

# Foundations of Cinema Syllabus Autumn 2021

Tuesday and Thursday 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm

Location: CDM Center 924

Instructor: Andrew Stasiulis ([astasiul@depaul.edu](mailto:astasiul@depaul.edu)) Office CDM 408

Office Hours: Monday 1:30pm – 3:00pm, Wednesday 11:00 am – 3:00pm

Given the current situation, all office hours will be conducted remotely via video chat or by phone call.

## Summary

This course will examine the craft, technology, and aesthetic principles of media production. Drawing on a wide array of historical examples, the course will look at the many expressive strategies potentially usable in the creation of moving image art forms: the importance of story and controlling ideas, storytelling with images, the basics of composition and editing, and an examination of narrative, documentary, and experimental approaches. In addition to analyzing the works of others, students will also produce their own projects thus, putting theory into practice. The following topics will be covered: the importance of story and expressing ideas; storytelling with images and sound; the basics of image composition and editing; narrative, documentary, and experimental approaches and their intersections. Please Note: This course is not a production course. Rather, it is an exploration of the aesthetics of cinema. Students will receive a more in depth technical instruction in Production I.

## Covid-19 Policies

Keeping our DePaul community safe is of utmost importance in the pandemic. Students, faculty and staff are expected to

- (1) wear a mask as required at all times while indoors on campus;
- (2) refrain from eating and drinking in classrooms;

- (3) keep current with their COVID-19 vaccinations or exemptions;
- (4) stay home if sick;
- (5) participate in any required COVID-19 testing;
- (6) complete the online Health and Safety Guidelines for Returning to Campus training; and
- (7) abide by the City of Chicago Emergency Travel Advisory.

By doing these things, we are Taking Care of DePaul, Together. The recommendations may change as local, state, and federal guidelines evolve. Students who do not abide by the mask requirement may be subject to the student conduct process and will be referred to the Dean of Students Office. Students who have a medical reason for not complying with any requirements should register with DePaul's Center for Student with Disabilities (CSD).

## 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.

## Texts

Film Art: An Introduction (Any edition)

Authors: David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson

Various Supplemental Readings Posted Online

## Assignments & Grading

Weekly Responses = 50%

Citizen Kane Analysis = 25%

Final Short Film = 25%

## Week by Week Autumn Quarter 2020

Week 1: September 9

Introduction of Course. Overview of Syllabus and Expectations. What is Cinema?

The Lumiere Brothers vs. Melies.

Week 2: September 14 & 16 – Wong Kar Wai's *Chungking Express*

Cinematography: The Shot (Read pgs. 159-187)

Week 3: September 21 & 23 - Mathieu Kassovitz' *La Haine*

Mise-en-scene: The Plastics of the Image (Read pgs. 112-134)

Week 4: September 28 & 30 – Claire Denis' *White Material*

Editing: Ordering the Image in Time (Read pgs. 216-241)

Week 5: October 5 & 7 - Ola Simonsson and Johannes Stjärne Nilsson's *Sound of Noise*  
Sound: Possibilities  
and Problems (Read pgs. 263-287)

Week 6: October 12 & 14 - Orson Welles' *Citizen Kane*  
Scene Analysis 1 Due  
Storytelling: Form and Content (Read pgs. 50-72)

Week 7: October 19 & 21 - Dee Rees' *Pariah*  
Storytelling: Character, Conflict, and Theme (Read pgs. 72-100)

Week 8: October 26 & 28 - John Carpenter's *The Thing*  
Cinematic Horror

Week 9: November 9 & 11  
The Short Film (Read pgs. 303-328)

Week 10: November 2 & 4 - Jennie Livingston's *Paris Is Burning*  
Documentary Film and The Problem of Truth

Week 11: November 16  
What is Cinema?

Final Exam: Thursday, November 18 11:30am-1:45pm

## Attendance

Attendance and participation is mandatory. An absence, which is defined as not showing up to class or arriving more than 10 minutes late to class, constitutes a reduction in your overall grade.

All students in attendance must wear an appropriate face mask at all times. If you are feeling unwell, please do not attend class. All lectures will be recorded and made available to you.

## D2L

You will be using D2L extensively in this course. To log on, go to: <https://login.depaul.edu/cas/login?service=https://d2l.depaul.edu/d2l/orgtools/CAS/Default.aspx> and enter using your campus connect login and password. Once you are logged in, click on the course number link and you

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will find links to the syllabus, course outline, video lectures, discussion forums, weekly assignments, etc.

## 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

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## 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.

### 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.

### 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.

## 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