

## Gail H Sonnenfeld

Production Design-Spring 2024  
COMM 310-001 SP24  
Loyola University  
Sullivan Center, Room 253  
**Wds.** 4:15-6:45  
gsonnenfeld@luc.edu  
gail500@hotmail.com  
917-478-9133

This class is intended to serve as an overview of the concept of Production Design as it relates to the motion picture and television worlds in both **theory and practicality.**

The Course provides an overview of Production Design for the visual media by exploring the history and theory of production design, as well as the application of art, design, and architecture to moving image storytelling. Students will examine and critique case studies. Instruction covers the process of script analysis, breakdowns, research to budgeting for the art department. The roles and procedures of the art department will be introduced. Students will collaborate to gain practical experience of production designing through working on a short film. Lastly they will take a script and create the “look” of a script of their choosing.

Set skills developed through this class will provide the student with a working knowledge of building and decorating a set. This will include the breakdown of a script and development of a budget. **We will develop the visual language of a shoot.** Students examine and critique case studies. Instruction covers the process of script analysis and breakdowns to budgeting for the art department. The roles and procedures of the art department will be introduced. Also, included will be an introduction to the traditional skills of sketching, drawing, and model making which serve to communicate a designer’s concepts to a production crew. Students will be required to serve as part of a Production Design crew for two weekends of shooting.

At the successful completion of this course, students will be able to identify, categorize, and understand the art direction needs of a script, be able to conceive of and discuss the many design elements and choices necessary to tell a story visually. The student will be able to read a simple ground plan and elevation for a set, create a basic art department budget and schedule, as well as have an understanding of the basic tools and techniques of building a set. By the end of term, the student will have cooperated with their peers on the Production Design of a production.

### **School of Communication Statement on Academic Integrity**

A basic mission of a university is to search for and to communicate truth as it is honestly perceived. A genuine learning community cannot exist unless this demanding standard is a fundamental tenet of the intellectual life of the community. Students of Loyola University Chicago are expected to know, to respect, and to practice this standard of personal honesty.

Academic dishonesty can take several forms, including, but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, copying another student's work, and submitting false documents. These examples of academic dishonesty apply to both individual and group assignments.

Academic cheating is a serious act that violates academic integrity. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, such acts as:

Obtaining, distributing, or communicating examination materials prior to the scheduled examination without the consent of the teacher;  
Providing information to another student during an examination;  
Obtaining information from another student or any other person during an examination;

Using any material or equipment during an examination without consent of the instructor, or in a manner which is not authorized by the instructor;  
Attempting to change answers after the examination has been submitted;  
Taking an examination by proxy. Taking or attempting to take an exam for someone else is a violation by both the student enrolled in the course and the proxy. Unauthorized collaboration, or the use in whole or part of another student's work, on homework, lab reports, programming assignments, and any other course work which is completed outside of the classroom;

Falsifying medical or other documents to petition for excused absences or extensions of deadlines; or Any other action that, by omission or commission, compromises the integrity of the academic evaluation process.

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism is the appropriation of ideas, language, work, or intellectual property of another, either by intent or by negligence, without sufficient public acknowledgement and appropriate citation that the material is not one's own. It is true that every thought probably has been influenced to some degree by the thoughts and actions of others. Such influences can be thought of as affecting the ways we see things and express all thoughts. Plagiarism, however, involves the taking and use of specific words and ideas of others without proper acknowledgement of the sources, and includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Submitting as one's own material copied from a published source, such as Internet, print, CD-ROM, audio, video, etc.;

Submitting as one's own another person's unpublished work or examination material; Allowing another or paying another to write or research a paper for one's own benefit; or

Purchasing, acquiring, and using for course credit a pre-written paper. Submitting the same work for credit in two or more classes, even if the classes are taken in different semesters. If a student plans to submit work with similar or overlapping content for credit in two or more classes, the student should consult with all instructors prior to submission of the work to make certain that such submission will not violate this standard.

The above list is in no way intended to be exhaustive. Students should be guided by the principle that it is of utmost importance to give proper recognition to all sources. To do so is both an act of personal, professional courtesy and of intellectual honesty. Any failure to do so, whether by intent or by neglect, whether by omission or commission, is an act of plagiarism. A more detailed description of this issue can be found at [https://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg\\_academicintegrity.shtml](https://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml).

Plagiarism or any other act of academic dishonesty will result minimally in the instructor's assigning the grade of "F" for the assignment or examination. The instructor may impose a more severe sanction, including a grade of "F" in the course. All instances of academic dishonesty must be reported by the instructor to the Associate and Assistant Deans of the School of Communication. Instructors must provide the appropriate information and documentation when they suspect an instance of academic misconduct has occurred. The instructor must also notify the student of the findings and sanction.

