

DC 110 Foundations of Cinema
Fall 2017
Thursdays 1:30-4:45

Instructor: Dana Hodgdon
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Office Hours: See office/advising hours on Professor's CDM website
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Course Description

This course will examine the craft, technology, and aesthetic principles of media production. In lectures we will examine the “world” of media production with special emphasis on current and new technologies, industry conventions and structures, career paths/opportunities, and different genres within this world. All lectures will include screenings of selected films and videos which will support the lecture topics. This course has important creative/production components as well. Both in class and outside of class, students will write two creative/analytical short papers and produce two digital production assignments. Classes will start promptly at 1:30 on Thursdays. Each class will begin with the screening and analysis of a short film or film clip.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students should be able to analyze films and videos in terms of structure, the framed image, sound, and image sequence. Students should also be able to incorporate these concepts into their own creative work. The following topics will be covered:

- the importance of story and controlling ideas
- storytelling with images
- the basics of composition and editing
- an examination of narrative, documentary, and experimental approaches
- an introduction to other media forms including television and TV commercials
- an ongoing discussion and analysis of current and emerging media technologies including HD, 4K, youtube, and everything from iphones to Twitter.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course students will:

- Identify the function of cinematic techniques in the art of storytelling.
- Examine the relationship between theory and practice in the filmmaking process.
- Integrate the aesthetic principles of visual design, style, and film

form in the creation of multiple projects.

- Utilize film language in the analysis of short and feature length media.
- Working in groups, create 2 short films.

REQUIRED TEXT

Film Art: An Introduction by David Bordwell, Kristin Thompson, & Jeff Smith (ISBN 978-1-259-53495-9). Any edition.

Please Note – This course is **not** a production/technology course. Rather it is an overview of the world of media production. For students who want to get an introduction to digital cinema technology, the course to take is DC 210 Digital Cinema Production I.

Course Outline

Subject to change

WEEK 1	9/7	Introduction, organization, assignments Lecture: “A 90 minute history of Cinema”
WEEK 2	9/14	Lecture: “Hollywood: The Big Picture. The business of filmmaking. How feature films are produced.” Screening: Discussion/analysis of film clips from Living in Oblivion and more. Lecture: Current film and digital technology. Formats, aspect ratios, distribution systems. Read <i>Film Art</i>, Chapters. 1&2
WEEK 3	9/21	Lecture: “Storytelling, narrative structure, the Aristotelian Curve, Surprise and Inevitability.” Screening: Discussion and analysis of film clips from North By Northwest and Blue Velvet , Pulp Fiction , Midnight Express . Read <i>Film Art</i>, Chapter 3.
WEEK 4	9/28	Lecture: Narrative Forms and Structure continued. Classic Hollywood Cinema.. Screen Casablanca . Read <i>Film Art</i>, Chapter 4.
WEEK 5	10/5	Lecture/Screening: “Experimental Forms: The Avant Garde and its Relation to the Mainstream.”

Screening: Stan Brakhage, Maya Deren, and others
Writing Exercise # 1 Due – hard copy due in class.
 Lecture: Experimental Forms continued.
 Screening: **Select music videos and short films**
Read *Film Art*, Ch. 10 (“Documentary, Experimental, and Animated Films”), pp. 350-369

- WEEK 6** 10/12 Lecture: “The Documentary: An Evolving Form.”
 Screenings: **TBA. Spinal Tap.**
 Creative Projects: Groups meet for creative conferences for Digital Assignment # 1.
 Creative Projects: Lab – Canon XF 100 cameras, tripods.
Read *Film Art*, Chapter 10
- WEEK 7** 10/19 Creative Projects: Lab – Premiere Pro lab.
Writing Exercise # 2 Due – hard copy due in class.
 Lecture: “The Television Commercial: High Stakes in Advertising.”
 Screening: Selected TV commercials.
 Creative Projects: Groups meet for creative conferences for Digital Assignment # 2.
- WEEK 8** 10/26 The Television Commercial continued.
 Screening: Super Bowl commercials
Digital Assignment # 1 “City Symphony” Due in Class.
 We will screen and critique this assignment in class.
- WEEK 9** 11/2 Lecture: “Television Studio Production: Formulas for Success.”
 Lecture: “New Technologies: Digital, HDTV, Compression, Transmission and Delivery Systems. The future of Cinema.
- WEEK 10** 11/9 **FINAL EXAM**
- WEEK 11** 11/17 **Thursday 11/16/2017, from 11:30 AM to 1:45 PM.**
Screen and Critique Final Projects – Digital Assignment # 2.
This is the scheduled date/time for the final exam for this course. We will use this time to screen and critique Final Projects. Attendance is mandatory

Summary of Assignments

Writing Exercise # 1 – parameters for this assignment will be announced in class on Week 4 and will be due in class Week 5.

