

**USC SCA CTPR 507 PRODUCTION I Fall '08**  
**COURSE DESCRIPTION and OUTLINE (18606)**  
4 units

**Instructors:**

Cinematography: Judy Irola  
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Producing/Directing: Steve Albrezzi  
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Location: RZC 119

SA: Elizabeth Yarwood  
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With faculty guests:  
Producing: Brenda Goodman  
Ideation: Mark Harris  
Editing: Tony Porter  
Sound: Midge Costin  
Sound: Doug Vaughan

**Overview**

Production I (CTPR 507) is about ideas and your ability to communicate effectively through the language of cinema. It combines introductions to the five major disciplines within the cinematic arts: producing, directing, editing, cinematography, and sound with guided opportunities to create individual and small group projects. Students will make two short HD projects as part of an exploration of visual storytelling. The core focus of the class is to communicate ideas, feelings, moods and emotions through the design of visual and aural environments. All approaches to cinema will be introduced including non-fiction, abstract, and experimental --as well as narrative fiction.

CTPR 507 is the beginning of an educational process which will strengthen your instincts as a filmmaker, develop strong critical faculties, help clarify themes which will define your art and develop the skills necessary to express those themes effectively through moving pictures.

## **COURSE GOALS:**

- Investigate the underlying aesthetic structures of cinema.
- Master the basic elements of character and story.
- Learn how to tell a story effectively through the use of sound and image.
- Explore a range of forms and genres—documentary, narrative, personal essay, poetic.
- Deliver and receive cogent and constructive critiques of works in progress and completed works.
- Become aware of the cultural impact of cinema.
- Establish ethical standards for filmmaking and critiquing.
- Develop fundamental skills in the areas of producing, directing, cinematography, editing, and sound design.
- Highlight the fundamental relationship between form and content.

## **CTPR 507 will cover introductions to these skill-sets:**

**Producing:** the art and craft of producing from pitch to delivery; the role of producer, assistant director and unit production manager. Including: script breakdown, location and scheduling concerns

**Directing:** developing a comprehensive aesthetic approach to the goal, central idea, and theme of a project; including: story beats, character arc, and behavior that reveals character

**Cinematography:** five weeks of 16mm in-class exercises that will cover: composition, use of space, all aspects of production design (including wardrobe, etc.), color temperature, deep focus, shallow focus, hard and soft light, available light, key, fill, back-light and negative fill. Instruction in how to light for day interior, night interior, sunset (exterior light), and night exterior; four weeks introducing Sony HD EX Camera.

**Editing:** exercise in editing a basic 2-character dialogue scene; story shaping, paper edits, continuity editing; parallel, montage and non-linear editing; media management

**Sound:** Concepts of sound design and using sound as a creative element in cinematic storytelling. Introduction to production sound recording, sound editing, use of music and effects, and sound mixing.

## **PROJECTS:**

Students will complete two, five minute max projects in HD:

### **PROJECT 1:**

1. one weekend shooting
2. one week editing

### **Suggestions:**

Narrative:

1. Beat change within a scene
2. Behavior which reveals character
3. Give a character a dilemma; resolve it

Documentary:

1. Portrait of a person
2. Capture a process
3. Explore the complexity and nuance of a place

Experimental:

1. Use montage to express an emotion or mood
2. Explore the qualities of light and darkness
3. Explore shape, line, time and/or space

### **PROJECT 2:**

Student Choice Project (must be crewed)

use location sync-sound; five minutes max

- a. emphasis on story structure; building tension, character development; optional production recording/dialogue
- b. four weeks of production (begins week 10)
- c. faculty supervise production from pre-prod through dailies, cuts, and sound design

## **GRADES:**

CTPR is graded on a Credit/Non-Credit basis. According to University Standards achieve a minimum letter grade of B in order to receive Credit. Each student must complete both films and all exercises in order to receive a grade of credit. Grades will be based on both subjective and objective judgments; essentially we look for intelligence, clarity, craftsmanship and emotional depth indicative of a growing mastery of the art form. Success is necessarily predicated on an energetic and ongoing interaction between all members of the class. So, late projects, tardiness and unexcused absences will have a negative impact on your grade. Late projects will be docked 10 percent per day. If you must miss class, call your instructor or SA as soon as possible and always before class begins.

