

Advanced Production,
Cinematography & Post

MM630

Spring 2013

Los Angeles Mission College
LRC 106/126

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Office Hours: Tues. 11-1pm



Course Description

Footage Acquisition is a fundamental course on developing professional quality video images using HD cameras and small lighting kits, with an emphasis on shooting for flexible editing and compositing. The course structure will include: lectures, camera demos, lighting, microphone techniques, as well as in-class group productions and critiques.

We may have studio visits so our in class schedule is subject to change.

The course will provide experiences in developing skills in the five disciplines: film producing, directing, cinematography, editing, and sound -- Above all else, MM630 is a course in communication, collaboration and story-telling. The focus of the class is to communicate ideas, story-beats, feelings, moods and emotions through the design of visual and aural elements. All approaches to cinema may be

pursed --in addition to narrative fiction-- including non-fiction, imagistic, and experimental.

"You don't understand! I coulda had class. I coulda been a contender. I could've been somebody, instead of a bum, which is what I am."

Course Objectives

- To speak and write effectively in conceptual, technical and aesthetic terms (i.e. verbally, write treatments and storyboards)
- To be able to use equipment effectively in order to clearly communicate a concept or idea
- Know how to work effectively and use the resources available
- Have an understanding of the different modes of video/filmmaking – documentary, narrative and experimental -and their means of production independent vs. industry

FOCUS

Throughout the semester we will focus on the following activities to strengthen our skill set as filmmakers.

Directing/Producing

Directing: Story interpretation and adaptation: developing a comprehensive aesthetic approach to the goal, central idea, and theme of the project; including: story-beats, character arc, directing dialogue and behavior that reveals character; shot lists and shot breakdowns; casting, rehearsals, and working with actors in a fiction piece.

Producing: Team leadership and collaboration; resource allocation and management; development, including script breakdowns, call sheets, production scheduling, casting and locations; guiding the production team through all phases of production; working within the budget; creative problem solving.

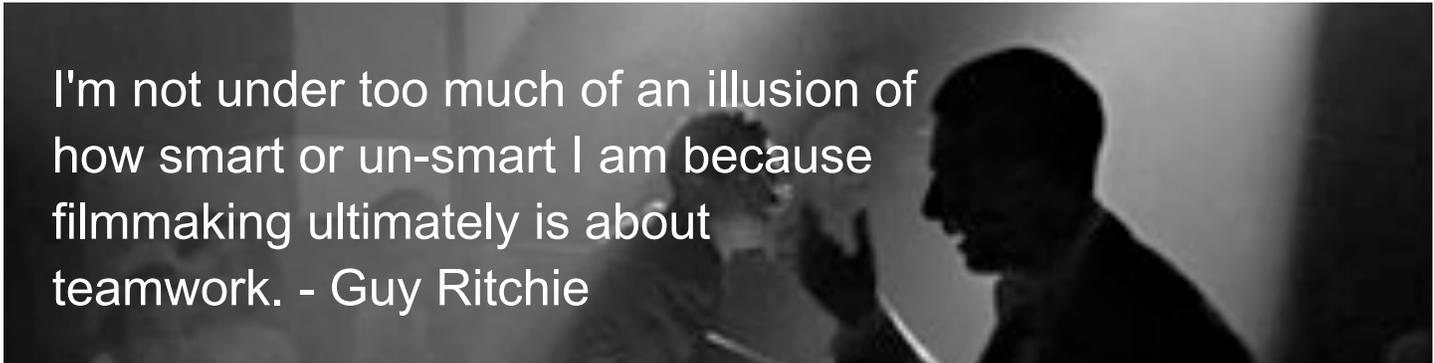
Cinematography /Sound

Camera: Through a series of interior and exterior lighting workshops. Students will work in crew rotation, learning the skills of each position, while they work in teams. Students will be exposed to several different scenarios and techniques to help them tell their stories visually. This discipline is meant to hone the students' skill with lighting, color temperature, composition, lens choice etc.