The Associate and Assistant Deans of the School of Communication may constitute a hearing board to consider the imposition of sanctions in addition to those imposed by the instructor, including a recommendation of expulsion, depending on the seriousness of the misconduct. In the case of multiple instances of academic dishonesty, the Dean's office may convene a separate hearing board to review these instances. The student has the right to appeal the decision of the hearing board to the Dean of SOC. If the

student is not a member of the SOC, the Dean of the college in which the student is enrolled shall be part of the process. Students have the right to appeal the decision of any hearing board and the deans of the two schools will review the appeal together. Their decision is final in all cases except expulsion. The sanction of expulsion for academic dishonesty may be imposed only by the Provost upon recommendation of the dean or deans.

Students have a right to appeal any finding of academic dishonesty against them. The procedure for such an appeal can be found at: [http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg\\_academicgrievance.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicgrievance.shtml).

The School of Communication maintains a permanent record of all instances of academic dishonesty. The information in that record is confidential. However, students may be asked to sign a waiver which releases that student's record of dishonesty as a part of the student's application to a graduate or professional school, to a potential employer, to a bar association, or to similar organizations.

### **Student Accommodations:**

Students who need special accommodations for exams or class meetings will provide you with a letter documenting the type of accommodations needed. If they claim to have a physical or psychological condition that hinders their ability to perform in class, medical documentation must be provided to the Student Accessibility Center (SAC) and that office will assess whether or not your collaboration is required. These matters are confidential. The following language should be included on your syllabus:

Any student who needs special accommodation during exams or class periods should provide documentation from the Student Accessibility Center confidentially to the instructor. The instructor will accommodate that student's needs in the best way possible, given the constraints of

course content and processes. It is the student's responsibility to plan in advance in order to meet their own needs and assignment due dates.

### **Privacy Statement**

Assuring privacy among faculty and students engaged in online and face-to-face instructional activities helps promote open and robust conversations and mitigates concerns that comments made within the context of the class will be shared beyond the classroom. As such, recordings of instructional activities occurring in online or face-to-face classes may be used solely for internal class purposes by the faculty member and students registered for the course, and only during the period in which the course is offered. Instructors who wish to make subsequent use of recordings that include student activity may do so only with informed written consent of the students involved or if all student activity is removed from the recording.

### **Student Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**

As Loyola's mission statement holds, "We are Chicago's Jesuit, Catholic University-a diverse community seeking God in all things." Together, as a community rich in diversity, we are called to "expand knowledge in the service of humanity through learning, justice and faith."

Recognizing and appreciating the diverse collection of identities, experiences, perspectives, and abilities of the students, faculty, staff, and community partners with whom we collaborate, the School of Communication commits itself to enriching academic experiences through the advancement of diversity, equity, inclusion, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive practices.

### **Managing Life Crises and Finding Support**

Should you encounter an unexpected crisis during the semester (e.g., securing food or housing, addressing mental health concerns, managing a

financial crisis, and/or dealing with a family emergency, etc.), I strongly encourage you to contact the Office of the Dean of Students by submitting a CARE referral (LUC.edu/csaa) for yourself or a peer in need of support. To learn more about the Office theDean of Students, please find their websites here: LUC.edu/dos or LUC.edu/csaa; phone number 773-508-8840, email deanofstudents@luc.edu

***Week 1-January 17,2024 --Overview “Idea” of Production Design!***

What exactly do Production Designers Do?

What is the scope of our work in pre-production, production and post-production? Who makes up the Art Department?

What is the hierarchy of the Art Department?

With whom do Production Designers collaborate with and why can this be useful and important?

**Assignment 1:** Bring in pictures, photos and/or drawings of 3 designers and/or 3 artists, musicians or writers who inspire you. Please have information mounted in an appropriate manner. Present to the class.

**Due: January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

***Week 2-January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024--Production Designers and Collaboration***

Specific Designers and their work-The influence of Genres & Styles

What is involved!

What are the elements and tools of design open to the Art Department in the creation of the visual language? **Assignment 2:** Pick a film to watch, watch it without sound and write a short paper on the visual language of this film which will be due February 7th, 2024.

***Week 3-January 31st, 2024—Where does our work generate from-The Script!***

Script analysis guide.

Visual Literacy.

Artistic Inspiration.

What is a **theme** and why is it important?

Understand the various elements of design, and what they are.

How does a PD use these elements to create the “look” of a ?lm? How do visual metaphors work.

