

CTPR 508 PRODUCTION II MASTER SYLLABUS
Fall 2014
Section 18621 (Blue)

FACULTY:

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COURSE OVERVIEW

Production II (CTPR 508) is a course in beginning film production skills while working in a three-person crew — or “trio.” The course will provide experiences in developing skills in the five disciplines: film producing, directing, cinematography, editing, and sound — including sound

recording, sound editing, and sound design. Above all else, 508 is a course in communication and collaboration.

Students will work in trios to make three 6-minute HD projects as they continue to develop skills in visual and aural storytelling. 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 pursued — in addition to narrative fiction — including non-fiction, imagistic, and experimental.

Fiction film scripts must be 5 pages maximum. Students must make their best efforts to communicate ideas with images and sound, rather than only dialogue. Non-fiction films must be prepared with a treatment, shot list, and interview questions (if relevant to film's approach). Observational non-fiction films must be prepared with a statement of intent, locations, and potential on-camera subjects. Experimental and imagistic films must have statements of intent and storyboards.

Trios are formed randomly by the department and are assigned at the end of the previous CTPR 507 semester. Students will work in these specific roles on each project:

1. Director, Sound Designer, Sound Editor
2. Producer, Sound Recordist, Picture Editor
3. Cinematographer, Production Designer

Students will work in all three of the above roles during the semester, rotating project-to-project.

Fiction projects note: it is not necessary to write an original script for 508, you may adapt (or have someone else adapt) a pre-existing work, as long as you obtain the rights. However, it is required that you function in all of the roles listed in the previous paragraph. Again, students outside of your trio may not be engaged to function in any of those roles.

CTPR 508 will provide these skill-sets:

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.

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.

Cinematography: 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. This component will ultimately focus on visual storytelling.

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; fulfilling the producer's and director's vision; collaboration among the filmmaking team will be foremost.

Sound: Creative use of sound in the sound design; production sound recording, booming, mixing, and miking techniques; sound editing principles and practices for dialogue, fx, foley; programming foley and limited ADR, if necessary; working with a composer to develop an effective soundtrack; directing the mix; and all around collaboration with the filmmaking team.

Production Design: Collaborating with the Director and Producer, the Cinematographer will also act as the Production Designer, responsible for the overall visual concept of the film including sets, locations, graphics, props, lighting, costumes, etc. Crew from outside the trio may work in the art department.

COLLABORATION

At the core of the 508 experience is collaboration. A functional three-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 three of you have a full opportunity to take responsibility in turn for all the roles in this hands-on filmmaking experience - producing, directing, cinematography, production design, sound recording, picture editing, sound design and sound editing. If you feel this is not happening in your trio, talk to your partners. If this is not successful, contact the producing instructor.

It is assumed that students have no more than the minimal 507-level experience, and the course is designed for experientially learning by doing, as well as through instruction. Trios are required to shoot over two weekends even if they could manage with one - there should be a learning curve from week to week as a result of seeing dailies and getting feedback. The need to learn on the job is one of the main reasons everyone is urged in 507 and again in 508 to choose and design limited-scale and focused, yet creatively challenging projects that can succeed, both as learning experiences and as cinema, without requiring advanced technical proficiency.

No one in this course should ever think of a 508 project as “my film” or as “your film” as opposed to “our film.” No one should ever make a trio partner feel that they are letting down the trio because they are learning on the job; that’s what they’re supposed to be doing.

Each trio will select a name which can be used for class identification purposes. This name cannot be used for presentation credits on projects.

JOURNALS

On Monday by 9 a.m. you will e-mail to the producing and directing instructors a copy of your journal for the previous week. A lot of your most important learning will happen experientially outside of the classroom. Journals are a way to be more conscious of all aspects of the learning process, more observant and more self-aware. They should not be dry, factual reports but rather a chance to reflect, analyze, vent, and track the creative development of your work. They become a record of your creative ideas (one that can be valuable to refer back to) and what you have accomplished (it’s easy to forget, once a film is finished, all the work that went into it, and all the problems - artistic, logistical and emotional - that were confronted and overcome. Please note that this is a journal you are writing to yourself, and the instructors see a copy. Don't write them to the instructor.

