Course Description

Background and Rationale: YouTube, Snapchat, Netflix, Apple TV, Twitch, Maker, HBO Now, Twitter, WPP, Brightcove, Periscope, Fullscreen, ZEFR, Buzzfeed, ESPN, Facebook, Xbox One, Crackle – these are a small sampling of the companies who are warring, partnering, innovating, investing in, and ultimately disrupting the most influential medium in our society – video.

This 8-week course organizes the multi-dimensional tangle that is today’s Video Revolution into seven logical layers and understandable trends. Each week, the Instructors assign readings for the coming layer. Class sessions consist of interactive exercises to breakdown the layer at hand into subcomponents followed by lecture and case studies. In addition each class session, starting in Week 2, will include a guest speaker from industry to provide further perspective on the layer being discussed. Instructors will prep each guest speaker to think about advice for aspiring professionals (such as new USC grads) to best succeed professionally in the space.

The seven layers of the course are:
1) Infrastructure – Technical and Legal
2) Distribution Platforms
3) Content Development: Categories
4) Content Development: Talent
5) Content Development: Financing and Monetization
6) Content Marketing and Growth Hacking
7) The Future

Requirements: This is a 2-unit credit/non-credit course. Each week students are required to submit educated questions to the coming guest speaker via Google Spreadsheet. In addition students are required to create two 12 minute presentations about a facet of the video revolution of their choosing. Finally, students will submit a short analytical research paper on Week 8, 1000-1500 words in length. Attendance and participation are required. Consistent failure to submit educated questions to the guest speakers or demonstrate knowledge of the weekly readings may lead to no credit for the course.
Class Policies and Resources

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 Standards https://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.
Schedule of Classes

Week 1 (date XX): The Revolution Will Not Be Televised

Lecture:
Instructors take students through an ice-breaker and interactive whiteboard exercise to visually map the components and trends that comprise online video and its cultural impact.

Instructors organize their whiteboard map into the seven layers described in the Course Description - thus providing an overview for the course. Visualizations compare the layers and their interoperating components from the 1970s to the 1980s to the 1990s to the 2000s to today.

Instructors review the syllabus for the course and spell out the goals and student requirements. Instructors lay out Layer 1 of the course Infrastructure: Technical and Legal.

Case Studies:
- Case Study 1 – Infrastructure: Net Neutrality in a Nutshell
- Case Study 2 – Copyright Soup
- Case Study 3 – Machinima’s Excellent Adventure with the Digital Millennium Copyright Act
- Case Study 4 – Why Digital Distribution Destroyed Music but Strengthens Video

In Class Exercise:
Given the lecture materials and case studies from above each student spends 45 minutes researching and preparing a 3-5 slide presentation on a content case study of interest. Student must explain origins of her choice, perspective on its cultural impact, conjecture on its business model, and thoughts regarding its path to the future. Example case study candidates: Khan Academy, The Onion News, Overly Attached Girlfriend, Geek and Sundry, Ze Frank, Major League Baseball, Lynda.com, Vice Media, Funny or Die, BroBible. Select students will present their findings at the end of class.

Assignment 1 Prep:
Each student writes a one page journal entry outlining her interests in and curiosities about the realm of online video. All seven layers of the course are options for this entry. The entry must end with a clearly worded question that she wishes to explore for her Assignment 1 Presentation.

Due via email before start of next class. These entries will be discussed next week in class.

Readings to Be Discussed Next Week Assigned:
- Links: [definition of video distribution platforms and overview of current players, to come]

Guest Speaker Question Assignment:
Students are provided a) the name of next week’s guest speaker b) link to a shared class Google Spreadsheet for students to post questions for the guest speaker. Each student must look speaker up online and post at least two educated questions for him/her – due by 10 am next Monday.

Note: Instructors will always post the following questions for the Guest Speaker:
   a) What about your business keeps you up at night?
   b) What skills and/or know-how would you want from an ideal junior hire (e.g. a new USC graduate)
Week 2 (Date XX): Distribution Platforms

Discussion of Readings
Class discusses the readings and maps out key questions about Distribution Platforms from students on the whiteboard.

Lecture:
Instructors take students through an interactive exercise to visually organize sub components (technical and business) of the Distribution Platforms used to present video content to end users.

Instructors lecture on the who, what, why, and how to demystify the Distribution Platform layer of online video.

