

**USC Spring Semester 2017  
CTPR 327**

**MOTION PICTURE CAMERA - COURSE OVERVIEW**

Introduction to the theory and practice of motion picture photography. Students work in groups to shoot in class exercises on HD. The emphasis is on controlling the image through the use of camera placement, lens selection, movement, lighting and composition. Open to all undergraduate students.

***Two Class Sections***

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<b>Tuesday Instructor:</b>	<b><i>6:30p – 9:30p Gary Wagner</i></b>	<b><i>Soundstage #3 310.339.9626 Cell garywagn@usc.edu</i></b>
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<b>Office Hours:</b>	<b><i>SCA 410</i></b>	<b><i>by appointment</i></b>
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<b>Student Assistant:</b>	<b><i>Elias Ginsberg</i></b>	<b><i>402.321.3571 Cell edginsbe@usc.edu</i></b>
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**3 Units**

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<b>Wednesday Instructor:</b>	<b><i>6:30p – 9:30p Tristan Whitman</i></b>	<b><i>Soundstage #3 310-714-0563 Cell tristanwhitman@sbcglobal.net</i></b>
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<b>Office Hours:</b>	<b><i>SCA 419</i></b>	<b><i>by appointment</i></b>
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<b>Student Assistant:</b>	<b><i>Lars Struck</i></b>	<b><i>305-588-3590 Cell struck@usc.edu</i></b>
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**3 Units**

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“Art is the lie that makes us realize the truth.”

Pablo Picasso

**Course Objective:** To learn how to operate camera and lighting equipment and to begin to "see" light, manipulate it and to accurately record the images you pre-visualize on HD Video.

**Course Description:** Cinema-TV 327 is an excellent introduction to the creative and technical challenges of motion picture photography. The content of the course will emphasize learning how to express ideas, moods, story and character using basic photographic and lighting principals to control the images you create to express ideas, mood, story and character.

**What to expect from the course:**

You will be exposed to a wide variety of cinematic challenges that will enable you to develop your "eye". You will learn how to expose HD, as well as how to manipulate the light, camera and content of your "scenes" into a meaningful, conceptual presentation. If you commit to this learning process you will finish the course with a basic competence in these areas and should have a more refined idea concerning how best to pursue your development in filmmaking and in particular, cinematography. This is an ideal introduction to motion picture photography for aspiring cinematographers, as well as for those interested in directing, editing, art directing, writing and producing. The first few class meetings will be lectures designed to give you the basics to get you going. The remainder of the meetings will be photographing in-class "Scene Projects", the guidelines for which I will provide. Equipment is not available outside of class periods.

**Safe Conduct.** The stage is a place where people can be seriously injured or equipment damaged beyond repair. Pay attention.

**Dress Code:** The sound stage is an industrial work environment. All students must come to class prepared for physical work. You must wear long pants and close toed shoes. Shorts, skirts, dresses, sandals and flip flops will not be allowed. If you come inappropriately attired, you will be asked to leave and will be marked absent. I also strongly suggest you bring leather palmed work gloves.

**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 of the 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](mailto:sarc@usc.edu) describes reporting options and other resources.

### **In-class Scene Projects:**

Cinematography is first "seeing" reality, interpreting that reality, then recreating our interpretation of that reality on HD. Having the in-class projects based on existing works gives you the framework and context to overcome challenges while you create the photographic images you want. There is no reason to become unduly absorbed in the exact contextual details (i.e. acting, art direction, costumes, etc.) of the scene to the point of forgetting what the class is about - learning about cinematography. This is not a class in set design or props – we can use our imagination. \*No weapons, real or otherwise will be allowed in your scene projects.

The Scene Projects will consist of shooting HD on the stage. Depending on the number of people in the class we will form 2-3 groups. Each person will be assigned specific crew responsibilities within the group and will rotate those responsibilities for each weekly exercise. Crews will shoot 3 or more shots for each exercise. The results of those exercises will be viewed and discussed the following class period.

I will provide you with specific guidelines for your in class projects. You will be required to work with your individual groups outside of class to create your shot list and a detailed plan for each in class project.

Each week, the cinematographers are to come prepared with still images of the scene they wish to emulate, a copy of their script, shot list, story boards, floor plan and a brief synopsis describing the visual intention of the scene (what it should look like).

