

USC School of Cinematic Arts
CTPR 335 Motion Picture Editing, Section 18497R
Class Meetings: Monday 7pm-10pm
Location: SCA 259
<http://classes.usc.edu/term-20163/course/ctpr-335>

Instructor: Margie Goodspeed, Film Editor
mgoodspe@usc.edu
Office Hours by appointment
SCA Room 410

SA: Victor Pourcel • pourcel@usc.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Picture Editors are storytellers. Unlike writers and lyricists who use words, we use visual images, dialogue, sound, visual effects and music to tell our stories. How, why and when we use these elements and tools is vital. Why should I cut at this frame as opposed to that one? When might it be more affective to use off-camera dialog as opposed to playing dialog on-camera? Why should a music cue start at this point in a scene as opposed to that point? How might a transition from one scene to the next be used to the greatest advantage?

CTPR 335 is an introductory Practice and Theory course: students will learn the *HOWS* and the *WHYS* of motion picture editing. The Theory aspect of the course will be rooted in the art of the edit, focused on practical applications and techniques as opposed to theoretical criticism.

Practice: This class is a hands-on course where you will learn how to use Avid Media Composer, (the leading professional software in the motion picture industry). You will edit scenes from profession Movies/TV, add sound effects and music, and explore visual effects and style tools. You will also learn essential technical and organizational skills: how to set up a project, organize bins, manage media, and best practices to back up and save project files.

Theory: Editing, or *Montage*, is the assembly and juxtaposition of images. There is an alchemy that happens when all the elements are at play, in time, creating an experience for the viewer. This happens in news shows and feature films, in commercials and TV shows. Visual language is an integral part of our daily lives. In this class students will not only learn the tools to deconstruct and understand their responses to motion pictures in all forms, but will be prepared to make conscious and precise editorial choices to create a desired experience for the viewer.

By the end of the semester you will understand the empowering tools, the art, and perhaps even the joys (yahoo) of being a motion picture editor.

Students will use SCA LAB computers and AVID software for projects, no need to buy these, but you will need the following ON FIRST DAY OF CLASS...

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT TWO PIECES OF EQUIPMENT ONLY

1. One SCA approved and supported Hard Drive

GO TO: <https://cinema.usc.edu/Laptops/> If link isn't working, find it at www.cinema.usc.edu > students & parents > computing requirements > Hard Drives

2. Head phones

You need headphones with a ¼" jack or adapter for use in the labs.

OPTIONAL – Logitech silicone AVID Media Composer keyboard cover: <http://www.videoguys.com/logickeyboard-apple-ultra-thin-keyboard-logicskin-for-avid-media-composer.html>

HELPFUL RESOURCES AND READING – NOT REQUIRED

- *The Lean Forward Moment: Create Compelling Stories for Film, TV, and The Web* by Norman Hollyn; New Riders Press
- For all things SCA: <http://knowledgebase.sca.usc.edu/>
- Students can supplement class instruction of AVID Media Composer by reviewing the [Lynda.com](http://www.usc.edu/its/lynda/) tutorial. [Lynda.com](http://www.usc.edu/its/lynda/) is free to USC Students: <http://www.usc.edu/its/lynda/>
- The AVID Genius Bar: Toi Juan Shannon, an AVID Certified instructor, and John Rosenberg will be helping students and faculty at the AVID Genius bar located in B149:
 - MON & THURS - 1:00-6:00pm, Toi Juan Shannon
 - FRI - 11:00am-1:00pm, John Rosenberg

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 showing editing assignments, discussion of the effectiveness of the piece, and general supportive dialogue of challenges and notes on improving the piece. The world of critique, both giving and receiving, is an essential part of the editors' world and the editorial process. Let's get good at it!

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS + Mid-Term Presentation and Final Solo Project

There will be a short, written scene analysis assignment to get us warmed up.

You will work in pairs cutting raw footage (called "Dailies") from Hollywood Industry films and television shows. You will be asked to cut scenes together, show your first cuts in front of the class and get feedback. You will add sound effects, music and visual effects to your edits as we learn those techniques. **Bring your hard drive to class each week so you can show work in class.**

Mid-Term – Scene analysis oral presentation.

Final Project – Student choice with instructor approval. This is a solo Editing Project (as opposed to pairs).

CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PROTOCOL

Students are expected to attend class regularly and be punctual. Please let me know if circumstances make attendance impossible. Any reasonable excuse will be honored but communication is essential. Also, don't let your editing partner down!

There will be no use of cell phones in class. Laptops may remain open only if they are used to take notes. Non-observance of the above will affect your grade and/or the amount of class time you will receive in discussing your edited scenes. Remember, showing up and giving our attention is an act of generosity to the whole class.

