

# FILM 385 -- Directing II

Spring 2021 | Tuesday 1:15-4:30 | Zoom  
Office hours: Appt. On Bluestar--Tuesdays 11:00-12:30

**Instructors:** John Klein and Wendy Roderweiss  
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*Please allow 24 hours for an email response.*

**Course Management System:** D2L  
**Type of Instruction:** Online Synchronous/Asynchronous  
Lecture/discussion/workshop  
**Drop dates/deadlines:** <https://academics.depaul.edu/calendar/Pages/default.aspx>

*This syllabus is subject to change. (Document date 3/18/21)*

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:**

Advanced study of directing for cinema. Students will continue exploration of directing concepts including: casting, rehearsing, analyzing script, blocking and working with actors, blocking and moving camera, and re-directing through editing and sound. Course will culminate in a final project directed by each student, using professional actors, professional equipment and/or facilities, and an original screenplay.

The class will consist of discussions, lectures and demonstrations to strengthen the student's knowledge of the general mechanics of filmmaking and further their understanding of aesthetics. Study and technical workshops will prepare students to take on their projects.

Students will execute one short film as individuals. Details will be provided. Other assignments will include pre-production materials and script and scene analysis.

## **CLASS OUTCOMES AND OBJECTIVES:**

Upon successful completion of the course the student will be able to:

- Analyze their screenplay for blocking actors and camera;
- Evaluate locations and sets for dramatic purposes;
- Collaborate effectively with a film crew;
- Develop techniques for working with actors;
- Express technical and aesthetic understanding of directing through the constructive critiques of other students' films;
- Edit or supervise the editing (sound and picture) of their short film using computer systems;
- Complete a short film that demonstrates technical proficiency and creative ambition that is festival ready.

## **PREREQUISITES**

FILM 285: Directing I (*though this has been waived for this iteration of the course*)

We are operating under the assumption that you have all taken numerous classes up until this point and should have a solid understanding of film production. If you do not, please reach out to us and we will give you resources to get caught up.

## **GRADING**

(1) Script: 10%

Director's Notebook Materials 40%:

- (2) Logline: 5 %
- (3) Locked Script: 5%
- (4) Script Breakdowns and Marked Script: 5%
- (5) Casting Breakdowns and Headshots: 5%
- (6) Schedule and Budget: 5%
- (7) Aesthetic/Visual Plan: 5%
- (8) Scene Beat Breakdowns: 5%
- (9) Blocking/Staging plan: 5%

(10) Final Project Polished Rough Cut: 20%

(11) Final Reflection Paper: 10%

(12) Discussion Boards: 10%

(13) Attendance and Participation: 10% - based on live class *and* D2L viewing

*Extra Credit Opportunities will be available on D2L.*

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.

## **TEXTBOOKS**

Required: The Film Director's Intuition: Script Analysis and Rehearsal Techniques

By Judith Weston ISBN-10: 0941188787

Additional materials provided by the instructor.

## **SOFTWARE FOR:**

Word processing

Screenwriting

PDF creation

Scanning documents

Spreadsheets

Editing

Sound

## **LATE ASSIGNMENTS**

Late assignments are not accepted. In case of illness or emergency, please contact us PRIOR to the due date. It shows that you care, and that goes a long way.

## **COURSE PRACTICES**

*Viewing practices:* Students are expected to stay alert during class time and watch all lectures and films without distraction. These videos should be the only thing on your screen and phones must be put away during viewings. Students are also expected to watch in full all assigned out-of-class films, web content, and asynchronous lecture materials, and engage fully with said material in any written assignments or in-class discussions.

*Class discussion practices:* Students are expected to actively participate in class discussions. This requires the ability to listen with intention, speak with purpose, and enter class prepared. Students are expected to ask relevant questions, answer questions with clarity & precision, support claims with detailed evidence from lectures/films/readings/notes, elaborate on own ideas & those of classmates, make connections between related concepts, acknowledge & respect multiple perspectives, and be on topic.

*Reading assignments:* Students are expected to fully complete assigned readings on time so they are prepared for class discussions and writing assignments. Reading matters. When done well, it is the most effective and efficient way to access another's intelligence, experience, and wisdom. Students who manage their time to allow for careful reading will more successfully learn and participate in this course.

