

**CTPR 335 Motion Picture Editing
USC SCHOOL OF CINEMATIC ARTS**

Spring 2016

Section 18497R

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Class Meetings: Monday, 7-10 p.m. (SCA259)

Office Hours: Monday by appointment

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Syllabus subject to change

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Editing is an integral part of the modern filmmaking process. But filmmaking is a form of expression that made its entrance onto the human stage later than most. Before film people used music, writing, fine arts and drama to share their innermost thoughts. Filmmaking combines all these elements to entertain, enlighten or move us. This class is about the “whys” and the “hows” of this process as it related to editing. We will examine how and why we make an edit. Why do we choose one take and not another? On which frame do we cut? When do we linger on a shot? When do we cut sway sharply?

During the first weeks of class you will be introduced to the basic concepts of editing and will begin to learn how to work with the AVID in the USC labs. This is an introductory editing class composed of a combination of practical editing and class lectures, which will move across a wide spectrum of genres. Using professional dailies stored on the USC system, you will learn how to organize a project, set up bins, and manage media. You will learn by doing the work, and also by examining your own work and the work of your classmates. You will present assignments on a regular basis and receive notes about the work. You will be expected to execute the changes.

Learning the basic concepts of editing is useful whether you want to be a film professional or not. The editor is the last person to shape the story. Any unseen problems with the script or with an actor’s performance probably can be solved in the editing room. It is important for you to know how to get the best cut from the material you have.

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

SCA approved and supported Hard Drives

Check SCA Community website BEFORE purchasing a drive

Below is the navigation to information on what hard drive to purchase.

SCA Community:

<https://scacommunity.usc.edu/index.cfm>

Scroll down center frame to SCA Post Help and CLICK

Scroll down to Required Equipment by Class and CLICK

Choose SCA Required Hard Drives PDF and CLICK

Head phones

You will have to purchase headphones with a ¼” adapter for use in the labs.

SUGGESTED READING (These are NOT required texts but will enlarge your understanding of editing and storytelling.)

“The Lean Forward Moment: Create Compelling Stories for Film, TV, and The Web”

by Norman Hollyn; New Riders Press (mainly chapters: 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11)

“Media Composer 6: Part 1 - Editing Essentials”

by Mary Plummer; Avid Learning Series

This book comes with media that coincides with each chapter. If you are a hands-on learner, this is the way to go.

For additional information- **Foundations of Video: The Art of Editing with Norman Hollyn** on www.lynda.com

CLASS FORMAT

Each week will be a mixture of lecture, class discussion/presentations and hands-on training. Once you begin your editing assignments, a portion of class time will be devoted to sharing individual editing assignments. An editor’s work is reviewed every day in the real world, so in this class you will be asked to show your work to everyone and get their notes, if time allows.

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

There will be at least three major editing projects that deal with different editing theories and techniques. You will work in pairs editing raw footage (called “Dailies”) from Hollywood films and television shows. You will be asked to cut scenes together, show your first cuts in front of the class and get their feedback, then hand in revisions based on your notes. The Avid Media Composer is a powerful tool. You will learn the technical skills necessary to edit creatively and efficiently. All work will be copied to your hard drive. Bring your hard drive to class each week we are scheduled to be in the lab so you can show work in class.

There will also be a written scene analysis assignment and various oral presentations during the semester. (To Be Determined.)

CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PROTOCOL

The SA will take attendance at the beginning of class. Students are expected to attend class regularly. Class starts promptly at 7:00 pm. Excused absences will be granted only in the case of rare extenuating circumstances with an email of explanation prior to class. If you are absent without a valid excuse or habitually late, your grade will be affected. Just like movie theaters and concert halls, I'm going to ask every one of you to turn off all cell phones before coming to class. You may keep your laptops or smartphones/iPads/tablets etc. open and active during class. However, there will be no "text messaging" or game-playing during class.

Take notes, either written or on your laptop. (Scientists say that people retain more information if they hand-write notes but the choice is yours.)

GRADING:

Grading will be done on a standard scale with no curve:

A 600 pts.

A- 550 pts.

B 500 pts.

B- 450 pts

C 400 pts.

C- 350 pts

Editing Assignment # 1 (TBD) 100 points

Editing Assignment # 2 (TBD) 50 points

Editing Assignment # 3 (TBD) 150 points

Scene Analysis/oral class presentations 100 points

Class participation 100 points

Final exam 100 points

Total of 600 points

Attendance: More than three unexcused absences will result in a lowering of your grade 50 pts.

Tardiness: Each unexcused tardiness is minus 5 points (tardiness is arriving after 7:15)

Participation is an important part of your grade. Filmmaking and editing requires teamwork, collaboration, and the considerate sharing of opinions on your work on a daily basis. The contributions you make to the work of others are crucial to the learning process.

**Do not hesitate to ask me for help, or to discuss conceptual ideas you have for your assignments. Getting started in editing can be confusing, so please do not let concerns over the buttons keep you from a rewarding and fun experience.*

PRESENTATION OF Editing Assignments

All of your editing assignments will be copied to your hard drive and shared in class.

Your SA can help with this process.

