CTPR 294: Directing in TV/New Media, Fiction, and Documentary Spring ‘16

4 Units
Concurrent enrollment: CTPR 295 Cinematic Arts Laboratory
Wednesday 2-4:50 pm

Fictional Narrative SCE Stage 2

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**Course Objectives:**

CTPR 294 has three components that overall introduce Production students in the School of Cinematic Arts to the major aspects of contemporary cinematic practice. Each component is explored for 5 weeks. Three different instructors will guide students through each aspect.

1) Fictional Narrative Practice.
2) Documentary Practice
3) TV/New Media Practice.

Students will participate in exercises, lectures, and discussions in each of the three components.

**Fictional Narrative Practice**
This 5 week seminar will expose each student to the fundamentals of directing a narrative film. Classes will include basic film theory and grammar, example clips from films and practical directing techniques. Each directing student will stage a scene from a published screenplay, shoot on location and show an edited cut.

**Documentary Practice**
The student will learn the unique characteristics of documentary, how to find cinematic material in the world around the student, how to cover a scene while it is happening, and how to film an interview. The student will learn how to reveal character through action and the unique elements of cinema.

**TV/New Media Practice**
Students will learn how to create a pilot episode for a web series. The focus will be on the importance of developing a clear tone and establishing a strong voice. Students will learn how to harness their creativity and to thrive in a workshop environment.

**Projects:**

For each of the three components, students will complete exercises, making a total of six: one in narrative, three in documentaries, and two in TV/New Media. Students will screen cuts of the exercises for feedback. NOTE: All cuts will be screened from the Avid project. At the end of each rotation, the director will turn in a compressed file of the final cut.
Directing the Fictional Narrative:
- One in-class scene (performed with actors in the classroom),
- One filmed exercise (a scene, on location, with two actors). The instructor will provide scenes.

Directing the Documentary:
- Street Corner and Interview exercises
- One ‘mini-documentary’

Directing TV/New Media:
- Video Pitch
- 3 page pilot script
- 3 minute pilot episode

NOTE:
During the course, each student will assume a major role in directing one project from one of the three components. The directors for the various components are randomly chosen before the semester begins.

Course Structure and Schedule:

Students in CTPR 294 and CTPR 295 are divided into three groups (Silver, Gold, and Platinum) which rotate at five-week intervals through the three components of the CTPR 294. See the attached schedule for your group. It is important to be aware of the schedule for both CTPR 294 and CTPR 295, as they are interrelated.

The rotations for groups in CTPR 294 are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Silver Group (18481):</th>
<th>TV/New Media to Documentary to Fictional Narrative</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gold Group (18483):</td>
<td>Documentary to Fictional Narrative to TV/New Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platinum Group (18482):</td>
<td>Fictional Narrative to TV/New Media to Documentary</td>
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Schedules for the five weeks of each of the components:

**Fictional Narrative Component**

This 5 week seminar will expose each student to the fundamentals of directing a narrative film. Classes will include basic film theory and grammar, example clips from films and practical directing techniques. Each directing student will stage a scene from a published screenplay, shoot on location and show an edited cut in class. Each trio will hand in their production book in the fifth class.

***ASSIGNMENT 1 - BEFORE THE FIRST CLASS, please WATCH The Graduate and READ the assigned screenplay we will be working from. Each trio will choose a 2-4 page scene from the assigned screenplay (and a backup scene). Please do NOT watch the film as we are focusing on how you translate the written word to film.***

**WEEK 1**

**A Director Prepares** - Screenplay Analysis, Director-Actor Grammar, Dramatic Structure. Research, Visual inspirations

THIS WORK IS DONE BEFORE, AND REFINED DURING, CASTING & REHEARSAL!

**ASSIGNMENT** - Read the following from your packet: Objectives - Golden key, CASTING - Setting up an audition

**WEEK 2**

**Casting/Auditioning** - In class practicum

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

1) ALL SCENES assigned and cast
2) Read “Rehearsing” chapters from Judith Weston’s Directing Actors handout.