*Writing assignments:* This course requires students to write analytically both formally and informally. All formal compositions are expected to be typed, properly formatted, and carefully proofread.

## **CONTENT CHANGES**

Depending on time factors, the assignments projected for the term may require slight alteration or rescheduling. We will contact you via email with any deviations from the syllabus. Please ensure that mail sent to the email address that you provided to the school is readily accessible.

## **ZOOM POLICIES**

The DePaul [Code of Student Responsibility](#) applies to online behavior as well as in-person or classroom behavior. The following are policies for our course meetings with Zoom:

- **General** – Sign in with your preferred first name and last name. If you do not have access to a computer or smartphone with internet access, call into class. This is not optimal; try to locate an internet-enabled device to use for this course. Please stay engaged in class activities. Close any apps on your device that are not relevant and turn off notifications.
- **Video** – Turn on your video when possible. It is helpful to be able to see each other, just as in an in-person class. You may elect to turn off your video if you have limited

internet bandwidth, no webcam or if you're unable to find an environment without a lot of visual distractions.

- **Audio** – Mute your microphone when you are not talking if you are in a noisy environment. We have a small class, so I'd like to keep our mics open whenever possible. Be in a quiet place and turn off any music, videos, etc. in the background.

### **ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:**

**Attendance** – Classes will consist of lecture, screenings, discussion, and creative exercises. Attendance is mandatory. An absence is defined as not showing up for class, or arriving more than 15 minutes late, or missing any 15 minute period during class time. Type “Here” in the chat as a record of your attendance. **Anyone who misses 3 classes will automatically drop a letter grade. Anyone who misses 4 classes will automatically fail.** Please email us before class if you are not going to be present.

**Class Participation**—Along with “showing up”, you are expected to join in class discussions, critique other people’s work, and participate in workshops.

### **ADDITIONAL COSTS:**

Producing digital content is rarely a cheap endeavor, even on Zoom. Such costs will potentially include items for art direction and costumes, production and post-production (primary external hard drives and a back-up) and general necessities. As a general guideline for all films that you make, your project budgets should always include a 10% contingency fee to help account for cost overruns.

### **SUGGESTED ONLINE RESOURCES:**

- Short Of The Week: Every post is a new award-winning independent film, from all genres.
- CineFix: A useful, entertaining and inspiring YouTube channel for video essays, interviews.
- Every Frame a Painting: Tony Zhou’s video essays on a variety of aspects of art of filmmaking.
- Must See Films: A stimulating collection of video essays that helps you see films differently.
- Fandor: An informing source for video essays.
- The Directors Series from FilmFrontier: In-depth multi-part video essays on master directors.
- Lynda: A useful collection of video tutorials for learning various software programs. All DePaul students have free access to Lynda via LinkedIn Learning. It is available by (free) subscription. It is highly recommended that you watch the essential training on Adobe Premiere CC.

# WEEKLY SCHEDULE

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## Week 1 - 3/30

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### **DUE ON THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS: (1) Polished First Draft of Script**

LECTURE: Overview of syllabus, class, us and you, Directing, Pre-Production  
WATCH: *Little Boxes: A Birth Story*, Episode 1  
WORKSHOPS: Creativity Exercises, Script table readings and critiques (PART I)

### **Assignments due 4/6:**

WATCH: *Little Boxes: A Birth Story* (All 14 shorts)  
Async Lectures:  
    (a) How to Choose Your Crew  
    (b) Script Breakdowns (optional)  
READ: Intuition Ch. 1-4 (pp1-69)  
WRITE: Discussion forum posts about yourself and Intuition readings  
    3 questions about *Little Boxes: A Birth Story*  
    Loglines for your projects (see assignment guidelines for the definition of a proper logline)

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## Week 2 - 4/6

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### **DUE: (2) Loglines (ALL)**

LECTURE: Choosing your Zoom Crew, The Tech of Making a Zoom Film, Production Design for Zoom  
WATCH: *Early to Rise*, Episode 1  
GUEST: Co-creator/Actor Leslie Murphy (*Little Boxes: A Birth Story*)  
WORKSHOP: Creativity Exercises, Script table readings and critiques (PART II)