Every assignment should have:

A Title Card at the beginning with all of the necessary information and be presented in this format:

- 2 seconds of black,
- 5 seconds of Title Card that contains the following information:
 - Your name (s)
 - Project Name (i.e.: Law & Order: SVU sc.18)
 - Version (i.e.: "First Cut," "Second Cut,")
- 2 more seconds of black
- the editing assignment itself
- then finishing with 1 second of black at the end

RULES FOR USING SCA COMPUTER LABS

- 1) No food, drinks (including bottled water), gum, or **skateboards** in the labs, Edit or Sound Edit Suites. Violation of this rule will result in suspension of Lab or Edit Room privileges. Locker area is available for food and drink storage. Skateboards must be stored in the hallway.
- 2) You must sign in at Front Desk with your Student ID and use station assigned. Any change must be done through Front Desk.
- 3) SCA Help Documents are located on each workstation desktop which will help you trouble shoot editing problems.
- 4) If you are having technical problems with your workstation when you are working independently, contact a Tech through the Front Desk or Help Desk.
- 5) Closing time is strictly enforced. Techs will give warnings when to begin saving. Please do not argue with them.
- 6) Lab Hours and Supported Hard Drive documents can be found at the Front Desk, Help Desk, and SCA Community.
- 7) Headphones with 1/4 inch adapters are required at each workstation. SCA does not supply headphones or adapters so bring your own.
- 8) Users may be bumped after their station has been vacant for a period of 30 minutes.
- 9) For locker checkout, fill out locker form in B144. Lock must be approved before locker is assigned.
- 10) SCA Help Documents are located on each workstation desktop.
- 11) Please handle all equipment and computers professionally.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The School of Cinematic Arts expects the highest standards of excellence and ethics from all of you. It is particularly important that you avoid plagiarism, cheating on our exams, or submitting any work that you or your partner have not done. Violations of this policy will result in a failing grade and be reported to the Office of Student Conduct. If you have any questions or doubts about these policies, consult "Scampus" and/or confer with your SA or me.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. Please be sure that the letter is delivered to your SA or me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30am to 5pm, Monday through Friday. Their phone number is (213) 740-0776.

WEEKLY COURSE BREAKDOWN (subject to change)

EDITING ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE DONE IN PAIRS.

Date		
Week 1 (01/11)	<u><i>Intro To The Building Blocks of Editing</i></u>	<p>Lecture: Review syllabus. Discuss course and material required. Using clips of similar subject matter-some circa 1970, others more contemporary- we examine the visual building blocks of editing and learn terminology used to describe editing. Brief introduction to the Avid and how we use it at USC.</p> <p>Homework assignment #1- Select a three to five minute clip from a film you admire. Prepare a written and oral analysis of the editorial choices you think make the scene exceptional .</p>
(01/18)	Martin Luther King Birthday	POST CLOSED
Week 2 (01/25)	<u><i>How to Use the Editing Lab</i></u> (***)Class will be held in the editing lab B120.)	<p>Lecture: Getting started. Introduction to equipment and procedures.</p> <p>Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Creating a project •Creating folders and bins •Accessing footage from ISIS •Select teams and begin work on editing assignment #1 using dailies from lab. <p>Hand in homework assignment #1. Oral presentations at a later date.</p>
(01/29)	ADD/DROP ENDS	Last day to drop/add classes

<p>3 (02/01)</p>	<p><u>Examining The Scene</u></p>	<p>Lecture and Practice: <i>Students make oral presentations about scenes they selected.</i> Using footage from our projects we will discuss- How should the scene start? How should it progress? What information do you give the audience? Students will share the first cuts of editing assignment #1 and receive notes. Homework assignment #2- TBD</p>
<p>4 (02/08)</p>	<p><u>Examining The Sequence/</u> <u>Restructuring the story</u> (***)Class will be held in the editing lab B134.)</p>	<p>Lecture : What happens when scenes are switched? What happens when scenes are deleted? Taking notes in dailies. How does that inform your editing?</p>
<p>(02/15)</p>	<p>President's Day</p>	<p>POST CLOSED</p>
<p>5 (02/22)</p>	<p><u>Examining The Cut</u> <u>Music and Sound</u> (Class will be held in the editing lab B120.)</p>	<p>Lecture: Fine-tuning the images. How a scene is shot influences how you will go about editing it. Practice: Begin work on editing assignment #2 using dailies from lab. The power of sound How music and sound effects can accentuate your scene and reinforce story and emotion. Moving characters around. Motivating cuts. Editing room protocol. Editing assignment #1 due. Homework assignment #3- TBD</p>
<p>6 (02/29)</p>	<p><u>The Action Sequence</u></p>	<p>Lecture : Illustrate the building blocks of an action sequence. Review how music and sound effects can be used to accentuate an action sequence. How is this similar to or different from other types of scenes? Practice: Students will share the first cuts of editing assignment #2 and receive notes.</p>

7 (03/07)	<u>Humor In Editing</u>	Lecture : Screen samples of comedy from silent films through current media. Do the same rules of editing drama apply to editing comedy?
03/13-20	<u>Spring Recess</u>	POST CLOSED
8 (03/21)	<u>Opticals/VFX</u>	Lecture: Manipulating image in the service of story. Creating something that does not exist. (Possible guest lecturer.) Practice: <i>Editing assignment 2 due</i>
9 (03/28)	<u>Style</u> (Class will be held in the editing lab B118.)	Lecture : Screen examples of different “styles” of editing. Practice: Begin work on editing assignment #3 using dailies from lab.
10 (04/04)	<u>Documentaries</u>	Lecture : Basics of documentary editing. How being true to the facts can strengthen storytelling. What part do ethics play in documentary filmmaking. Homework assignment #3- TBD
11 (04/11)	<u>Experimental Film</u> Short Films: Commercials and Music Videos (***Class will be held in the editing lab B120.)	Lecture : Editing difficult material. Cutting longer form vs. shorts Students will share the first cuts of editing assignment #3 and receive notes.
12 (04/18)	<u>Last class</u>	Final projects due
(05/09)	Final exam (written)	