**WEEK 3** - Review clips - Discuss Mise en scene and Montage
   Actors review audition tapes with Andrei Belgrader

Rehearsal techniques - setting the scene in context of the story and character arcs, spontaneous combustion, physical life of the scene, playing the actions not the words.
Preparing to shoot

ASSIGNMENT - Rehearse with your actors outside of class
    Prepare shot list
WEEK 4 - Bring rehearsed scenes into class WITH shot list/floor plan

ASSIGNMENT - Shoot and edit scene.

WEEK 5
Screen cut scenes and hand in production books.

ASSIGNMENT:

PRODUCTION BOOK:

Your production book will contain your trio’s preparation:

(Please include each trio members name and production responsibility)

Theme
Superobjective/spines
Given circumstances for both characters/antecedent action
Beat to beat breakdown
Research - visual inspirations
Shot list and floor plan

Each students self evaluation of their role in production.
Documentary Component

Week 1) Lecture/Discussion: Documentary defined. How does it differ from fiction?

Bring Three Documentary Ideas to First Class (person, place, or process)

Styles of documentary.
What is a documentary?
Screening of short sample films.

In Class: Students come up with
three documentary ideas for a 3-4 minute film
about either a person, a place, or a process.

Outside Class: Students shoot Street-corner exercise.

Week 2) Lecture/Discussion: How to conduct a good interview.

Bring cameras to class.
SA get 3 boom kits

In Class: Screen street corner exercise
Students critique ideas, settle on one,
Plan their approach for shooting.
Demonstration: Documentary Style Coverage, working as a
documentary team.
The interview.

Outside Class: Students begin shooting. Shoot a key element of
project (interview or scene)

Week 3) Lecture/discussion/demo: How to structure reality.

Shooting a documentary scene
Filmmaker/subject relationships. Documentary
Ethics.
In Class: Students screen and critique dailies

Outside Class: Students edit film

Week 4) Lecture/discussion: How to ‘SHOW,’ not ‘TELL.’”

The weave.
In Class: Students screen and critique first cuts

Outside Class: Students finish edit.
Week 5) Lecture/discussion: Wrap up
   In class: Students screen revised cut
TV/New Media Component

**Week 1**
Introductions.
Schedule and course overview/concept of class, grading, office hours.
Screen webisode examples.
Lecture: Attitude/Tone/Style & Creative Process, Intro to Character/Story.

*Homework:* Create a video pitch for a webisode pilot (90 seconds).

**Week 2**
Screen/workshop pitches.
Screen webisodes for character, tone, voice, coverage, pacing.
Sample script page.

*Homework:* Create a 3 page pilot script. Begin casting/pre-production.

**Week 3**
Workshop scripts; well developed characters/consistent tone/strong voice.
Conversation: what is the Director’s job?

*Homework:* Shoot pilot episode. Create rough cut.

**Week 4**
Screen rough cuts; critique/discuss.

*Homework:* Re-writes, re-shoot, pickups, edit final cut.

**Week 5**
Screen pilot; critique/discuss.
Q & A and overview of process. Discuss distribution, building and audience and social media.
Equipment and Facilities:

Students in CTPR 294 and CTPR 295 will be divided into pods of three and share a camera package. Each student must pay a lab fee of $75 for CTPR 294 and $225 for CTPR 295, and an insurance premium of $300 for CTPR 294.

The School will provide:

1. Sony NXCAM HD Cameras and tripods.
2. Avid editing stations in the Avid Editing Lab

N.B. WITH THE NXCAM CAMERA, THIS SETTING IS THE ONLY SETTING THAT WILL ENABLE YOU TO EDIT YOUR FOOTAGE ON AVID: HD 1080/24p FX

Students will provide their own:

1. **Headphones (required) for Avid lab.** We recommend Sony MDR 7506, which are available at the USC Bookstore.
2. **SDHC Memory (16 GB) cards for NXCAM.** (Class 10 rated) SCA APPROVED SDNC CARDS:
   - Kingston 16GB SDHC Flash Card: Model # SD10V/16GB
   - SanDisk Extreme 16GB SDHC Flash Card: Model # SDSDRX3-16GB-A21
   - SONY 16GB SDHC Flash Drive: Model # SF16NX/TQ
   - Lexar Professional 133x 16GB SDHC Flash Card: Model # LSD16GCRBNA133
   - PNY Professional Series 16GB SDHC Flash Card: Model # P-SDHC16GB10-EFS2
3. **One of the following approved External Hard Drives:**
   - G-TECH: G-RAID (4-8TB RAID)
   - G-TECH: G-DRIVE (2-4TB Single Drive)
   - Glyph-Technologies: Studio (1-4TB Single Drive)

