

COMM 359 – Advanced Post-Production

SOC 003, Wednesdays 9:20-12:05 Professor Aaron Greer

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Office hours: W 1:00-5:00 p.m. or by appointment

Prerequisites: Intro to Video Production.

Course Objective

This course combines editing theory and practice, aimed at providing students with the technical craft and aesthetic skills required for editing film and video of all genres. During the course students will examine how meaning is created and shaped through the manipulation of sound and image, as well as engage in the creation of short scenes and videos through editing, sound design and motion graphics. At the conclusion of the course students will be able to:

- Edit both narrative and non-fiction video to effectively communicate a story.
- Use color correction, fx and sound design to optimize a video's impact and aesthetics.
- Compress and prepare media for various distribution and exhibition formats.
- Create motion graphics, moving text and basic animation for video projects.
- Design and author navigable editors' reels.

Texts and Readings

Required • *In the Blink of an Eye, 2nd Edition* by Walter Murch

• Articles on Sakai.

Optional • Lynda.com membership.

Equipment and Material Supplies

Required Materials:

Stereo headphones

External hard drive (USB 3.0 or Thunderbolt)

Computer Use:

Please be aware that occasional software bugs, virus presence, human error and/or hardware failure can result in damaged, corrupted or deleted files (including audio, video and graphic files). In addition, to conserve drive space and ensure the smooth operation of the computers, media files cannot be permanently saved on the internal hard-drives of the CPUs in the SOC labs. Consequently, it is your responsibility to back-up your media and project files during and after each use. Loss of files is not an excuse for missed or late assignments.

Grading & Evaluation

Attendance policy: This class meets only once a week for a total of 14 sessions. Consequently, attendance and participation is important and will be recorded and included as part of your final grade. Any more than 2 absences, excused or unexcused, will reduce your participation points and thus your cumulative grade by 2% point per absence.

Late Work: Students are expected to complete all of the assigned projects and readings on time. Late projects will automatically be penalized 1/2 point per weekday (i.e. a project that earned 13/15 points will be reduced to a score of 12/15 points if turned in two days late). No projects will be accepted more than one week after the original due date.

Grading & Evaluation:

Your final grade will be based on your participation in classroom discussions, critiques and exercises, your performance on quizzes and the quality of your editing assignments. The course is not intended to be a competition of technical wizardry, but as a place to develop and express emerging creativity. Emphasis will be placed on completing polished, finished pieces. Consequently, you always have the opportunity to tweak an assignment to improve your grade, but revision are due within a week and are subject to the same point deduction as late assignments (see above).

Your final grade will be calculated using the following formula:

Quizzes: %15 (5% per quiz)
The Narrative Edit : %15
The Color Grade: %10
The Non-Fiction Edit: %20

The Found Footage Film: %20
The Editor's Reel: %15
Attendance & Participation: %5

Assignments

The meat of this course consists of completing the following projects:

- The Narrative Edit- constructing the narrative spine, pacing & POV of a scene.
- The Color Grade- fixing, adjusting and color grading footage.
- The Non-fiction Edit- constructing story, meaning, character, mood from footage.
- The Found Footage Film- creating meaning and story through animation and found footage.
- The Editor's Reel- designing and authoring an editor's reel and portfolio for the web.

Note: graduate students enrolled in the class have additional requirements described on page 4.

Assignment Descriptions

The Narrative Edit

Using the video dailies provided by the instructor, edit a scene so that it has the greatest visual and emotional impact. Think about issues of pacing, perspective or point of view (whose scene is it?), issues of continuity in image and sound, as well as enhancing the mood and meaning through music, transitions, and sound design. Note: although you should add sounds and music, you *cannot* use any images other than the footage provided. Your project will be evaluated based on: the seamlessness of your edit, the overall emotional/visual impact of your edit, your creative use of sound/music/effects, manipulation of pacing and of POV.

Grading Rubric (15 points total)

- Sound Design- use of music, sounds and effects (scale 1-5)
- Narrative Editing - continuity, pacing, transitions and rhythm (scale 1-5)
- Content & Creativity- shaping meaning and mood (scale 1-5)

Color Grading

Using the media provided by the instructor, correct, standardize and manipulate the imagery's color and lighting using Speedgrade. Think about how to indicate changes of time and space, how to impact the film's meaning and mood, how to fix exposure or color balance mistakes, how to make the cuts seamless from a lighting/color perspective, and generally how to improve the overall look and feel of the film via color. Your project will be evaluated based on: the seamlessness and effectiveness of your color correction, as well as the impact and creative use of color on the meaning and mood of the piece.

Grading Rubric (10 points total)

- Correction- shot-to-shot color continuity, color and exposure balance (scale 1-5)
- Creativity and Color- communication of mood, theme, time & space changes (scale 1-5)

Non-fiction Edit (Documentary or Trailer)

Using the video dailies provided by the instructor, edit either a short documentary OR a trailer so that it has the greatest possible impact. Think about issues of pacing, voice and style, creating a sense of character, story and space. You should play with sound, image, titles, fx, and graphics to create the strongest edit. Your video must include subtitles, inter-titles, graphics and/or captions.

Grading Rubric for documentary (20 points total)

- Sound Design & Mix- use of music, sounds and effects and seamlessness of mix (scale 1-5)
- Editing- style, pacing and rhythm (scale 1-5)
- Titles, text & graphics- style, design, impact and readability or graphics and text (scale 1-5)
- Content & Creativity- clarity of narrative, structure and mood (scale 1-5)

* Additional Requirements for Graduate Students. See page 4.