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	50 points
Editing Assignment # 2	75 points
Editing Assignment # 3	75 points
Editing Assignment # 4	100 points
Scene Analysis	25 points
Mid-Term oral presentation	75 points
Class participation	100 points
<u>Final exam/Editing Finale</u>	<u>100 points</u>
Total :	600 points

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

Tardiness: Each unexcused tardy is minus 5 points (tardiness is arriving after 7:10).

Extra Credit: At Instructor discretion, always available to all students.

Participation is an important part of your grade. I am a firm believer in two heads are better than one. This is a collaborative process—we are audiences and critics as well as creators.

PRESENTATION OF Editing Assignments

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

Your SA and lab assistants can also help with this process. Every assignment should have a Title Card at the beginning with all of the listed information and be presented in this format:

1. 2 seconds of black
2. 5 seconds of Title Card that contains the following information:
 - Your name(s)
 - Project Name (e.g., Law&Order:SVU sc.18)
 - Version (e.g., "First Cut," "Second Cut,")
3. 2 seconds of black
4. Your edited scene
5. 1 second of black

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.
- 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) If you are having technical problems with your workstation, contact a Tech through the Front Desk or Help Desk.
- 4) Closing time is strictly enforced. Techs will give warnings when to begin saving. Please do not argue with them.
- 5) Lab Hours and Supported Hard Drive documents can be found at the Front Desk, Help Desk, and SCA Community.
- 6) Headphones with 1/4 inch adapters are required at each workstation. SCA does not supply headphones or adapters.
- 7) Users may be bumped after their station has been vacant for a period of 30 minutes.
- 8) For locker checkout, fill out locker form in B144. Lock must be approved before locker is assigned.
- 9) SCA Help Documents are located on each workstation desktop.
- 10) Please handle all equipment and computers professionally.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The School of Cinematic Arts expects the highest standards of excellence and ethics from all students. 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.

A NOTE ON TRIGGERS

During the course of this class we will be viewing a variety of visual media. Although I cannot predict what material might be a trigger for an individual student, it is my intention to make this class a safe space for learning about motion picture editing. If you have concerns, please privately communicate them to me so that we can be clear and have protocols in place to protect both your privacy and your right to learn in a safe environment. There will be no viewing of rape culture material.

WEEKLY COURSE PLAN:

All material below is subject to change based on various factors including how quickly we move through AVID instruction and adjustments of the workload. **Editing assignments will be done in pairs.**

Week 1 (Jan. 9)

Lecture: Introduction to Motion Picture Editing

- Review the syllabus
- What is editing and why does it matter? Visual language literacy in the age of mega-media exposure.
- How do we talk about editing? Watch a scene and discuss.
- Watch Hitchcock talk about montage theory

Practice:

• From 8-10 PM we will have an introductory tutorial on using the SCA labs and Avid Media Composer in the editing Labs.

- Formatting Drives

Homework Assignments:

- SCENE ANALYSIS: *Pick a scene from a favorite movie or show to analyze in editorial terms. Write down 5 editorial comments about it, make at least 2 comments about technique (as in, how did the editorial choices create the experience for the viewer?) Bullet points are fine for this. Make sure to identify the visual media analyzed and include a link if possible. (DUE Jan 16)*
- Watch Lynda.com “Performing basic edits to build a foundation”
- Format your Hard Drive

Week 2 (Jan. 16) MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY – NO CLASS

Week 3 (Jan. 23) • Class will be held in AVID LAB B120

Lecture: Getting Set-Up

- Best Practices for success using AVID

Practice:

- Pick Editing Partners
- Create a Project
- Create folders and bins
- Access media from AVID ISIS online storage system
- Reading a Lined Script, understanding coverage
- Organizing Dailies for cutting in Frame View and script order
- How to watch dailies and take notes/understand screening notes format for homework

Editing in the LAB:

• Use the knowledgebase.sca.usc.com >> CTPR PRODUCTION >> 335 resource for how to connect to ISIS and make basic edits.

Assignments due next class:

- Watch Dailies for scene 55, make notes on given screening notes form, and bring this to class
- Start editing scene 55 with partner (Editing Assignment #1)
- Watch Lynda.com “Performing basic edits to build a foundation” if you are floundering with AVID editing.
- Bring hard drive with AVID PROJECTS folder to class

Week 4 (Jan. 30) • Class will be held in AVID LAB B120

Lecture: Editor as First Audience

- Watch Scorsese lecture
- Editing as a contact sport. Where’s your attention?
- Discuss Mike Nichol’s idea of “whose scene is it?”