The journals are private, seen only by the producing and directing instructors (this restriction doesn’t apply if there are safety, legal or ethical implications). You can discuss anything. The instructors will only respond to something in a journal if you add a note at the top of the journal entry addressing the instructors and asking for a response (e.g., “please help me with this problem”). Occasionally, if several students are encountering the same problem or concern, the instructor might address the generic issue in class so long as it can be done in a way that is entirely anonymous. Students may address additional journals and questions to other faculty if they are specifically commenting on (or need feedback) about specific disciplines: directing, cinematography, sound and editing.

PROJECT, ETHICAL AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

You have complete creative freedom in this class. There are only four simple, but inviolable, requirements:

1. Do your own work.
 2. Stay within the limitations on footage shot and equipment used.
 3. Cut your projects to time.
 4. Make sure everyone is safe and treated ethically.
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1. It is an ethical violation to have any other person do your job (including another member of your trio). Use of outside personnel or film facilities for shooting, lighting, editing, mixing or any other creative or technical aspect of your project is an infringement of academic integrity.

The only exceptions for outside contributions are script supervision, art department, wardrobe, hair/makeup, stunts, focus pulling, assistant directing, and film scoring. Production assistants may provide general help under your supervision.

2. It is an ethical violation for a member of a trio to take on another student's work, such as cinematography or editing. For example, if a director were to shoot or edit the film they are directing, they are essentially depriving the assigned student of an assigned learning experience. Directors and editors are expected to find ways to communicate and collaborate to find the film's form without the director taking on the role of editor. Co-editing is not an acceptable practice nor credit on a 508 film. It is an ethical academic violation to misrepresent the work and credits on a film. Members of the trio cannot act in their films.
3. A total of four S x S cards can be used for a total of 32GB. Students are not permitted to transfer data and re-use their cards, without prior written approval from producing faculty. Failure to obtain prior approval will be taken into account when final grades are determined. Students should be aware that editing SAs for each section will be monitoring the cards. If approval is granted to re-use card space, students must consult with their editing SA's about how to safely download their data to an appropriate storage device.
4. Shooting must take place on the 2 shooting weekends, a maximum of 2 days per weekend. Any non-weekend shooting must be justified by compelling reasons (e.g., location or actor availability), be approved by the producing instructor in writing in advance, and must not interfere with the classes of anyone on the set. However, minimal pickup shots — e.g., inserts — when they can be done with little investment of time and effort, there's room left on a card, funds in the budget, there's a clear story value, and they will not impose an undue burden on the editor, can be done with prior written approval from producing faculty. Pickups must be performed by the trio. Note: Pickups are distinct from re-shoots.

Gear returns will be scheduled within 48 hours after last pickups.

5. Certain minimal outside equipment rentals are permissible. Please consult the "2nd Semester Camera, Grip, & Electrical Equipment Petition List" and discuss with the cinematography instructor in advance.
6. All editing must be done in USC's post facilities.
7. The limit on final running time is invariable and there are no exceptions (see General Guidelines #1 below).
8. You must make the safety of everyone, including yourself, the highest priority. All class members on a set are responsible at all times for production safety. Any scenes or shots, however innocuous-seeming, that involve safety and/or ethical considerations (including any

physical stunt, any representation of a weapon, explosion, collision or projectile, and any work with a minor) must be approved in advance, with all required paperwork completed and submitted. Actions that might seem safe under normal circumstances (e.g., hurrying down stairs or crossing an uncontrolled street) may not be under production conditions and must be discussed with the producing instructor. Take extra care when shooting at night, and do not leave equipment in your car (not even the trunk).

If you are using minors in your production, you must have a certified studio teacher/welfare worker on the set — this is California state law as well as strict SCA policy, and is required for the safety and welfare of the minor(s) as well as education. Students are responsible for obtaining all studio teachers' valid certification, as well as work permits for minors.

Any violation of the above course requirements is considered an academic, ethical violation, governed by the USC Code of Conduct. (see Statement on Academic Integrity below) and is grounds for confiscation of footage, lowered grade, failing grade, probation, suspension, or expulsion from the University. Ethical violations are enforced by course faculty, the Head of Physical Production, the SCA Disciplinary Committee, and may be sent to the USC Student Judicial Affairs for review/action. Any ethical or safety violation will become a part of the student's record at SCA.