Case Studies:
- Case Study 1: Snapchat
- Case Study 2: YouTube as Distribution Platform
- Case Study 3: Facebook as Distribution Platform
- Case Study 4: Brightcove

Guest Speaker:
Guest speaker from a distribution platform company (like Snapchat).

In-Class Discussion of Assignment 1 Prep: Journal Entries
Students discuss their Assignment 1 Prep Journal Entries. Class and instructors provide feedback and suggest ideas for her to begin her Assignment 1 Presentation.

If class size > 7 then students separated into two groups to complete the above.

Assignment 1 Given:
Each student creates a slide presentation of 8-30 slides (no longer than 12 minutes) on her personalized Assignment 1 topic.

Instructors and class collaboratively determine schedule of Assignment 1 student presentations to be made in class over the coming weeks.

Readings to Be Discussed Next Week Assigned:
- Links: [breakdown of the most prominent categories of online video to come - http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/246758]

Guest Speaker Questions Assigned:
Students are provided a) the name of next week’s guest speaker b) link to a shared class Google Spreadsheet for students to post questions for the guest speaker. Each student must look speaker up online and post at least two educated questions for him/her – due by 10 am next Monday.

Note: Instructors will always post the following questions for the Guest Speaker:
   a) What about your business keeps you up at night?
   b) What skills and/or know-how would you want from an ideal junior hire (e.g. a new USC graduate)
Week 3 (Date XX): Content Development: Categories

Discussion of Readings
Class discusses the readings and interactively maps out key questions about Content Categories from students on the whiteboard.

Lecture:
Instructors take students through an interactive exercise to visually organize the sub components (technical and business) of the Content Categories that are most popular with end users.

Instructors lecture on the who, what, why, and how to demystify the Content Categories layer of online video. The Top 26 categories on YouTube are discussed and non-YouTube equivalents are identified.

Case Studies:
- Case Study 1: YouTube Top 26 Content Categories
- Case Study 2: FunToyzCollector Channel and unboxing content
- Case Study 3: Twitch.TV and video game content
- Case Study 4: Lynda.com and educational content
- Case Study 5: Over the Top: Netflix, Amazon, Hulu and premium content

Guest Speaker:
Guest speaker from a content development company (like Amazon Video or Legendary Digital).

Assignment 1 Student Presentations
Students present their Assignment 1 presentations. Instructors and classmates provide critique and discussion.

If class size > 7 then students separated into two groups to complete the above.

Assignment 2 Prep:
Each student writes a one page journal entry outlining her interests in and curiosities about the realm of online video. All seven layers of the course are options for this entry. The entry must end with a clearly worded question that she wishes to explore for her Assignment 2 Presentation.

Due via email before start of next class. These entries will be discussed next week in class.

Readings to Be Discussed Next Week Assigned:
- Links: [Articles about online talent development to come]

Guest Speaker Questions Assigned:
Students are provided a) the name of next week’s guest speaker b) link to a shared class Google Spreadsheet for students to post questions for the guest speaker. Each student must look speaker up online and post at least two educated questions for him/her – due by 10 am next Monday.

Note: Instructors will always post the following questions for the Guest Speaker:
   a) What about your business keeps you up at night?
   b) What skills and/or know-how would you want from an ideal junior hire (e.g. a new USC graduate)

Week 4 (Date XX): Content Development: Talent

Discussion of Readings
Class discusses the readings and interactively maps out key questions about Talent – e.g. where do they come from, how do they get popular, who are leaders, how do they make money, what kind of representation do they have, what goes on behind the scenes - from students on the whiteboard.

Lecture:
Instructors take students through an interactive exercise to visually organize the sub components (technical and business) of the Talent questions.

Instructors lecture on the who, what, why, and how to demystify the Talent layer of online video.

Case Studies:
- Case Study 1: YouTube Top 20 Earners
- Case Study 2: Maker Studios
- Case Study 3: Fullscreen
- Case Study 4: Fine Brothers
- Case Study 5: Geek and Sundry

Guest Speaker:
Guest speaker from a talent development company (like Maker Studios).

In-Class Discussion of Assignment 2 Prep: Journal Entries
Students discuss their Assignment 2 Prep Journal Entries. Class and instructors provide feedback and suggest ideas for her to begin her Assignment 1 Presentation.

If class size > 7 then students separated into two groups to complete the above.

