

MEMORANDUM

TO: Konstantia Kontaxis, Chair, Department of Cinematic Arts
CC: Rafal Sokolowski, Assistant Professor
FROM: Ed Talavera, Professor
DATE: December 19, 2022
RE: Rafal Sokolowski teaching evaluation

I had the pleasure of observing Rafal Sokolowski's CCA 660 Directing the Actor class on Wednesday, November 30, 2022. There were nine motion pictures students, and several theater acting students present at the class. Instruction began promptly at 3:35pm.

The class was devoted to screening and review of directing projects. The discussion I observed was extremely well structured. Narrative storytelling, camera technique, aesthetics, and directing interpretations were all a part of the conversation. Each student director received detailed and constructive criticism. There was time for open discussion and students took every opportunity to participate in the critique session. During the class, several things became clear: the instructor was extremely organized, exceptionally clear in communicating complex directing concepts to the students, the students felt safe and participated actively in the discussion and seemed to genuinely enjoy the screening and review process.

What was of particular interest to me was that student engagement and participation seemed high for both the motion pictures and the theater acting students. Rarely have we achieved this type of balance in the past in our production courses. Clearly this course represented the possibilities of a mutually beneficial cross-departmental instruction.

I left the class convinced that Rafal Sokolowski is an excellent professor with a particular gift for conceiving and delivering a cross-disciplinary cinematic arts class that is characterized by discipline and structure. His strength lies in his unique ability to create an environment where students are eager to engage and learn. He is well respected by his students who are lucky to have him as their instructor.

Ed Talavera



Acknowledged by:

Rafal Sokolowski, Assistant Professor

Comments:



01/16/23

Signature

Date

MEMORANDUM

TO: Konstantia Kontaxis, Chair, Department of Cinematic Arts

FROM: Sanjeev Chatterjee, Professor

DATE: March 7, 2023

RE: Rafal Sokolowski's classroom teaching evaluation



I had the pleasure of visiting Rafal Sokolowski's CCA 494/750 *Special Topics* class on Wednesday, February 8. I attended this class for just over an hour where, as scheduled, the session was dedicated to production design and pre-visualization. There were 5 students present at the beginning of class, and instruction began at 1:35pm. One student came in about 10 minutes late and another was 35 minutes late.

Professor Sokolowski was very well prepared for class and used a Powerpoint presentation to illustrate his points regarding the importance and role of production design. His visual lexicon drawing from films internationally and including his own work was indeed impressive. I was particularly taken by his references to all-time film greats like Alejandro Jodorowski and Andrei Tarkovsky. Rafal's facility with decoding frames from referenced films and their contributions to texture and feeling helped draw students in.

This led to the more practical side of the class where the instructor detailed the composition of a typical production design team and their outputs such as the creation of look books, color palettes, and mood reels, as an essential part of cinema design. I notice on the course syllabus that students are expected to create these assets for their own respective projects later in the semester.

I found professor Sokolowski's class to be highly organized, informative, and engaging. I learned a few things as well during the hour I spent in his class.

One gentle suggestion I have for the instructor is to continue making students aware of their tardiness. I am painfully aware that the post-COVID scenario with student attendance and tardiness is affecting the morale and effective instruction in all classes. My suggestion is meant to encourage the teacher to simply telegraph to students that he sees them and their behaviors. It is a small contribution that all of us could make towards achieving some sense of normalcy.

I want to thank professor Sokolowski for giving me the opportunity to observe his class. I have come away from the experience with a very high regard for his teaching and I continue hold him in very high regard as a colleague.

Acknowledged by:

Rafal Sokolowski, Assistant Professor

Comments:

Rafal Sokolowski
Signature

03/06/2023
Date



Teaching Review of Rafal Sokolowski
CCA 395 Directing Techniques I
September 11, 2023. Studio A 10:10 – 12:55.

Let me begin by noting that Rafal Sokolowski's work teaching "Directing Techniques I" that I observed on Monday, Sept. 11, 2023, ranks among the top of the studio classes, masterclasses, and workshops I have observed across the U.S. and Europe.

I joined Rafal's class for the final two hours, after my overlapping CCA 103 9:30 – 10:45 class ended. When I entered the class, already in session, a combination of thirty-two Cinema Arts B.A. directing students and Theatre Arts B.F.A. acting students seated in a large circle.

Two visiting professional Screen Actors Guild actors, one male one female, were seated on one side of the circle. Rafal worked in the center of the circle, both directing the two actors for the scene they were preparing to shoot and explaining to the students how professional artists worked when rehearsing and shooting a scene.

Watching the intelligence, energy, and articulateness of Rafal at work with fellow professional artists while teaching the class was a delight. He is unusually skilled at establishing the decorum expected in a professional production, while explaining to the students why this professionalism is so important.

After repeated rehearsals and discussions, the actors moved across the studio to shoot the scene. The studio lights focused on two chairs facing each other with a small, low table between them. Two digital cameras had been set up, one behind each chair, attached to two large video monitors facing the class. This allowed the students to observe both actors performing the scene, simultaneously.

When Rafal interviewed for his current position, he held a masterclass using two other professional actors to demonstrate to an audience of students and faculty his approach to the art and craft of directing actors. It was an exciting session that led to his being hired to lead our directing program. The directing class I attended confirmed our assumptions and exceeded our expectations. He is an exceptionally gifted teacher.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Chase Soliday".

John Chase Soliday, Ph.D.
Associate Professor

Date: 11/13/2023

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rafal Sokolowski".

Rafal Sokolowski
Assistant Professor

Date:

School of Communication Peer Teaching Evaluation Form

Name of Evaluator: Grace Barnes Name of Faculty Member Being Evaluated: Rafal Sokoloski
 Class Being Evaluated: CCA "Script to Screen" Date of Evaluation: 2/28/2024

Please rate the faculty member's teaching on each of the items below. If something doesn't apply, check N/A.

Preparation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fair	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Relevance of the content presented	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fair	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Command of the material	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fair	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Engagement with the material	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fair	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Engagement with students	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fair	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Quality of the lecture materials	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fair	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Accuracy of the lecture materials	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fair	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Use of examples to explain concepts	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fair	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Control of the classroom	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fair	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Ability to maintain students' attention	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fair	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Responses to student questions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fair	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Enthusiasm	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fair	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Confidence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fair	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Includes methods for diverse learning needs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fair	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Environment supportive of all students	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fair	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Overall teaching quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fair	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A

Based on your observation of this class, please answer the questions below. Provide as much detail as possible, as the goal of this evaluation is to facilitate improvement of teaching.

What are the faculty member's biggest strengths in the classroom?

Rafal speaks with the authority of a seasoned filmmaker; the students were engaged throughout the class.

The topic of the session was pre-visualization — he showed examples of his own work, such as "Look Books" and images from his location scouting. When students occasionally brought up questions about their own projects, Rafal gave them thoughtful answers, often incorporating in his answers, clips from his films or anecdotes from his production experiences.

In what areas would you recommend improvement? Why?

I enjoyed his class very much - I don't have any suggestions.

Other comments or observations?

"Script to Screen" would be a valuable class for students to take before they enroll CCA 351(Intermediate Film Production.)



Signature of Evaluator:



Signature of Faculty Member

Faculty member's comments about this evaluation (optional):