Sound: Production Sound recording, booming, mixing, and miking techniques; Sound Editing principles and practices for Dialogue, FX, Foley;

Editing

Editing: Working directly with scenes from the students' films, this component will focus on scene and story structure: how are story-beats revealed? How does the audience connect with the story and characters? How are the elements of "surprise" and "reveal" engaged? We will focus on matching visual action, visual fluidity, pacing, transitions, montage, time manipulation and time ellipses



I'm not under too much of an illusion of how smart or un-smart I am because filmmaking ultimately is about teamwork. - Guy Ritchie

Collaboration

Nobody tells the stories by themselves!

At the core of the MM630 experience is collaboration. A functional multi-person team involves open communication, shared responsibility and mutual trust. You will be expected to work as an equal with your partners, resolve disagreements in a constructive manner, and make sure that all of you have a full opportunity to take responsibility in turn for all the roles in this hands-on filmmaking experience — producing, directing, cinematography, sound recording and post editing.



Evaluation and Grades:

Team Production Work	40
Technical Quizzes	20
Cinema Techniques Report (Oral & Written)	20
Class Exercises & Shoots	100
Production Journal	20
Major Projects (2) & Critiques	100
TOTAL POINTS	300

LAB

Your success as a video maker this semester will be dependent upon the amount of time that you dedicate to the course throughout the entire semester. All students must enroll in Multimedia 500, a one-unit course that gives students lab access.

Required Materials:

1. Notebook and Binder to store production info
2. MiniDV tapes (Sony Premium preferred),
3. External fire wire hard drive, Mac Compatible, minimum capacity 200 gigs



HOW YOU WILL BE SUCCESSFUL IN THIS CLASS

Course Time Expectation

As an advanced level course, students should expect to spend 4-10 hours per week of time outside of class working on online material, projects, and exercises assigned for class. The more time you spend working on this material - the more you are going to comprehend and the more successful you may be.

Ask Questions.

This is a technical class, and we will be covering a lot of information in a short time. If you are confused, lost, need clarification, etc, please don't hesitate to ask questions in class. Chance are your fellow students will benefit from the answers AND this will add to your class participation grade! I am also available between classes via email.

In Class Policies

Cell phones must be turned to silent mode during class. If a call must be answered, take the call outside of the classroom. While class is happening, Lab workstations should only be used for class work—However, I realize Web browsing, e-mail, Google Plusing, Facebooking, game play, instant messaging and other non-

class related computer activities are going to happen BUT! these activities should not distract you or neighbors. I will not go over material again if I find the student was not paying attention.

In The Lab

No food or drink are allowed in the computer labs.

Please Bring Headphones to the class! When we are working in edit mode - it makes it so much easier!

Be Courteous and Professional towards others - This is a team effort - On group projects please know that it is a WE effort - and it's OUR film...

ATTENDANCE

Voluptat est ipsum quis est eu pede laoreet elementum lectus

1. Vivamus est ipsum vehicula nec. Attendance and Participation Class attendance is an important part of the course experience. Most of the course content is only available by attending class. You are responsible for obtaining any notes that you missed during an absence, either from a classmate or from the Moodle site (or from SpringPad). Participation in class discussions, labs, and student professionalism are all factored into your classroom grade. Missing a few classes is going to happen - missing classes in a row is going to be difficult for the student to catch up. My lessons are layered so one topic leads to the next. If you must miss a class, please notify me, either by e-mail or in person, prior to class so arrangements can be made.





Being a Student is Life-Long... Things will get better for you if you...

1. Attend class-- Choose to attend all class periods on time and don't leave early. If you are absent on a day try and work with a partner to get caught up. Also, knowledge in any technology based class is extremely cumulative. What you miss one day will continue to hurt you throughout the rest of the course.
2. Pay attention-- Pay attention in class, participate in class discussions, and ask questions.
3. Do all lab/homework-- Do or attempt all homework not for the sake of just doing it, but trying to understand the concepts, learning them in the process. "Practice makes perfect" applies not only to music and sports, but also in learning. Be sure to schedule sufficient time to complete your assigned tasks before the next class period.
4. Get help-- Know how to get help if you need it. Consult with Curtis via

Email or other social media device/app. Look online for further information - THAT MEANS RESEARCH. Come use the LAB - A LOT!