Assignment 2 Given:
Each student creates a slide presentation of 8-30 slides (no longer than 12 minutes) on her personalized Assignment 1 topic.

Instructors and class collaboratively determine schedule of Assignment 1 student presentations to be made in class over the coming weeks.

Heads-Up Discussion about Final Assignment
Instructors explain the final assignment which will be assigned officially in Week 7 – due Week 8. Students are encouraged to email any questions to instructors in prep for Week 7.

Readings to Be Discussed Next Week Assigned:
- Links: [breakdown of financing norms for guerrilla to premium content to come]
- Links: [breakdown of revenues and how those revenues are distributed for guerrilla to premium content to come]

Guest Speaker Questions Assigned:
Students are provided a) the name of next week’s guest speaker b) link to a shared class Google Spreadsheet for students to post questions for the guest speaker. Each student must look speaker up online and post at least two educated questions for him/her – due by 10 am next Monday.

Note: Instructors will always post the following questions for the Guest Speaker:
   a) What about your business keeps you up at night?
   b) What skills and/or know-how would you want from an ideal junior hire (e.g. a new USC graduate)
Week 5 (Date XX): Content Development: Financing and Monetization

Discussion of Readings
Class discusses the readings and interactively maps out key questions about Financing and Monetization of online video – e.g. how is it financed, how does it make money, how revenues are distributed, what goes on behind the scenes - from students on the whiteboard.

Lecture:
Instructors take students through an interactive exercise to visually organize the sub components (technical and business) of the Financing and Monetization questions.

Instructors lecture on the who, what, why, and how to demystify the Financing and Monetization layer of online video.

Case Studies:
- Case Study 1: Hulu
- Case Study 2: Vessel
- Case Study 3: WPP
- Case Study 4: Crowdfunding – Kickstarter vs IndieGogo
- Case Study 5: Leading Brand du Jour that sponsors online video

Guest Speaker:
Guest speaker from innovator in monetizing video (like Vessel).

Assignment 2 Student Presentations, Part 1 of 2
First half of the students do a presentation tonight. Instructors and classmates provide critique and discussion.

If class size >7 then students separated into two groups to complete the above.

Readings to Be Discussed Next Week Assigned:
- Links: [breakdown of how content goes viral to come]
- Links: [breakdown of ways premium content is marketed to come]
- Links: [breakdown of how guerrilla content is marketed to come]

Guest Speaker Questions Assigned:
Students are provided a) the name of next week’s guest speaker b) link to a shared class Google Spreadsheet for students to post questions for the guest speaker. Each student must look speaker up online and post at least two educated questions for him/her – due by 10 am next Monday.

Note: Instructors will always post the following questions for the Guest Speaker:
  a) What about your business keeps you up at night?
  b) What skills and/or know-how would you want from an ideal junior hire (e.g. a new USC graduate)

Week 6 (Date XX): Content Marketing and Growth Hacking

Discussion of Readings
Class discusses the readings and interactively maps out key questions about Content Marketing and Growth Hacking of online video from students on the whiteboard.

Lecture:
Instructors take students through an interactive exercise to visually organize the sub components (technical and business) of the content marketing questions.

Instructors lecture on the who, what, why, and how to demystify the content marketing layer of online video.

Case Studies:
- Case Study 1: ZEFR and YouTube as Marketing Channel
- Case Study 2: Facebook as Marketing Channel
- Case Study 3: Kim Kardashian
- Case Study 4: Netflix’s Bloodline (or premium OTT series du jour)
- Case Study 5: Growth Hacking Defined

Guest Speaker:
Guest speaker from innovator in marketing video (like ZEFR).

Assignment 2 Student Presentations, Part 2 of 2
Second half of the students do a presentation tonight. Instructors and classmates provide critique and discussion.

If class size >7 then students separated into two groups to complete the above.

Final Assignment Given and In-Class Discussion
Students take all they have learned to date and write a 1000-1500 analytical paper about a facet of online video of their choosing. Example ideas: Concept for Online Video Content/Business, What I Would Do if I Were X and Why, How X Could Gain More Viewers, How X Could Better Monetize, How Will Talent Development Evolve, Why Video Won’t be Destroyed Like Music

Due via email before next class.

