MCS 273: STORYTELLING AND STYLE IN CINEMA
ONLINE VERSION

Michael DeAngelis, Ph.D.
14 E Jackson, Room 1115
(312) 362-7703
mdeangel@depaul.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course covers basic concepts and terminology of cinema as forms of art and mass culture. This course covers the aesthetic systems that constitute cinema: plot structure, sets, costumes and makeup, acting, lighting, cinematography, editing, and sound. We consider how the interaction of these elements produces meaning in cinematic narrative. We also examine how these concepts are practiced in cinema production. After mastering the aesthetic concepts, students also examine their use in different modes of film communication: fiction, documentary, and experimental biography.

LIBERAL STUDIES
MCS 273 has been approved for Liberal Studies credit in fulfillment of one of the course requirements in the Arts & Literature domain.

COURSE GOAL
To be able to analyze the strategies of narrative and documentary cinema in terms of form, style, and content.

COURSE OUTCOMES
  o Describe the elements of cinematic form in conjunction with story, plot, and narration.
  o Identify and analyze stylistic aspects of filmmaking, including mise-en-scene, cinematography, editing, and sound.
  o Identify and formal and stylistic attributes specific to classical Hollywood, modernist, and postmodernist cinemas.
  o Differentiate the formal and stylistic features of narrative, documentary, and experimental cinemas.
  o Explain the formal and stylistic devices that filmmakers choose in terms of other possible devices that they might have chosen.

REQUIRED TEXTS (available at the Loop Campus Barnes & Noble)
STRUCTURE OF THE MODULES
Each of the ten course modules covers one week of the course. Each module begins on Monday, and it concludes at 11:59 p.m. on Sunday.

The modules include the following:
- An online lesson that features a combination of narrated PowerPoint slides and a series of film clips that provide examples of course terms and concepts.
- A reading assignment from one or both of the required textbooks. (Please note that Module 8 has no reading assignment.)
- A film screening (except for Module 5).
- A set of Study Questions that you should review before you watch that module’s film screening.
- A discussion conference (Modules 2, 3, 5, 7 and 10 only).
- A Terminology and Concept Quiz (Modules 1, 3, 5, 7, and 9) OR an Application Quiz (Modules 2, 6, and 10).

WORKING THROUGH EACH MODULE
In the Content section for each module, the activities in that module are listed in the order in which you should perform them. In some cases you will be asked to watch the film before working through the online lesson; in other cases, you will be asked to work through the online lesson before viewing the film.

ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES AND DEADLINES
All assignment due dates and deadlines are indicated in your D2L calendar. In addition, the email message that I will send to you at the start of each module will indicate the due dates and deadlines of all assignments pertaining to that module.

All assignments are due at 11:59 p.m. on the dates indicated on the D2L calendar. It is your responsibility to plan and complete your work so that you have sufficient opportunity to submit your assignments by the specified due dates and times. I strongly suggest that you do not wait until the last minute to submit your work.

All of the due dates and deadlines indicated in the D2L calendar and reiterated in my email messages are in Central Time. If you are submitting an assignment from a different time zone, it is your responsibility to be aware of the difference between time zones and to ensure that the assignment is submitted on time.

SUBMITTING COMPLETED ASSIGNMENTS
Each assignment must be submitted through the appropriate dropbox on the D2L course website. I will not accept any assignments by email.

All assignments must be submitted as Microsoft Word documents. Files submitted in PDF for any other format besides Microsoft Word will not be accepted.
**GRADED ASSIGNMENTS**

**Discussion Conferences:** These conferences provide you with the opportunity to share your perspective on a specific topic related to the module. Each conference is worth five points of your grade. You are expected to participate in all five discussion conferences.

**Terminology and Concept Quizzes:** These objective quizzes are designed to assess your understanding of cinematic terms and concepts discussed in the modules. Each quiz consists of 10 questions, and each question is worth one-half of a point. There are five Terminology and Objective Quizzes, and they can be found via the “Quizzes” link of the website. These quizzes are given every other week, in Modules 1, 3, 5, 7, and 9. An optional Extra Credit Quiz with 14 questions (7 points) covering all modules will be available after Module 10.

