

USC School of Cinematic Arts
Course 497: The Shortest Film
MUSIC VIDEO and COMMERCIAL PRODUCTION
FALL 2017
Room 316 SCA

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497 is an intensive workshop experience in short form production, focussing on music videos and commercials. Please keep this class in perspective. It is many things: a unique opportunity to learn through practical experience; a chance to learn through lecture and case study. It is ultimately a class and although we encourage you to push boundries creatively you must work within the guidelines of the class.

SHORT FORM PRODUCTION COURSE OBJECTIVE

COMMERCIAL/BRANDED CONTENT: We will explore the timeline from concept through completion of a television commercial. Students experience first hand the process of commercial production from creative concept through post production by creating their own commercial/PSA as a :30 or branded content up to 2 minutes with a viable :30. We will have lectures, Q&A and guest speakers to help with commercial production and the development/execution of creative. Guest speakers and topics may change based on availabilities.

MUSIC VIDEO: We will explore the timeline of making a music video, beginning with a band or recording artist's new music, commissioning the track among directors and production companies to the making of a music video through post production and premiere of the final product.

This course will give students the opportunity to produce and direct their own music video, beginning with choosing a song, writing an original treatment, budgeting the concept and producing an approximately 4 minute music video. Guest speakers will be invited to share their experiences in music video production. Topics and speakers may change based on availability.

Prerequisite: CPTR 310

See specific dates below for each class content/requirements

Grading Breakdown for class:

<i>Attendance* and participation</i>	<i>10%</i>
<i>Pre-Production assignments per syllabus</i>	<i>20%</i>
<i>Music Video Presentation</i>	<i>35 %</i>
<i>Commercial Presentation</i>	<i>35 %</i>

****Students are expected to be on time and prepared for each class.***

Two unexcused absences will result in your grade being lowered by one full point (ex: A to B). A third unexcused absence will result in your grade being lowered another full point (ex: B to C). Your grade will be lowered by one point for every absence thereafter. Two late arrivals equates to one full absence. In order for an absence to be excused the student must have approval from the professor and provide documentation at the next attended class session. If you have an emergency and must miss class, please contact your professor prior to class.

You are responsible in this class for adhering to all the rules found in the student production handbook and the safety rules in the student productions handbook. You can find a copy of both in SPO.

IF ANY RULES ARE IGNORED, SANCTIONS WILL APPLY INCLUDING LOWERING OF YOUR GRADE AND POSSIBLE SUSPENSION FROM THE CINEMA SCHOOL.

******** The camera for 497 is the SONY EX3 ********

The only other cameras that may be used are digital cameras which you personally own. No rentals or friends cameras may be used as USC does not cover their insurance. Students may petition profesor for use of other camera. Forms to be submitted for approval several weeks before shooting.

The lighting and grip package is the 508 kit.

Any safety issues need to be addressed with instructor AND Joe Wallenstein 5 days before your shoot

We are looking for an “even playing field” in this class and to that end students may spend on their commercials no more than \$2,000 of their own money and \$3,000 on their music videos.

There is no combining of money's spent. For instance you cannot spend \$1,000 on your commercial then \$4,000 on your music video.

Again we would encourage you to use the camera and equipment available to you through the school and spend as little of your personal money as possible.

Regarding renting or purchasing equipment or other merchandise or services:

You are still responsible for adhering to all the rules including safety guidelines found in the student production handbook. You can find a copy in SPO.

STUDENTS MUST HAVE INSTRUCTORS SIGN HAZARDOUS SHOOTING FORMS BEFORE SHOOTING ANYTHING WHERE A HAZARDOUS SHOOTING FORM IS REQUIRED. ALL FORMS MUST BE SUBMITTED AND APPROVED BEFORE SESSION 7

Students must shoot within the “Studio Zone” – within 30 miles of USC.

Please keep all receipts and hand them in with your final project.

If you are shooting during the day you can shoot off campus.

If you are shooting at night in a safe enclosed environment you can shoot off campus.

If you are shooting at night – but the location is not in safe enclosed environment – you will have to shoot on campus.

Shoot day must not go beyond 12 hour day.

Permits are required as the “rule of 3” no longer is in existence.