Readings to Be Discussed Next Week Assigned:
- Links: [future of platforms breakdown to come]
- Links: [future of talent development to come]

Guest Speaker Questions Assigned:
Students are provided a) the name of next week’s guest speaker b) link to a shared class Google Spreadsheet for students to post questions for the guest speaker. Each student must look speaker up online and post at least two educated questions for him/her – due by 10 am next Monday.

Note: Instructors will always post the following questions for the Guest Speaker:
   a) What about your business keeps you up at night?
   b) What skills and/or know-how would you want from an ideal junior hire (e.g. a new USC graduate)

Week 7 (Date XX): The Next Five Years and Course Wrap Up

Discussion of Readings
Class discusses the readings and interactively maps out key questions about the next five years for each of the seven layer from the course on the whiteboard.

Lecture:
Instructors take students through an interactive exercise to visually organize the sub components
Instructors lecture on broad trends for the next five years with online video.

Case Studies:
- Case Study 1 - Platforms: Magic Leap and Hololens
- Case Study 2 – Distribution: Facebook vs. YouTube: Are You Ready to Rumble?
- Case Study 3 - Distribution: HBO Now and the Great Unbundling
- Case Study 4: Content: RYOT and Virtual Reality Video Journalism
- Case Study 5: Start Up Du Jour

Guest Speaker:
Guest speaker from forward thinking online video innovator.

Discussion of Final Assignments
Instructors write out the topics chosen by the students on the whiteboard. Students discuss their topic verbally and get feedback and critique from the instructors and their classmates.

If class size >7 then students separated into two groups to complete the above.
Instructor Bios

Sanjay Sharma
Sanjay is Chief Executive Officer, All Def Digital, Inc. With over 15 years of media, consumer web, content, advertising and technology experience, Sanjay Sharma is responsible for leading the strategic direction as well as running all day-to-day business and operational affairs of All Def Digital (ADD), the leading video programming brand for new urban millennials across digital, television, live events, music and film. His partner and co-founder is Russell Simmons, who began the hip hop movement with the iconic Def Jam Records and then created HBO's Def Comedy Jam and Def Poetry Jam. Sharma is also a member of the company’s Board of Directors.

Sharma joined ADD in August of 2014 from online video pioneer Machinima, where he was one of the company's first employees and was a key architect of its expansion and growth as Executive Vice President of Strategy and Business Development. Among his many responsibilities during his nearly five years at Machinima, Sharma ran strategy, business development, corporate development, corporate communications, and business and legal affairs for the company.

Sharma previously served in the Business & Legal Affairs division of Warner Bros. Pictures and, prior to Machinima, in strategy and business development for four years at Spot Runner, an advertising technology startup. A graduate of Stanford University Law School, and Columbia University, he is an active member of and advocate for the Los Angeles startup community, advising a number of early-stage companies and working closely with area accelerators, including with USC's Viterbi School.

Chris Swain
Chris Swain is an entrepreneur in the game space and video space. His is also an author and long-time USC faculty member.

At USC he co-founded the Electronic Arts Game Innovation Lab and was one the original game faculty at the university. Via his lab Chris explored play mechanics in a research setting. He developed methodology to solve hard UX problems with original play mechanics. His thesis students have gone on to win multiple Game of the Year Awards in industry. Chris led many other projects at USC including for Rockefeller Foundation, Gates Foundation, Annenberg Center, LA Times, and the US National Counterterrorism Center. His USC lab project, The Redistricting Game, is a staple in the redistricting reform community. His game, Ecotopia, was created in collaboration with Conversation International and translated in-game actions by players into real world impact – specifically in into thousands of trees being planted in the Brazilian rain forest.

Outside of USC Chris has led over 50 interactive products in industry for companies that include: NBC, MTV, Game Show Network, Turner Network Television, PBS, Microsoft, Disney, Sony, Activision, Warner Brothers, Discovery, BBC, Intel, and many others. His projects have won over two dozen design awards. Notable games include the world’s first massively multiplayer casual game NetWits - original IP which Swain sold to the Microsoft Network; Multiplayer Jeopardy!; and Multiplayer Wheel of Fortune. The Jeopardy! and Wheel of Fortune games were landmark hits for Sony Online that helped establish the then new, business of online casual games. Chris created Cred.FM which was a venture-funded music discovery network built on the YouTube platform. He was a founding member of the design agency R/GA Interactive in New York which grew from 4 people to over 150 and $0 in revenue to over $50mm annually during his time with the company.