

DC 450 Directing Actors for the Camera

Course #: DC-450-801

Time: W 1745-2100

Campus: LOOP

Room: 14EAS LL107

Instructor: Ronald Eltanal (Associate Professor), MFA-University of Southern California

Office: CDM 501

Phone: (312) 362-7309

Email: reltanal@cim.depaul.edu

Office and Advising Hours: Please see instructor page at the CDM website

Course Description

This course will consist of scene studies emphasizing the actor/director relationship, the relationship between the camera and performer, casting, blocking for the camera, and scene analysis. During the course students will shoot and edit short dialogue scenes. The scenes will be analyzed for the quality of the performance and effectiveness of direction. Students will work toward the creation of a final, polished short film.

Learning Outcomes

For actors:

To gain practical knowledge and experience of filmmaking and film language that will enable him or her to adapt acting skillset to the unique demands of screen acting.

For directors:

To develop an understanding of the actor's process that will enable him or her to communicate effectively with actors and elicit emotionally truthful performances that serve the cinematic storytelling needs of a given scene or project.

Prerequisites

For directors: DC 462 Graduate Directing Workshop. Enrollment by Instructor Approval. Directing students are expected to have experience and proficiency with all major aspects of digital cinema production and post as well as prior experience directing and working with trained actors.

It is expected that you are already familiar with the following text. If not, become so as soon as you can: *Directing Actors*, Judith Weston. Weise.

For actors: Third (Final) Year MFA Acting student status within the DePaul Theatre School.

Course Management System

D2L

Textbooks and Printed Resources

Acting in Film, by Michael Caine

Recommended Readings:

An Actor Prepares, Constantin Stanislavski.

A Practical Handbook for the Actor, Melissa Bruder, et al.

Making Movies, Sidney Lumet.

On Directing and True and False: Heresy and Common Sense for the Actor, David Mamet.

Respect for Acting, Uta Hagen.

REQUIRED SUPPLIES:

A portable Mac-formatted FireWire, USB3, or Thunderbolt Hard Drive (1 TB minimum) for storing media files and editing. Recommended Mac format is: Mac OS Extended (Journaled).

Notes on Course Structure and Content:

Because there are two distinct populations in the class and two sets of learning goals, please keep in mind the following:

For actors, this class is about honing and adapting the acting skillset already possessed to the unique demands of the screen, getting valuable on-camera experience, and learning how to collaborate with cinema directors during the relatively brief time allowed for rehearsal and production of film projects.

For directors, this class is about deepening your understanding of the actor's craft and process so you can learn the art of actor-director collaboration. This understanding will enable you to empower your actors to bring depth, nuance, and truth to your scripts and characters.

Therefore:

There will be short portion of some class meetings that are geared toward one group or the other. Every effort will be made manage time efficiently, but in certain situations, your patience will be requested in order to facilitate this.

Assignments:

Directors will be shooting two projects that utilize two actors in the class. Every actor must be cast in at least one final project. Directors are expected to **assemble a crew** for each project and to crew on at least one other directing student's project for each major production assignment. Additional crew work will constitute extra credit. However, crew members can and must be drawn from outside of class and should consist of minimum of a dedicated member for camera, sound, lighting, art department, and production. Under no circumstances should the director be operating the camera. Focus on directing your actors and the performances.

Project 1 must be shot in a location secured by the directors. The Final Project must be shot at Cinespace during the following dates:

Feb. 9 – 12

Feb. 16 – 19

Feb. 23 – 26

Director will be assigned 2-3 shooting days. While we will work as a class to create the schedule based on a variety of factors like set availability, actor availability, and crew availability, once the dates are set, you will not be permitted to switch.

Project 1 (3-2-1):

This project is a three-minute film based on characters from the screenplays written for the final project. Each film will utilize two characters in one location (hence, 3-2-1).

Actors and directors for these projects will be assigned by the instructor. One actor will be double cast (preferably not the same actor/s double cast in the final projects).