5. Keep up with all work-- Getting behind will "snowball" on you very rapidly. Do your lab practice homework as much as you can- not just when we meet.
6. DO Something everyday-- Don't leave all the work until the weekend. No one can "digest" so much crazy technology all at once, no matter how much time you spend trying. This stuff is best studied in bite-sized, digestible pieces. It is like learning a language- rinse-repeat.
7. If there is text -READ the text(mostly online stuff)!-- Reading about software should be done slowly and carefully... it doesn't read like a novel or a magazine. It is important that you learn the language of technology; you cannot succeed in ANY course without learning to express yourself in that language. Only by reading your text carefully and regularly can you learn it.

8. Get Organized and Learn to Take Good Notes--do I really need to elaborate on this- If so- then you are NOT organized and you are not a good note taker.

9. Find other students to work with. Group work is very productive. You will learn from each other! and share ideas, thoughts, concepts...

10. Strive for understanding not just remote memory. Understanding greatly enhances your ability to comprehend later material. Memory is unreliable, and temporary. Understanding is intense, never lost...and exciting!

What You can expect from Me as a Teacher

1. I am Nice- but "Creatively Blunt"
2. I am actually here for YOU guys- that's right- you heard it right...
3. I like to challenge myself and students to do their best... I see limitations or obstacles that may be in your way... my job is to help you navigate around them.
4. I am willing to fail occasionally - knowing that it will propel me forward - As an Artist you have to trust this- and use it.
5. I will ask you as many questions as you will ask me
6. I like to think of students as "Effective Help Seekers"
7. My job is to steer you toward a purpose... but I need to know what traffic jam of a freeway you are on.

KEY DATES

April 24 - Project 1 is due
May 29 (Final Day) - Project 2 is due

February 14, 2013
Last Day to process add request

February 15, 2013 - February 18, 2013
President's Day (College Closed) Holiday

February 18, 2013
Last day to drop with a refund in person or online

March 08, 2013
Last day to petition for Credit/No-Credit and do a section transfer

March 29, 2013
Deadline to petition for Spring/Summer 2013 Graduation

March 29, 2013 - April 05, 2013
Spring Break (College Closed)

April 01, 2013
Cesar Chavez Day Holiday (College Closed)

May 25, 2013
Classes End

May 27, 2013 - June 01, 2013
FINAL EXAMS

May 27, 2013
Memorial Day Holiday (College Closed)

June 04, 2013
GRADUATION DAY!

Stanley Kubrick

A film is - or should be - more like music than like fiction. It should be a progression of moods and feelings. The theme, what's behind the emotion, the meaning, all that comes later.

NUTS AND BOLTS

COMPUTER APPLICATIONS AND EQUIPMENT: Access to equipment is limited; for this reason, and because of the time-intensive process of video production and editing, you will need to be very organized and conscientious in the planning and management of your time. Projects and clips can be saved on the SHARED drive. However, students should purchase additional removable media for projects and archiving.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES: Digital cameras, lights and microphones will be available to students in Multimedia 630 and 640 for checkout only after students have signed the equipment contract. Please refer to the Equipment Policy handout for details on camera checkout. Students are responsible for all equipment that they check out. Make sure that all equipment is present, complete and in working order BEFORE you check it out or begin editing. All problems or missing parts must be reported prior to using equipment. Damage or loss of equipment during use should be reported immediately. Charge batteries before returning cameras, or set the charger up upon return. Failure to return or maintain equipment impacts your peers significantly. Failure to return equipment on time will result in a fine and possible suspension of privileges. **YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE** for all Equipment you check out.



MM 630 General Course Outline & Schedule

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Wk	Lecture	Demo	Outside Work
1	Intro to Class	Camera Info	Crew Up, Script Select, Start Report
2	Cinematography	Lighting #1	
3	Cinematography & Blocking	Lighting #2 & JIB	
4	Cinematic Motion	JIB & Character Movement	
5	Direction -Working with Actors	Sound Recording#1	
6	Editing Theory #1	Sound Recording#2	
7	Editing Theory #2	Editing	
8	Guest Lecture - Screenwriting	Editing - Script Shooting	
9	Project Critiques	Project Critiques	
10	Documentary Style#1	Interview Shots & VOs	
11	Documentary Style#2	Run & Gun	
12	Changes In Technology	DSLR Shooting	
13	Field Trip	Field Trip	
14	Formats	Editing DSLR	
15	Project Critiques	Project Critiques	
16	Final - Crossfade Prep	Final - Crossfade Prep	



The Producer

The Producer is ultimately responsible for the success of a project. He or she makes sure the project is produced on time, at the highest quality possible, and under budget.

