

COM 310: Advanced Media Production

Professor: D. Stokes Piercy

Wake Forest University

Fall 2014

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course delves further into the art and theory of digital filmmaking. You will learn to distinguish various modes of cinema, learn advanced editing techniques and produce a collaborative visual story.

COURSE GOALS

- Utilize professional video and audio technology in a technically competent and creative way.
- Understand cinematic workflow from Preproduction, Production, and Post Production.
- Gain a greater fluency of digital literacy and storytelling in both theory and practice.

MATERIALS

The following items are required:

- (1) SanDisk 32 GB SDHC Memory Card Extreme Pro Class 10
- (2) USB 3.0 hard drive with a minimum storage capacity of 500 GB.
- (3) *The Filmmaker's Eye* by Gustavo Mercado, Focal Press 2013

Magnolia Project Criteria: Visual Storytelling, Sustainability and Environmentalism

This course is part of the Magnolia Project initiative. The Magnolia Project is a collective effort of faculty across the university to strengthen student engagement with environmental issues and sustainability. This collaboration has two graded components:

- 1) Mid-Term Presentation (20 points) Over the course of the semester will we discuss the emergence of sustainability in the film industry practice. Students will research and present various means of sustainable filmmaking practices and movements, such as *The Center For Media and Social Impact* and *The Green Filmmaking Project*.
- 2) Final Project: *You Are Here* (25 points).

Each student will produce a short form documentary film that explores the presence and practice of sustainability and environmentalism at Wake Forest University. There will be a film screening and paneled discussion at the end of the semester.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Project One	=10%
Project Two	=10%
Mid-Term Presentation	=20%
Production Quizzes	=20%
Attendance and Participation	=15%
Final Project	=25%

CALENDAR OF INSTRUCTION

August 27th: Welcome

- Class Introduction, Course Objectives and Policies.
- Selective screenings

September 3rd: Editing

- Equipment Check out procedures and policies
- What is editing? Why does it work?
- Functions of Editing
- Principles of Continuity and Discontinuity

September 10th: ¹ Fundamentals of FCPX

- FCPX Workflow
- Events and Projects defined
- Organizing and Naming Projects
- Optimizing and Trouble-shooting
- Introduction to the interface
- Media Optimization and analysis
 - Class Workshop: Library Lab

September 17th: Film Structure (Quiz 1)

- Elements of Film Structure
- The Production Process
- Collaboration and Pre-visualization
- Documentary, Narrative and Experimental Modes
- Time and Space in Cinema
 - Class Workshop

September 24th: Assignment One Due

- All videos must be exported as a QT Pro Res file onto your hard drive prior to the beginning of class.

¹ Students will need to have an SD card and external hard drive by week 3.

October 1st: Cinematography (Quiz 2)

- How to shoot a sequence
- Exposure, Lenses, Composition
- F-Stops, ISO and Depth of Field
- Coverage, 180 Rule, More coverage

October 8th: Assignment Two Due

- All videos must be exported as a QT Pro Res file unto your hard drive.
- October 15th: Principles of Sound Design
- Dialogue
- Special Effects and Natural Sound, Music

October 22nd: Mid Term Presentation - *Sustainability and Cinema*

- Each group will “pitch” their final documentary project.
- Presentations must include elements of process, research and pre-production

October 29th: FCPX Advanced techniques

- Ratings, Keywords, Metadata • Smart Collections
- Key Framing
- Color Correction
- Titles and Animation

November 5th: The Nature of Narrative

- Story and Script
- A Word or Two on Actors and Directing • POV and Elements of Style

November 12th: Exploring the Action Sequence

- Camera Moments - whip, pan, tilt, dolly, crane
- Blocking for Action
- Directing and lighting the action sequence

November 19th: On Directing

- Camera Blocking
- Working with Actors
- Set Design and lighting

November 24th: Thanksgiving Break

December 3rd: Final Documentary Assembly Edit Due

GETTING HELP

I'm always pleased to answer questions and/or help you produce quality work for this class. *However*, questions need to come at least 48 hours before an assignment is due. I'm also happy to talk to you about general ideas, surviving school, academia in general, careers, or anything else that is on your mind.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Active, thoughtful and prepared participation is an important component of this course. In terms of evaluation, simply showing up to every class meeting earns *at best*, a "C." Contributing to class discussion in a meaningful way; coming to class with considered questions and/or observations; paying attention to media shown in class; offering feedback and suggestions; communicating questions or problems; being actively aware of class assignments and deadlines; all of these components are factored in to the participation grade. Participation, I might emphasize, occurs both inside and outside the classroom. I trust it is obvious that missing a lot of days, appearing disinterested, texting in class, blowing off class work, waiting until the last day to confirm assignments and/or expectations are a few things that will negatively affect a final grade.

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HONOR CODE

All written work submitted in this class must be solely your own product. I expect that you know what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. If you have questions regarding this policy, error on the side of caution and raise them with me prior to turning in an assignment. Cheating, plagiarism, COPYING and any other actions contrary to University standards of behavior will not be tolerated. Students found guilty of such offenses will be given an "F" as a final course grade and appropriate action taken with the University. Seriously.

DISABILITIES STATEMENT

If you have a disability that may require an accommodation for taking this course, then please contact the Learning Assistance Center (336.758.5929) within the first two (2) weeks of the semester. Please feel free to discuss this issue with me in private if you need more information.