**Demonstrations:** Throughout the semester I will demonstrate use of equipment and various lighting techniques. I may also screen a number of clips to help illustrate various cinematic concepts.

### **Readings:**

Throughout the semester I will refer to information and articles in these sources. You will be expected to have working knowledge of the material.

Recommended Readings will be from:

**The Bare Bones Camera Course for Film and Video** by Tom Schroepel

**The Filmmaker's Eye: Learning (and Breaking) the Rules of Cinematic Composition** by Gustavo Mercado

Current Articles of interest are available on the class section of Google Drive

### **Required:**

- Weekly Handouts and/or downloadable PDF files will be available on the class section of Google Drive

**Grading:**

Mid-Term Exam	25 points
Notebook Assignment	20 points
Participation	10 points
Scene Projects (prep, shoot & wrap)	20 points
Final group project	15 points
Final written Exam	10 points

**Attendance:** Each unexcused absence lowers grade one step.  
(i.e. from an A to an A- or from an A- to a B+)

**Tardiness:** Two late arrivals to class = one unexcused absence

1. The Mid-Term Exam is a written individual test of your understanding of the material presented through lectures and reading assignments.
2. The Notebook is an individual assignment. **NO LATE NOTEBOOKS ACCEPTED!!**
3. Participation is essential to the collaborative process of filmmaking. It is essential that each of you participate in this class. Your thoughts, questions and ideas are valuable to the class as a whole.
4. Scene Projects are graded both individually and for the group. Each cinematographer must submit the paperwork (described above) for their scene.
5. Final Project requires the participation of all the students in the class. (The instructor reserves the right to change this to an individual written exam.)

**Attendance**

For an absence to be excused, you will need to provide me with a doctor's note or other form of verifiable evidence pertaining to a personal or family emergency.

**Missing a Quiz or Exam, Incompletes:** The only acceptable excuses for missing a quiz or exam or for taking an incomplete in the course are personal illness or a family emergency. Students must inform the instructor **before** the quiz or exam and present verifiable evidence in order for a make up to be scheduled. Students who wish to take an incomplete must also present documentation of the problem to the instructor before the final grades are submitted.

**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](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.

"Amateurs concern themselves with equipment, professionals concern themselves with schedules, and masters concern themselves with light."

## Course Schedule

*(This schedule is subject to change as necessary and at the discretion of the instructor)*

Class 1 January 9	Introduction to Class Class Overview, Assign Readings, Lecture on Mechanics of Camera & Exposure
Class 2 January 16	Review Mechanics of Camera & Exposure Lecture: Exposure Latitude, Into the NX5 Camera Demonstration: Stage Safety, Electrical Distribution
Class 3 January 23	Introduction to Grip and Lighting Equipment Lecture: Color Temp and Color Use of Light Meters <b>Basic Exercise #1 - Exposure Latitude – w/ 1 Light Only</b>
Class 4 January 30	Lecture: Space and Lenses, Depth of Field <b>Basic Exercise #2 - A Sense of Space &amp; Field of View</b>
Class 5 February 6	<b>Basic Exercise #3 - Lighting Basics w/ 3 Pt. Lighting</b>
Class 6 February 13	<b>Basic Exercise #4 - A Sense of Place – Lighting Mood w/ 2 Lts.</b>
Class 7 February 20	<b>Basic Exercise #5 - Hard Lt vs. Soft Lt</b>
Class 8 February 27	<b>MID-TERM EXAM</b>
Class 9 March 6	<b>Basic Exercise #6 – CU Faces &amp; Matching shots</b>
March 13	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>
Class 10 March 20	<b>Exercise #7 - Motivated Source Lighting</b>
Class 11 March 27	<b>Exercise #8 – Replicate a Scene from a Film/TV Show</b> <b><u>STILL PHOTO NOTEBOOKS DUE</u></b>
Class 12 April 3	<b>Exercise #9 – Product Photography</b>
Class 13 April 10	<b>Exercise #10 – Shoot a Music Video (Edit for Final Screening Class)</b>
Class 14 April 17	<b>Exercise #11 – Shoot Commercial (Edit for Final Screening Class)</b>
Class 15 April 24	Final Class Mtg <b>Shoot Final Exercise #12 - Mixing Color Temperatures (Edit for Final Screening Class)</b>
May 1	<b>STUDY DAYS</b>
Final Exam May 8	<b>Screen Final Projects</b> <b>Final Written Exam</b>

