

**DePaul University  
School of Cinematic Arts  
Spring Quarter – 2017-2018  
DC 110 – Foundations of Cinema for Majors  
Section: 601  
Class Location: 14 E. Jackson, Room LL105  
Class Times: Thursdays, 1:30 – 4:45 PM**

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

Instructor: Firas Aladai  
Email: faladai@cdm.depaul.edu  
Office Location: CDM Room 522  
Office Hours: Thursdays, 10:15 AM – 1:15 PM

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course deals with visualization and cinema literacy skills. Drawing heavily on a wide array of historical examples, the course will examine the many expressive strategies potentially usable in the creation of moving image art forms: image construction and manipulation, editing, composition, sound, narrative, and performance. An emphasis will be placed on story and storytelling. In addition to analyzing the works of others, students will produce their own projects, putting theory into practice.

Prerequisite(s): None

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The course is designed as a practical look at cinematic form for filmmakers. By the end of the course, students should form some understanding of cinematic language and be able to incorporate structure, the framed image, sound, and editing into their own creative work.

The following topics will be covered:

- The importance of story and expressing ideas;
- Storytelling with images;
- Basics of image composition and editing;
- Basics of lighting and sound design; and
- Narrative, documentary, and experimental approaches and their intersections.

Please note: This course teaches concepts rather than technology. Filmmakers will take the concepts learned in DC 110 to better communicate their ideas in Digital Cinema Production I (DC 210) and beyond.

**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.
- Create a short film of approximately 2 minutes in length demonstrating the aesthetic, critical, and practical material of the course.

### **REQUIRED TEXT**

*Film Art: An Introduction* (11<sup>th</sup> ed.) by David Bordwell, Kristin Thompson, & Jeff Smith  
(ISBN 978-1-259-53495-9)

### **GRADING**

Late work will not be accepted for grading. All assignments are due at the beginning of class unless noted otherwise.

### **GRADE BREAKDOWN**

Attendance and Participation	15%
Silent Shorts Project	10%
Narrative Structure Assignment	5%
Mise-en-scene Assignment	10%
Still Photo Project	15%
City Symphony Project	15%
Scene Analysis Assignment	5%
Final Project	25%

A = 100-93, A- = 92-90, B+ = 89-88, B = 87-83, B- = 82-80, C+ = 79-78, C = 77-73, C- = 72-70, D+ = 69-68, D = 67-63, D- = 62-60, F = 59-0

A indicates excellence, B indicates good work, C indicates satisfactory work, D work is unsatisfactory in some respect, and F is substantially unsatisfactory work.

### **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>

## **WEEKLY SCHEDULE (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)**

*For class days with an assigned reading, in-class students will be asked to write an answer to a question about the reading at the beginning of class.*

### **WEEK 1 (3/29)**

Introductions, Review of Syllabus  
Brief History of Cinema  
Assign Groups; Explain Project #1 (Due 4/12)  
**For next class: Read *Film Art*, Ch. 1 ("Film as Art") & Ch. 3 ("Narrative Form," pp. 72-99 only)**

### **WEEK 2 (4/5)**

Narrative Form  
Screening: *Winter's Bone* (Debra Granik, 2010)  
Explain Assignment #1 (Due 4/19)  
**For next class: Read *Film Art*, Ch. 4 ("The Shot: Mise-en-Scene")**

### **WEEK 3 (4/12)**

**PROJECT #1 DUE**  
Mise-en-scène  
Screening: Scenes from *L'Avventura* (Michelangelo Antonioni, 1960), *The Mirror* (Andrei Tarkovsky, 1975) & *Box of Life* (Oussama Mohammad, 2002)  
Explain Assignment# 2 (Due 4/26)  
**For next class: Read *Film Art*, Ch. 5 ("The Shot: Cinematography")**

### **WEEK 4 (4/19)**

**ASSIGNMENT #1 DUE**  
Cinematography  
Screening: *Vision of Light* (Todd McCarthy, 1992)  
Explain Project #2 (Due 5/3)  
**For next class: Read *Film Art* Ch. 6 ("The Relation of Shot to Shot: Editing")**

### **WEEK 5 (4/26)**

**ASSIGNMENT #2 DUE**  
Editing  
Explain Project #4 – Parts 1 and 2 (Due 5/10)  
**For next class: Read *Film Art*, Ch. 7 ("Sound in the Cinema")**

### **WEEK 6 (5/3)**

**PROJECT #2 DUE**  
Sound in Cinema  
Explain Project #3 (Due 5/24)  
**For next class: Read *Film Art*, Ch. 3 ("Narrative Form," pp. 99-109 only)**

### **WEEK 7 (5/10)**

**PROJECT #4 – PART 1 DUE**  
Screening: *Citizen Kane* (Orson Welles, 1941)  
Explain Assignment #3 (Due 5/31)

**WEEK 8 (5/17)**Neorealism in Italy & The New Wave in FranceScreening: *Breathless* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1960)**For next class: Read *Film Art*, Ch. 10 ("Documentary, Experimental, and Animated Films," pp. 350-369 only)****WEEK 9 (5/24)****PROJECT #3 DUE**Experimental Film**WEEK 10 (5/31)****ASSIGNMENT #3 DUE**DocumentaryScreening: *The Burden of Dreams* (Blank, 1982)**WEEK 11 (6/7)****FINAL PROJECTS (PROJECT #4 – PART 2) DUE IN CLASS (11:30-1:45)\***

\*NOTE: This is not the regular class time; it is an earlier time assigned for the final exam.

**Assignment #1:** Narrative Structure (5 pts)**Project #1:** Silent Shorts (10 pts)**Assignment #2:** Mise-en-scène analysis (10 pts)**Project #2:** Still Photo Project (15 pts)**Assignment #3:** Scene Analysis (5 pts)**Project #3:** City Symphony Project (15 pts)**Project #4:** Final Project (25 pts)

(Includes Concept &amp; Pitches for Final Projects, Pre-Production Notes, and Storyboards)

**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.