Grading Weights:

Producing.....	10
Directing.....	10
Cinematography.....	15
Editing.....	10
Sound.....	10
Project 1.....	15
Project 2.....	20
Participation.....	10

**MID-SEMESTER CONFERENCES: [between weeks 8-12]**

These conferences allow you to get a sense of your overall progress, areas for improvement and an estimated grade at mid-point in the semester. If you are in danger of failing, you will be alerted in writing and in a conference; we will outline together what steps must be taken in order for you to pass. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of USC's add/drop and withdrawal deadlines.

**SAFETY:**

THE PERSONAL SAFETY OF YOURSELVES, YOUR CAST AND CREW MEMBERS IS A VITAL CONSIDERATION AS YOU PLAN AND SHOOT YOUR PROJECTS. PLEASE CHECK WITH YOUR INSTRUCTORS BEFORE SHOOTING IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS. READ THE SAFETY HANDOUT AND UNDERSTAND THE CONTENTS. FOOTAGE SHOT UNDER UNSAFE CONDITIONS WILL BE WITHHELD FROM THE PROJECT; STUDENTS PRIVILEGES MAY BE SUSPENDED: AND GRADES LOWERED. BE SURE TO DISCUSS ALL HAZARDOUS SHOOTING CONDITIONS LISTED ON THE HSC HANDOUT WITH YOUR INSTRUCTORS.

PRODUCTION SAFETY GUIDELINES, The Student Handbook, and the Pre-Production Hazardous Shooting Form and other valuable documents ARE available at: <https://scacommunity.usc.edu/index.cfm>

Faculty Sign-Off sheets are required for all Hazardous shooting conditions prior to production, including shoots with minors and studio teachers.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:**

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or the TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301, and is open 8:30am-5:00pm Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

## **COPYRIGHT**

Because the School provides equipment and facilities, the copyright to all 507 films resides with the University. However, the student retains ownership of the underlying intellectual property rights to their work. The SCA provides a community portal on the internet so that 507 students may share their work. The complete copyright agreement can be viewed at: [https://scacommunity.usc.edu/resources/physical\\_production/pdf/PP-copyrightAgreement.pdf](https://scacommunity.usc.edu/resources/physical_production/pdf/PP-copyrightAgreement.pdf)

## **COURSE OUTLINE:**

### **Week 1**

8/26 -- Cinematography, 16mm (1 of 5) RZC 108

Philosophy of course; assignments; facilities; safety

Basics: camera reports, slates, ditty bags, cameras, lenses, filters, cleaning and maintaining equipment, set procedure, diopter (both kinds), ground glass, framing, hand-holding, loading cameras, using light meters.

Review: What is a Tstop? an aperture? What is depth of field and what does it mean visually? How do you control it? 6 camera packages in class

8/28— Brenda Goodman: Producing (1 of 2) RZC119

Who does what: the roles, responsibilities and functions of the creative collaborators. Basic production techniques: script breakdown, identifying shooting sequences, location concerns, production meetings and scheduling methods

### **Week 2**

9/2 - Cinematography, 16mm (2 of 5) RZC108

Light meters, camera packages and ditty bags, how to clean and pack a lens, filmstocks and ASA/ISO/EIs, how to read ISO label on can, exposing for interiors, exteriors, loading and cleaning cameras, electricity, lights, flags, C-stands, lighting demo, check gate, 85s & NDs. ASSIGN CREW POSITIONS

9/4 — Brenda Goodman: Producing (2 of 2) RZC 119

The basics of a pitch, analysis of material for costs and how to maintain story, focus, intent, clarity, organization and basic set workflow.

### **Week 3**

9/9 — Cinematography, 16mm (3 of 5) RZC 108

Interior lighting workshop, Stage electricity checkout, C-stands, flags, grip Equipment, crew

9/11— Tony Porter: Editing (1 of 3) RZC 119

Editing two-character dialogue scene with supplied material; aesthetic editing instruction, using examples from professional film and television, and previous student films. Concepts of character and story shaping, shot selection

and sizes, angles, matching action, the 180-degree line, and character blocking; students will create a paper cut and begin editing  
Homework – The students will be responsible for editing and outputting a final version of the supplied scene.