All students are expected to understand and abide by the USC School of Cinematic Arts guidelines. All students are equally responsible at all times for production safety.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. Maximum length is strictly set at 5:30 minutes plus 30 seconds of credits which may be supered over a single shot with one audio track for credits. The version created in this class is the final version of the film.
2. Every effort should be made to tell the story visually and through sound design wherever possible.
3. Given the short semester, the deadlines set out in the class schedule are immutable except under extreme circumstances. Dates for, principal weekends, screenings, picture lock, mixing are firm since there is simply no possibility to play catch-up given the tightness of the schedule.
4. Each production must have all the proper actor releases, location permits, insurance coverage, copyright arrangements, hazardous shooting forms etc., to cover every shooting situation. Please note that location releases in apartments need to be signed by the owner or manager, NOT the tenant.

5. Projects must be shot with the Sony HD EX-1 cameras from USC. Please see the memo "Use of Non-USC Equipment."
6. During the first full crew meeting each crew will determine how they will handle any loss and damage that might occur during the shoot. Each crew will decide if the individual responsible for the loss or damage is financially liable or if it will be split between crew members.
7. Crews will limit their workday to 12 hours from call to wrap. Travel time outside the Los Angeles 50-mile zone is considered work time. Within thirty miles from the School the location is a "report to" location meaning that the work time clock starts at the location. Between thirty and fifty miles "travel time is work time," meaning the work time starts at school and continues until the return to school. A location an hour and a half away from school means the workday is shortened by three hours. In 508 you are not allowed beyond fifty miles. (This rule is based on the SAG rule that actors asked to report more than fifty miles from home base are considered on a distant location and must be paid per diem and put up in a first class (or best available) hotel or motel and only one to a room.) Sunday shoots must wrap by 11pm if there is a 9am class on Monday.
8. Crews must be given a 10 hour turnaround between shoots. SAG requires that actors have a 12 hour turnaround.
9. It is the responsibility of all crew members to ensure that all rules and guidelines are followed. It is every crewmember's responsibility to ensure a safe set for everyone.
10. All 508s must use original music or music from the USC cinema music library. Any deviation will only be considered by petition.
11. All cast members must be available for scheduled shooting days during production. It is also advisable to check additional availability in the event that weather or other circumstances forces a change in the production schedule.
12. No proprietary credits are allowed (i.e.: A film by) on films. All works must display:
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13. Each production will complete a production notebook (see producing syllabus for further information). The notebook will be due three days after the mix. In order that projects by festival eligible, production notebooks will be vetted and signed-off on by your Producing instructor, then approved by Archives and, finally, by Student-Industry Relations.
14. The use of minors is strongly discouraged, due to both the cost of required on-set studio teacher/welfare workers and the limited shoot times minors can work. Minors can be included in no more than 50% of scenes (by page count).

15. Use of special effect prosthetics and extensive special effects makeup is strongly discouraged due to impact on the budget and limited amount of shooting time.
16. Adobe After Effects, Photoshop, other visual effects work, green screen, front/rear screen projection and transcoding of in-camera slow-mo are all unsupported by SCA staff for 508. Trio producers must seek approval for any of these processes with their faculty, but these processes are not taught or supported in 508. Color correction must be done at SCA in Avid by the cinematographer.
 - Due to scheduling constraints, visual effects are discouraged by the faculty.
 - A VFX shotlist and schedule must be approved by producing and editing faculty prior to shooting.
 - VFX must be created by a trio member other than the editor, or, with permission, by an outside entity.
 - No shot substitutions are allowed after picture lock.
 - All work must be done according to SCA Editorial technical specifications.
17. The director selects circle takes during shooting. Then, before dailies class, the director, cinematographer, and producer-editor consult to select a presentation of dailies that best conveys the full range of scenes, setups, performances and story points captured over the weekend. Students must screen one take from every set up and are encouraged to select shots that didn't work as well as those that did.
18. It is possible that issues will arise that are not covered by these guidelines or that you wish an exception to for legitimate reasons. In such cases, it is mandatory to submit a formal petition to the faculty requesting approval of your plans. The petition must be initiated by the producer and acknowledged and agreed to by all trio members and submitted to your producing instructor no later than 5pm on the Thursday before the shoot.

