

**EDITING SYLLABUS CTPR 335 (18499) FALL 2014****Instructor: Michael Economou****(818) 766-9900 home (818) 516-9663 cell****me99@roadrunner.com*****Tuesdays 7-10 pm, Room 363,*****SA : Yuske Fukada****(213) 618-6060****yfukada@usc.edu****YOU ARE REQUIRED TO READ THE SYLLABUS IN ITS ENTIRETY****COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

SCA 335 is an introduction to the art of Film Editing. The director gives the editor hours and hours of film and says "O.K., Bud, it's your turn now. Show all the dramatic values in the film, and give it pace, rhythm, texture and emotional continuity" - in other words, the extraction of what is essential. Which is exactly what editing is about.

The goal of the class is to familiarize the students with all aspects of editing and how they affect a film. It will deal with the technical, conceptual and aesthetic principles associated with film editing. Clips from well-known films will show the practical application of theory and, often, a scene from the original script will be shown for the purpose of comparing it to how editing changed it for the better in the final version of the movie. This will be one of the many examples of the unique contribution of editing as to how it can affect the structure, dramatic build of a scene, enrich character, manipulate time, visual dynamics and the effect of rhythm and pacing on the entire film.

Because of the influence of editing on the whole film making process, a thorough understanding of its principles is considered extremely valuable, especially for students who are also interested in screenplay writing or directing, and can also prepare them for advanced editing classes, if they are so inclined.

## CLASS FORMAT

335 is also a "hands-on" course that provides the students with a practical application of theory, encouraging them to develop a further appreciation for the art of film editing, as well as the opportunity to experiment. You will be assigned hands-on editing exercises from unedited material which will put you in the driver's seat to make your own editing decisions, just like a professional editor does. For the first two editing assignments **you will be working in pairs**, which promotes a climate of creative collaboration, a must in film making. For your last editing assignment - which will be part of your finals - **you will be the sole editor**.

NOTE: You will be required to purchase your own hard drive. Since you will be working in pairs, it makes sense to split the cost with a classmate. Here is the link regarding your hard drive choices: <https://scacommunity.usc.edu/index.cfm>

You will edit on the AVID Media Composer digital editing system. There will be appropriate tutorials to familiarize you with the system, plus **free** additional supplemental sources such as [www.usc.edu/its/Lynda](http://www.usc.edu/its/Lynda), and others. Your edited work will be presented in class via quick time file on a memory stick. Be sure your cut has the following format in front of the sequence: 2 second of black, 3 second I.D. card, and 2 second of black. At the end of the cut should be 3 seconds of black.

**All editing or written assignments are due on deadline.**

You are expected to participate actively in class, During all phases of the course I encourage questions and comments, presenting your own view point. Make yourself heard, especially if you don't understand or disagree with something I said. Nothing is more stimulating than a challenge. It makes for a livelier, more productive class. This attitude, energy and "connection" with the class will influence your overall grade. Feel free to stay after class if the complexity of an issue being examined at the time requires further discussion. This has happened a number of times in previous semesters and I will be glad to do so again.

## SCENE ANALYSIS ASSIGNMENT

This is not a critical-studies type of analysis. From a motion picture that has impressed you, you will select a scene, and try to analyze it aesthetically. You will then show it to the class and present the reasons for your choice, why you chose that scene. Obviously, there was something in it that appealed to you, created a certain emotion in you. The scene should be analyzed mostly - but not exclusively - from its editing point of view and contribution.

You can use various media sources for the class presentation of this assignment (DVDs, U Tube, etc.) The sequence should be no longer than 5 minutes, and you will have 5 minutes to present it and explain your choice. Another purpose of this exercise is to learn to express your creative thoughts in a precise and, also, brief way.

NOTE: This assignment will be given later in the semester after you had sufficient time to become familiar with editing, as well as the work of the important creative contributors to the film, such as the writer, director, actors, etc., all of whom effect the editor's decisions.

it is a one-time-only assignment. NO written report will be required.

## CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PROTOCOL

Students are expected to attend class regularly and be punctual. **Class starts promptly at 7:00 pm.** If you are habitually tardy your grade will be affected. An absence can be excused only due to an emergency or medical documentation. There will be no use of any cell phone functions in class. Non-observance of the above will definitely affect your grade. If your laptop is open but is not used for taking notes, you will not be allowed to bring your laptop to class for the rest of the semester.

## INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS WITH INSTRUCTOR

Arrangements can be made with the instructor for individual meetings either by phone or in person, preferably on the day of the class..

## EDITING ASSIGNMENTS:

### **Editing Assignment #1:**

*This being your first editing exercise, it requires more or less simple editing techniques.*

### **Editing Assignment #2:**

*More creative editing is required for this highly emotional and tense scene.*

### **Editing Assignment #3:**

*An entertaining action sequence that requires split-second timing and appropriate use of various sound effects.*

### **Editing Assignment #4:**

*You will design your own personal “**Title Card**” which is due with your last project (Assignment #3) at semester's end. The card should be superimposed over any shot of that editing assignment.*

**THERE WILL BE A MIDTERM AND A FINAL EXAM,** each one consisting of an editing assignment, as well as a written exam.

## REQUIRED READING:

*On Film Editing*, Edward Dmytryk, Focal Press, Boston/London

## HELPFUL READING:

*The Film Editing Room Handbook*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, Norman Hollyn, Lone Eagle Publishing, Beverly Hills

*In the Blink of an Eye*, Walter Murch, Silman-James Press

## GRADING

<i>Editing Assignment #1 - BOSTON LEGAL</i>	<i>NO GRADE</i>
<i>Editing Assignment # 2 - ROSEWELL</i>	<i>( part of mid terms )</i>
<i>Editing Assignment # 4 - YOUNG INDY</i>	<i>(part of finals)</i>
<i>Scene Analysis</i>	<i>100 points</i>
<i>Mid-term exam</i>	<i>100 points</i>
<i>Final exam EDITING</i>	<i>100 points</i>
<i>" " WRITTEN</i>	<i>100 points</i>
<i>Making a title</i>	<i>50 points</i>
<i>Attitude, energy and "connectivity" to class</i>	<i>50 points</i>
<i>Total of</i>	<i>500 points*</i>

*\*Attendance: Each unexcused absence will be minus 10 points.*

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The School of Cinema-Television expects the highest standards of excellence and ethics from all of you. It is particularly important that you avoid plagiarism, cheating on our quiz, or submitting any work that was not done by you or your partner. Violations of this policy will result in a failing grade and be reported to the Office of Student Conduct. If you have any questions or doubts about these policies, consult "Scampus" and/or confer with your SA or me.

**NOTE: The material we use in class is COPYRIGHTED. You are not allowed to post any of your class exercises anywhere on the internet!!!**

## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. Please be sure that the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30am to 5pm, Monday through Friday. Their phone number is 213/740-0776.

## RULES FOR USING SCA COMPUTER LABS

- 1) No food, drinks (including bottled water), gum, or skateboards in the labs, Edit or Sound Edit Suites. Violation of this rule will result in suspension of Lab or Edit Room privileges. Locker area is available for food and drink storage.*
- 2) You must sign in at Front Desk with your Student ID and use station assigned. Any change must be done through Front Desk.*
- 3) If you are having technical problems with your workstation, contact a Tech through the Front Desk or Help Desk.*
- 4) Closing time is strictly enforced. Techs will give warnings when to begin saving your project. Please do not argue with them.*
- 5) Lab Hours and Supported Hard Drive documents can be found at the Front Desk, Help Desk, and SCA Community.*
- 6) Headphones with 1/4 inch adapters are required in order to work at a workstation. SCA does not supply headphones or adapters.*
- 7) Users may be bumped after their station has been vacant for a period of 30 minutes.*
- 8) For locker checkout, fill out locker form in B144. Lock must be approved before locker is assigned.*
- 9) SCA Help Documents can be found through SCA Community*
- 10) Please handle all equipment and computers professionally.*

## CLASS SCHEDULE

### WEEK 1 AUG 26

- A short introduction to film editing.
- 1st LAB AVID TUTORIAL

### WEEK 2 SEP 2

- 2nd LAB AVID TUTORIAL

### WEEK 3 SEP 9

- The Frame. The Cut & the Million \$\$\$ Question
- Why is editing so important.
- The creative film collaborators, plus something uniquely astonishing about film editing.
- How the editor thinks: the theory behind editing decisions and the various considerations.
- Editing's power to manipulate time .
- FILM CLIPS illustrating the above.
- **Assign 1st editing assignment: *BOSTON LEGAL***, plus discussing assignment
- NOTE: There is no credit for the *Boston Legal* editing exercise.

