

DePaul University School of Cinematic Arts

DC 221 Section 601: Film Structure for Majors

Spring 2017/18

Tu 1:30-4:45 PM, 14 East Jackson LL105

Professor Anna Hozian: ahozian@depaul.edu, 312-362-5624

Office Hours: M 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM and TU 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM in CDM 463

Summary of Course:

A critical analysis of three-act film structure as well as an introduction to alternative narrative structures including, but not limited to, dual protagonist, ensemble, and nonlinear structures. Films of various genres and eras will be examined. Students will develop a cinematic language with which to discuss films as well as a toolbox of techniques to use when making films.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will develop a solid understanding of the relationship between character and story structure.
- Students will be able to identify the various narrative tools available to filmmakers in the writing and producing process.
- Students will develop a cinematic vocabulary with which to discuss films critically.

PREREQUISITE(S): NONE

Outcomes:

Six Assignments will assess and develop student learning across the objectives above. Assignments will be drawn from the films screened in and out of class, course lectures, and the reading material posted online.

Course Management:

This course is housed and managed on **D2L**. There, you will find each week's recorded lecture (available shortly after 6 PM each class day), required reading material, and all of your assignments. Also posted on D2L will be a weekly discussion forum for questions and thoughts concerning the films, the lectures, and assignments.

The films screened in class, as well as those which require individual viewing, are available on **ColTube** – an online DePaul video player available for Mac and PC.
<http://coltube.cdm.depaul.edu/ColTube/Home/>

Schedule:

Character and Three-Act Structure

Week One, March 27th, 2018: Course Intro. Three-Act Structure overview. Direct/Indirect Conflict.

Screen in Class: *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*

Screen at Home: *Mean Girls*

Week Two, April 3rd, 2018: Focus on Character Intros and Development Across Three Acts including the Four Key Stages of O/W/W/M

Read: *Glossary, Screenwriting Tools, What is a Screenplay, Classic Screenplay Structure*

Screen in Class: *Lars and the Real Girl*

Assignment #1: Three-Act Structure Breakdown - DUE Monday, April 9th by 11:59PM.

The Hero's Journey

Week Three, April 10th, 2018: The Hero's Journey Part I, plus Plant and Payoff

Read: *Structure and Character, Schechter on Character*

Screen in Class: *The Silence of the Lambs*

Screen at Home: *Gladiator*

Week Four, April 17th, 2018: The Hero's Journey Part II, plus dramatic irony, suspense, mystery, and a perfect ending.

Read: *Vogler: The Writer's Journey, J. Campbell*

Screen in Class: *Moon*

Assignment #2: Hero's Journey Breakdown - DUE Monday, April 23rd at 11:59PM.

Save the Cat

Week Five, April 24th, 2018: Intro to Blake Snyder's Save the Cat, Plus Dialogue and Exposition

Read: *Save the Cat Intro* by Snyder

Screen in Class: *Her*

Assignment #3: Save The Cat Breakdown - DUE Monday, April 30th at 11:59PM.

Sequences

Week Six, May 1st, 2018: Intro to Sequences

Read: *Gulino on Sequences, Howard On Sequences*

Screen in Class: *Guardians of the Galaxy*

Watch: *Thelma and Louise*

Week Seven, May 8th, 2018: Sequences, Part II

Screen: *Get Out*

Assignment #4: Sequence Breakdown with Dramatic Questions - DUE Monday, May 14th at 11:59PM.

Ensemble Films

Week Eight, May 15th, 2018: Ensemble Films and How They Hold Together

Read:

Screen: *Little Miss Sunshine*

Assignment: *Watch Love, Actually*

Ensemble Films and Intro to NonLinear Structure

Week Nine, May 22nd, 2018: Ensemble Films and Theme; Intro to Nonlinear Narrative

Read: *Willis and LoBrutto on DTRT*

Screen: *Do The Right Thing*.

Assignment #5: Ensemble Film, Thematic Structure and Breakdown - DUE May 28th at 11:59PM.

