Film Directing - Fall '15

- Required Text
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- Participation & Exercises
- Individual & Group Projects
- Evaluation
- Web Resources
- BERT

Time & Location:
M 12:00–02:50 pm — Comm Studio A

Professor: Robert Spahr
Contact: rspahr@siu.edu
Office: MCMA 1121E

Office Hours:
T 09:00am - 12:00pm
W 12:00pm - 03:00pm
and by appointment

Course Syllabus Location: http://www.robertspahr.com/dir/

Course Listings:
Film Directing - 65717 - CP 471 - 002
Media Arts Studio Seminar: Film Directing - 67354 - MCMA 543 - 005

Required Text:
* All other readings will be distributed in class or available online. *

Further Reading:
Description:
This class will explore in the role of the film director. It will be examined and presented in depth through a series of short projects, acting exercises and lessons in scene analysis. The students will be lead through the creative process and role of the film director. Students will participate in acting projects, crew for their classmates, and produce several individual projects while workshopping the adaptation of Franz Kafka's short story *The Metamorphosis*, into a collaborative multimedia production. The instructor will explain this in detail in class.

Upon successful completion of this course, students will have used theoretical writings, analysis and ensemble work to better understand the role of the film director. Students will have further developed their own media arts practice by creating individual and group projects, which will have resulted in a multi-media production that will be presented to the public.

Syllabus:

### Be sure to check back often for any updated information.###

Aug 24  
**Introductions, Overview, Scene Analysis**  
*Mamet: Glengarry Glen Ross - The Leads are Weak Scene*  
*Shakespeare: Romeo & Juliet, Act I, Scene I*

Aug 31  
**Explorations in Acting: Theatre Games**  
*Kafka's The Metamorphosis*

Sep 07  
**Labor Day - No Class Meeting**

Sep 14  
**Scene Development:**  
*Character, Relationships, Objectives, Super-Objectives, Units and Bits*  
Reading:  
Uta Hagen: *Respect for Acting*

Sep 21  
**Staging, Blocking, Camera Perspective**  
**Guest Presentation: Professor Jay Needham**  
Project One proposal is due by email.

Sep 28  
**Visiting Filmmaker: Saba Dewan**
Oct 05
12:00-5:50pm
Combined class time with Dr. Kapur's Acting Class
Presentation/ Critique of Project One
Open Studio / Workshop Metamorphosis
Project One is due.
Project Two proposal is due by email.

Oct 12
Fall Break - No Class Meeting

Oct 19
Open Studio / Workshop Metamorphosis

Oct 26
Open Studio / Workshop Metamorphosis

Nov 02
Presentation/ Critique of Project Two

Nov 09
Workshop Metamorphosis

Nov 16
Workshop Metamorphosis

Nov 23
Workshop Metamorphosis

Nov 30
12:00-5:50pm
Combined class time with Dr. Kapur's Acting Class
Workshop Metamorphosis

Dec 07
Technical Rehearsal

Kafka's The Metamorphosis: A Multimedia Production
Invited Public Presentation
TBD - Possible dates: Dec 08, 09, 10, 11 ??? TBD.

Dec 14
University Scheduled Final - 12:30-2:30pm
Final Documentation of all course work including journals is due.


**Participation & Exercises**

Because of the collaborative nature of this course, student participation is very important. There will be a variety of exercises assigned throughout the semester including but not limited to theatre games, script analysis, story boards, and the creation of short video projects. These works will be presented and critiqued in class. It is important to use these exercises to try new things, to imagine ‘what if?’, and to risk real failure. This will help you push yourself and to develop your skills as a media-maker.

**Directing Projects: Two Individual/Small Group Projects and One Collaborative Class Project**

**Two Individual or Small Group Projects**

Each student will complete two original projects produced as individuals or in a small group. These projects will likely develop from the creative work explored in the weekly exercises. The details and scope of these projects will be discussed and approved by the instructor. From this work, a group collaborative production will be developed. More information will be provided during the course, as the details will develop based on the interests of the participating students.

**Final Group Project - Franz Kafka's The Metamorphosis**

Using Franz Kafka's short story *The Metamorphosis* as a starting point, the class will create a group collaborative production that will be workshopped and developed during the semester. This project will be created and structured by the group, and will be the result of the work developed from the previous projects and exercises. The final production of *The Metamorphosis* will be presented to an invited general public. Date and location TBD.

Projects can be documented in any suitable medium, such as DVD, a thumb drive, or on the Web.

**Evaluation:**

The work in this course requires motivation, exploration, risk-taking, and most importantly, an openness to new ideas. The grading policy of this class is meant to encourage you to explore new ideas and take chances. Do not think in terms of "What must I do to receive an A grade", but think in terms of what you would like to learn.

All assignments and projects are due at the beginning of class.

