

SCWR 425 Genre Storytelling

When: Tuesday · 5:45pm – 9:00pm
Where: Daley Building / RM 214 / Loop Campus

Instructor: Matt Quinn · mquinn@cdm.depaul.edu · 312-362-5807 · CDM 509
Office hours: Tuesday · 11:15am – 1:15pm and 4:45pm – 5:30pm / Wednesday · 11:15am – 1:15pm

Summary of Course

This advanced course examines the dramatic conventions of genre storytelling in film and television. Through extensive script readings and discussions, students will deconstruct the common features of genre in an effort to discern audience expectations and develop a methodology for narrative innovation in their own work.

Course Objectives

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

- explain how genres have evolved over time, the innovations shaping them today, as well as possible future iterations they might have.
- differentiate the common features in genre, describing how narrative and aesthetic elements comprise a particular style
- discuss the manner in which story structure is influenced by genre
- analyze nontraditional narratives as a counterpoint to “Classic Hollywood” conventions
- demonstrate a cinematic vocabulary to discuss films and television series critically and creatively

Prerequisites

None

Grading

Class Attendance and Participation	10%
Screening Response Assignments	60%
Final Paper	30%

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 work is unsatisfactory in some respect, F is substantially unsatisfactory work.

Textbooks / Streaming Service

Readings provided by instructor. In lieu of a textbook, student should have access to Netflix streaming service for the duration of the quarter

Attendance

Attendance and participation are mandatory. An absence, which is defined as not showing up to class or arriving more than 10 minutes late to class, constitutes a reduction in your overall grade.

D2L

You will be using D2L extensively in this course. To log on, go to:

<https://login.depaul.edu/ldap/login?service=https%3a%2f%2fd2l.depaul.edu%2fd2l%2fcustom%2fcas> and enter using your campus connect logon and password. Once you are logged on, click on the course number link and you will find links to the syllabus, course outline, video lectures, discussion forums, weekly assignments, etc.

Course Outline

Week 1 – September 17th

Lecture: Course Intro, Genre and Audience

Assignment: Screening Response 1, Script Reading and Screening 1

Week 2 – September 24th

Lecture: Character and Conflict

Assignment: Screening Response 2, Script Reading and Screening 2

Week 3 – October 1st

Lecture: Feature Storytelling Conventions

Assignment: Screening Response 3, Script Reading and Screening 3

Week 4 – October 8th

Lecture: Television Storytelling Conventions

Assignment: Screening Response 4, Script Reading and Screening 4

Week 5 – October 15th

Lecture: Drama, Procedurals, Primetime Soaps, and Half-Hour Drama

Assignment: Screening Response 5, Script Reading and Screening 5, Screening Response 6, Script Reading and Screening 6

Week 6 – October 22nd

Lecture: Comedy, Romantic Comedy, and the Situational Comedy

Assignment: Screening Response 7, Script Reading and Screening 7, Screening Response 8, Script Reading and Screening 8

Week 7 – October 29th

Lecture: Horror and Science Fiction

Assignment: Screening Response 9, Script Reading and Screening 9, Screening Response 10, Script Reading and Screening 10

Week 8 – November 5th

Lecture: Action, Thriller, and The Genre Show

Assignment: Screening Response 11, Script Reading and Screening 11, Screening Response 12, Script Reading and Screening 12

Week 9 – November 12th

Lecture: Animation, The Family Film, and Children's Television

Assignment: Screening Response 13, Script Reading and Screening 13, Screening Response 14, Script Reading and Screening 14

Week 10 – November 19th

Lecture: Genre Hybrids and the Future of Cinematic Storytelling

Assignment: Screening Response 15, Script Reading and Screening 15

Week 11 – November 26th

Final Paper Due

Assignments**Screening Response Assignments (60% of final grade)**

The instructor will post a topic for you to write about after each class in regards to the lecture, screening(s), and corresponding screenplay/reading assignment(s). Your response must be a minimum of 500 words for each Screening Response Assignment, which is essentially two double spaced typed Word document pages. The document should be saved as a PDF and submitted to the corresponding D2L Submission link by the assigned due date. There is a total of 15 Screening Response assignments for the quarter, each work four points.

Final Paper (30% of final grade)

Write an analysis using the storytelling conventions we have discussed throughout the quarter on one screenplay of your choosing from a list of screenplays provided by the instructor. The analysis should NOT be a linear retelling of the script's plot. You must discuss the narrative devices employed throughout to build a cohesive and engaging narrative or, depending on your argument, why the current draft of the script will fail to connect with an audience. You MUST have a definitive opinion on the material and defend it with specific examples from the script that illustrate the conventions discussed this quarter – Don't waiver.

The paper is due via the corresponding D2L Submission assignment link on Tuesday, November 26th by 5:45pm. No late assignments will be accepted. A few things to keep in mind:

- Remember, your opinion is not wrong as long as you can support it with specific examples from the film.
- In an effort to present your work objectively, please do not use any personal pronouns when referring to your opinion, such as "I feel this film exhibits poor structure" – It is clear you are saying it because the entire paper is your opinion.
- The paper must be no less than four pages - MLA Formatting Required
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

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.

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

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. Please see <https://resources.depaul.edu/teaching-commons/teaching/Pages/online-teaching-evaluations.aspx> for additional information.

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/>.

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>

Preferred Name and 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>

Incomplete Grades

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. All incomplete requests must be approved by the instructor of the course and a CDM Associate Dean.

Only exceptions cases will receive such approval. Information about the Incomplete Grades policy can be found at <http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/Grading-Policies.aspx>

Students with Disabilities

Students seeking disability-related accommodations are required to register with DePaul's Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) enabling them to access accommodations and support services to assist with their success. There are two office locations:

- Loop Campus – Lewis Center #1420 – (312) 362-8002
- Lincoln Park Campus – Student Center #370 – (773) 325-1677

Students who register with the Center for Students with Disabilities are also invited to contact Dr. Gergory Moorhead, Director of the Center, privately to discuss how he may assist in facilitating the accommodations to be used in a course. This is best done early in the term. The conversation will remain confidential to the extent possible.

Please see <https://offices.depaul.edu/student-affairs/about/departments/Pages/csd.aspx> for Services and Contact Information.