

DC 495 Directing the Short Motion Picture

Winter 2019 | Tuesday 5:45-9:00pm | 14 E. Jackson LL107

Instructor: Wendy Roderweiss Office: CDM 513

Email: wroderwe@depaul.edu (please allow 24 hours for a response)

Office hours: 5:00-5:30, 9:00-10:00pm Tuesdays

Course Management System: D2L

Type of Instruction: Lecture/discussion/workshop

January 18, 2019 Last day to drop classes without penalty

February 22rd, 2019 Last day to withdraw from WQ2019 classes

This syllabus is subject to change (Document date 12/18/18)

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:

The penultimate production course for directors. Students must enter with a finished, producible, short film script with some principal pre-production elements in place. Advanced pre-production skills and topics to be covered include: prepping and breaking down the shooting script, schedule and budget, pre-visualization and storyboards, casting, rehearsals and directing actors, blocking, continuity, shot design, locations, aesthetics and visual design, working with crew, set procedures, the production binder, and directing from prep through post-production and delivery. PREREQUISITE(S): DC 462 and DC 423

The class will consist of discussions, lectures and demonstrations to strengthen the student's knowledge of the general mechanics of filmmaking and further their understanding of aesthetics. Study and technical workshops will prepare students to take on their projects.

Students will execute one short film as individuals. Details will be provided. Other assignments will include preproduction materials and script and scene analysis.

CLASS OUTCOMES AND OBJECTIVES:

Upon successful completion of the course the student will be able to:

Shoot successfully with motion picture cameras.

Design effective and creative lighting, shots, and sound.

Show an increasing understanding of camera, editing, lighting and sound aesthetics.

Create essential pre-production materials to support their projects.

Develop a working language with actors.

Express technical and aesthetic understanding through the constructive critiques of other student's films.

Edit or supervise the editing (sound and picture) of their short film using computer systems.

Complete a short film that demonstrates technical proficiency and creative ambition that is festival ready.

PREREQUISTES

I am operating under the assumption that you have all taken numerous classes up until this point and should have an established relationship with the basics of film production. If you do not, you will have a difficult time in this course and should consider taking it at another time.

GRADING

(1) Script 1st draft: 10%

Director's Notebook Materials 55%:

- (2) Logline: 5 %
- (3) Locked Script: 5%
- (4) Script Breakdowns: 5%
- (5) Casting Breakdowns and Headshots: 5%
- (6) Schedule and Budget: 5%
- (7) Aesthetic/Visual Plan: 10%
- (8) Scene Beat Breakdowns: 10%
- (9) Shot List and Overheads: 10%

(10) Final Project Polished Rough Cut: 25%

(11) Attendance and Participation: 10%

Extra Credit Opportunities will be available on D2L

Excellent work A 93-100 A- 90-92

Above satisfactory work B+ 87-89 B 83-86 B- 80-82

Satisfactory work C+ 77-79 C 73-76 C- 70-72

Unsatisfactory work D+ 67-69 D 63-66 D- 60-62

Substantially unsatisfactory work F 59-61

TEXTBOOKS & COURSE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Materials provided by the instructor.

D2L

SOFTWARE

Word processing software

Screenwriting software

PDF software

Spreadsheet software

Editing software

SCREENS

The use of screens; phones, laptops, tablets etc, are not allowed in class.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Late assignments are not accepted. In case of illness, please contact me PRIOR to the due date.

It shows that you care, and that goes a long way with me.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:

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 arriving more than 15 minutes late, or missing any 15 minute period during class time. I take attendance every class. If you arrive less than 15 minutes late, and do not hear your name called, make sure you let me know you are present so I do not mark you absent. Any absences will result in a reduction of the attendance/participation grade. **Anyone who misses 3 classes will automatically drop a**

letter grade. Anyone who misses 4 classes will automatically fail. However, if you are legitimately sick, I mean really sick, please stay home. We don't want your evil germs. Please email me at BEFORE class if you are going to be absent.

Class Participation—Along with showing up, you are expected to join in class discussions, critique other people's work, and participate in workshops.

Week 1 1/8

DUE: (1) Polished First Draft of Script

LECTURE: Overview of syllabus, class, me and you. Directing, Producing, Production notebooks, Crew, Story, Scripts

WORKSHOPS: Creativity Exercises, Script table readings and critiques (PART I)

Homework due 1/15:

Loglines for your projects (see assignment guidelines for the definition of a proper logline)

Week 2 1/15

DUE: (2) Logline (ALL)

LECTURE: How to choose your crew, Budgets, Locations, Script Breakdowns, Shooting Groups assigned

WORKSHOP: Creativity Exercises, Spine Exercise, Script table readings and critiques (PART II)

Homework due 1/22:

-Scripts (ALL)-- a locked final version is due next week.