Final Project:

This project is a 7-page screenplay written by SCA (School of Cinematic Arts) MFA Screenwriting students. From the class actors, directors will cast the screenplays to which they have already been assigned. Directors will be required to lead a rehearsal process, share an exploratory rehearsal with the class and ultimately deliver a rough cut and final cut of a 7-minute-ish short film featuring at least two actors from the class.

Self-Evaluation:

All students will be required to write a self-evaluation for both projects. Evaluations must be 250 words or more, and must simply answer three questions:

1. What did I do that I liked?
2. What would I do differently?

Self-evaluations should be uploaded to the D2L Dropbox.

Notes for Actors:

Production projects require a significant commitment of time for rehearsal, preparation, and on set or on-location. Directors and their crews are expected to make every effort to schedule your time as efficiently and respectfully as possible but please understand that being on "stand-by" during a production day is par for the course. You should be given as much advance notice as possible but in general you should not schedule other activities after call time on a shooting day.

Also, as soon as a project you acted in is screened in class, you should coordinate with the director to obtain the full-quality Quicktime movie of the project on your portable hard drive for possible future use as part of your demo reel. It is your responsibility to obtain the media from your director. This is required for the class; you will be required to edit a 1-minute excerpt of your best work for your reel.

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 the Dropbox in D2L and sent via email.

Grading

Grading Breakdown

Class Participation	10%
Project 1	40%
Final Project	50%

Grading Scale

A: 93-100, A-: 90-92, B+: 87-89, B: 83-86, B-: 80-82, C+: 77-79, C: 73-76, C-: 70-72, D+: 67-69, D: 63-66, D-: 60-62

All grading is final (assignments may not be resubmitted for new grades). Unless otherwise noted, all assignments are due the class after which they are assigned. Late assignments will not be accepted (if you anticipate you will miss class, the assignment must be delivered to my door before the start of the class in which it is due), unless the absence for the class is excused (documented illness, death in the family, etc.).

Production Resources

Take time to check out all the resources listed on the School's website:

<http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/current%20students/pages/production-resources.aspx>

Week-by-week Assignments/Readings:

WEEK ONE

Jan. 2

Topics:

- Course Intros & Overview
- Definition of acting
- Casting considerations and audition techniques for actors: relaxation, improv, lovability and authenticity.

- Casting considerations for directors: directability, adjustments, “vein of gold,” PITA factor
- Sides for casting

Screen: “The Audition”

Directors’ Assignment: Prepare Final Project sides and deliver to actors at 4:45 PM on Sunday, Jan. 8

Actors’ Assignment: Prepare sides for casting on Jan. 9

WEEK TWO

Jan. 9

Topic:

- Casting for Final Projects
- Actor’s tools for the director: needs, objectives, playable actions, adjustments.
- Acting with the eyes.
- What actors and directors need from each other
- What is good screen acting?
- External vs. Internal Techniques & Approaches
- Presentation vs. Representational Acting
- Differences between stage & screen

Screen: Actor’s Studio Excerpts

Read: Caine (all)

Directors’ Assignment: Cast Final Projects

WEEK THREE

Jan. 16 – NO CLASS

Assignment: Pre-produce Project 1

WEEK FOUR

Jan. 23

Topics:

- Guest Speaker TBA

Assignment: Shoot and edit Project 1

Actors’ Assignment: Secure footage, edit reel excerpts

WEEK FIVE

Jan. 30

Topic:

- Rehearsal and Preparation Techniques for Film.
- What to rehearse and what not to rehearse.
- Setting the tone and guiding the rehearsal.
- Schedule Final Project shooting days

Screen: Project 1 and actors’ editing reel excerpts

WEEK SIX

Feb. 6

Topic:

- In-class rehearsals (Feb. 9-12 shoots)
- External Technique and Technical Aspects of Acting and Directing Actors for the Camera: marks, blocking, the frame, lenses, coverage, and continuity.

