- Editing Software: CDM Computer Labs are available for software use outside of class
  - CDM labs offer Adobe Creative Cloud on PC and Mac operating systems.
  - Supplemental instruction at LYNDACOM is available at the library and by (free) subscription online using your CampusConnect login.

Information on rooms, production equipment, rules & guidelines, can be found [HERE](#)

**Course Management System: D2L** - The course materials for this course such as syllabus, announcements, course documents, and assignments will be available to you on [D2L](#)

### **Basis for Evaluation**

RESPONSES ..... 30%  
PROJECTS ..... 50%  
ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION ..... 20%  
TOTAL ..... 100%

A = 100 – 94, A- = 93 – 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.

**Grading** - Grades and/or written feedback will be given for each assignment on D2L.

### **CLASS SCHEDULE & COURSE OUTLINE**

WEEK 1	9/12 TH	INTRODUCTION & SYLLABUS, WHAT IS CINEMA?
WEEK 2	9/17 TU 9/19 TH	BASIC CONCEPTS: SILENT SHORTS PROJECT A BRIEF HISTORY OF CINEMA
WEEK 3	9/24 TU 9/26 TH	INDUSTRY OVERVIEW & THE PRODUCTION PROCESS FILM FORM
WEEK 4	10/1 TU 10/3 TH	MISE-EN-SCÈNE CINEMATOGRAPHY
WEEK 5	10/8 TU 10/10 TH	EDITING SOUND
WEEK 6	10/15 TU 10/17 TH	IN-CLASS SCREENING: <i>Citizen Kane</i> IN-CLASS SCREENING: <i>Citizen Kane</i>
WEEK 7	10/22 TU 10/24 TH	PROJECT SCREENINGS NARRATIVE: STORY, PLOT, CHARACTER
WEEK 8	10/29 TU 10/31 TH	FINAL PROJECT PITCHES IN-CLASS SCREENING: <i>Halloween</i>
WEEK 9	11/5 TU 11/7 TH	GENRE & OTHER WAYS OF UNDERSTANDING FINAL PROJECT WORKSHOP
WEEK 10	11/12 TU 11/14 TH	CHALLENGING CLASSICAL CINEMA IN-CLASS SCREENING: <i>Hill of Freedom</i>

WEEK 11      11/19 TU      WHAT IS CINEMA? 21st CENTURY EDITION

FINALS      11/26 TU      FINAL PROJECTS DUE & SCREENING (11:30AM-1:45PM)

**Content & Schedule Changes** – The course schedule is subject to change depending on class progress, time constraints, and material availability. The overall workload, however, will not change. Make sure you pace yourself accordingly. You will be notified of any changes in the syllabus in a timely fashion.

**Screenings** - In addition to in-class screenings, you will be assigned films to watch at home and will use them for your responses and our discussions. All films will be made available to stream on D2L. Here is the (subject-to-change) list of what we will be watching:

*Sherlock Jr.*, 1924, Keaton, USA  
*Only Angels Have Wings*, 1939, Hawks, USA  
*The Fits*, 2015, Holmer, USA  
*Repo Man*, 1984, Cox, UK/USA  
*Do The Right Thing*, 1989, Lee, USA  
*Citizen Kane*, 1941, Welles, USA  
*Halloween*, 1978, Carpenter, USA  
*Hill of Freedom*, 2014, Hong, South Korea

### **Assignment Breakdown & Due Dates**

#### **RESPONSES**

Response #1 - Intro (4pts) - Due 9/17  
Response #2 History (4pts) - Due 9/24  
Response #3 - Form & Meaning (4pts) - Due 10/1  
Response #4 - Mise-en-scene (4pts) - Due 10/3  
Response #5 - Cinematography (4pts) - Due 10/8  
MIDTERM - Scene Analysis (10pts) - Due 10/22

#### **PROJECTS**

Project #1: Silent Shorts (3pts) - in-class  
Project #2: Photomontage (10pts) - Due 10/10  
Project #3: City Symphony (12pts) - Due 10/17  
Project #4: Final Short Film (25pts) - Due 11/21

**Course Policies** - In addition to the DePaul University course policies (see student handbook), the following policies apply to this course:

**Attendance** - Each class consists of lecture, discussion, and screenings; attendance is mandatory. Class time is most productive when everyone arrives promptly and comes prepared to discuss that week's topic (whether a reading, film, etc). Clips and short films

shown in class may not be available outside of class, and you are responsible for all of the class material. All absences will result in a reduction of the participation grade unless excused. Excused absences are handled through the Dean of Students Office after completing an Absence Notification Form [here](#). Note: Every situation will be handled according to individual circumstances at the instructor's discretion. Absolutely no consideration will be given to those who request special treatment without advanced notice or a doctor's note.

**Deadlines** - Film & video production requires strict adherence to deadlines, therefore late assignments will not be accepted for grading. Failure to turn in even one assignment has a significant impact on your grade (i.e. an assignment worth 10 points (10%) is equal to one full letter grade).

**Group Evaluations** - For group projects, each team member is required to turn in a written evaluation of their experience. If all evaluations are uniformly positive, all group members will share the grades evenly. If evaluations are negative, the grades of the group members will vary (and not in a good way).

**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 topic, reading, screening, etc. Students must keep up with the readings and screenings 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 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.

**NO ELECTRONICS** - This course involves a mixture of lecture, discussion, as well as screenings and as such, it requires your full attention (we watch movies with our eyes, ears, and minds!). There will be no phones, computers, etc, allowed during class. Exceptions will be made on an individual basis. If you bring a phone to class it *must* be on silent mode or turned off. 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, tweeting, snapchatting, instagramming, etc, is *never* allowable in class.

**Reading Assignments** - Reading assignments are *mandatory*. The textbook readings supplement and inform the lectures and discussions and will be crucial in a broad understanding of cinema as well as writing your responses. Lectures may introduce additional material not available in the readings, and the readings may explore concepts not mentioned in class. *Supplemental readings will also be assigned & discussed in-class*. They will be available on D2L.

**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 [here](#)

**SCA Production Handbook** - The School of Cinematic Arts Production Handbook is an invaluable resource to all DePaul student filmmakers. The answers to most questions regarding contacts, resources, contracts, rules, guidelines, etc, can be found inside. It is updated annually and linked to on the CDM Production Resources Page [HERE](#)

## **UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

**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** - Plagiarism is dishonest behavior and therefore violates collegiality as well as University policy. Any cases of plagiarism will automatically receive a zero and be reported to departmental and University officials for disciplinary action. You should familiarize yourself with behavior that constitutes plagiarism by reviewing the University's policy regarding academic dishonesty at:

<http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/Resources/Students/index.html>

**Special Needs** - 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).

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