**Assignment 3: Pick a script from those provided to you . Read the script and think about its themes. Pick one picture which you think expresses the overall theme of your script.**

***Week 4-February 7th, 2024— Inspiration and Research***

Examination of various imagery, artistic styles and ideas in the development of the production design of a film.

Elements of design

Artistic styles

Music

Philosophy

**Assignment 4: Choose 3 works of art that informs your script design and begin your Look Book and Inspiration!**

**Assignment 4A: Read and review “Handler “ script so we can breakdown your own scripts.**

***Week 5-February 14th 2024, – Breakdowns, and Budgets***

What is a breakdown sheet?

Are they the same for set dressing, budget, etc?

How are breakdowns helpful in preparing a budget?

The role of the art department coordinator.

How do breakdowns help determine if you shoot on location or do a build.

**Assignment 5:**

**Prepare breakdown and continue visual research. Bring your breakdowns, and pre-viz to class to discuss next week,**

***Week 6-February 21st, 2024- Visual Conception and How to Share your Ideas!***

**PreVis or Pre-Visualization/Location of Built Set-**

Look Book

Story Boards

Art Boards

Concept Art

**Assignment 6: Presentation**

**Mount and present all your research to this point for class**

**Assignment 6A: Tutorials on line before the next class—February 28th, 2024.**

**There may be a quiz about these tutorials.**

**Color Theory-[www.worqx.com/color](http://www.worqx.com/color)**

**Color Theory-[www.mariaclaudiacortes.com/color](http://www.mariaclaudiacortes.com/color)**

**Week 7-February 28th, 2024–Color in Film**

Color Theory

Color in films

Color meanings-certain colors mean or create certain feelings. What do we mean by hue, value, tones.

Technicolor-origination and use.

Texture and its effect on color and light.

Black and white's descriptive nature.

**Assignment 7: Prepare a color palette of your script to be included in your final presentation.**

**Week 8–March 13th, 2024- Getting Ready to Shoot!**

**Drafting 101 and Other Presentation Forms –  
Fundamentals of Drafting.**

How do you use a scale?

What is a plan and elevation?

What information does one get from these?

**Assignment 8: Create a ground plan of your set.**

**Week 9-March 20th, 2024-Google Sketch-**

**Review, breakdown, pre-visualization, Look Book and ground plan**

**Assignment 9:**

**a. Simple drafting –draft a plan for your set.**

**Assignment 10- Pick a scene from your project and create a storyboard for it that will be included in your Final Presentation.**

**Week 10 – March 27th, 2024--Set Dressing, Props, and Construction-**

The full scope of set dressing

What is a Prop? What are Special Props?

Graphics.

**Assignment 11: Watch one of the following films either via Netflix or other means, *Prestige* by Christopher Nolan, *Orlando* by Sally Potter, *Agora* by Alejandro Amenabar, or *Libertine* by Laurence Dunmore.**

**Examine the set dressing of the film. Write a one to three page paper telling me how the set dressing is used in this film and what information it provides you.**

**Week 11—April 3rd, 2024 -- Shoot and Wrap /Special Effects –**

The finishing touches to a set. Aging and other scenic processes.

What are tool kits and what is in them? What is the purpose of a Wrap?

What are Special Effects (Practical Effects) as they are used and integrated into a set?

**Week 12—April 10th, 2024 -- Visual Effects and Post-Production-The New Frontier of PD!-**

What is the role of the Production Designer and the Art Department in Post-Production?

What is our role in LED shoots?

The effect of colorizing on the art department.

Traditional “*in camera*” visual effects used by the Art Department.

Miniatures and Models.

**Week 13—April 17th 2024— CGI/ Green Screen/ Animation-**  
Discussion of individual examples of visual effects by genre.

**\*Remember-All students should be completing work for the Final Presentation which will be on May 1st, 2024!**

**Week 14—April 24th, 2024-Review**

**Week 15-May 1st, 2024-- Final Presentations to Class**

**Bibliography:**

*Special Effects: The History and Techniques* by Richard J. Rickitt

*Architectural Graphics* by Francis D. K. Chung

*Architecture: Form, Space, and Order* by Francis D. K. Chung

*Construction Drawing and Details for Interiors: Basic Skills* by Francis D. K. Chung

*If It's Purple, Someone's Gonna Die: The Power of Color in Visual Storytelling* by Patti Bellantoni

*Designs in Film: A Century of Hollywood Art Direction* by Cathy Whitlock

*Costume Design 101* by Richard La Motte

*The Visual Story* by Bruce A. Block