Practice: • Continue editing Scene 55 from 500 DAYS OF SUMMER • More editing techniques: Replace edit, extend, extract and lift on keyboard • How to make title card • Finessing production sound

Assignments due next class:

- Finish first cut of scene 55 (Editing Assignment #1)

- Make title card to ID your scene [Watch Lynda.com “Creating a basic lower third title with Avid Title tool” for brush up as needed]
- Bring hard drive with AVID PROJECTS folder to class

Week 5 (Feb. 6) • Class will be held in AVID LAB B120

Practice: More tools

- WATCH SCENE 55 cuts (Editing Assignment #1)
- Instructor notes to teams on changes to cut scenes...in lab re-cutting.
- How to get the next assignment GLADIATOR Sc. 57 organized, create project
- Multi-Cam synching lesson

Assignments due next class:

- Get Sc 57 organized for cutting: sub-clip takes, at least one MultiGroupClip, make screening notes

Week 6 (Feb. 13)

Lecture: Editing as Process

- Editor’s Cut vs. Final Cut in THE LIZZIE McGUIRE MOVIE

Lecture: Use of Space and Time, Physical and Psychological

- How to engage the viewer (keeping the balloon afloat)
- WATCH ACTION SCENES FROM MOVIES

Practice:

- Questions answered about AVID
- Discuss MID-TERM oral presentation requirements.

Assignments due next class (Feb 27):

- Editing Assignment #2 – first cut of Gladiator

Week 7 (Feb. 20) – NO CLASS

Week 8 (Feb. 27) • Class will be held in AVID LAB B120

Practice:

- Watch editing assignments: Sc. 57 GLADIATOR
- Spotting a scene for music and SFX
- Track assignment – color tracks
- Understanding AVID MEDIA FILES
- Adding media from ISIS SFX and MX sources
- Adding media from external source (MX downloaded onto your drive)
- Basic Audio Editing [see Lydia.com for brush up as needed]
- Timeline Views – expanded tracks for key-framing
- Start downloading (SFX) for Sc. 57 - this is Editing Assignment #3
- Questions answered about AVID, Mid-Term

Assignment:

- Prepare MID-TERM oral presentation
- Download/Organize SFX/MX for Sc. 57 [due March 20]

Week 9 (March 6)

MID-TERM Oral Presentations

SPRING BREAK – MARCH 12-19

Week 10 (March 20)) • Class will be held in AVID LAB B120

Practice:

- Peak at using the AVID effects pallet. Discussion of VFX software, SAPPHIRE.
- Class time for editing SFX with Instructor one-on-one

Assignments due next class:

- Continue to edit SFX/MX to GLADIATOR SC
- Read Tarkovsky chapter from SCULPTING IN TIME, watch Odessa Steps scene - MONTAGE

Week 11 (March 27)

Lecture: Experimental Film/Film as Anthropology

- Chick Strand, Maya Deren
- **Discuss FINAL**

Practice:

- Watch SFX/MX Editing Assignment #3 COMPLETE

Assignment due next class:

- Gather materials for Editing Assignment #4: Cut a Promo or Music video, use VFX/Style

Week 12 (April 3) • **Class will be held in AVID LAB B120**

Lecture: Creating something from Nothing

- Watch VFX heavy title sequence

Practice:

- Working with Style/VFX • Basic Color Correction

Assignment due next class:

- Start Editing Assignment #4: Cut a Promo or Music video, use VFX/Style

Week 13 (April 10) • **Class will be held in AVID LAB B120**

Lecture: Cultivating Moments – Editing as Meta-performance

Practice:

- Importing Media
- Work on WIP edits of Music Video or Trailer with VFX/Style

Assignment due next class:

- Continue refining your cut
- Prepare to talk (w/instructor) about what your FINAL PROJECT will be to get approval.

Week 14 (April 17) • **Class will be held in AVID LAB B120**

Lecture: Script to Screen – The Dream and its Realization

Practice:

- Watch editing assignment #4 COMPLETE
- Review + Exporting
- One-on-one check in on what INDIVIDUAL Final Projects will be, get started/continue
- Start work on Final Projects

Assignment:

- Work on individual Final Projects

Week 15 (April 24)

Possible Guest Lecture

- How do we read visual language now that we are editors?
- Discuss practicalities of the life and work of a professional editor.

Assignment:

- Work on INDIVIDUAL Final Project

Week 16 (May 1) **NO CLASS**

Week 17 (May 8) **Watch Final Projects extravaganza.**

NON-REQUIRED ADDITIONAL READING (this list is a compilation by past Instructors of 335. I have only read the first four listed and loved them:)

<http://magazine.creativecow.net/article/style-emotion-vamping-on-the-vampire-diaries>

A fantastic article Nancy Forner, ACE wrote about her experiences editing "The Vampire Diaries" AESTHETIC and PRACTICAL

Murch, Walter: *In the Blink of An Eye: A Perspective on Film Editing* 2nd Edition
Silman-James Press. AESTHETIC.

