College of Computing & Digital Media • School of Cinematic Arts

DC342-401 Advanced Topics in Editing • Autumn 18
Case Study: Breaking Bad

INSTRUCTOR:	**Martin Bernstein**	**SECTION: 401**
OFFICE HOURS:	**THUR 12:00-1:30**	**CLASS #: 16418**
OFFICE LOCATION:	**CDM 705**	**CLASS TIMES: THUR 1:30 - 4:45 PM**
E-MAIL:	**mbernst@depaul.edu**	**CLASS LOCATION: CDM 708**

D2L Home Page **https://d2l.depaul.edu/d2l/home/648370**

Course Description (From Course Catalog)

This class will be an in-depth examination of an editor, editing style, or editing theory that has had a significant influence on the development of cinematic storytelling and expression. Through lectures, screenings, readings, discussions, and editing assignments, students will analyze the distinctive traits of the selected topic within the broader context of cinema history and culture. Editing projects will be assigned through the quarter. Specific topics will be selected by the instructor and will vary with each quarter. Additional course description on D2L.   PREREQUISITE(S): DC 220

Instructor Course Description

This course will explore story arc and creative narrative using the music, montages and transitions and other motifs in the hit AMC television *Breaking Bad* series. Its editors were given considerable freedom outside of the script to build dramatic tension and connections using montage, *in media res* story structure and a variety of source music, from classic rock and oldies, contemporary, standards, classical, Motown, blues and jazz, folk, country and Mexican narco-corrido.

A talented team of writers and ensemble cast under the brilliant direction of Vince Gilligan has put together an unforgettable series, which stretches the limits of episodic television, and has garnered multiple awards and audience appeal. While it is impossible to fully exploit this topic in ten weeks, we can reach an understanding of how these thematic elements work to underscore and enhance the narrative experience.

NO Textbook is required. However, the ability to view episodes through a resource such as NETFLIX or DVD will be required.

Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:
- Identify, demonstrate and describe in detail the elements that facilitate emotionally effective cinema in the chosen topic;
- Investigate, discover and evaluate alternate approaches to the topic, and appraise new areas of exploration these approaches suggest;
- Describe the historical context of the topic;
- Comprehend the concepts of the chosen topic as it applies to their own creative work.

ASSIGNMENTS/GRADING

Each week, students will be assigned a specific Season, Episode, Team and prepare an audio/visual presentation identifying specific thematic elements of editorial motifs, such as Montage, Music, Color, Cold Opens, Comic Relief, Transitions, POV, etc. In addition, students will submit a detailed log of that presentation, with specific reference to scenes or sequences, analyzing the editorial technique, the effectiveness as it affects story and character development and the student's personal response in the context of the techniques being taught in this class. The homework log is due the morning of the class presentation and must be uploaded as an electronic file to the appropriate submissions portal for that week.

The Final Thesis Paper or Video is requirements are detailed in that Assignment portal.

• **Scene Presentation: 40%**
• **Presentation Log: 40%**
• **Final Thesis Paper or Video: 10%**
• **Attendance: 10%**

COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS:

All assignments, course schedule, grades, attendance, handouts, links will be available on the D2L site for the course.

GRADING

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 student has NOT accomplished the objectives of the course

GRADING POLICY

Students are expected to turn in all assignments by the established deadlines. LATE WORK WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. I will not accept the excuse of technological failure or absentmindedness (you all have phones…set alarms for due dates!). Back up your work and do not leave your work until the last second! This is your warning. All grades will be kept current on D2L. Students who do not submit logs or do their presentations when scheduled will receive a failing grade for that log or presentation.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

You are expected to be on time, and if you plan on missing or being late to a class are expected to notify the instructor BEFORE that particular class. The instructor reserves the right to determine whether an absence or tardy is "excused." Unexcused absences or tardiness will negatively affect your grade. Please see Course Policies as Suggested by the Dean of Students Office at the end of the syllabus to see how your grade will be affected. Attendance will be kept current on D2L. If you want to question a recorded absence or tardiness, it must be done within a week of the recorded occurrence. DO NOT COMPLAIN about your final grade if you have skipped class and your final grade was reduced. This is your warning!

COMPUTER/CELLPHONE/I-PAD ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY

If you are using any personal or school electronic equipment during class for anything other than class-related work, you will be asked to leave and will be counted as absent for that class. For the record, it's incredibly obvious (not to mention distracting) when someone is using a computer/PDA/Cell phone for anything other than taking notes.

