

COURSE CONTENT

Course Code	DF3012
Course Title	Film Directing
Pre-requisites	DF2000 and DF2005
No of AUs	3
Contact Hours	39 hours studio contact

Course Aims

In this intermediate level film course you will receive an intensive introduction to practical film directing in fiction films. You will experience an in-depth knowledge of the director's craft, focusing on effective performance for the screen and how to improve your ability to make directorial choices to articulate a meaningful cinematic narrative. The learning in this course will directly inform and enhance any directing responsibilities in future film projects.

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO)

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. Communicate clearly with actors to direct and shape on-screen performance.
2. Analyse and breakdown a script identifying visual style, dramatic structure and narrative function.
3. Apply a cinematic style through effective shot sequencing and sound design.
4. Provide leadership and clear communication to manage a film crew.
5. Critique ideas and directorial techniques employed by peers in a constructive manner.

Course Content

A Director's Choices and Key Relationships

In this course you will experience an overview of the role of the Film Director through pre-production, production and post-production on a film and key relationships with creative partners and crew. You will learn how to establish a director's vision and understand how a director conceptualises a film. Differences and similarities in story-telling and audio-visual narratives will be covered.

Script Analysis and Interpretation

In this phase you will examine how a director works from script to screen. You will explore dramatic situations, narrative perspectives and character design, as you break down a scene, developing character backstory and motivation, understanding themes, beats, subtext, turning points and story throughlines / spines. Through casting you will explore character choices.

Shaping On-Screen Performance

On-screen performance is about developing layered, lively and truthful performances. You will work with playable action-oriented objectives, listening and reacting, direct gesture and body language to build an engaging and effective dramatic scene. Techniques explored include staging and blocking, timing of camera and actors, hitting marks and staying in the frame, utilising the physical environment and situation. You will design opportunities for layered

characterization in the moment.

Visual and Audio Conceptualisation

Visual and audio conceptualisation supports the director's vision through frame design, shot sequencing, coverage and other audio and visual narratives. You will practise with a variety of useful camera exercises to capture and shape performance – simple walk and talk shots, over the shoulder matching shots, table coverage, tracking action on static camera and with moving camera. Communication mechanisms include moodboards, storyboards, camera plans, shot-lists and photo-series.

Casting, Rehearsals and Pre-production

This phase includes preparation for shooting, including casting, location scouting and audio-visual conceptualisation. You will be introduced to casting practices and how this critical choice affects the essential story. Techniques covered include table read, actors rehearsal and technical rehearsal.

Post-production Design

In post-production design you will examine the role of the director, including editing and montage, sound design and mixing, scoring and visual effects.

Class assignments

- 1) Scene Analysis - You will analyse the visual style, dramatic structure and narrative function of a 3-5-minute dramatic scene from a feature film of your choice. Submit a short 1-page paper in hard copy.
- 2) Short Screenplay – You will write an original or adapted short screenplay (3-5 pages) that you will also analyse and breakdown (script analysis) in class.
- 3) Pre-production Presentation (Casting and Conceptualisation) – You will cast and create visualisation / conceptualisation boards to convey the authorial choices you have made.
- 4) Class Rehearsal and Shoot – You will explain the key points of your script analysis and rehearse the scene with your actors.

Final Project

You will direct, shoot and present a completed short film of 3-5min. The steps include developing an idea, writing a 3-5-minute script, conceptualising, directing, shooting, editing, sound-designing and mixing. The finished film will be screened in the final class for a group critique with a guest advisor, and the final digital file will be uploaded to the film server.