**Application Quizzes:** For these quizzes, you will be asked to apply your understanding of the material in the modules through the analysis of visual material in essay format. There are three Application Quizzes, and they can be found via the “Dropbox” link of the website. These quizzes are given in Modules 2, 6, and 10.

All Application Quizzes must be submitted in Word format through the Dropbox.

**Narrative Analysis Paper:** For this paper, you will analyze the narrative structure of a designated film using theories of narrative form discussed in class.

The Narrative Analysis Paper must be submitted in Word format through the Dropbox.

**Visual Analysis Paper:** For this paper, you will construct a shot breakdown from an assigned film, identifying technical choices in mise-en-scene, cinematography, editing, and sound. You will then write a paper analyzing the effects of those technical choices. You will have a three film scenes from which to choose.

The Visual Analysis Paper must be submitted in Word format through the Dropbox.

**GRADING SCALE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>73-76</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>63-66</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>62 and below</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
BREAKDOWN OF GRADED ASSIGNMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Type</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Narrative Analysis Paper</td>
<td>16 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Analysis Paper</td>
<td>24 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Conferences</td>
<td>4 points per module</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terminology and Concept Quizzes</td>
<td>5 points per quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application Quizzes</td>
<td>5 points per quiz</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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TOTAL 100 POINTS

GRADING CRITERIA AND RUBRICS

DISCUSSION CONFERENCES
You can earn a maximum of four (4) points through your participation in the discussion conference of each module—three (3) points for your primary posting, and an additional point for a response to the posting of a fellow student.

The Primary Posting
The primary posting is where you offer your own contribution to the discussion topic. My expectation is that your primary posting will be of no less than 250 words (the equivalent of one page of an essay, double-spaced). I encourage you to do a word count (on Microsoft Word: File ➔ Properties ➔ Statistics) before submitting your posting.

The primary posting must be posted to the discussion conference by 11:59 p.m. of the Saturday (sixth day) of that module. Postings that are submitted later than this, but before 11:59 p.m. on the seventh and final day (Sunday) of that week's module will forfeit one point. Postings will not be accepted any later than 11:59 p.m. on that Sunday.

Primary Posting Rubric
3 points:
- You address the discussion prompt or question directly.
- You make substantive and original comments and observations that enhance the discussion and help to move the conversation forward. These include examples, new perspectives, and relevant follow-up questions.
- You provide a high level of detail and precision in your posting.
- You show strong evidence of having engaged with the learning materials of the module, including course readings, screenings, and the online lesson.
- The length of your posting is at least 250 words.

2 points:
- You address the discussion prompt or question to a considerable extent.
- You make some comments and observations that enhance the discussion and help to move the conversation forward. These include examples, new perspectives, and relevant follow-up questions.
o You provide some detail and precision in your posting.
o You show some evidence of having engaged with the learning materials of the
module, including course readings, screenings, and the online lesson.
o The length of your posting is at least 250 words.

1 point:
o Your response evidences a low level of connection to the discussion prompt or
question.
o You make minimal comments and observations that enhance the discussion and
help to move the conversation forward.
o You provide little detail or precision in your posting.
o You provide a minimal degree of evidence of having engaged with the learning
materials of the module, including course readings, screenings, and the online
lesson.
o The length of your posting is less than 250 words.

0 points:
o You do not submit a primary posting by the specified deadline.

**The Response Postings**
The response posting is where you extend the discussion of the conference by offering a
constructive reply or response to the posting of one (or several) of your classmates. My
expectation is that each response posting will be of no less than 125 words (the equivalent
of half a page of an essay, double-spaced). I encourage you to do a word count (on

All response postings must be posted to the discussion conference by 11:59 p.m. of the
seventh and final day (Sunday) of that week’s module. Response postings will not be
accepted any later than 11:59 p.m. on that Sunday.