Assignment: Pre-produce and shoot final projects

WEEK SEVEN

Feb. 13

Topic:

In-class rehearsals (Feb. 16-19 shoots)

Editing and directing and acting

Screen: Five minutes of selected dailies

Assignment: Pre-produce and shoot final projects; begin editing

WEEK EIGHT

Feb. 20

In-class rehearsals (Feb. 23-26 shoots)

Actors' assignments: Secure footage and edit 1-minute excerpts

Screen: Five minutes of selected dailies

Recommended reading: *Zen and the Art of Archery*, Eugen Herrigel

Assignment: Pre-produce and shoot final projects; begin or continue editing

WEEK NINE

Feb. 27

Topic: *Zen and the Art of Acting and Directing*

Screen: Five minutes of selected dailies and actors' editing reel excerpts

Assignment: Finish editing final projects

WEEK TEN

March 6

Screen: Final Project Rough Cuts

FINAL EXAM DAY:

March 13, 5:45-9:00 PM

Screen: Final Project Final Cuts

CDM EQUIPMENT CENTER CHECK OUT POLICIES

College of Computing and Digital Media Equipment Access and Use Policy

DePaul College of Computing and Digital Media (CDM) production equipment is intended for use in CDM related assignments. Students may not use DePaul CDM equipment for hired work, or in the service of any other company, organization, or person, whether for pay or otherwise. Students may not request financial compensation for work using DePaul CDM production equipment.

Access to General Equipment Inventory (“non-advanced” cameras, general audio, all general grip and electric)

- Equipment is available to DePaul CDM students for CDM-related assignments, classwork, or approved independent projects only.
- Designated equipment is available to College of Communication students, staff, and faculty.
- Most cameras and some specialized items are assigned to particular classes, and only students enrolled in those classes will be able to reserve those items in advance.
- All items unreserved as of Thursday, 5pm will be made available for check out on a first-come basis.
- An open stock of Canon DSLRs and JVC GY-HM700 camcorders are available for reservation for all students at all times.
- Students wishing to reserve equipment other than the open stock or the equipment designated for the classes in which they are enrolled must fill out an Equipment Request Form. The form must be signed by a DePaul SCA faculty member who is familiar with the equipment requirements of the project. It must be submitted to the appropriate equipment center manager(s) at least 48 hours before making the reservation. Submission of the request does not guarantee approval.

Access to Advanced Equipment Inventory (Items include: Canon C300, Sony FS7, Red One, Red Epic, Arri Alexa, Grip Truck, Chapman Dolly, Advanced Sound Package, Honda Generator)

- Equipment is available to DePaul CDM students for CDM-related assignments, classwork, or approved independent projects only.
- Students shooting projects assigned by an instructor as part of a regular course, or green lit MFA Thesis projects (including equipment approval by all three thesis committee members), do not require prior permission to reserve the equipment.
- Prior permission to reserve equipment is required for students who wish to do any of the following:
 - Reserve equipment not in the open stock or designated for courses in which they are enrolled.

- Shoot a project for an Independent Study (DC/ANI 399 or 599)
- Shoot a project not assigned by or attached to any course.
- In order to receive permission, students must fill out an Equipment Request Form. This form must be signed by a faculty member who is serving as the project advisor. The faculty member must be familiar with the equipment requirements of the project. The form must then be submitted to each Equipment Center from which the student wishes to take equipment.
- Please note that submitting the form does not guarantee approval of the request. The equipment center managers will take into account many other factors, including demand on the particular items requested, timing of the request, and duration of the shoot.
- For projects not assigned by or attached to a course, current DePaul University students must occupy 4 of the 5 following key crew roles on set:
 - ☐ Director
 - ☐ Producer
 - ☐ Director of Photography/Cinematographer
 - ☐ Sound Mixer
 - ☐ Gaffer/Key Grip
- Students requesting equipment that requires certification or training, such as the advanced cameras or the grip truck, must also meet those requirements.
- To reserve an advanced camera package (Arri Alexa, Red Epic, Red One, Canon C300, Sony FS7), the Director of Photography and 1st Assistant Camera must successfully complete a training session for the requested camera with Camera Vault staff.
- To reserve the grip truck, the student must possess a non-CDL Class C Drivers License (in Illinois or equivalent from another state) and successfully complete training with DePaul Cinespace Studios staff.
- To reserve a Chapman Hybrid or PeeWee dolly, the student must successfully complete a training session with DePaul Cinespace Studios staff.
- To reserve the Honda generators, the student must successfully complete a training session with the DePaul Cinespace Studios staff.
- To reserve the advanced sound cart, the student must successfully complete a training session with DePaul Cinespace Studios staff.
- To reserve the DIT cart, the student must successfully complete a training session with DePaul Cinespace Studios staff.

