

Com 235
Introduction to Video Production
Spring 2015

COMM 135, sec 203

(This section is cross-listed with WSGS)

Class Meets: Mon. 12:35-3:20

Classroom: SOC 015

Office: SOC, 219, WTC

Office Hours: Mon, 11:00-12:00, SOC, 219, WTC

Wed, 3:45-5:00, LSC, Information Commons café, or by appointment

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Course Objectives:

Video Production will train you in the art and craft of small format digital video. No single genre or type of video product is privileged in this course, although this section will explore gender identity issues. You will be exploring documentary, narrative, and experimental genres and will be asked to demonstrate competency in story-telling, camera, editing, sound, lighting, scripting and design work. You will also be asked to integrate theoretical and ethical ideas about the media into the creative context of visual/aural expression. You will use collaborative skills to help train students at Senn high school. By the end of the course you will have a portfolio of short works to take with you in a number of formats.

Course Materials:

Selected articles, available on Sakai

A portable hard drive storage device

Grade Requirements and Course Expectations:

Regular attendance is required. Technology demonstrations will not be repeated. A note from the doctor or infirmary will excuse you for illness. Work must be turned in on time. Speak with me *before* the deadline if you have a conflict. **Always backup a copy of your work in two places—your computer, the LUC drive, the clouds.** Hard drives fail and you will lose all of your work unless you save the program to a backup. Written work must be typed and must be done for this course. Plagiarism results in an “F” for the course.

- Your final grade will be based on the following percentages:

20% Narrative/Experimental Short

25% Technical Exam

20% Senn project

10% In class work

(“Making of” Documentary)

25% Final Project

Assignments:

Video Projects

- a. Narrative short/ Experimental —2-4 minutes
- b. ‘Making of’ Documentary—web-based media projects, 3-5 minutes of video total
- c. Final Project—5-7 minutes; longer projects may be discussed.

Emphasis in these projects is on trying out different story dynamics, developing a strong visual composition style and learning to grasp your creative relationship to the timing and sequencing of motion imagery. (It is more difficult to do a good 3-minute project than a 10-minute one!) You will learn and apply skills, such as storyboarding and script writing, to make your creative ideas concrete. You will complete three assignments that require the creation of material to show to and get feedback from your peers. (At least one of these assignments will incorporate gender issues.) The projects will also demonstrate your acquisition of the technical information of the course. Structural forms will focus on narrative, documentary and experimental. Inspirational starting points might include a childhood object, a newspaper photograph or article, an abandoned street lot, an old portrait in an antique shop, a scrap of graffiti, an unusual sound, an overheard conversation, etc... You will choose a moment, an event, an object or a metaphor to motivate your ideas for your projects. You are expected to turn in a treatment/script and storyboard/lookbook for each project. You are also expected to help your classmates out during production of these assignments.

Final Video Project—5-7 minutes

A written treatment, script and storyboard of the final project are due by week 10. These projects may develop from one of your earlier 2 project assignments, or may be entirely new material. Time frame will be determined by the nature of the project, but clarity of information and quality of technique is emphasized over length.

Presentation and Discussion of Work

Public presentation of your work and group critique is the foundation for most fine arts courses. Your thoughtful participation in this process contributes significantly to your overall performance in the class.

Knowledge of Technical Apparatus

There is a written, comprehensive test comprised of multiple choice and short answer questions on the technical operation of the equipment. The test is given when technical training is complete and will be based on information on Sakai and given in class. Training includes operation of the camera, a tripod, microphones, lights, editing machines, and equipment checkout procedures.

Collaborative Project

We will also have to opportunity to work in groups to train Chicago high school teens on basic video production. This exercise will teach you collaborative skills and will reinforce your introduction to video production.

CALENDAR

Week 1 **January 12th**

Ideas and Images

Introductions

Camcorder, microphones and tripod review

Idea development; Scripts, treatments, lookbooks; Storyboards; Composition, Framing
PPTs on Sakai

Screen: Narrative/experimental shorts

Homework: Create storyboard/lookbook and shooting script for Project 1. May work in pairs.

Week 2 **January 19th**

NO CLASS

Martin Luther King Holiday

Week 3 **January 26th**

Editing Intro

Review storyboard/scripts for Project 1.

3 pt. Lighting; setting up an interview.

Screen: *Delirium*; Vimeo site

Homework: Start shooting narrative/experimental projects

Week 4 **February 2nd**

MINDY FABER visits

Screen: Faber teen films

Homework: TBA; “Documentary and Collaboration: Placing the Camera in the Community”

Week 5 **February 9th**

Post-production

Editing Exercise—cut project 1; more Sound Basics

Screen: *Doc shorts*

Homework: Write Treatment/Lookbook for Senn Documentary Project and study for exam; Read Liz Lerman guidelines for feedback

Week 6 **February 16th**

Technical Exam

Due/Screen: Project 1: Narrative/Experimental film due in class

Technical Exam

Week 7 **February 23rd**

Visit Senn high school

Homework: Treatment/Lookbook for Project 2: Senn Documentary.

Week 8 **March 2nd**

NO CLASS Spring Break

Week 9 **March 9th**

Graphics and Transitions

Due: Treatment or Script & Storyboard or Lookbook for Final Project

Homework: Finish final project treatment or script/storyboard

Week 10 **March 16th**

Distribution/Portfolio

Individual Conferences for final project during week.

Screen: Documentary rough cut/drafts

Homework: Edit documentary; Initiate production plans for final

Week 11 **March 23rd**

Mt at Dig Media Lab. LSC, with Senn high school students

Due: Revised treatment or script/storyboards for final project due.

Homework: Complete fine cut and Quicktime copy for documentary

Week 12 **March 30th**

Due/Screen: Project 2, "Making of" documentary

Homework: Shoot final projects; Help at least one classmate, post on Sakai description of activities.

Week 13 **April 6th**

NO CLASS

Easter holiday

Week 14: **April 13th**

Senn high school screenings; bring Project 2

Week 15: **April 20th**

Screen: Rough cuts of final project

Homework: Complete fine cut and Quicktime copy for final project

Week 16 **April 27th**

Due/Screenings: Final Project Screenings

Week 17 **May 4th**

Any other final or revised work due.