#### **Week 4**

9/16 —Cinematography, 16mm (4 of 5) RZC 108  
Interior lighting workshop

9/18 — Tony Porter: Editing (2 of 3) RZC 119  
“Lean Forward Moment,” Rule of 3’s, Scene transitions –match cutting, dissolves, fades, wipes; L-cuts, editing on movement, “popping in” or “popping back;” review students’ cuts of their scenes. Aesthetic concepts, such as editing for character, will be reinforced. Editing room concepts, such as media management naming conventions, proper output strategies; students begin work on 2<sup>nd</sup> scene; crossing the line, poor performances, mismatches; instructor will demonstrate alternatives

#### **Week 5**

9/23 —Cinematography, 16mm (5 of 5) RZC 108  
Interior lighting workshop

9/25— Tony Porter: Editing (3 of 3) RZC 119  
Filmic editing styles will be presented using existing film clips: fragmented editing, parallel editing, non-linear storytelling, pacing, montage, use of music, jump cutting; review students’ edited scenes; import and demonstrate the use of sound and music

#### **Week 6**

9/30 —Cinematography, HD (1 of 4) RZC 108  
Intro to HD EX Cameras: body, lens, menu settings, SxS cards, handling & care of camera , use of eyepiece vs. LCD, focusing diopter

10/2 -- Project One pitches – Steve Albrezzi/Mark Harris RZC 119  
a. Producing: Producing Central idea - story - scope and demands and objective of project  
b. Directing: central idea, goals, aesthetic  
Assignment: Project 1, Group A (6) shoots

**Week 7** –Due: Project 1: Group A (6) shoots

10/7 --Cinematography, HD (2 of 4) RZC 108  
Color temperature, production design, HD EX cameras, controlling exteriors in HD

10/9—MIDGE COSTIN: Sound editing and mixing in Avid: editing backgrounds, effects, production; mixing in AVID, AudioSuite tools; RZC 119

**Week 8**—Due: Project 1: Group B (6) shoots; Group A (6) Edits; RZC 119

10/14--Cinematography, HD EX (3 of 4) RZC 108

HD taught with production sound recordist, DOUG VAUGHN, principles and techniques of sound recording kits, basic concepts of using mics, working on set with a boom, controlling location factors AND audio settings on camera

10/16 —Project 1: Screen Group A(6) RZC 119

**Week 9**--Due: Project 1: Group C (6) shoots; Group B (6) Edits

10/21—Cinematography, HD EX (4 of 4) RZC 108

HD shot at Vagabond with sound teacher, DOUG VAUGN

10/23—Project 1: Screen Group B (6) RZC 119

**Week 10**—Due: Project 1: Group C (6) Edits

10/28 -- Project 2: Pre-Prod Meetings with faculty; production design materials for second projects RZC 119

10/30 —Project1: Screen Group C (6) RZC 119

**Week 11**

11/4—Project 2: Due: Group A shoots; Screen Dailies RZC 119

11/6—Project 2: Group B Pre-Prod Meetings RZC 119

**Week 12**

11/11—Project 2: Screen Group A cuts RZC 119

11/13—Project 2: Screen Group B Dailies RZC 119

11/13\* BEGIN CLASS 2-5pm —Project 2:Group C Pre-Prod Meetings RZC 119

**Week 13**

11/18—Project 2: Screen Group A final cuts RZC 119

11/20-- Project 2: Screen Group B Cuts RZC 119

11/20 (2-6)—Project 2: Group C Dailies RZC 119

**Week 14**

11/25—MIDGE COSTIN: Dialogue Editing: Students will learn how to clean up and organize production tracks to make them mixable. Basic techniques will be covered for editing dialogue, ADR, Production Fx, as well as creating fill for handles, use of alternative takes, and how to use Audiosuite tools to make production tracks useable. RZC 119

11/25 (2-6) —Project 2: Screen Group B Final Cuts RZC 119

\*\*\*\*\* Project 2: Screen Group C Cuts RZC 119

**Week 15**

\*\*\*\*\*12/2—TBD RZC 119

12/4-- View re-edits projects A/B Optional RZC 119

12/4 (2-6)—Project 2: Screen Group C Final Cuts RZC 119

\*Production Majors only