Equipment Reservation

1. Equipment reservations for equipment housed at the CDM Equipment Center and at the Camera Vault may be done by phone or in person. Equipment reservations for equipment and space at DePaul Cinespace Studios should be done via email. Please see the Production Handbook for more information.

2. Undergraduate students, faculty not filming Project Bluelight projects, and graduate students not filming MFA Thesis projects may reserve equipment up to 30 days prior to the first shooting date.
3. Graduate students filming MFA thesis projects and faculty filming Project Bluelight projects may reserve equipment up to 60 days prior to the first shooting date.
4. Students may only have 2 open transactions (reservations or active check outs) simultaneously.
5. Students are suspended from reservation and check out of all equipment and space until any outstanding fines are paid.

Period of Loan

- The standard period of loan from the CDM Equipment Center and the Camera Vault is 3 days/2 nights. Equipment checked out on a Monday is due Wednesday. Equipment checked out on Tuesday is due Thursday. Equipment checked out on Wednesday is due Friday.
 - The equipment centers are closed on Saturdays and Sundays. Therefore, equipment checked out on Thursday or Friday will be due the following week.
- o CDM Equipment Center check outs on Thursday are due Monday. o CDM Equipment Center check outs on Friday are due Tuesday. o DePaul Cinespace Studios/Camera Vault check outs on Thursday or Friday are due Monday.
- Hours may vary for DePaul Cinespace Studios.
 - In all cases, the due date and time listed on the check out record is considered official.
 - Longer periods of loan may be accommodated by special request. Decisions will be made based on classroom needs, equipment needs, scheduling needs, equipment requested, and length of request.
 - During Autumn, Winter, and Spring Quarters, no period of loan can be longer than 11 calendar days (one week, bookended by two weekends).
 - During December Intersession and Summer Session, no period of loan can be longer than 18 calendar days (two weeks, bookended by two weekends).

Reservation Cancellations

- Students must call the appropriate check out center in advance to cancel reservations.
- If an individual does not cancel a reservation for equipment by noon the day before the scheduled pickup date, they will be fined \$25.00.
- If an individual does not cancel a reservation for space 72 hours before scheduled pickup, they will be fined \$50.00.

Pick Up and Responsibility for Equipment

- Reserved equipment must be picked up on the first day of the reservation period. Any equipment not picked up on the first day will be made available to other students.
- The individual listed on the reservation must be present to pick up and return equipment. Equipment will not be released to or accepted from others.
- The individual listed on the reservation will be the only person held responsible for any late fines or repair and replacement fees, with one exception:
 - For MFA Thesis projects, the MFA candidate will be the only person held responsible for any late fines or repair and replacement fees.
- The individual checking out equipment must inspect all packages to confirm that all items and parts are present and in working condition. Please allow ample time. Any issues must be reported to checkout center staff immediately.
- The individual will be responsible for any damage discovered after equipment is removed from the checkout center premises.

Equipment Return and Penalties for Late Return

- Equipment must be returned in its entirety at the return time listed on the check out record.
- Equipment must be returned clean, well packed, and fully functional.

Checkout center staff will inspect and test equipment. Inspection may take several hours on busy days. Any missing or damaged items will be reported via email to the individual listed on the check out record.