### **Assignments due 4/13:**

WATCH: *Staged*, Episodes 1-3  
Async lectures:  
    (a) Scene Spines, Actions, Dramatic Blocks, Fulcrums  
    (b) Casting Breakdowns  
    (c) Production Notebooks  
READ: Intuition: Ch. 9-10, 15 (pp127-156, 203-210)  
    Article on the making of *Staged*  
    *Distant Learners* Zoom Guidelines  
WRITE: Discussion Forum posts on Intuition readings and *Staged*  
    Revise Scripts (ALL) - a locked final version is due next week

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### Week 3 4/13

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**DUE: (3) Final, locked draft of script (ALL)**

LECTURE: Rehearsal techniques  
WORKSHOP: Character outline workshop  
WATCH: *Static Space* (picture-locked scene)  
GUEST: *Static Space* actors Kate Black-Spence and Mariah Copeland:  
Casting and rehearsing for Zoom

CALENDAR: Start Casting -- must be fully cast by **4/27**- (ALL)

**Assignments due 4/20:**

WATCH: *Notorious* (blocking examples)  
Async lectures:  
(a) Locations  
(b) Casting (optional)  
WRITE: Discussion Forum post on *Notorious*  
Script Breakdowns for every scene (ALL)  
Casting Breakdowns for each character (ALL)  
READ: *Notorious* - chapter on blocking  
Intuition, Ch. 20 (pp291-301)

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### Week 4 4/20

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**DUE: (4) Script Breakdowns (ALL), (5) Casting Breakdowns for each character (ALL)**

LECTURE: Blocking and Staging for the Camera, Visual Design for Zoom  
WATCH: *Displaced*  
WORKSHOP: Scene analysis (in breakout groups)  
CALENDAR: Continue Casting -- must be fully cast by **4/27** (ALL)

**Assignments due 4/27:**

WATCH: Async lectures:  
(a) Budgeting (optional)  
(b) Scheduling (optional)  
READ: Intuition, Ch. 18-19 (pp225-289)  
WRITE: Discussion Forum post on Intuition readings  
Shooting Schedules & Budgets (ALL)  
Bring headshots and present your cast to the class (ALL)

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### Week 5 4/27

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**DUE: (6) Shooting Schedules & Budgets, (5) Headshots (ALL),**

WORKSHOP: Present cast to class, discuss audition process

EXERCISE: Zoom trial scene, with roles

**Assignments due 5/4:**

WATCH: Async lectures:

(a) Visual Design (optional)

(b) Lookbooks (optional)

WRITE: Scene dramatic block breakdowns (ALL)

Aesthetic/Visual Plan (ALL)

Blocking and Staging Plan (CYCLE 1)

SELECT: A joyful object for our "Working with Actors" workshop next week

READ:

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### Week 6 5/4

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**DUE: (5) Headshots (ALL), (7) Aesthetic/Visual Plan (ALL), (8) Scene Dramatic Block Breakdowns (ALL), (9) Blocking and Staging Plan (CYCLE 1)**

GUEST: Andrew Gallant - Working with Actors intensive

CALENDAR: CYCLE 1 SHOOTS THIS WEEK

**Assignments due 5/11:**

WATCH: Async Lecture: Ready to shoot?

WRITE: Blocking and Staging Plan (CYCLE 2)

EDIT: Footage or edited scene for screening (CYCLE 1)

READ: Intuition, Ch. 22 (pp321-329)

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### Week 7 5/11

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**DUE: (9) Blocking and Staging Plan (CYCLE 2), FOOTAGE or EDITED SCENE (CYCLE 1)**

WORKSHOP: Production reflection, Screen raw or edited footage from one scene (CYCLE 1)

CALENDAR: CYCLE 2 SHOOTS THIS WEEK, CYCLE 1 EDITING

**Assignments due 5/18:**

WATCH: TBD  
WRITE: Discussion Forum post reflecting on your production experience (CYCLE 1)  
EDIT: Footage or edited scene for screening (CYCLE 2)  
READ: TBD

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### Week 8 5/18

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**DUE: FOOTAGE or EDITED SCENE (CYCLE 2)**

WORKSHOP: Production reflection, Screen raw or edited footage from one scene (CYCLE 2)