REQUIRED TEXTS

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

And continue to be (as in 507):

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

Sound for Film and Television, Second Edition (Book & CD-ROM), Tomlinson Holman, Focal Press, 2001

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

The Power of the Actor, Ivana Chubbock, Gotham, 2005

The Intent to Live: Achieving Your True Potential as an Actor, Larry Moss, Bantam, 2005
Directing Actors: Creating Memorable Performances for Film and Television, Judith Weston,
Michael Wiese Productions, 1999

GRADING BREAKDOWN

Students are graded in their overall growth and collaboration in these five disciplines:

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|-----------------|-----|
| Producing: | 20% |
| Directing: | 20% |
| Cinematography: | 20% |
| Editing: | 20% |
| Sound: | 20% |

In the dailies and cuts group classes, everyone is expected to view attentively the works in progress of the other trios, and to offer thoughtful, honest, constructive comments. Learning to recognize, analyze and be articulate and helpful about problems in footage and cuts is part of developing as a filmmaker, as is learning to listen to, interpret, and make good use of feedback from others. If you don't volunteer responses, you may be called upon to do so.

Timely attendance is mandatory. Class attendance includes being on time to class, both at the start and after break. Tardiness is disrespectful of your colleagues and either holds up the entire class or shortchanges those whose work is discussed first. It is also considered inexcusable in professional film production, and you should develop the discipline in film school of always being on time. Anyone not in class at the start of the hour or at the end of the break is considered late. Returning equipment is not an excuse.

Absences and tardiness may affect grades. Absences can only be excused on medical grounds or for other urgent personal or family reasons. Any absences must be pre-arranged through the student assistant for the instructor's approval. Students must also notify their partners immediately by phone or text. Doctor's notes must be provided to Producing faculty by the next class meeting.

Students who at mid-term are in danger of a failing grade will be notified.

STATEMENT FOR 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 to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m., 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/>.

DIGITAL POLICY

No digital devices (smartphones, tablets, or laptops) may be used in class, other than by members of the trio whose dailies or cuts are being discussed.

COURSE SCHEDULE

TBD Pre-semester: Proj 1 Meeting: Producing

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|----------------|---------------|------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| Week 1: | Aug 25 | Mon | 9-11:50 1-4:50 | SCA 204 B128 | Dannenbaum Hall | Overview/Producing Sound |
| | Aug 27 | Wed | 9-11:50 1-4:50 | SCA204 Stage 1 | Dannenbaum Salky | Producing Directing |
| Week 2: | Sept 1 | Mon | LABOR DAY | | | |
| | *Sept 2 | Tues | 9-11:50 1-4:50 | Stage 1 SCA 203 | Cucchiari Salky | Cinematography Directing |
| | Sept 3 | Wed | ***No class in morning 1-4:50 | | SCA 204 | Dann/Salky Prod/Dir |
| | *Sept 4 | Thurs | 9-11:50 | RZC-D | Cucchiari | Cinematography >P1, A |
| Week 3: | Sept 8 | Mon | 9-11:50 1-4:50 | SCA 204 Stage 1 | All Salky | Dailies Directing |
| | Sept 10 | Wed | 9-11:50 1-4:50 | Stage 1 SCA 204 | Cucchiari Hirsch | Cinematography Editing >P1,B |
| Week 4: | Sept 15 | Mon | 9-11:50 1-4:50 | SCA 204 SCA 204 | All Hirsch | Dailies Editing |
| | Sept 17 | Wed | 9-11:50 1-4:50 | SCA 204 SCA 204 | All Hirsch | Cuts Editing |
| Week 5: | Sept 22 | Mon | 9-11:50 1-4:50 | SCA 204 B128 | All Hall | Cuts Sound |
| | Sept 24 | Wed | 9-11:50 1-4:50 | SCA 204 SCA 204 | All Hirsch | Cuts Editing |
| | | | PICTURE LOCK PROJECT 1 | | | |
| | Sept 27 | Sat | 12-3 | B105 | TBA | ProTools BC 1/3 |