**Response Posting Rubric**
1 point:
o Your posting directly references and responds to the idea expressed by another
classmate or classmates.
o Your posting develops, expands upon, or qualifies the idea expressed in the other
student’s posting.
o The length of your posting is at least 125 words.

0 points:
o You do not submit a response posting by the specified deadline.

**TERMINOLOGY AND CONCEPT QUIZZES**
These quizzes evaluate your ability to identify terminology and concepts covered in the
course lesson, readings, and screenings. Each Terminology and Application Quiz is worth
five (5) points. Each quiz includes 10 objective questions (multiple choice and/or true or
false). Each question is worth ½ of a point. You will have 30 minutes to complete each quiz.

Each Terminology and Concept Quiz is due by 11:59 p.m. on the final day (Sunday) of that course module. **No late Terminology and Concept quizzes will be accepted.**

**APPLICATION QUIZZES**
The purpose of the application quiz is to give you the opportunity to demonstrate your ability to use the terminology and concepts of the course in the analysis of specific visual artifact such as the scene of a film. By applying the material in this way, you strengthen your learning of the concepts.

My expectation is that your quiz will comprise an analysis of no less than 250 words (the equivalent of one page of an essay, double-spaced). I encourage you to do a word count (on Microsoft Word: File ➔ Properties ➔ Statistics) before submitting your posting.

Each application quiz is due by the final day (Sunday) of the module in which it is assigned. Application quizzes submitted after this, but before 11:59 p.m. on the next day, will forfeit one point. Application quizzes will not be accepted any later than 11:59 p.m. the day following the due date.

Each Application Quiz is worth five (5) points.

**Application Quiz Rubric**

5 points:  
- You address the quiz question or topic directly.
- You demonstrate an exceptional level of ability to draw upon and incorporate course terminology and concepts in your analysis.
- Your analysis features an exceptional level of detail and precision.
- Your analysis is thorough.
- The essay is at least 250 words in length.

4 points:  
- You address the quiz question or topic directly.
- You demonstrate a strong ability to draw upon and incorporate course terminology and concepts in your analysis.
- Your analysis includes sufficient detail and precision.
- Your analysis addresses most aspects of the assignment.
- The essay is at least 250 words in length.

3 points:  
- You address the quiz question or topic to some degree.
- You demonstrate some ability to draw upon and incorporate course terminology and concepts in your analysis, but this demonstration is not consistent.
- Your analysis relies more upon generalities than precise details.
- Your analysis addresses some aspects of the assignment.
The essay is at least 200 words in length.

2 points:
  - You address the quiz question or topic to some degree.
  - You do not demonstrate a workable ability to draw upon and incorporate course terminology and concepts in your analysis.
  - Your analysis includes little detail and precision.
  - Your analysis addresses some aspects of the assignment.
  - The essay is at least 150 words in length.

1 point:
  - You address the quiz question or topic only minimally.
  - You demonstrate no ability to draw upon and incorporate course terminology and concepts in your analysis.
  - Your analysis is general or unfocused.
  - The essay is at least 150 words in length.

0 points:
  - You do not submit an application quiz by the specified deadline or within the acceptable late submission period.

NARRATIVE ANALYSIS PAPER
The goal of this paper is to have you apply course concepts about film form and structure in the analysis of a film outside of class. Through this analysis, you will demonstrate your understanding of film form directly. The paper will incorporate material that is covered in Modules 1 & 2 of the course.

The required length of the paper is 5-6 pages, double-spaced. The Narrative Analysis paper must be completed in order for you to be eligible to receive a passing grade in the course. The paper is worth 16 points.

Narrative Analysis Paper Rubric
You will find the grading rubric for this paper under “Getting Started” in the Content section of the course website.

