

FILM251: CINEMATOGRAPHERS AT WORK

Section 503 - Winter 2019-2020

Lecture Location: 14 East Jackson, Rm214 Theater
Day/Time: Thursdays 10:00AM – 1:15PM
Instructor: John Klein
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Office Location: 14 E Jackson, Rm200B
Office Hours: Thursdays 1:30 – 3:00PM



COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores the aesthetic and technological developments of cinematography from early cinema to the digital age by examining the works of notable cinematographers. Students will examine the changing styles of cinematography as an art form.

Please Note: *This course teaches concepts and technological/creative history over hands-on experience. Filmmakers will take ideas from this class to better communicate their ideas as a cinematographer on future projects.*

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Over the course of this quarter, students will:

- ❖ Identify **cinematographers** past and present behind the most striking visuals in cinema history and how they worked on and off set.
- ❖ Demonstrate how the **historical context** around the invention and proliferation of motion picture technology in all forms affects the work of the cinematographer.
- ❖ Identify **cinematography techniques and technologies** at work in a variety of film and TV content.
- ❖ Examine the **collaborative relationship** between the cinematographer and director and how that manifests on screen.
- ❖ Articulate through discussion the **themes and storytelling techniques** at work in feature films and short-form content.
- ❖ Demonstrate how **cinematography correlates to those themes and techniques**.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- ❖ **DESIRE2LEARN** (D2L): Additional readings and weblinks will be posted on D2L. **A note:** I use D2L like a bible of sorts for the course; please consult it regularly, as all your assignments will also be submitted through here!
- ❖ **NETFLIX and other streaming services** are definitely helpful, but all films will be made available on D2L.
- ❖ It's **not required** per se, but a subscription to **AMERICAN CINEMATOGRAPHER MAGAZINE** and/or **ICG MAGAZINE** is pretty much the best thing you can do for yourself as an aspiring cinematographer or filmmaker. You'll cite back issue articles in your research papers, so expect trips to the library to read up on those! Cinespace has recent issues left out in the lobby as well.

ASSIGNMENTS/GRADING

- ❖ **ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION:** 15% (INDIVIDUAL) You are required to attend class and participate in the day's activities and discussions. This active engagement will ensure you get the most from the course. Each class is vital to your artistic development as a filmmaker and cinematographer!
- ❖ **RESEARCH PAPER:** 20% (INDIVIDUAL) In this paper, you will do a deep dive into the filmography of one cinematographer not discussed in class. Highlight their best works, consistencies across those works, and the ways in which their collaborations and visual styles changed over their storied history. There will be separate assignments (**TOPIC** and **OUTLINE**) also included as part of this grade.
- ❖ **PRESENTATION:** 15% (GROUP) In groups of 3-4, you will give a 15-20min presentation on a given cinematographer and film, introducing the cinematographer and their personal aesthetic as well as the stylistic elements used in that film. This will mean not only analyzing the film's themes and visuals but detailing what technology was used in each case.
- ❖ **VISUAL STORY:** 10% (INDIVIDUAL) From a set of short stories available on D2L, pick one to read and analyze. How would you as a cinematographer light and shoot this story? What thematic elements are present? What choices would you want to make, assuming you were trying to convince a producer or director? What images or inspirational material would you reference in a lookbook?
- ❖ **DISCUSSION POSTS:** 30% (INDIVIDUAL) Each week, a discussion prompt will be posted on D2L pertaining to the assigned film for that week, which will lead into the class discussions and lecture material. You must respond in kind to the prompts! *If you miss more than four posts, you will receive a zero for this portion of your grade.*
- ❖ **ARTICLES:** 15% (INDIVIDUAL) Pick three (3) articles from the past year (roughly) of American Cinematographer Magazine or ICG Magazine. In a paper for each, describe what you learned from each article and how it might apply to your production work this quarter. Each paper will be worth 5%.

A = 100-93, A- = 92.9-90, B+ = 89.9-87, B = 86.9-83, B- = 82.9-80, C+ = 79.9-77, C = 76.9-73, C- = 72.9-70, D+ = 69.9-67, D = 66.9-63, D- = 62.9-60, F = 59.9+Below.

"A" indicates Excellence, "B" indicates Very Good, "C" indicates Satisfactory, "D" indicates Poor, "F" indicates the student has NOT accomplished the objectives of the course.