Alternative Narrative

Week Ten, May 29th, 2018: Alternative Narrative

Read: Ghislotti on *Memento*, *Memento Mori* (short story)

Screen: *Memento*

Assignment #6: Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind and Nonlinear Structure - DUE June 5th at 4:45 PM.

Assignments

There are six required assignments:

Assignment 1: Character development and Three-Act Structure

Assignment 2: The Hero's Journey

Assignment 3: Save The Cat

Assignment 4: Sequences

Assignment 5: Ensemble and Theme

Assignment 6: Nonlinear Structure

Grading:

Attendance and Participation: 10%

Six Assignments: 15% each (90% total)

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 level writing demonstrates accurate, thorough comprehension of the material but also provides a unique take and excellent point of view. It offers clear, creative thought.

B level writing demonstrates mostly accurate, mostly thorough comprehension of the material and attempts to provide a creative take or point of view.

C level writing is not entirely accurate nor is it comprehensive. It does not present a notable creative approach to discussing the material.

D level indicates a serious lack of effort, a total failure to comprehend the material, and no effort toward an original point of view.

F level writing is a failure to make any attempt.

Work that contains grammatical errors, misspellings, or generally poor and unclear construction will rarely if ever achieve a grade of **A** or **B** no matter how good the actual thinking presented might be.

Late work will not be accepted.

Laptops/Cell Phones:

In the seated section, if your computer and the mind attached to it drift away from class, and I so much as suspect you of online activities not related to the task at hand, you will lose laptop privileges for the entire semester. Phones must be silenced and stowed.

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 issues arise, a student may be asked to leave the classroom. The professor will work with the Dean of Students Office to navigate such issues.

Changes to the 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

Instructor and course evaluations provide valuable feedback that can improve teaching and learning. The greater the level of participation, the more useful the results. As students, you are in the unique position to view the instructor over time. Your comments about what works and what doesn't can help faculty build on the elements of the course that are strong and improve those that are weak. Isolated comments from students and instructors' peers may also be helpful, but evaluation results based on high response rates may be statistically reliable (believable). As you experience this course and material, think about how your learning is impacted. Your honest opinions about your experience in and commitment to the course and your learning may help improve some components of the course for the next group of students. Positive comments also show the department chairs and college deans the commitment of instructors to the university and teaching evaluation results are one component used in annual performance reviews (including salary raises and promotion/tenure). The evaluation of the instructor and course provides you an opportunity to make your voice heard on an important issue – the quality of teaching at DePaul. Don't miss this opportunity to provide feedback!

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Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

This course will be subject to the academic integrity policy passed by faculty. More information can be found at <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/>. The university and school policy on plagiarism can be summarized as follows: Students in this course should be aware of the strong sanctions that can be imposed against someone guilty of

plagiarism. If proven, a charge of plagiarism could result in an automatic F in the course and possible expulsion. The strongest of sanctions will be imposed on anyone who submits as his/her own work any assignment which has been prepared by someone else. If you have any questions or doubts about what plagiarism entails or how to properly acknowledge source materials be sure to consult the instructor.

Withdrawal

Students who withdraw from the course do so by using the Campus Connection system (<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

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. CDM policy requires the student to initiate the request for incomplete grade before the end of the term in which the course is taken. Prior to submitting the incomplete request, the student must discuss the circumstances with the instructor. Students may initiate the incomplete request process in MyCDM.

- All incomplete requests must be approved by the instructor of the course and a CDM Associate Dean. Only exceptions cases will receive such approval.
- If approved, students are required to complete all remaining course requirement independently in consultation with the instructor by the deadline indicated on the incomplete request form.
- By default, an incomplete grade will automatically change to a grade of F after two quarters have elapsed (excluding summer) unless another grade is recorded by the instructor.
- An incomplete grade does NOT grant the student permission to attend the same course in a future quarter.

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: (773)325.1677

Fax: (773)325.3720

TTY: (773)325.7296