Specifically, the Producer:

- Oversees the entire production process.
- Describes stylistic approach in broad terms, while allowing the Director to control specific creative/artistic aspects of the project.
- Selects and secures talent and crew. (MM630 talent should be secured 3 weeks ahead of production.)
- Selects and secures shooting locations
- Makes a production schedule (covering pre-production, production and post-production).
- Proactively communicates with crew and key personnel.
- Provides a finished script, with defined acts & scenes. May work with or seek input from the Director on this.
- Provides scripts to talent and crew
- Makes sure rehearsals are scheduled.
- Secures all materials, videotapes and props.
- Gets legal clearances (model, location, and license releases)
- Makes sure editor has complete information for titles, graphics, & credits and helps determine stylistic suggestions (music, fonts, colors, etc.)

For each MM630 production, the Producer will submit and be graded on a Project Packet that contains:

- Cover page listing project name and all personnel
- Final script (with clearly defined scenes)
- Cover page listing project name and all personnel
- 1-2 page critique detailing the your experience with the process and your success (or lack thereof). NOTE: This can be in the form of a blog posting.
- Crew evaluation- Describe who contributed the most and made your project a success. Who didn't show up on time, didn't pull their weight, or presented obstacles?
- Talent, location & license releases

The Director

The Director is responsible for coordinating efforts of the production team and talent.

Specifically, the Director:

- Communicates with the Producer regularly to ensure project is progressing properly.
- Analyzes the script and works with the Producer to modify it as needed.
- Determines specific aesthetic/stylistic approach.
- Creates storyboards of all scenes and shot lists tied to specific locations.
- Blocks scenes (camera and talent)
- Creates production / shooting schedules
- Works with the Producer to select shooting locations
- Proactively communicates with crew and talent, working closely with the DP. The Director can delegate responsibility to the Assistant Director and the DP when possible.
- Oversees rehearsals and makes sure talent is prepared
- Helps determine stylistic approach for post-production (music, fonts, colors, etc.)
- Makes sure editor has complete information for titles, graphics, & credits.
- contributed the most and made your project a success. Who didn't show up on time, didn't pull their weight, or presented obstacles?

The Director Of Photography

The DP is responsible for getting the look and capturing the images that the Director has specified.

Specifically, the DP:

- Oversees grips, camera team, and lighting/electrical team.
- Meets with the Director well before production to determine aesthetic wishes and technical requirements.
- Visits sites and shooting locations and create location sketches and floor plans
- Communicates all needs and requirements to the Gaffer well before Production so that he/she may devise lighting plan.
- Oversees the Camera Crew and the Gaffer.
- Works closely with Gaffer and the Director
- Use a light meter and the Zone system to determine lighting and filter needs.
- Arrives early on the set and makes sure camera system is setup and in place.
- During Production, the DP will also assist the Director, keeping track of proper coverage, shooting continuity, screen direction, technical continuity, etc.
- Specify lenses, exposure, film stock, frame rate, shutter angles, filters, camera dynamics, etc.

SUGGESTIONS FOR MAKING BETTER FILMS:

Do's:

- Mostly shoot from eye level or slightly below.
- Always get enough coverage.
- Shoot lots of Close-ups (get plenty of actor's reactions, and cutaways).
- Use a tripod sparingly (to stimulate creative camera angles and moving shots, but see caveat on shaky shots below).
- Emphasize creative sound effects over music.
- Use at least two characters (in appropriate exercises).
- Use good musical scores.
- You may include titles and credits, but keep them brief and simple.
- Stories should take place in more than one location.
- Off campus are better than on-campus locations.
- Production schedules of two or more days usually result in better films.
- Try not to stage your action on a horizontal plane in the center of the shot. Utilize the frame by moving your actors toward and away from the camera.
- Allow your characters to exit the frame rather than panning.
- Start and finish an action in each shot.