

**Video Production 1
Summer 2008
Syllabus**

**John Cantine
412-681-5449 x 215
jpc@pghfilmmakers.org
www.johncantine.com**

Objectives:

Students taking this course should have had some experience shooting and editing video in “Motion Picture Fundamentals” or a similar introductory course. Readings, assignments, and in-class lectures and demonstrations will give students a broader and deeper knowledge of digital videography, lighting, location audio, and digital post-production. All equipment, including MiniDV cameras and Final Cut Pro editing suites, as well as limited media storage, will be provided by Pittsburgh Filmmakers. Students are expected to provide videotape and other production materials as well as CD-R or other file storage material.

T.A. Sessions and Open Labs:

In addition to the weekly class sessions, each student will be required to attend 10 (total) contact hours with a Teaching Assistant. These include small-group sessions to allow hands-on practice with key pieces of equipment, and open lab sessions that make trained personnel available to help the student with post-production issues. The syllabus indicates the schedule of sessions; exact times will be determined by the second week of class. Attendance at T.A. and lab hours counts toward the attendance/participation portion of the grade.

Text:

Cantine, John and Andrew Sproule, *Digital Video Production*. (unpublished, available at Pittsburgh Filmmakers)

Bibliography:

Books:

Apple Computing, *Final Cut Pro 6 User's Manual*. (Apple Computing 2005)

Apple Computing, *Soundtrack Pro User's Manual*. (Apple Computing 2005)

Black, Bruce, *The Visual Story*. (Focal Press 2001)

Holman, Tomlinson, *Sound for Film and Television, 2nd ed.* (Focal Press 2002)

Millerson, Gerald, *Video Production Handbook*. (Focal Press 2001)

Videomaker, *Digital Videomaker Guide to Digital Video and DVD Production*. (Videomaker 2004)

Weynand, Diana, *Final Cut Pro 6: Apple Pro Training Series*. (Peachpit Press 2007)

Web Resources:

www.2-pop.com (Final Cut Pro Tips and Techniques site)

www.dv.com (technical info on digital video and related topics)

www.adamwilt.com (video production info)

www.apple.com (technical specs, updates, etc on computer equipment and Final Cut Studio)

www.kenstone.net (digital video info)

www.youtube.com (on-line video site)

Assignments:

1. We will shoot several lighting set-ups in class, to be decided by the class as a whole. Students will be graded on their participation in this shoot.
- 2a and b. A short quiz and a longer written exam. Each will be short answer, technical information written tests. The quiz will be on information covered until that point. The exam will be comprehensive.
3. Screening essays. Each student will be asked to turn in three essays of two to four pages each, typed. For each essay, the student must watch one moving-image piece, on film or video, either a film seen at a theater, video viewed at home or online, or an installation piece seen at a museum or gallery. For each essay, analyze the work as a whole and try to ascertain what the maker is trying to say or do with the work. Then pick one technical area (lighting, sound, camerawork, etc) and say how it contributes to (or detracts from) what the maker is trying to do overall. Students may turn in a fourth essay for extra credit.
4. First video assignment: Each student will shoot video of a noun (person, place, or object). None of the shots may show the entire thing – only detail, texture, light, and color. The shots will be edited together in a way that conveys the thing, but no effects or computer-generated transitions can be used. There must be a soundtrack, but no music or dialogue can be used. The edited video can be less than a minute long, and under no circumstances should it be longer than five minutes. This project will be shown in Class 6.
5. Editing assignment: Each student will use found footage and edit it to a soundtrack. This soundtrack can be an existing song, royalty-free music and sound effects from the Library, or a soundtrack created by the student, but should not include synchronous dialogue. The student should not shoot any video for this project. This editing project should be less than five minutes long and will be shown in Class 9.
6. Each student will create a video work shorter than 7 minutes in total length. The style, subject matter, and structure of this video are to be determined by the student. The student will take this video from concept through script, rough cut, fine cut and on to final exhibition copy by the end of the semester. The project will be graded on creativity of idea, aesthetic value and technical proficiency of the finished product, and effort expended.

Grading:

The percentage of the final class grade is as follows:

Script deadline:	5%
In-class shoot:	5%
Quiz:	10%
First assignment:	10%
Editing project:	10%
Screening essays:	15%
Exam:	15%
Final Video Project:	20%
Class Participation:	10%
Total:	100%

Policies:

Attendance is extremely important; chronic lateness or absenteeism will severely impair the student's ability to pass the course. Make-up exams will be given only in unavoidable circumstances, and never more than one week later than the scheduled exam date. If assignments are not completed by the due date deadline points will be forfeited for that assignment – no exceptions will be granted. All material must be the student's own or must be properly attributed. Cheating on an exam, turning in the same assignment for more than one class, or turning in a plagiarized assignment will result in a grade of "0" for that exam or assignment. A second incidence will result in a grade of "F" for the course.

Class Schedule:

Please note deadlines, assignments, and dates of exam and quiz. These will not change unless announced in advance.

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| Class 1
May 13 | Introduction to class
NTSC specs - Types of videos and exhibition options
The CCD and the analog video signal
Digital video: bit depth and sampling rate
The stages of pre-production
Reading: Digital Video Production Chapters 1 & 4 |
| Class 2
May 20 | Compositional conventions – shot sizes, headroom, etc
Screen direction – Camera support
Color temperature and white balance
The lens: focal length, focus, exposure - The Canon GS400 camera
Reading: DVP Chapters 2 & 3
Assignment: First video due Class 6 |
| Class 3
May 27 | Characteristics of sound
Microphones: types, pick-up patterns, available EQ
Digital audio: sample rate and bit depth
Reading: DVP Chapter 5 & 7
Assignment: Treatment of final video due next week
QUIZ |
| Class 4
June 3 | Characteristics of light: direction, intensity, color, quality
Lighting styles – Lighting examples from video and film
Movie lights: parts, care, available EQ
Prep In-class shoot
Reading: DVP Chapter 6 & 8
DUE: Treatments of final videos |
| Class 5
June 10 | In-class shoot: Lighting
Reading: DVP Chapter 9
Assignment: Script for final video due next week |

- Class 6
June 17
Viewing of first video assignments
Final Cut Pro: Interface, Log and capture, rough cutting, print to video
Video and audio assets in the library
Reading: DVP Chapter 10
DUE: First video assignments
DUE: Scripts for final video
Assignment: Editing exercises due Class 9
- Class 7
June 24
Editing: continuity and match cutting, time compression and expansion,
Editing: montage, long take - Examples of editing from videos and films
Final Cut Pro: fine cutting, the tool palette, and the trim edit window
Assignment: Begin shooting final video
DUE: Screening essay 1
- Class 8
July 1
Final Cut Pro: waveforms and audio editing
Soundtrack
Final Cut Pro: Titles, transitions and rendering
- Class 9
July 8
Final Cut Pro: color correction, filters, and keyframing
Viewing of editing exercises
DUE: Editing exercises
DUE: Screening essay 2
- Class 10
July 15
EXAM
Export options – Web video - Compressor
- Class 11
July 22
DVD creation using DVD Studio Pro
DUE: Screening essay 3
- Class 12
July 29
Viewing of final video projects
DUE: FINE CUT OF FINAL PROJECT ON MINIDV, VHS, OR DVD