CALENDAR: CYCLES 1 AND 2 EDITING

**Assignments due 5/25:**

WATCH: TBD  
WRITE: Discussion Forum post reflecting on your production experience (CYCLE 2)  
EDIT: Rough cuts (ALL), CYCLE 1 Rough cuts screened next week  
READ:

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### Week 9 5/25

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**DUE: (10) Bring in polished rough cut (CYCLE 1)**

WORKSHOP: Screen Polished Rough Cuts (CYCLE 1)

CALENDAR: CYCLES 2 EDITING rough cut, CYCLE 1 FINAL FILMS

**Assignments due 6/1:**

WATCH: Async lecture on EPK and marketing  
VAS on film festivals  
WRITE: Discussion Forum post on VAS film festival panel  
EDIT: CYCLE 2 Rough cuts screened next week, CYCLE 1 work on finishing films  
READ: Marketing Materials

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### Week 10 6/1

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**DUE: (10) Bring in polished rough cut (CYCLE 2)**

WORKSHOP: Screen Polished Rough Cuts (CYCLE 2)

CALENDAR: CYCLES 1 & 2 complete final films with sound

**Assignments due 6/8:**

WATCH: TBD

WRITE: Final Reflection Paper on production

EDIT: Final films (ALL)

READ: TBD

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**Week 11 6/8**

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**DUE: (10) Bring in finished films (ALL), Reflection Paper (ALL), Document uploaded outlining anything that you want to complete after class (sound mix, color grading, vfx, more sound design, etc)**

WORKSHOP: Screen all finished films

*Attendance to the final exam period is mandatory, if you are not present **you will receive a 0 on your final project.***

**ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICIES AND INFORMATION:**

**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>

### **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](https://resources.depaul.edu/teaching-commons/teaching/Pages/online-teaching-evaluations.aspx). 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 university's academic integrity policy. More information can be found at <https://resources.depaul.edu/teaching-commons/teaching/academic-integrity/Pages/default.aspx>.

### **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>

### **Withdrawal**

Students who withdraw from the course do so by using the Campus Connection system at <http://campusconnect.depaul.edu>. Withdrawals processed via this system are effective the day on which they are made. Simply ceasing to attend, or notifying the instructor, or nonpayment of tuition, does not constitute an official withdrawal from class and will result in academic as well as financial penalty.

### **Retroactive Withdrawal**

This policy exists to assist students for whom extenuating circumstances prevented them from meeting the withdrawal deadline. During their college career students may be allowed

one medical/personal administrative withdrawal and one college office administrative withdrawal, each for one or more courses in a single term. Repeated requests will not be considered. Submitting an appeal for retroactive withdrawal does not guarantee approval. College office appeals for CDM students must be submitted online via MyCDM. The deadlines for submitting appeals are as follows:

- Autumn Quarter: Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent winter quarter
- Winter Quarter: Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent spring quarter
- Spring Quarter: Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent autumn quarter
- Summer Terms: Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent autumn quarter

### **Excused Absence**

In order to petition for an excused absence, students who miss class due to illness or significant personal circumstances should complete the Absence Notification process through the Dean of Students office. The form can be accessed at <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/dos/forms.html> . Students must submit supporting documentation alongside the form. The professor reserves the sole right whether to offer an excused absence and/or academic accommodations for an excused absence.

### **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>

### **Online Office Hours**

Faculty should be accessible to students using Zoom, Skype or other similar platforms for the duration of the office hours. Faculty must be accessible on the designated platform for the duration of the office hours.

[https://offices.depaul.edu/student-affairs/resources/faculty-staff/faculty-questions/Documents/Faculty\\_Resources\\_Online\\_Classroom.pdf](https://offices.depaul.edu/student-affairs/resources/faculty-staff/faculty-questions/Documents/Faculty_Resources_Online_Classroom.pdf)

### **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:

Student Center, LPC, Suite #370

Phone number (Lincoln Park Campus): (773)325.1677

Phone number (Loop Campus): (312)362.8002

Fax: (773)325.3720  
TTY: (773)325.7296  
Email: [csd@depaul.edu](mailto:csd@depaul.edu)

Students who register with the Center for Students with Disabilities are also invited to contact Dr. Gregory 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.