

University of Southern California
School of Cinematic Arts
Production Division
Spring, 2020

CTPR 386: Art and Industry of the Theatrical Film -- The Case Study Seminar
Tuesdays, 7pm, SCA 214 (18518R, 4 units)

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Course Description: Welcome to this introductory seminar, offering a detailed case study of one film from conception through distribution.

The movie chosen for this semester is a new, low-budget feature produced outside the studio system using DIY techniques: PHOBIAS, made by recent SCA alums.

Each meeting will include three class segments: an opening lecture and discussion based on guest takeaways and required reading; the centerpiece guest Q & A featuring a key department head; and a discussion of industry current events.

In this third segment, every week each student will research and be prepared to describe one recent story from the trades, including details and sources.

Students are expected to be **proactive, inquisitive and thoughtful** during the three class segments. **Careful note-taking** is essential.

Learning Objectives: The goal of the class is to develop an understanding of the complex system and plain hard work involved in the making of a movie, as well as an appreciation for the wider entertainment system through current events. This will shed light on the behind-the-scenes, non-glamorous elements of moviemaking as a craft and commercial art form, in the context of a global industry.

It's important to keep up with the weekly readings as found in the "Class Schedule" on the next pages, in order to connect with the lectures, discussions and Guest Speakers.

There will be one mid-term exam and one final exam. Attendance will be taken at the start of every session; each student is expected to arrive on time.

Grading: The midterm and final will make up roughly 75% of your grade; classroom participation will make up roughly 25%.

In the event of an absence, contact the S.A. in advance. Otherwise, it is an unexcused absence. More than one unexcused absence will have a negative impact on your grade.

Production Division Attendance Policy: Students are expected to be on time and prepared for each class. Two unexcused absences will result in a student's grade being lowered by one full letter (i.e., A becomes B). A third unexcused absence will result in a student's grade being lowered by one additional full letter (B becomes C). A student's grade will be lowered by one full letter for each additional unexcused absence. Two late class arrivals equate to one full absence.

In order for an absence to be excused, the student must have prior approval from the professor and provide documentation at the next attended class session. If class is missed due to an emergency, the student must contact the S.A. and the professor prior to class or the Production Office at 213-740-3317.

While we'll have plenty of fun learning from the lectures, discussions, required reading and industry guests, the real work of the course will be your putting it all together and becoming familiar with the art and industry of making movies.

Required Reading

The Movie Business Book Fourth Edition, edited by Jason E. Squire.
Routledge/Focal Press, 2017.

Deadline.com, THR.com

Class Schedule and Assignments

(Please keep track of guest speakers on blank lines.)

1. Tuesday, January 14

Movie industry basics and history; how the course works; introductions; review of syllabus.

Screening: _____

2. January 21 in SCA 108 **Read:** "The Creators," pp. xix-51.
Screening: _____
3. January 28 **Read:** "The Property," pp. 55-95 and
"Money," pp. 99-135.
Guest: _____
4. February 4 **Read:** "Producing in the DIY Model,"
pp. 474-484.
Guest: _____
5. February 11 **Read:** "Management," pp. 139-172.
Guest: _____
6. February 18 **Read:** "The Deal," pp. 175-220.
Guest: _____
7. February 25 **Read:** "Production," pp. 223-274.
Guest: _____
8. March 3 **In-class midterm exam.**
Screening: _____

Suggested Additional Reading

Anderson, Chris. The Long Tail. Hyperion, 2006.

Elberse, Anita. Blockbusters: Hit-Making, Risk-Taking and the Big Business of Entertainment. Henry Holt and Company, 2013.

Fritz, Ben. The Big Picture: The Fight for the Future of Movies. Eamon Dolan/Houghton Mifflin, 2018.

Goldman, William. Adventures in the Screen Trade. Warner Books, 1983, and Which Lie Did I Tell? Pantheon Books, 2000.

Iger, Robert. The Ride of a Lifetime: Lessons Learned From 15 Years as CEO of the Walt Disney Company. Random House, 2019.

Miller, James A. Powerhouse: The Untold Story of Hollywood's Creative Artists Agency. Custom House, 2016.

Obst, Linda. Sleepless in Hollywood: Tales From the New Abnormal in the Movie Business. Simon & Schuster, 2013.

Puttnam, David with Neil Watson. Movies and Money. Vintage Press, 1999.

Reiss, Jon. Think Outside the Box Office: the Ultimate Guide to Film Distribution and Marketing for the Digital Era. Hybrid Cinema Publishing, 2010.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct:

Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Support Systems:

Student Health Counseling Services - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call
engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

Student Health Leave Coordinator – 213-821-4710

Located in the USC Support and Advocacy office, the Health Leave Coordinator processes requests for health leaves of absence and advocates for students taking such leaves when needed.

<https://policy.usc.edu/student-health-leave-absence/>

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call

suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call

engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) | Title IX - (213) 740-5086

equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help a survivor of harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations.

Bias Assessment Response and Support - (213) 740-2421

studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions for appropriate investigation and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776

dsp.usc.edu

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710

studentaffairs.usc.edu/sssa

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101

diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call
dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call
dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.

Diversity and Inclusion:

Diversity and Inclusion are foundational to the SCA community. We are committed to fostering a welcoming and supportive environment where students of all identities and backgrounds can flourish. The classroom should be a space for open discussion of ideas and self-expression; however, SCA will not tolerate verbal or written abuse, threats, harassment, intimidation or violence against person or property. If students are concerned about these matters in the classroom setting they are encouraged to contact their SCA Diversity and Inclusion Liaison, <http://cinema.usc.edu/about/diversity.cfm>; e-mail diversity@cinema.usc.edu. You can also report discrimination based on a protected class here <https://equity.usc.edu/harassment-or-discrimination/>

Disruptive Student Behavior:

Behavior that persistently or grossly interferes with classroom activities is considered disruptive behavior and may be subject to disciplinary action. Such behavior inhibits other students' ability to learn and an instructor's ability to teach. A student responsible for disruptive behavior may be required to leave class pending discussion and resolution of the problem and may be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs for disciplinary action.

**PLEASE NOTE:
FOOD AND DRINKS (OTHER THAN WATER) ARE NOT PERMITTED IN ANY
INSTRUCTIONAL SPACES IN THE CINEMATIC ARTS COMPLEX**