Writing Exercise # 2 – parameters for this assignment will be announced in class on Week 6 and will be due in class Week 7.

Digital Assignment # 1 – Digital Video. Work in groups of 2. Your video will be a **City Symphony**. Pick a theme for your symphony – eg. commerce, people, transportation, architecture, poverty, lakefront, etc. Your video should have approximately 20 shots and be set to a piece of music of your choosing. All shots must be tripod, locked down, no camera movement. So, every composition should be well planned and thought out. Target length is 90 -120 seconds. Export your video to Quicktime, drag/drop onto a jump drive.

Digital Assignment # 2 – Final Project – Digital Video. Work in groups of 2-3. This will be a short video. I will give you the parameters of the project in the next few weeks. Export your video to Quicktime, drag/drop onto a jump drive and present in class.

Course Materials

Required:

- 1 USB3 jump drive –16GB or more recommended.

Highly Recommended:

External USB3 or SSD drive 250 GB plus.

Grading

Class Attendance and Participation	10%
Writing Exercise # 1	5%
Writing Exercise # 2	10%
Digital Assignment # 1	15%
Digital Assignment # 2	30%
Final Exam	30%
Total	100%

Course Policies – In addition to DePaul University course policies (see student handbook), the following special policies will apply to this course.

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 showing up 15 minutes or more late. Any absences will result in a reduction of the attendance/participation grade.

Assignments and Exercises – Assignments and exercises must be completed by the due date as indicated in the syllabus. Late work will not be accepted without prior consent of the instructor.

Examinations – Students who do not take exams during the regularly scheduled time will receive a failing grade for the exam unless they have contacted the instructor in advance to arrange for a make-up exam.

Plagiarism – Plagiarism on assignments or cheating on exams are serious offenses and earn the student a failing grade for the class. Please read the Academic Integrity Policy (AIP) at: <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/handbook/code16.html>.

Course Lectures/Reading Assignments – The assigned readings offer an opportunity for independent learning that supplements the lectures. Lectures will introduce material not available in the readings, and the readings will explore concepts not mentioned in class. The exam will cover both lecture and reading materials.

Content Changes – Depending on time factors, the assignments projected for the term may require slight alteration or rescheduling.

Working in Groups – For several projects for this course you will be working in groups of 2-3. A major component of producing films and videos is teamwork. In this course many of you will be working as a creative team for the first time. Most student teams work very well together. But sometimes personality conflicts or creative conflicts can arise. It is your job as a team to work through these conflicts, because if you don't, your project will suffer. If things get really difficult you can come to me as a team and I will help mediate/resolve the situation.

Office Hours/My Availability – I enjoy working with my students and am always available for advising, answering questions, etc. If you stop by during my office hours I may be in the building, but not in my office. If that is the case, call me on my cell and we'll connect up.

More Information

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 that all students know what is expected of them and that all students are treated equally by being held to the same standards.

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.

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

25 E. Jackson Blvd. (1420)

Phone: (312)362-8002

Fax: (312)362-6544

TTY: (773)325.7296

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance: Students are expected to attend each class and to remain for the duration. *Coming 15 minutes late or leaving 15 minutes early constitutes an absence for the student.*

The overall grade for Attendance & Participation drops one-third after any absence. Three absences for any reason, whether excused or not, may constitute failure for the course.

Participation: Student participation in this class will be measured in two ways. First, students will write an answer to a question based on the assigned reading from the textbook at the beginning of class (see grading system). Second, students will receive points for actively contributing to class discussions. Students must keep up with the reading to participate in class discussions.

5 points – Excellent answer, with details from the assigned reading

3 points – Acceptable answer

1 point – Inaccurate/unclear answer

0 points – Absent/no answer

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.

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