

Video Production 1
Winter/Spring 2010 W2
Syllabus

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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. Attendance at T.A. and lab hours counts toward the attendance/participation portion of the grade. Failure to attend camera, sound, or lighting T.A. sessions will severely limit the student's equipment access.

Text:

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 (unpublished, available at Pittsburgh Filmmakers)

Bibliography:

Books:

Apple Computing, *Final Cut Pro 7 User's Manual*. (Apple Computing 2009)

Apple Computing, *Soundtrack Pro 3 User's Manual*. (Apple Computing 2009)

Black, Bruce, *The Visual Story*, 2nd ed. (Focal Press 2008)

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*, 2nd ed. (Videomaker 2008)

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 can 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 7.
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 11.
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.

Class 1 Jan 13	Introduction to class NTSC specs - Types of videos and exhibition options The stages of pre-production Reading: Digital Video Production Chapter 1
Class 2 Jan 20	Compositional conventions – shot sizes, headroom, etc The CCD and the analog video signal Digital video: bit depth and sampling rate Screen direction Reading: DVP Chapters 2 & 3
Class 3 Jan 27	Camera support Color temperature and white balance The lens: focal length, focus, exposure - The Canon GS400 camera Reading: DVP Chapter 4 Assignment: First video due Class 7
Class 4 Feb 3	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 5 Feb 10	Characteristics of light - 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 6 **In-class shoot: Lighting**
Feb 17 **Reading:** DVP Chapter 9
 Assignment: Script for final video due Class 8
 DUE: Screening essay 1
- Class 7 Viewing of first video assignments
Feb 24 Final Cut Pro: Interface, Log and capture, rough cutting
 Video and audio assets in the library
 Reading: DVP Chapter 10
 DUE: First video assignments
 Assignment: Editing exercises due Class 11
- Class 8 Editing: continuity and match cutting, time compression and expansion,
March 3 Editing: montage, long take - Examples of editing from videos and films
 Final Cut Pro: fine cutting, the tool palette, and the trim edit window
 DUE: Scripts for final video
- MARCH 10 – NO CLASS- SPRING BREAK
- Class 9 Final Cut Pro: waveforms and audio editing, print to video
March 17 Soundtrack Pro
 Assignment: Begin shooting final video
 DUE: Screening essay 2
- Class 10 Final Cut Pro: Titles, transitions and rendering
March 24 Final Cut Pro: the motion tab and keyframing
 Final Cut Pro: color correction and filters
- Class 11 Final Cut Pro: Questions and problems
March 31 Open Discussion
 Viewing of editing exercises
 DUE: Editing exercises
- Class 12 **EXAM**
April 7 Export options – Transcoding - Web video - Compressor
- Class 13 DVD creation using DVD Studio Pro
April 14 **DUE:** Screening essay 3
- Class 14 Viewing of final video projects
April 21 **DUE: FINE CUT OF FINAL PROJECT ON MINIDV OR DVD**