### WEEK 4 SEPT 16

- 1st CUT *BOSTON*.** Watch and critique student cuts.
- Editing styles and their functions in various films.
- FILM CLIPS illustrating the above.

### WEEK 5 SEPT 23

- 2nd CUT *BOSTON*.** Watch and critique student cuts.
- EDITING DIALOGUE:
  - Before you make your first edit.
  - Recognizing and "dealing" with the actor's performance.
  - Style, substance, necessity.

FILM CLIP illustrating the above.

- TIME MANIPULATION and its various forms.
- Assign VIEWING ONLY 2nd editing exercise: "**ROSEWELL**"

#### WEEK 6 SEP 30

- An examination of the symbiotic relationship between editing and screenplay writing.
- Empathy and psychological realism.
- How the story dictates the style of editing.
- FILM CLIPS illustrating the above.
- **Assign "ROSEWELL"**, plus discussing the assignment.

#### WEEK 7 OCT 7

REMINDER: NEXT WEEK IS MIDTERMS consisting of the 2nd cut *ROSEWELL*, plus one-page double-spaced paper on "What I've learned so far" to be handed in class **(not emailed)**.

- 1ST CUT ROSEWELL.** Watch, critique student cuts .
- Reminder: SCENE ANALYSIS assignments start in two weeks.
- @ LAB : SOUND EFFECTS

#### WEEK 8 OCT 14 **MIDTERM EXAMS** on :

##### **1) 2nd CUT ROSEWELL**

##### **2) One-page paper** on "What I've learned so far" to be handed in class **(hard copy - not emailed)**.

- Going crazy knowing you cut a scene quite well, yet it doesn't work.
- Resolving script and flow problems in the movie through editing - or why the director took his editor to a very expensive lunch.
- Comparing the original scripted scene of a well-known film to the way that scene was greatly improved in the movie through time manipulation.



- FILM CLIP illustrating the above.
- Scene Analysis assignments.

### WEEK 9 OCT 21

- 1st SC. ANALYSIS presentations.
- Some reflections on *ROSEWELL*.
- The judicious use of close-ups.
- FILM CLIP illustrating the above.
- Another example of resolving script and flow problems in the movie through time manipulation.
- FILM CLIP illustrating the above.
- @ LAB: DISSOLVES, TITLE

### WEEK 10 OCT 28

- 2nd SC. ANALYSIS presentations.
- MONTAGE: the amazing story-telling concept.
- FILM CLIPS illustrating the above.

### WEEK 11 NOV 4

- 3rd SC. ANALYSIS presentations.
- The roadmap of POST PRODUCTION.
- What constitutes "energy" in a film.
- FILM CLIPS illustrating the above.

### WEEK 12 NOV 11

- 4th (LAST ) SC. ANALYSIS presentations.
- The daunting intricacies of editing courtroom scenes.
- FILM CLIP illustrating the above.
- Screening the "**YOUNG INDY**" dailies (your finals editing assignment)

WEEK 13 NOV 18

- Some unique thoughts and views on film editing.
- Analyzing certain clips from iconic films, samples of excellent collaboration between writing, directing and editing.

WEEK 14 NOV 25

- Screening an extraordinary film whose entire structure is based on editing concepts.

WEEK 15 DEC 2 LAST WEEK OF CLASSES

- A review of what we have learned.
- A delightful, informative documentary about the early days of film making in Hollywood.

DEC 5-9 STUDY WEEKWEEK 16 DEC 16 FINALS

- 1) YOUNG INDY (an individual editing assignment, not in pairs)
- 2) TITLE (an individual assignment, not in pairs)
- 3) WRITTEN EXAM (on what was taught in class during th semester)

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