Each drive listed meets our minimal hardware requirements. Those requirements include but are not limited to:
1. Interface with at least one USB 3.0
2. The disc speed must be at least 7200rpm
3. Low failure rate
4. **NO BUS POWERED DEVICES**

A second drive or 16GB flash drives are highly recommended to back up material in the case of drive failure.
Grading:

Each of the three components contributes 1/3 of the final grade. The grades for the individual components are determined as follows:

Fictional Narrative Component:
- Class Participation: 25%
- Organization and Communication: 35%
- Fictional Narrative Filmed Scene: 40%

Documentary Component
- Class Participation: 10%
- Collaboration: 30%
- Documentary Projects:
  - Street corner: 10%
  - Interview: 10%
  - Final Project: 40%

TV/New Media Component
- Class Participation: 10%
- Series Pitch: 20%
- Pilot Script: 20%
- Collaboration: 20%
- Pilot: 30%

This is a production class. Students should plan to not miss class; students must discuss all absences with the instructor in advance. If a student is sick, the student must call or email this information to the instructor or SA before the class. Each unexcused absence will reduce the student’s grade one increment; e.g. B to B-. Two unexcused latenesses will be counted as an absence.

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Section 11, Behavior Violating University Standardshttps://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies.
on scientific misconduct, http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity http://equity.usc.edu/ or to the Department of Public Safety http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us. This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The Center for Women and Men http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/ provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage sarc@usc.edu describes reporting options and other resources.

**Support Systems**

A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the American Language Institute http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. The Office of Disability Services and Programs http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, USC Emergency Information http://emergency.usc.edu/ will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

**Disruptive Student Behavior:**

Behavior that persistently or grossly interferes with classroom activities is considered disruptive behavior and may be subject to disciplinary action. Such behavior inhibits other students' ability to learn and an instructor's ability to teach. A student responsible for disruptive behavior may be required to leave class pending discussion and resolution of the problem and may be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs for disciplinary action.
SAFETY SEMINAR – MANDATORY ATTENDANCE

All students are required to attend the safety seminar in order to obtain a Production Number. The production number covers, actors, equipment, stages, insurance, additional equipment, locations, on and off campus permits, audition rooms and access to SCA facilities for filming (Courtyard, class rooms, bathrooms, stairwells).

Three seminars are offered at the start of every semester. This semester’s seminars:

Friday, January 8, 2016 – Norris Theater - 2:00 P.M. To 4:00 P.M.
Monday, January, 11, 2016  –  SCI 106 (First Floor) - 6:00P.M. To 8:00 P.M.
Tuesday, January 12, 2016 – SCI 108 (First Floor) - 6:00 P.M. To 8:00 P.M.

There are NO MAKE UP seminars available beyond these dates.

Required Reading (TV/New Media Section)

Action! Acting for Film and TV/New Media by Robert Benedetti, (2001) Pearson Education Company

Suggested Reading

TV/New Media Production Handbook 7th edition by Herbert Zettl
Basic TV Technology 3rd edition by Robert L. Hartwig, Focal Press
Lighting for Video 3rd edition by Gerald Millerson, Focal Press
Books; paperback
Writing Down the Bones by Natalie Goldberg; ISBN 0-87773-375-9;
Shambala Publiclications, Inc., paperback
Fearless Creating by Eric Maisel; ISBN 0-87477-805-0; Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam Book,
paperback
Writing Your Life by Deena Metzger; ISBN 0-06-250612-9; Harper San Francisco,
paperback
Focal Press, paperback
Kazan by Jeff Young
Film Directing Fundamentals by Nicholas Proferes
Shot By Shot by Stephen Katz
A Director Prepares by Anne Bogart
The Visual Story by Bruce Block