# VFX430 Visual Effects Supervision Syllabus
DePaul University

<u>Course Information</u>
Course Code: VFX430
Course Title: Visual Effects Supervision
Prerequisites: FILM 401 (formerly DC 414) and POST 400 (formerly DC 420)
Term: Winter 2021
Section: 501
Class Hours: Wednesdays 10:00am - 1:00pm
Location: Online Synchronous

<u>Faculty Information</u>
Brian Andrews
bandrew4@cdm.depaul.edu
Office Hours:
Office Hours Location: Zoom or Phone. Appointments can be made on BlueStar.

<u>Course Description</u>
This course examines production from the perspective of the visual effects supervisor. The visual effects supervisor is the creative and technical director overseeing all aspects of visual effects creation. Emphasis is placed on sequence design, on-set photography and data collection, as well as production management.

<u>Learning Outcomes</u>
Students will be able to:
- Breakdown a script and create visual effects pre-production materials.
- Design visual effects solutions for shots and sequences.
- Manage visual effects crew on set and in post production.
- Supervise photography of visual effects elements.
- Schedule and budget visual effects production.
- Research and prepare bids for visual effects vendors.

<u>Software & Technology</u>
**Email**
DePaul manages all communications through BlueM@il. Check your BlueM@il email account regularly for class communications. Support for BlueM@il is available here:
https://depaul.service-now.com/sp?id=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=KB0010864&sys_kb_id=6a2029991bcbd01022e20dc8cc4bcb93&spa=1

**Zoom**
This class will use Zoom for instruction and collaboration. Zoom links, passwords, and guidelines of professional etiquette for online meetings are available on d2l.

**Software**
This course uses FrameForge and Shotgun software. DePaul will be providing licences and logins for both applications.

**Tech Support**
If you are having tech issues, please reach out for support as soon as possible.
- A knowledge base of common issues is available at: http://depaulscaavsupport.groovehq.com/help
- All support inquiries should be sent to scaavsupport@depaul.edu.

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- For a general orientation please view the DePaul SCA Tech Orientation: https://depauledu-my.sharepoint.com/:v:/r/personal/tcohron_depaul_edu/Documents/How%20To%20Tech/How_To_Tech.mp4?csf=1&web=1&e=725iqO

## Textbook
The Filmmaker's Guide to Visual Effects: The Art and Techniques of VFX for Directors, Producers, Editors and Cinematographers by Eran Dinur.
Available free on O'Reilly E-Books via the DePaul library: https://go.oreilly.com/depaul/

## Assessments & Grading
- Script Breakdown Packet: 20%
- 3D Storyboards 15%
- Tech Visualization 15%
- Camera Movement Exercise 10%
- Green Screen Exercise 10%
- Set Reference 10%
- Post Production Schedule & Budget: 20%

## Course Outline

**Week 1**

Topics: Introduction to course, Visual Effects- The Big Picture: The What, Why, Who, How, and Which of VFX Production

Reading: The Filmmaker's Guide to Visual Effects, Introduction, Chapter 1 "Core Concepts"

**Week 2**

Topics: Breaking Down a Script, Shot Lists

Reading: The Filmmaker's Guide to Visual Effects, Introduction, Chapter 7 "Pre-Production"

Assignment: Script Breakdown Packet

**Week 3**

**Martin Luther King Day** - No synchronous class

Asynchronous Topics: The Role of the VFX Supervisor, CG Pipelines

**Week 4**

Topics: Design for Visual Effects, Introduction to FrameForge

Assignment: 3D Storyboards

Reading: The Filmmaker's Guide to Visual Effects, Chapter 2 "VFX as a Filmmaking Tool"

**Week 5**

Topics:  Visual Effects Pipelines, Previz in FrameForge

Assignment: Tech Visualization

Reading:  The Filmmaker's Guide to Visual Effects, Chapter 5 "The VFX Workflow"

**Week 6**

    Topics: Cameras and VFX, Shooting for CG Integration.

    Reading: The Filmmaker's Guide to Visual Effects, Chapter 3 "From 2D to 3D: The Quest for the Lost Dimension"

    Assignment: Camera Movement Exercise

**Week 7**

    Topics: Green Screens and Transparency

    Reading: The Filmmaker's Guide to Visual Effects, Chapter 4 "Separations: Roto, Green Screens, and the Challenges of Extractions"

    Assignment: Green Screen Exercise

**Week 8**

    Topics:  On Set VFX Procedures, Data Collection

    Reading: The Filmmaker's Guide to Visual Effects, Chapter 8 "On Set"

    Assignment: Set Reference Exercise

**Week 9**

    Topics: Post-Production Workflows & Scheduling, Introduction to Shotgun

    Reading: The Filmmaker's Guide to Visual Effects, Chapter 6 "Workflow Case Studies" and Chapter 9 "Post-Production"

    Assignment: Post-Production Schedule & Budget

**Week 10**

    Topics:  The Future: Virtual Reality & Virtual Production

    Reading: The Filmmaker's Guide to Visual Effects, Chapter 10 "The Future"

    Assignment: Post Production Schedule and Budget

**Finals Week**

    Topics: Post Production Schedule and Budget due, All resubmissions due.

Course Policies
- Focus: Class time requires your complete attention. All students are expected to participate in all class activities. This means no distractions, such as cell phone use, web browsing, texting/chatting, food, or working on other projects in class.
- Professionalism: Students are expected to act according to the professional environment of the classroom. This includes but is not limited to:
    - Maintaining  a positive and open-minded attitude while participating in class discussions.
    - Progressively achieving the highest standards of quality of artwork to be submitted for grading.
    - Defending their artwork in an articulate manner that demonstrates critical and analytical thinking.
    - Demonstrating neat, self-disciplined, and timely work habits.
    - Attending class on time and stay throughout the whole class period.

- Resubmissions: Visual effects are a highly iterative process. I highly encourage revisions and resubmission of work based off of feedback from the class. Resubmitted files should be submitted to the original submission folder on D2L. Resubmissions will be accepted until the beginning of the final class of the course. Project reviews are time based and therefore not eligible for resubmissions.  Late work penalties cannot be made up by resubmissions.
- Late work: Assignments submitted late will have their grades reduced by 15% per class day the assignment is late. Late assignments are not eligible for resubmissions.
- Attendance: Attendance is key to success in this course. Student who miss three days of class will have their final grade lowered by 20%.  Students who miss four days of class will automatically fail the course. Missing more than 15 minutes of class counts as an absence.
- Contact: Please attend office hours and ask questions in person, as this is often the fastest way to answer a complex question. I also am available outside of office hours by appointment. I make every effort to respond to email within 24 hours, with the exception of Sundays and holidays. If you have an issue or emergency, please contact me as soon as possible before the next class date.
- Have fun: While making film and VFX can be challenging and stressful, don't forget to have fun and enjoy the process. We are all artists, and our art thrives when we put all of our passion and enthusiasm into our work.

University Policies

**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.

**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.
Lewis Center 1420, 25 East Jackson Blvd.
Phone number: (312)362-8002
Fax: (312)362-6544
TTY: (773)325.7296