- Any items or component parts missing upon return will be billed to the student. Please see heading below, Missing and Damaged Equipment, for details.
- The repair costs for any item found damaged will be billed to the student. Please see heading below, Missing and Damaged Equipment, for details.
- At the discretion of the checkout center managers, individuals may be assessed a \$25 cleaning fee for equipment returned dirty or so poorly packed as to be dangerous to the equipment.
- Extension requests will not be accepted.
- Fines for overdue equipment are billed at \$50 per day.
 - A \$25 discount will be applied if the equipment is returned within 1 hour of the deadline.
 - Fines are incurred immediately at the time due. Individuals not in line to return equipment at the designated time will be considered late, without exception. A minute past the due time is late.
- At 14 days overdue, outstanding equipment will be treated as a theft and both DePaul Public Safety and the Chicago Police Department will be notified.
- The maximum penalty for late return is \$700 (14-day late fine), or the current cost of the item plus a 25% restocking fee, whichever is less.
- If an individual is more than 1 day late more than twice in a quarter, access to equipment is suspended for the duration of the quarter.
- Access to equipment will be suspended until all outstanding fines are paid.

Missing and Damaged Equipment

- If an item or part of an item is not in the package at the time of return, the individual listed on the checkout record will be held responsible for its replacement.
 - The individual will be given 7 days to find and return the missing item(s). Late penalties will apply to individuals who return missing items within the 7-day period.
 - After 7 days, the individual will be billed by the Equipment Center Manager for the replacement cost of the item(s). The individual will have 14 days from the date of billing to make payment.
 - Failure to make payment within 14 days of billing will result in the suspension of the individual's equipment access until the debt is paid in full.
- If an item is damaged while in the individual's possession for any reason, the individual will be held responsible for the repair costs. The repair provider will be selected solely at the discretion of the checkout center manager.
 - The individual will be notified of the repair costs as soon as an estimate is acquired from the repair provider. The individual must make payment within 14 days of notification. Failure to do so will result in the suspension of the individual's equipment access until the debt is paid in full.
- If the total amount of the replacement or repair costs is greater than \$100, the individual may request an installment-based repayment plan. Terms of the repayment plans will be determined by the checkout center manager on a case-by-case basis, based upon the amount, the individual's expected graduate date, and previous record of mistreatment of equipment.

Repeated violation of the above rules and regulations or repeated mistreatment of equipment may result in penalization up to and including temporary or permanent suspensions of check out privileges as determined by CDM Staff and Faculty.

DePaul University Filming Procedure Summary

DePaul is open to student and faculty film projects as part of academic courses as well as advertising and promotional projects arranged by university officials for university purposes. DePaul is closed to filming by non-university and commercial entities except in special circumstances.

Students, faculty and staff may not use their access to DePaul's facilities by virtue of their enrollment or employment to engage in filming for another entity that does not have such access. If students, faculty or staff seek to film something on campus for an external organization, they must follow the requirements for non- university and commercial filming and qualify for an exception. See full procedures at: http://newsroom.depaul.edu/PDF/ProceduresForNonUFilming_Sep09.pdf
Note: These procedures do not apply to credentialed news media.

Requirements for student film projects

Coordination procedures for student film projects shot on campus for classroom use:

1. DePaul students working on class projects who plan to film in common areas or non-public areas inside campus facilities are required to obtain permission from the manager of that space preferably three days in advance, but minimally 24 hours in advance. *Permission is not guaranteed. DePaul is unlikely to close off public facilities like restrooms and elevators for filming.*
2. Filming should not interfere with the normal flow of building traffic or campus safety. Exits cannot be obstructed. Equipment should not create tripping hazards.
3. If students plan to film an event, they must get the event sponsor's permission in addition to the space manager's permission preferably three days in advance, but minimally 24 hours in advance for events scheduled 24 or more hours prior to their occurrence. For events scheduled less than 24 hours prior to their occurrence or events that happen spontaneously, students should secure permission from the sponsor prior to filming.
4. If permission is granted, students are required to notify Public Safety on that campus of the time, date and location of their scheduled filming and report who gave them permission to ensure it is a person with the authority to grant it.
5. Students who wish to interview faculty or staff in their campus offices should make prior arrangements by contacting the interviewee to request and arrange interviews, then alert Public Safety, which is responsible for enforcing film procedures, of the time, date and location of the interview.
6. Student film crews should carry their student IDs with them at all times during the shoot so that Public Safety and university administrators can confirm they are DePaul students.
7. Student film crews shall honor the request of any students, faculty, staff or guests who decline to be filmed while on campus.
8. Students should be familiar with and comply with the "Student Film Production Guidelines" on matters of insurance.
9. Students filming outside on public or private property should contact the Chicago Film Office for review. This is not necessary for filming on DePaul's private property if the crew size is five or fewer unless the filming involves weapons or fireworks or could alarm passersby. If a gun or any weapon will be fired or seen in public, arrangements must be made in advance via the film office for a Chicago Police Officer to be on the set. If pyrotechnics of any sort are used, the Chicago Fire Department and possibly police need to be on set. Chicago Film Office, 121 N. LaSalle Street Suite

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MEDIA RELATIONS

806, Chicago, IL 60602, Phone: 312.744.6415, Fax: 312.744.1378, Email:
filmoffice@cityofchicago.org, URL: www.chicagofilmoffice.us.

10. Students must notify Public Safety in advance if any prop weapons are going to be used or if any activity not normally allowed on campus will be staged, e.g. a fight.
11. If the project causes damage to any DePaul property, it should be reported immediately to the Dean of Students Office at 773/325-7290.
12. Filming in DePaul facilities should take place during normal business hours.
13. Faculty members who assign student film projects are responsible for making students aware of DePaul's procedures for student filming on campus and for ensuring students follow these policies.
14. If, after complying with these requirements, students encounter unreasonable interference to their filming by DePaul employee(s) or fellow student(s), they should contact their professor for assistance.

In the event a student film will be distributed outside DePaul (i.e., presented at an off-campus film festival or competition; on a non-DePaul television station or cable network; or distributed publicly in another manner; including posting on a multi-media sharing Web site such as YouTube or iTunes; or if it becomes a commercial venture, such as being purchased by an outside producer or distributor), the following requirements apply in addition to 1-14 above:

15. If the film project involves no usage of DePaul University's name, identifiable images of its campuses or buildings, or its corporate marks, then distribution may proceed without taking further steps.
16. If the film project includes any use of DePaul's name, identifiable images of its buildings, campuses or corporate marks and is distributed outside the classroom setting, the use of DePaul's name, image and/or corporate marks must be approved by the AVPs for PR and for Marketing Communications and, as appropriate, the university's president prior to filming. This approval process is designed to protect DePaul's image, reputation and logos and ensure the university's association with themes that support its academic integrity and reputation. In rare cases, such as when students seek to distribute a project outside the classroom that was originally intended solely for internal use, students can seek permission to use DePaul's marks and images after filming is complete.
17. Requests for review should be submitted to the AVP for PR a minimum of one week in advance of a decision.

Contacts for Students

Loop Campus:

Facility Operations 312/362-8682 14 E. Jackson Blvd., Suite 600

Student Centers Aileen Spencer Assistant Director of Student Centers, Loop Campus 312/362-8624

Public Safety 312/362-8400

Media Relations 312/362-8591

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MEDIA RELATIONS

Lincoln Park Campus:

Facility Operations 773/325-7377 Centennial Hall 303
Student Centers Jeff Quest Assistant Director of Student Centers, Lincoln Park Campus 773/325-7346
LA&S Event Spaces in SAC, Levan O'Connell Hermon Berhane 773/325-7300
Music School Rob Krueger Associate Dean 773/325-4355
Public Safety 773/325-7777

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College 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 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: cdm.depaul.edu/enrollment.

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