Rosenblum, Ralph. *When The Shooting Stops... The Cutting Begins*. Rosenblum, a veteran film editor who cut many of Woody Allen's early films, talks about his experiences both in and out of the editing room. More raconteurial than instructional, it does give a nice sense of the style of a colorful editor -- both in terms of editing and politics. AESTHETIC.

Tarkovsky, Andrei. *Sculpting in Time*

Ondaatje, Michael. *The Conversations: Walter Murch and the Art of Editing Film*. This is an *incredible* series of interviews with Murch. Far more accessible and interesting than *In The Blink of an Eye*, it goes over many of the real world concerns in shaping characters and filmic story telling. AESTHETIC.

Oldham, Gabriella. *First Cut: Conversations with Film Editors*. This is the book mentioned above. An incredible series of interviews with some of the top, most thoughtful, editors around. AESTHETIC

Koppelman, Charles. *Behind the Seen: How Walter Murch Edited Cold Mountain Using Apple's Final Cut Pro and What This Means for Cinema*. This is a really great book which describes what it was *really* like in the editing room on COLD MOUNTAIN, from the prep work that Murch typically does before a film is shot, through the later previews. Rather than a book about Final Cut (though it does talk a lot about that) it is more a look at the real world of editing. HIGHLY RECOMMENDED. AESTHETIC and PRACTICAL.

Arijon, Daniel. *Grammar of The Film Language*. A very detailed, thorough and incredibly tedious (but valuable) look at how to block a scene to create the best shots for editing. If you've ever tried to plan shots for a group of eight people around a dinner table, you'll appreciate this book. TECHNICAL

Bayes, Steve *The Avid Handbook*. This is an excellent reference book for the intermediate Avid editor, complete with tips and tricks on organizational skills, the Avid program, and the hardware. TECHNICAL

Boorman, John and Donahue, Walter. *PROJECTIONS*. This is a periodic book series that often includes interviews with directors. Some of their discussions are quite amazing in their description of storytelling. The excerpt from Walter Murch's interview about THE ENGLISH PATIENT that I use in class originally appeared in this series. AESTHETIC.

Cohen, Steve. *Avid Agility (3rd Edition)*. This is a great book that encompasses both basic and intermediate tips for the Avid Media Composer written by a working editor who advised AVID on the functionality of Media Composer. TECHNICAL

Crittenden, Roger. *Fine Cuts: The Art of European Film Editing*. AESTHETIC

Dancyger, Ken. *The Technique of Film Editing*.

Davis, Richard. *Complete Guide To Film Scoring*. We will be discussing film editing and

music during one of our classes. This is a good companion for those of you who want to dig deeper into the topic.

Dmytryk, Edward. *On Film Editing*. A great discussion of editing, from a personal point of view. Also valuable from the same author are *On Screen Writing*, *On Screen Directing*, and *On Screen Acting* and *On Film*. AESTHETIC.

LoBrutto, Vincent. *Selected Takes: Film Editors On Editing*. A wonderful series of interviews with some of the top editors of the past and present. AESTHETIC.

Pepperman, Richard D. *The Eye Is Quicker: Film Editing: Making a Good Film Better*. A profusely illustrated discussion of film editing, using frame grabs from well-known movies, to make general points about different styles of editing. AESTHETIC.

Rabiger, Michael. *Directing: Film Techniques and Aesthetics*. A very detailed study of the issues in directing. Its discussion of editing is very valuable for what it reveals about the storytelling mind, from the director's point of view. AESTHETIC.

Reisz, Karel, and Millar, Gavin. *The Technique of Film Editing*. One of the seminal texts on editing. While outdated in terms of some stylistic choices, it remains one of the classic texts on editing. AESTHETIC

Rubin, Michael. *Nonlinear - A Field Guide to Digital Video and Film Editing*. A description of the history and equipment in non-linear digital editing. Pictures of the various editing systems with descriptions of each one fill up most of the back part of the book. TECHNICAL

Solomons, Tony. *The Avid Film Editing Room Handbook*. This book is an excellent introductory work to the Avid. Though it isn't a how-to book in the classic sense, it does give the new Avid user a good sense of how to perform varying levels of tasks. TECHNICAL

Thompson, Roy. *The Grammar of the Edit*. AESTHETIC.

Truffaut, Francis. *Hitchcock/Truffaut*. A series of interviews done by then-critic Truffaut of the master director, Alfred Hitchcock. It is here that his incredible theory on surprise vs. suspense is mentioned. AESTHETIC.

STUDENT SURVEY

Name: _____ Major: _____

- What kind of editing experience have you had at USC or elsewhere?

- What editing software are you familiar with?

- What is the reason you chose this course?

- Name three things you hope to learn in this course.

- List your five favorite films...and why (this doesn't have to be about editing).

- List your five favorite TV shows...and why (this doesn't have to be about editing).