TALENT USED IN STUDENT COMMERCIAL PROJECTS:

You must use NON-SAG talent if you are creating a class commercial project with a

recognizable product (not required for PSA).

When putting out a casting call, please make written notes and state that this is a student project and you are casting non-SAG talent only.

Talent needs to sign a release stating that "by signing this release you are confirming you are not a SAG member".

Please send note to Candice stating that you have made every effort to cast non SAG members in your student production.

MUSIC VIDEOS NEED TO BE SHOT BETWEEN SESSIONS 8 AND 10. COMMERCIALS AND BRANDED CONTENT NEED TO BE SHOT BETWEEN SESSIONS 11 AND 13. FINAL SCREENINGS ARE WEEK 15 AND 16 SO BE PREPARED!!! IF ANY STUDENT SHOOTS BEFORE OR AFTER THOSE WEEKS, HE OR SHE WILL RECEIVE A FAILING GRADE.

SESSION 1 – 8/23

***Class business/enrollment
Instructor introductions***

MUSIC VIDEO REVIEW

- Do music videos still exist?
- The ultimate marketing tool for an artist, established or new
- Excellent creative outlet for building a strong director's reel
- Alternative formats: music films, VR, interactive
- The record label, commissioner, management and artist
- The production company, executive producer and director
- The role of a director's sales representative

MUSIC VIDEO HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT: Start thinking about the song you would like to produce and direct your music video for. It can be an original song, a famous song or any piece of music you wish. Be prepared to discuss 3 of your favorite music videos and why the concepts or styles speak to you most.

SESSION 2 – 8/30

THE MUSIC VIDEO TREATMENT

Receiving the track to developing an idea: The director's treatment process

- What is a director's treatment?
- Artist's creative brief, the track and lyrics
- Creative call with the commissioner and/ or artist
- Coming up with an idea and the art of pulling visuals

We will review various treatments for music videos produced for major recording artists and discuss some of your favorite music videos.

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT: Write an original treatment and pull visuals for the track you choose to make a music video for. This can be a work in progress, as we will discuss and develop ideas together in the next class.

SESSION 3 – 9/6

MUSIC VIDEO PITCH

- Pitching the idea – how to deal with artist feedback and compromise
- Pitching an idea that can realistically fit the budget

Class will share their work in progress treatments. Class and instructor will give feedback.

Guest speaker: TBD label commissioner panel

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT: Finalize treatment and layout based on class notes and feedback

SESSION 4 – 9/13

COMMERCIAL OVERVIEW

Part 1: Commercial/Branded Content:

- Role of Advertising Agencies
- Key folks at advertising agencies
- Production Company evolution
- Commercial Director evolution
- Evolution of commercials from conventional to long form branded content

Part 2: The Process - overview

- Client to agency creative to storyboards
- Production company involvement:
- Conference Call
- The Creative Presentation

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT: Develop commercial/branded creative idea as well as PSA for our next meeting. Written synopsis for each idea to be submitted with creative briefs presented in front of class. Be prepared to list your top 3 favorite commercials...explain relevance, efficiency. What makes a commercial memorable...which elements are most important and what is the take-away.

SESSION 5 – 9/20

FROM SCRIPTS/BOARDS THROUGH SHOOT

How commercials work from initial inquiry from agency to delivery of dailies.

Part 1:

- From conference call to The Presentation: Director's role; Sales Rep; Executive Producer
- The importance of the conference call – Role playing
- The Treatment – pictorial and text representation
- Director storyboard and video representation

Part 2:

- The budget
- Getting it done...Union vs Non-union: Branded work
- Role of Line Producer and AD in commercials and relationships with agency, etc
- View award winning spots

Part 3: Students present commercial ideas in front of class. Submit written description of commercials in narrative style.

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT: Final project selection. Prepare in A/V or storyboard format. Start thinking about Director's presentation.