E-MAIL POLICY

You are expected to READ ALL E-MAILS FROM THE CLASS INSTRUCTOR because you are responsible to know the information they contain. So, you should check your e-mail at least once every 24 hours! Type TOPICS IN EDITING in the SUBJECT LINE OF ALL E-MAILS to the instructor about this class. Please DO NOT JUST REPLY to my all-class e-mails because your response might get lost in the shuffle—Send me an individual e-mail.

I will do my best to get back to you ASAP, but please allow up to 24hrs for the instructor to respond.

PROJECT FILE LABELING & FORMAT POLICY
Please Label all Files as Such (example: Student is JOHN DOE and he is submitting the Season 1
• Episode 1 LOG ASSIGNMENT): DOE_S01E01.pdf

All Projects should be submitted in PDF format! Projects NOT submitted in the proper format or not
labeled correctly WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. THIS IS YOUR WARNING!!!

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION POLICY
All work submitted for this class should be original work made specifically for this class. If you are
found to be submitting work you have made for another class you will receive zero credit for that
particular assignment.
I will grade the first project file that is submitted. Check and double-check the work you are
submitting. Do not submit the wrong file, an incomplete file, a corrupted file, etc. Submit the
correct project file by each deadline. Most work will be submitted through D2L Submissions. Do not
leave this until the last second—upload several hours before the deadline to be safe! Again, no late
work is accepted!

EXCUSES (i.e. LACK OF PROFESSIONALISM)
My classes are designed to teach professional conduct and particular skill-sets. Time
management skills are essential for all endeavors. Modern technology makes it easy and simple to
stay organized, on time and on task. Please remember, an excuse is just
that—an excuse. Here are just a few examples of excuses for not meeting class obligations that I
won't accept (and please do not add to this list):
a. I have a life…
b. I forgot…
c. I didn't realize…
d. I mixed up the dates…
e. I don't "do" books…
f. My alarm didn't go off…
g. I was busy working on other projects…
h. My job called me in so I had to work and couldn't do my assignment…
i. I would have made the deadline if the deadline wasn't when it was…
j. It's just easier to do it my way, so I did it my way…
k. Other classes don't have me do it this way, so I did it their way…
l. I was not aware of class policy…
m. I was taking care of a sick friend so I couldn't…
n. I didn't read the e-mail you sent out, so I didn't know…
o. I scheduled dental surgery during the test/presentation so I can't…
p. The Cage checked me out bad equipment, so I couldn't…
q. My hard-drive crashed and I didn't back up my work…
r. The internet was slow when I tried to turn in my project…
s. I accidentally submitted the wrong project file, but it was on time…
t. I didn't do the assignment as you asked, but don't worry, I got it all worked on in my head…
u. I have to go on vacation…
v. I was at a bar and…
w. The weather…(when DePaul isn't cancelled due to weather)
x. I didn't look on the syllabus…
y. My dog, cat, bird, iguana, roommate peed on my notes, hard drive, etc.

Special thanks to Brian Zahm for some of the content contained in this syllabus.

Course Policies

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. 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

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

Students with Disabilities
Students seeking disability-related accommodations are required to register with DePaul's Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) enabling them to access accommodations and support services to assist with their success. There are two office locations:

- Loop Campus – Lewis Center #1420 – (312) 362-8002
- Lincoln Park Campus – Student Center #370 – (773) 325-1677

Students who register with the Center for Students with Disabilities are also invited to contact Dr. Gergory 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. For Services and Contact Information. Please see https://offices.depaul.edu/studentaffairs/about/departments/Pages/csd.aspx

Proctored exams for OL courses (if applicable)
If you are an online learning student living in the Chicagoland area (within 30 miles of Chicago), you will need to come to the Loop campus to take an exam. Online learning students outside of the Chicagoland area are required to locate a proctor at a local library, college or university. You will need to take the exam within the window your instructor gives. Students should examine the course syllabus to find exam dates and the instructor's policy on make-up exams. Detailed information on proctored exams for online learning students can be found at http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/onlinelearning/Pages/Exams.aspx

Online office hours for COL courses (if applicable)
Faculty should be accessible to online students via phone, email and/or Skype.

Course Policies as Suggested by the Dean of Students Office
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 participation drops one-third after any absence. Three absences for any reason, whether excused or not, may constitute failure for the course.

Class Discussion: Student participation in class discussions will be measured in two ways. First, students are highly encouraged to ask questions and offer comments relevant to the day's topic. Participation allows the instructor to "hear" the student's voice when grading papers. Secondly, students will be called upon by the instructor to offer comments related to the reading assignments. Students must keep up with the reading to participate in class discussion.

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 undisruptive 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.