

USC School of Cinematic Arts
CTPR 450, Production and Post-Production Practice
Developing Short Film Projects and Scripts
(for CTPR480 Spring 2015)
Fall 2014, Section 18548

Prerequisite: CTPR 310 Intermediate Production

Corequisite: One of the following practicums:

CTPR 421 Practicum in Editing

CTPR 424 Practicum in Cinematography

CTPR 438 Practicum in Producing

CTPR 440 Practicum in Sound

CTPR 465 Practicum in Production Design and Visual Effects

2 Units

- Open to Cinematic Arts Film and Television Production majors only -

Class Time: Tuesdays 9:00AM-11:50AM weekly, optional afternoon production discipline breakouts Tuesdays 1:00PM-4:50PM

Location: SCA112, afternoon sessions per instructors

Instructor:

Name: Professor Michael Peyser

Office: SCA 436

Office Hours: Tuesdays 4:50PM-6:00PM

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Student Assistant:

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Course Description:

CTPR 450 is a lecture and hands-on production skills course for Cinematic Arts Film and Television Production majors. Through lectures and working on advanced SCA projects (CTPR 480) students in CTPR 450 will be introduced to various assistant on-set production or post-production roles and skills, in the departments of producing, cinematography, art direction, sound and editorial.

Students will indicate which discipline they prefer to train in, with the goal of achieving experience that will enable them, at a later date, to fill a key position on an advanced SCA undergraduate project, in a department of their choosing.

Class Overview:

Students will learn both the roles of cinema production and the skills required for those roles through lectures and hands-on participation in the making of one original twelve-minute narrative, documentary, experimental, or television production.

Students in CTPR 450 meet as a group once a week. Students are also required to participate in the weekend shooting or editing days of their assigned production, depending on which role they are filling on the production. Weekend work schedules for assistants will be shorter those of the key crewmembers they are assisting on advanced projects.

Students registered in 450 will have separate breakout lectures, and presentations of ideas for films for the Spring 2015 480 pool of projects. They will read quality short scripts, watch quality short films, and discuss the audience and value of short film projects and platforms for presentation. Students will present project ideas in summary short form, then in full draft form before they submit ideas to the selection pool at the end of the 9th week of the semester. A description of the selection process for scripts, directors, producers, and key crew will be determined and published in advance of the selection process. Students are not required to submit scripts of their own, but may develop with writers within the class, or any of the undergraduate SCA student body. (Please note: story and script collaborators will not necessarily be eligible to formally enroll in the next term's 480. They would require the same matriculation of courses that are required to be eligible to be director, producer, or key crew.)

The final presentation pool for the Spring 2015 480 will generate up to six selected projects for production. It is anticipated that at least three of the projects will be narrative films (dramatic or comedic), one project will be in the form of a webseries pilot, one project will be a film focused on visuals and/or performance with minimal dialogue, and one project may be a form of documentary. Proposals for all these formats will be discussed and considered.

An informational meeting regarding CTPR 450 will be held for all CTPR 310 students in Week 13 of the semester. Once a student secures a position on a project, he or she will qualify for D Clearance for CTPR 450 for the following semester. Information regarding the selection process and deadlines will be available on the SCA Community Website: <https://scacommunity.usc.edu/login/login.cfm?returnURL=%2Findex%2Ecfm%3FCFID%3D1421415%26CFTOKEN%3D69740099>

Class Goals:

- To familiarize students with the roles and skills necessary for professional cinema production and post-production.
- To teach students supporting roles in at least one production or post-production department involved cinema production.
- To offer students the opportunity to learn and experience one or more of the interlocking esthetic and craft processes of building a unified narrative, documentary, experimental, or television production.
- To engage in the on-going dynamics of creative collaboration, specifically between the on-set activities of the production and the relationship with post-production departments.
- To provide an intensive exposure to the development and making of a narrative, documentary, experimental, or television production in all its aspects.

Schedule

An integrated schedule of Tuesday morning 450 and 480 sessions will be circulated in the week prior to the beginning of classes.

Course Requirements/Grading Criteria:

In addition to attending the weekly class and required weekend crew assignments, students will keep a weekly production journal describing in detail the work they have performed on-set or in editorial during the previous week.

Each week, students will turn in multiple copies (both printed and digital file) to the instructor and SA of any paperwork they have produced the previous week for the production. These may include, but are not limited to: call sheets, day-by-day reports, storyboards, shot lists, script notes, screen grabs of bins, sound spotting notes, sound cue sheets, etc.

Students will be given a final exam crafted to reveal his/her understanding of the discipline of the department in which he or she worked.

Final Grades:

Class Participation	10%
Meeting Deadlines (including story and script development)	20%
Timely delivery of Journals	10%
Weekly Paperwork	30%

Satisfactory progress in this course will be based on each student's effort, attitude and quality of work in fulfilling the course agenda of discussions, and on-set production & post-production skills.

Students' attendance, commitment, participation, and ability to work with others will also figure significantly in their grades. The faculty will further note students' ability to meet deadlines, act professionally, respect people and property, and arrive in class on-time and ready to work.

Attendance is required during all classes and assigned shoot or edit days. You must inform your SA and the lead instructor of an absence BEFORE you miss a class or a shoot.

The only acceptable excuses for taking an incomplete in the course are personal illness or a family emergency. Students must inform their instructors and present verifiable evidence in order to take an incomplete before final grades are due. An incomplete may only be assigned after the Week 12 withdrawal deadline.

Every unexcused absence will reduce your grade by 1/2 grade point – i.e. from A to A-; two tardy arrivals are equivalent to one absence. The SA at the beginning of class every week will take attendance.

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 one of the faculty (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.

Statement on Academic Integrity

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. *Scampus*, the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A: <http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/>. Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/>.

Reading:

Materials relating to production and post-production skills will be circulated by instructors. Materials for reading in the script and story development process will be provided online by the lead SA.

Although there are no required textbooks for the course, the following are recommended to supplement the students' hands-on learning experience:

Shooting To Kill: Christine Vachon & David Edelstein, Quill paperback, 2002

Let the Credits Roll: Interviews with Film Crew: Barbara Baker, McFarland & Company 2003

Masters of Light: Conversations with Contemporary Cinematographers: Dennis Schaefer, Larry Salvato, University of California Press, 1984

Voice and Vision: A Creative Approach to Narrative Film & DV Production, Hurbis-Cherrier, Focal Press, 2007

In the Blink of an Eye: A Perspective on Film Editing, Walter Murch, 2nd edition, 2001