Recycled Cinema

You will select an audio story or song to which you have to add images, animation and sounds to create a short film or music video. Gather archival footage, photographs and other types of images (texts, shapes, etc.) and sounds (where appropriate) to accompany the audio. Use After Effects to animate some of your images and text. Edit your media into a 1-4 minute found footage short or music video. You should attempt to create meaning or mood, inspire emotion and/or suggest ideas through your editing choices. Pay attention to issues of tempo and rhythm, graphic matches or juxtapositions, etc. Your project will be evaluated based on your effective use of titles, effects and transitions, your creative use of juxtapositions and graphic relationships, your selection of images, your ability to create and articulate mood and meaning through the edit, and the relationship of sound to the image.

Grading Rubric (20 points total)

- Editing – sound-image relationships, visual metaphors, pacing and rhythm (scale 1-5)
- Found Media – quality, quantity, variety of media (scale 1-5)
- Motion Graphics – quality, quantity, complexity and impact of fx (scale 1-5)
- Content & Creativity – visual variety, meaning and mood (scale 1-5)

* Additional requirements for graduate students on this assignment. See page 4.

The Editor's Reel

Using the projects you created in class and/or in previous courses, design and author an editor's reel and portfolio website that includes at least 2 pages, 3 assets (distinct videos), and a "sizzle reel" montage. Your portfolio will be evaluated based on its design complexity, navigability and graphic/visual creativity.

Grading Rubric (15 points total)

- Sizzle reel editing – pace, rhythm, visual design, fx (scale 1-5)
- Website – navigability, professionalism, clarity (scale 1-5)
- Professionalism & Impact - overall quality, impact, and creativity of reel/portfolio (scale 1-5)

*****Grad Student Requirements**

Graduate students enrolled in this course will be expected to follow a similar reading and assignment schedule, but will have to fulfill some additional requirements for successful completion of the course. The additional requirements are described below. Note: due to the additional assignment, grad students' final grades will be calculated as a percentage of a possible 120 points earned (vs. 100 for undergraduates)

**** Non-Fiction Edit (Documentary AND Trailer)***

Graduate students are required to do both the trailer and the short documentary OR to create a trailer for their short documentary; in other words, they must complete two video projects. Both projects will be evaluated individually using the rubric described above. The first project is due on week 9 (normal due date) and the second may be submitted week 10.

**** Found Footage***

Same requirements and grading procedure as the aforementioned assignment, except that grad students are required to find their own audio story or music and secure the rights to said material and/or ascertain that the material is in the public domain or otherwise free for them to use.

Course Schedule and Assignment Deadlines

<u>Week 1</u> Jan. 20	Syllabus and schedule review. Adobe Premiere Review: set-up and shortcuts. <i>Desperate Housewives</i> in-class edit.
<u>Week 2</u> Jan. 27	Quiz 1. Intro to narrative edit: pace and “POV.” Premiere: sub-clips and labels. Structural edit <u>workshop group: Kelly, Piper, Abi, Alex</u> . Guest: Paul Galati. Reading due week 2: Murch pp. 1-28 and 57-72 and Katz (Sakai)
<u>Week 3</u> Feb. 3	Premiere: syncing double-system footage; sound design and sound organization; text, titles and compositing. Rough-cut: due mid-class.
<u>Week 4</u> Feb. 10	Due: the narrative edit. EDLs. SpeedGrade: Color correction and scopes. <u>Workshop group: Marian, Julia, Stephanie, Tim.</u>
<u>Week 5</u> Feb. 17	Due: Color corrected/normalized sequence. SpeedGrade continued: color grading and “looks.”
<u>Week 6</u> Feb. 24	Due: color grade. <u>Workshop group: Hannah, Eric, Ben, Christian.</u> Intro to the non-fiction project. Premiere: Multi-cam editing.
<u>Week 7</u> March 2	Quiz 2. Editing non-fiction: montage theory, doc and trailer aesthetics. Reading due week 7: articles on editing documentaries, Pudovkin and trailer aesthetics (see Sakai) and Murch, pp. 29-56.
***** Spring Break *****	
<u>Week 8</u> March 16	NLEs and Photoshop: Subtitles, closed captioning and text on screen. Due: style tests and rough-cuts for non-fiction.
<u>Week 9</u> March 23	Due: Non-Fiction Edit. <u>Workshop: Kelly, Piper, Abi, Alex,</u> Intro to Found Footage project. Finding archival footage, sounds, pictures, etc.
<u>Week 10</u> March 30	Quiz 3. Adobe Encoder: standardizing media formats. Guest: Jarrad Quadir. Intro to After Effects: basic motion graphics and animation. Reading for week 10: Murch pp. 75-146, Best Practice, Archive Verite (Sakai)
<u>Week 11</u> April 6	Due: Found media for Found Footage project. Review found media. More AE: basic tracking, puppet and lighting effects. Exporting from AE.
<u>Week 12</u> April 13	Due: Motion graphics/animation for Found Footage project. Encoder: Preparing video for exhibition, the web and more.
<u>Week 13</u> April 20	Due: Found Footage Project. <u>Workshop: Marian, Julia, Stephanie, Tim.</u> Intro to editor reels, demos and navigable portfolios.

Week 14 **Due: Sizzle Reels/Montages. Workshop: Hannah, Eric, Ben, Christian.**
April 27 Web: best practices for online portfolios.

Final Exam **Due: editing portfolios and final reels. Workshop All Portfolios.**

*** Note: the above schedule is subject to revision as deemed necessary by the instructor. Any significant changes will be announced in class and reflected in an updated schedule posted to Sakai.**