GRADING POLICY

Professional filmmakers must adhere to strict deadlines. Students are expected to turn in all assignments by the established deadlines. **LATE WORK WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.** I will not accept the excuse of technological failure or absent-mindedness (you all have phones...set alarms for due dates). *Back up your work and do not leave your work until the last second!* This is your warning. All grades will be kept current on D2L and written feedback will be given for each assignment.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

You are expected to be on time, and if you plan on missing or being late to a class are expected to e-mail the instructor **BEFORE** that particular class. The instructor reserves

the right to determine whether an absence or tardy is “excused.” **Unexcused absences or tardiness will negatively affect your grade.** Please see **Course Policies as Suggested by the Dean of Students Office** at the end of the syllabus to see how your grade will be affected. Attendance will be kept current on D2L. If you want to question a recorded absence or tardiness, it must be done within a week of the recorded occurrence.

COMPUTER/CELLPHONE/I-PAD ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY

If you are using any personal or school electronic equipment during class for anything other than class-related work, *you will be asked to leave and will be counted as absent for that class.* I encourage you to take notes by hand rather than typing on your computer; trust me, you’ll learn better!

In addition, there will be a number of film screenings during class time. I expect you to adhere to the same policy during these screenings; if I see a phone out (barring an emergency), I will ask you to leave the classroom.

E-MAIL POLICY

You are expected to read all e-mails from the class instructor, and you are responsible for knowing the information they contain. *So, you should check your e-mail at least once every 24 hours!*

Type **FILM251** 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, but please allow up to 24hrs for the instructor to respond.*

PROJECT FILE LABELING + FORMAT POLICY

Label all Files as such (ex. Student is STEVEN SPIELBERG and he is submitting the “RESEARCH PAPER”): **Spielberg_ResearchPaper.**

Submit all papers as DOC, DOCX or PDF files. All papers must be double-spaced, Times or Arial 12pt font, typical 1” margins. Word counts for each assignment will be given out on the assignment sheets.

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 receive zero credit for that particular assignment.

I will grade the first project file that is submitted. 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* – we’re filmmakers, and we adhere to very strict deadlines in the real world. Most work will be submitted through D2L Dropbox.

Do not leave this until the last second—upload several hours before the deadline to be safe! *Again, no late work is accepted! AND you should always double-check that your file has been successfully uploaded to D2L!*

FILM + VIDEO CONTENT WARNING:

A full spectrum of award-winning film and video content will be shown in class with the hope that it will enlighten and inspire you. There are times where the subject matter may be disturbing to some viewers, and **I will do my best to provide content warnings on a weekly basis.** If you are highly sensitive to any particular cinematic content, please inform the instructor and you will be excused from watching said content.

EXCUSES (i.e. LACK OF PROFESSIONALISM)

My courses are designed to teach professional conduct and particular skill-sets. Time management skills are essential for all endeavors. Modern technology makes it easy to stay organized, on time and on task. Please remember, an excuse is just that—an *excuse*. Here are just a few examples of excuses for not meeting class obligations that I won't accept:

- ❖ I have a life...
- ❖ I forgot...
- ❖ I didn't realize...
- ❖ I mixed up the dates...
- ❖ I don't "do" books...
- ❖ My alarm didn't go off...
- ❖ I live out of town so I can't...
- ❖ I was busy working on other projects so I didn't...
- ❖ My job called me in so I had to work and couldn't do my assignment...
- ❖ I would have made the deadline if the deadline wasn't when it was...
- ❖ It's just easier to do it my way, so I did it my way...
- ❖ Other classes don't have me do it this way, so I did it their way...
- ❖ I was not aware of class policy...
- ❖ I didn't read the e-mail you sent out, so I didn't know...
- ❖ My hard-drive crashed and I didn't back up my work...
- ❖ The internet was slow when I tried to turn in my project...
- ❖ I accidentally submitted the wrong project file, but it was on time...
- ❖ I have to pick my friend up at the airport so I can't...
- ❖ I have to go on vacation so I can't...
- ❖ I was at a bar and...
- ❖ I scheduled an appointment during class time so I can't...
- ❖ I don't want to do this for my career, so I don't need to know how to do this so I didn't...
- ❖ I haven't been meeting class expectations, but I'm on scholarship and need an "A" so...
- ❖ I thought I turned in my project, but I didn't...
- ❖ I didn't look on the syllabus...