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| Week 6: | Sept 29 | Mon | 9-11:50 1-4:50 | SCA 204 SCA 204 | Hirsch Dannenbaum | Editing Producing | |
| | Oct 1 | Wed | 9-11:50 1-4:50 | Stage 1 B128 | Salky Hall | Directing Sound | |
| | TBD | Outside-of Class: | | Project 2 | Meeting: Producing | | |
| Week 7: | Oct 6 | Mon | 9-11:50 1-4:50 | Stage 1 SCA 204 | Cucchiari Dannenbaum | Cinematography Producing | |
| | Oct 7 | Tues | MIX PROJECT 1 | | | | |
| | Oct 8 | Wed | 9-11:50 1-4:50 | Stage 1 SCA204 | Salky Dann/Salky | Directing Prod/Dir | >P2, A |
| Week 8: | Oct 13 | Mon | 9-11:50 1-4:50 | SCA 204 RZC-E | All Salky | Dailies Directing | |
| | Oct 15 | Wed | 9-11:50 1-4:50 | SCA St 1 SCA 204 | Cucchiari Hirsch | Cinematography Cuts | >P2, B |
| | | | | | | | |
| Week 9: | Oct 20 | Mon | 9-11:50 1-4:50 | SCA 204 SCA 204 | All Hirsch | Dailies Editing | |
| | Oct 22 | Wed | 9-11:50 1-4:50 | SCA 204 RZC-A | All Cucchiari | Cuts Cinematography | |
| | TBD | Outside-of-Class: | | Project 3 | Meeting: | Producing | |
| Week 10: | Oct 27 | Mon | 9-11:50 1-4:50 | SCA 204 B128 | All Hall | Cuts Sound | |
| | Oct 29 | Wed | 9-11:50 1-4:50 | SCA 204 SCA 204 | All Hirsch | Cuts Editing | |
| | | | PICTURE LOCK | PROJ 2 | | | |
| | Nov 1 | Sat | 12-3 | B105 | TBA | ProTools BC 2/3 | |

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|-----------------|------------------|--------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|--------|
| Week 11: | Nov 3 | Mon | 9-11:50 1-4:50 | Stage 3 B128 | Cucchiari Hall | Cinematography Sound | |
| | Nov 5 | Wed | 9-11:50 1-4:50 | Stage 1 SCA 204 | Salky Dann/Salky | Directing Prod/Dir | >P3, A |
| Week 12: | Nov 10 | Mon | 9-11:50 1-4:50 | SCA 204 B128 | All Hall | Dailies Sound | |
| | Nov 12 | Wed | 9-11:50 1-4:50 | Stage 2 SCA 204 | Salky Hirsch | Directing Editing | >P3, B |
| Week 13: | Nov 17 | Mon | 9-11:50 1-4:50 | SCA 204 SCA 204 | All Hirsch | Dailies Editing | |
| | Nov 19 | Wed | 9-11:50 1-4:50 | SCA 204 SCA 204 | All Hirsch | Cuts Editing | |
| | Nov 20 | Thurs | PROJECT 2 | | MIX | | |
| | Nov 22 | Sat | 12-3 | B105 | TBA | ProTools BC 3/3 | |
| Week 14: | Nov 24 | Mon | 9-11:50 1-4:50 | SCA204 SCA204 | All Hirsch | Cuts Editing | |
| | NOV 26-29 | | THANKSGIVING BREAK | | | | |
| Week 15: | Dec 1 | Mon | 9-11:50 1-4:50 | B134 B134 | Hall Hall | Sound Sound | |
| | Dec 2 | Tues | PICTURE LOCK | | PROJECT 3 | | |
| | Dec 3 | Wed | 9-11:50 1-4:50 | B134 SCA 204 | Hall Dannenbaum | Sound Producing | |
| Week 16: | Dec 10 | Wed | MIX PROJECT 3 | | | | |
| | Dec 13 | Sat | FINAL PUBLIC SCREENING 11-3 | | | | |

*suggested make-up