Attendance and promptness to all classes is expected. There are no acceptable number of absences. More than two unexcused absences may result in failure for the class. Two lates are the equivalent of one absence. Leaving a class early is considered equivalent to arriving late.

**Journal/Sketchbook:** Each student will respond to class readings, projects and critiques. Students should also document their creative process, and artistic development within the journal. Think of the journal as a resource, to contain your current ideas and hints of future directions to explore.
Each Project will be graded on artistic, creative and intellectual merit.

Grades will be based on the following:

- Originality of concept
- Delivery (execution of the concept)
- Documentation
- Process
- Craft
- Critique & participation

Your final grade will be determined by the following:

- 20% Participation/Exercises
- 10% Journal/Sketchbook
- 25% Project #1
- 25% Project #2
- 20% Final Group Project

Web Resources:

### More web resources will be added throughout the semester ###

Creative Commons

Creative Commons Filmmaking - A Swarm Of Angels remixes modern cinema

Paul Graham: Taste For Makers

Building Emergency Response Protocols

University’s Emergency Procedure Clause:

Southern Illinois University Carbondale is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. Because some health and safety circumstances are beyond our control, we ask that you become familiar with the SIUC Emergency Response Plan and Building Emergency Response Team (BERT) program. Emergency response information is available on posters in buildings on campus, available on BERT's website at [www.bert.siu.edu](http://www.bert.siu.edu), Department of Public Safety's website [www.dps.siu.edu](http://www.dps.siu.edu) (disaster drop down) and in the Emergency Response Guideline pamphlet. Know how to respond to each type of emergency.
Instructors will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting your location. **It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during an evacuation or sheltering emergency.** The Building Emergency Response Team will provide assistance to your instructor in evacuating the building or sheltering within the facility.

**Students With a Disability:**

Instructors and students in the class will work together as a team to assist students with a disability safely out of the building. Students with a disability will stay with the instructor and communicate with the instructor what is the safest way to assist them.

**Tornado:**

During the spring semester we have a *Storm Drill*.

Pick up your belongings and your instructor will lead you to a safe area of the basement. No one will be allowed to stay upstairs. Stay away from windows. The drill should not last more than 10 minutes. You must stay with your instructor so he/she can take roll. Students need to be quiet in the basement as the BERT members are listening to emergency instructions on handheld radios and cannot hear well in the basement.

**Fire:**

During the fall semester we have a *Fire Drill*.

Pick up your belongings and your instructor will lead you to either the North or South parking lot depending on what part of the building your class is in. You must stay with your instructor so he/she can take roll. As soon as the building is all clear, you will be allowed to return to class.

**These drills are to train instructors and the Building Emergency Response Team to get everyone to a safe place during an emergency.**

**Bomb Threat:**

If someone calls in a bomb threat, class will be suspended and students will be asked to pick up their belongings, evacuate the building and leave the premises. Do not leave anything that is yours behind. We will not allow anyone back into the building until the police and bomb squad give us an all clear. **DO NOT USE YOUR CELL PHONES.** Some bombs are triggered by a cell phone signal.
Shooter in the Building:

If it is safe to leave, move to a safe area far from the building away from where the shooter is located. If anyone has any information about the shooter, please contact the police after they have gone someplace safe.

If it is not safe to leave, go into a room, lock the door and turn out the lights. Everyone should spread out and not huddle together as a group. Don't stand in front of the door or in line of fire with the door. Students' chair and desks should be piled in front of the glass and door as a barricade and the teacher's desk, podium and anything movable can be pushed against the door. This is intended to slow down any attempts to enter the classroom. If it looks like the shooter is persistent and able to enter, make a lot of noise and have the students use everything in their backpacks to throw at the shooter to distract him.

Silence all cell phones after one person in the room calls the police and informs them of their location and how many people are in the room. Be quiet and wait for the police to arrive. The police are looking for one or more shooters, and they have no way of knowing if the shooter is in the room people are hiding in. For this reason, when the police enter the room, no one should have anything in his/her hands and each person MUST raise his/her hands above his/her head.

Earthquake:

In the event of an earthquake, you are advised to take cover quickly under heavy furniture or crouch near an interior wall or corner and cover your head to avoid falling debris. Outside the building are trees and power lines and debris from the building itself that you will need to stay away from. In the building, large open areas like auditoriums are the most dangerous. Do not try to escape on a stairway or elevator. Do not hide under a stairway. We do not recommend that you stand in a doorway because the door could shut from the vibrations and crush your fingers trapping you there.

Women's Self Defense Classes are offered to female students faculty and staff by the Department of SIU Public Safety. For more information, contact Officer Mary Stark marys@dps.siu.edu.

SIU Syllabus Attachment

SIU Syllabus Attachment Fall 2015