-Script Breakdowns for every scene (ALL)

Week 3 1/22

DUE: (3) Final, locked draft of script (ALL), (4) Script Breakdowns (ALL)

LECTURE: Equipment, Casting, casting breakdowns, Scene Spines, Actions, Dramatic Blocks, Fulcrums

WORKSHOP: Character outline workshop

CALENDAR: Start Casting--must be fully cast by 2/12- (ALL)

Homework due 1/29:

-Casting Breakdowns for each character (ALL)

-Watch Notorious

Week 4 1/29

DUE: (5) Casting Breakdowns for each character

WORKSHOP: Working with Actors with special guest

CALENDAR: Continue Casting --must be fully cast by 2/12 (ALL)

Homework due 2/5:

-Read Notorious Blocking Chapter

-Shooting Schedules & Budgets (ALL)

-Watch VAS Casting Panel, bring in three things you got out of it

Week 5 2/5

DUE: (6) Shooting Schedules & Budgets, Notorious Blocking Chapter (ALL), Casting Panel reflection (ALL)

LECTURE: Blocking for the Camera, Shot Planning, Visual Design, VAS Casting Panel
CALENDAR: Continue Casting --must be cast by 2/12 (ALL)

Homework due 2/12:

- Bring headshots and present your cast to the class (ALL)
- Scene dramatic block breakdowns (ALL)
- Aesthetic/Visual Plan (ALL)
- Watch Visual Design lectures on D2L
- Shot lists and Overheads (GROUP 1)

Week 6 2/12

DUE: (5) Headshots (ALL), (7) Aesthetic/Visual Plan (ALL), (8) Scene Dramatic Block Breakdowns (ALL), (9) Shot lists and Overheads (GROUP 1)

LECTURE: Ready to shoot?

WORKSHOP: Present cast to class, Blocking and Staging

CALENDAR: GROUP 1 SHOOTS THIS WEEK

Homework due 2/19:

- Shot lists and Overheads (GROUP 2)
- Bring in raw or edited footage from one scene (GROUP 1)
- Cut Blocking Exercise from today to show in class next week

Week 7 2/19

DUE: (9) Shot lists and Overheads (GROUP 2),

LECTURE: Review blocking and staging exercises and discuss

WORKSHOP: Screen raw or edited footage from one scene (GROUP 1)

CALENDAR: GROUP 2 SHOOTS THIS WEEK, GROUP 1 EDITING

Homework due 2/26:

- Shot lists and Overheads (GROUP 3)
- Bring in raw or edited footage from one scene (GROUP 2)

Week 8 2/26

DUE: (9) Shot lists and Overheads (GROUP 3), Bring in raw or edited footage from one scene (GROUP 2)

LECTURE: Sound design/Music

WORKSHOP: Screen raw or edited footage from one scene (GROUP 2)

CALENDAR: GROUP 3 SHOOTS THIS WEEK, GROUPS 1 AND 2 EDITING

Homework due 3/5:

- Bring in raw or edited footage from one scene (GROUP 3)
- Bring in polished rough cut (GROUP 1)

Week 9 3/5

DUE: Bring in raw or edited footage from one scene (GROUP 3), (10) Bring in polished rough cut (GROUP 1)

LECTURE: Marketing, publicity and distribution

WORKSHOP: Screen raw or edited footage from one scene (GROUP 3), Screen Polished Rough Cuts (GROUP 1)

CALENDAR: GROUPS 2 AND 3 EDITING, GROUP 1 FINE CUTS AND SOUND

Homework due 3/12:

- Bring in polished rough cut (GROUP 2)
- Watch VAS on Film Festivals and bring in three things you learned
- Review Marketing materials lecture with links

Week 10 3/12**DUE: (10) Bring in polished rough cut (GROUP 2)**

DISCUSSION: VAS on Film festivals

WORKSHOP: Screen Polished Rough Cuts (GROUP 2)

CALENDAR: GROUP 3 EDITING. GROUPS 1 & 2 FINE CUTS AND SOUND

Homework due 3/19:

- Bring in polished rough cut (GROUP 3)
- Submit a document outlining what you plan to do to complete your films, be detailed as this can impact your grade on your final project. (ALL)

Week 11 3/19 (FINAL EXAM PERIOD)**DUE: (10) Bring in polished rough cut (GROUP 3), Document uploaded outlining what you will do to complete your films (ALL)**

WORKSHOP: Screen Polished Rough Cuts (GROUP 3)

CALENDAR: GROUPS 1 & 2 & 3 FINE CUTS AND SOUND

Attendance to the final exam period is mandatory.

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. 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: <http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/PoliciesandProcedures.aspx>

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

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 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.