VISUAL ANALYSIS PAPER
The goals of this paper are to have you illustrate (1) a knowledge of and an ability to discern the basic stylistic aspects of individual film shots, and (2) an ability to describe those ideas & techniques in terms of their overall aesthetic/ideological impact on a film. You will demonstrate these goals through the shot breakdown of the opening sequence of a film, along with a written analysis of the ways in which elements of style create narrative meaning in the sequence. The paper will incorporate material that is covered in Modules 4 through 7 of the course.
The shot breakdown section needs to be as long as it takes to specify the individual components of every shot in the sequence. The required length of the analysis section is 5-6 pages, double-spaced. The Visual Analysis paper must be completed in order for you to be eligible to receive a passing grade in the course. The paper is worth 24 points.

**Visual Analysis Paper Rubric**
You will find the grading rubric for this paper in the “Getting Started” in the Content section of the course website.

**THE BENEFITS OF KEEPING UP; THE CONSEQUENCES OF FALLING BEHIND**
While my expectations from you are high, the course workload is entirely manageable if you engage yourself in the work for the modules and keep up with the assignments. The most “effective” way to do poorly in this class is to fall behind. It is therefore important that you adhere to the deadlines of all assignments, and plan your time accordingly.

**NOTE TAKING**
It will be to your advantage to take notes on the readings and on the material in the online lessons. The study questions on the screenings are designed to provide structure and organization to your experience of watching the films, and while you do not need to turn in your responses to these questions, I strongly suggest that you write down your thoughts and observations. You will probably not remember them later unless you write them down as you watch.

**RESPECTFUL BEHAVIOR IN THE DISCUSSION CONFERENCES**
Students are required to be attentive and respectful of others students in the course, and to the professor and teaching assistant as well. The online classroom environment is intended to be safe space for reflection, learning and growing. It is therefore essential that the observations and opinions of others are respected, whether or not you agree with them.

**DEPAUL UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY**
Resist any temptation to present as your own work ANY material that others have written. All assignments that are submitted through the Course Dropbox are scanned by TurnItIn.

DePaul University is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are, therefore, detrimental to the values of DePaul, to the students’ own development as responsible members of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Violations include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university's academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil
or criminal prosecution. Please refer to your Student Handbook or visit http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/homehandbook.html for further details.

The DePaul Student Handbook defines plagiarism as follows: “Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following: (a) The direct copying of any source, such as written and verbal material, computer files, audio disks, video programs or musical scores, whether published or unpublished, in whole or in part, without proper acknowledgement that it is someone else’s. (b) Copying of any source in whole or in part with only minor changes in wording or syntax even with acknowledgement. (c) Submitting as one’s own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report or other assignment which has been prepared by someone else. This includes research papers purchased from any other person or agency. (d) The paraphrasing of another’s work or ideas without proper acknowledgement.”

IMPORTANT NOTE: Whether intentional or unintentional, plagiarism will result in the filing of an Academic Integrity Violation with the university as well as failure of the assignment and possibly of the course. If you are unsure of how to cite a source, ask!

POLICY ON INCOMPLETE (IN) GRADES
Undergraduate and graduate students have two quarters to complete an incomplete. At the end of the second quarter (excluding summer) following the term in which the incomplete grade was assigned, remaining incompletes will automatically convert to "F" grades. In the case of the Law School incompletes must be completed by the end of the semester following the one in which the incomplete was assigned. Ordinarily no incomplete grade may be completed after the grace period has expired. Instructors may not change incomplete grades after the end of the grace period without the permission of a college-based Exceptions Committee. This policy applies to undergraduate, graduate and professional programs. NOTE: In the case of a student who has applied for graduation and who has been approved for an Incomplete in his or her final term, the incomplete must be resolved within the four-week grace period before final degree certification.

ASSISTANCE WITH WRITING
For help with organizing your ideas, grammar, citing sources, and avoiding plagiarism, I encourage you to consult DePaul’s Center for Writing-Based Learning. The center offers both on-campus and online tutoring. See http://condor.depaul.edu/~writing/.