SESSION 6 – 9/27

THE MUSIC VIDEO AWARDED JOB

- *The artist loves your idea and the job is awarded to you... now what?*
- *The challenges of putting together a budget: We will look at music video budgets and discuss creative approaches to allocating funds.*
- *The key crew: Hiring the appropriate team is instrumental in realizing the director's vision and bringing the concept to life. We will discuss the importance of choosing the right team (producer, DP, production designer, 1st AD, casting, styling and editor)*

Guest Speaker: Producer TBD will discuss their pre production process, scheduling a shoot with the 1st AD and working within a budget to bring the director's idea to life

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT: Begin pre production. Write a pre production strategy and breakdown how you plan to go about filming your music video and allocating costs.

SESSION 7 – 10/4

COMMERCIALS

Director/Agency relationship

DIRECTOR PRESENTATION DEVELOPMENT CONTINUES

Part 1:

- Creative Players and how selected
- Developing "the look" of a spot/Art Director involvement/mood boards
- Talent and Casting Process - agency integration
- Casting in commercials
- Present spots: casting; art direction

Part 2: Guest Speaker

Part 3:

Continue student presentation of commercials. AV scripts submitted.

Students select the creative and start working on formal presentations...explain approach, the look...

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT: Create director's presentation written and visual TREATMENT required in power point or keynote format and will be presented in next session. We, the class, become the agency.

SESSION 8 – 10/11

STRAIGHT FROM THE DIRECTOR

Guest Speakers: Q & A panel with directors TBD discuss their process from concept to delivery of a music video and commercial.

The class will share pre production challenges with each other and find solutions.

SESSION 9 – 10/18

Post production and VFX as part of Directors Treatment, and the process of editorial involvement in Advertising.

Part 1:

Integration of VFX work in commercials:

- The process - engagement of VFX houses
- Conf calls w/ VFX supervisors/directors
- Budgets
- VFX Supervision involvement in prep and shoot

Presentation of VFX spots: great and terrible

Part 2: Guest Speaker

(If needed) Balance of students presentations.

Post Production Process and Directorial Involvement in advertising

Part 1:

Editorial and Post Production

Timeline/Process From Offline through completion

Relationship of editor and director

Presentation of editorial work

Part 2: Student Projects: Begin scheduling and budgeting of commercial project. Casting and location requirements for each spot to be submitted. Production forms to be completed AND APPROVED before shooting begins. Safety in shooting/ Q&A/Student post skeds formulated.

SESSION 10 – 10/25

New Media/Integration/Branded Content/VR

Part 1:

- What constitutes New Media
- Presentation of Integrated/Branded Content work

Part 2: Guest Speaker: TBD

Part 3: Student Projects//Shooting/ Q&A/Problem solving/Students share problems with class/ Post begins

SESSION 11 – 11/1

POST PRODUCTION TO PREMIERE

- Choosing the right post team for the project
- Role of a post producer
- Low budget vs high budgets in post
- Cutdowns, teasers, BTS and additional artist requests
- Premiere: Music video websites, blogs and social media

Guest Speaker TBD

SESSION 12 – 11/8

POST PRODUCTION PANEL-Guests TBD This panel will be comprised of Post Production and VFX personnel.

SESSION 13 – 11/15

Sales Representation

THE FILM COMMUNITY IN LA/NY

Part 1:

Getting representation

Determining what kind of production is right for you

Getting work. Understanding the major production markets

Branding yourself

Part 2: Guest Speaker: Sales Rep

Part 3: Wrap-up: Questions; Problem Solving/Post production continues

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY 11/20-24

SESSION 14 – 11/29

HOW TO GET A MUSIC VIDEO REP

Guest speaker: music video sales rep discusses what record labels and artists are looking for, what makes a strong music video director and shaping a music video director's career

Class will share their shooting/ post experiences

STUDY DAYS: 12/2 - 5

SESSION 15 – 12/6

SCREENINGS

Student Presentations: Music Videos and Commercials

SESSION 16 – 12/13 TBD

SCREENINGS

Student Presentations: Music Videos and Commercials

**** 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 this letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible.***

***** Guest speakers and various assignments may be moved around to accommodate the speaker's schedule.***

******Office Hours Scheduled as necessary***

******* If you do not have a written contract giving you the right to show your music video with the artist's song (or piece of music) then the film cannot be played at festivals or shown on any broadcast including the internet.***

******** If you do have a written contract allowing you to use the piece of music then the "festival office" will be the office to handle any type of distribution including the internet.***

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

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/departments/departments-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.