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1

1/9 **Lecture:** Syllabus, Introductions, The Cinematographer's Purview, Breaking Down a Script and the Collaborative Process
Scenes: Demo Reel, *Joker*
Screening: *Visions Of Light*
Assignment for Next Week: Watch *Barry Lyndon*, Discussion Post #1

Week 2

1/16 **Lecture:** Discussion of *Barry Lyndon*, John Alcott and Emmanuel Lubeski: Using Practical/Natural Light, Planning and Scheduling
Scenes: *A Clockwork Orange*, *The Tree Of Life*, *The Revenant*
Assignment for Next Week: Watch *Mudbound*, Discussion Post #2, Article #1

Week 3

1/23 **Lecture:** From the indie world to big-budget cinematography: Rachel Morrison, Matthew Libatique, and "Augmented" Light
Presentation #1: Rachel Morrison
Scenes: *Mudbound*, *Black Panther*, *Pi*, *A Star Is Born*, *Black Swan*
Assignment for Next Week: Watch *Annihilation*, Discussion Post #3

Week 4

Klein in Thailand!

1/30 **Lecture:** Rob Hardy, Dean Cundey and visual effects cinematography; A Deep Dive into Lenses (Diopters, Anamorphic, Tilt-Shift Lenses, Zooms/Primes)
Scenes: *The Thing*, *Blow-Out*, *Star Trek*, *Inferno* Lens Tests
Assignment for Next Week: Watch *The Assassination of Jesse James*, Discussion Post #4, Topic for Final Paper

Week 5

2/6 **Lecture:** Shooting on Film: Darius Khondji, Ellen Kuras, Wally Pfister – Factors to Consider (shutter, film stock, production, processing)
Presentation #2: Roger Deakins
Scenes: *McCabe&Mrs. Miller*, *Seven*, *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, *Saving Private Ryan*, *Interstellar*
Assignment for Next Week: Article #2, watch *Collateral*, Discussion Post #5

Week 6

2/13 **Lecture:** Dion Beebe and Anthony Dod Mantle: the transition from film to digital
Scenes: *Side By Side*, *The Celebration*, *28 Days Later*, Deakins on the Alexa
Assignment for Next Week: Watch *Arrival*, Discussion Post #6, read Putting the "Move" in Movie, Visual Story Paper

Week 7

2/20 **Lecture:** Camera Movement – Early Films (Russell Metty), Steadicam (Garrett Brown), Handheld; Planning for camera moves
Presentation #3: Bradford Young
Scenes: *Touch of Evil, I Am Cuba, Children of Men, Rocky, The Shining*
Assignment for Next Week: Watch *The Last Emperor*, Discussion Post #7, Outline Final Paper

Week 8

2/27 **Lecture:** Vittorio Storaro - Painting With Light (and Color); Technicolor; Digital color grading; B&W vs. color
Scenes: *The Last Emperor, O Brother, Where Art Thou?, Logan/Logan Noir*
Assignment for Next Week: Watch *Meadowland*, Discussion Post #8

Week 9

3/5 **Lecture:** The DP as Director: Steven Soderbergh, Reed Morano, Alfonso Cuaron, PTA
Presentation #4: Reed Morano
Scenes: *The Handmaid's Tale, Roma, Mosaic, High Flying Bird*
Assignment for Next Week: Discussion Post #9 (Commercials), Article #3

Week 10

3/12 **Lecture:** Short form cinematography: differences and similarities
Music videos: Chris Probst, Larkin Seiple
Commercials: Bill Bennett, Claudio Miranda
TV: Christian Sprenger (Atlanta), Lisa Wiegand (Chicago Fire), Sitcoms
Scenes: *Atlanta, This Is America*, car commercials, *Curfew*
Assignment for Next Week: Final Paper, Discussion Post #10

Week 11

3/19 **No class!** Your final paper is due by the end of the day (5:00pm CST).

OTHER SYLLABUS ITEMS:

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, and posted on D2L. AS A MEMBER OF THIS CLASS, YOU ARE REQUIRED TO KNOW AND FOLLOW THE GUIDELINES SET FORTH ON THE TOTALITY OF THIS SYLLABUS. 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.

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.

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>

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.

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: <http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/PoliciesandProcedures.aspx>

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.

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