

CTPR 421 INTERMEDIATE EDITING.
USC SCHOOL OF CINEMATIC ARTS

Spring 2018

Instructor: Rick Shaine
rickshai@aol.com
Office Hours by appointment

SA: Katie Thiel
thiel@usc.edu

Class Meetings: Wednesday 7 - 10 p.m. (SCA 363), Section 18532

Editing feels almost like sculpting or a form of continuing the writing process
- Sydney Pollack

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Motion Picture Editors are story tellers who use images rather than written words. They embellish these images with dialog, sound, music, and visual effects to tell their stories. In this class we will learn how to read a script for story, analyze the shot footage for story, and put it all together to fulfill that story.

This course will cover both the theory and technique of editing. You will edit and re-edit weekly, a series of scenes designed to expand your editing experiences. The accumulation of the knowledge gleaned from these exercises should give you an overview of the complete process - aesthetic and practical - enabling you to make *informed* editing decisions.

One of the goals of this class is to prepare you to assume a role on a CTPR 480, CTPR 479/486, or CTPR 484 Class, whether as an editor or other creator. The skills you practice and learn should also prepare you to edit in the outside world.

You will be given a working knowledge of how to organize an editing room and operate the various tools you need to make your editing decisions. Toi Juan Shannon will be conducting classes in the Lab on weeks two and eleven to teach you these technical skills. You will be given a background in assistant editor techniques such as synching in the Avid, digitizing, multicam, creating EDLs/AAFs, and organizing and media management.

Projects will be edited on Avid, the principal non-linear digital editing system used in features and television today. You will be editing in pairs, and will be expected to edit your projects outside of class, then bring your work into class to present and discuss with others including the instructor. You will learn how to assimilate outside input (a constant in editing) and refine your work.

Editing is at the heart of all filmmaking. Directors, writers, cinematographers all have to have an understanding of editing to be successful. In this class students will learn how to prepare, to think, to create, and analyze editorially, and how to define and show their own point of view.

CLASS FORMAT

In the first class I will discuss an overview of the editing process and discuss how the class will work. I will show some clips for discussion. Students will divide into pairs.

In succeeding classes I will make a presentation about the weekly topic (i.e. *preparing to cut*), show relevant clips, encourage questions and classroom discussion, and leave time to view and analyze classroom exercises. We will not always get to view all student work in class and I will ask some of you to post it online for me to view and comment on.

Every editing pair will be expected to complete the editing assignment for each class. You will also be responsible to complete re-editing notes I give you for the following class.

In addition to weeks two and eleven, we will have some time in the lab to go over specific editing questions you may have.

Please **turn off all cell phones in class**. You may have laptops or tablets open in class, but only to take notes about classroom presentations or discussion.

In addition to classroom exercises, students are encouraged to bring in other editing projects for discussion if we have time in class or else post them for discussion. Similarly if there is a favorite scene in a feature or TV show which illustrates an editing point, students are encouraged to share these scenes with the class.

WEEKLY COURSE BREAKDOWN

Class 1 (Jan 10)

Intro to Editing

How to approach script: analysis of written scene,
whose scene is it? where is the conflict? lean forward moment?

Looking at dailies and thinking about them

How to take notes and remember key moments

Lined Script

Preparing to cut

Assignment:

Mystery Editing Seq

Class 2 (Jan. 17)

Avid Editing Lab #1

Taught by Toi Juan Shannon

1) **Understanding workflow from input to output:**

Offline/online, Central drive (Isis or Nexus work space) vs local drive (external hard drives), Copying from project folders to workspace, understanding format and frame rate.

2) Creating and working within the Avid project:

Creating the organization/naming with folders and bins, Project settings, User settings, Customizing the keyboard and workspaces.

3) Making a Quick Time movie for viewing dailies and cuts and Exporting

4) Basic Editor Skills

Class 3 (Jan. 24)

Final Prep and Starting to Edit

Organizing Avid Bins

Viewing organized dailies

Final notes, Markers, pulling pieces

What is your intension for the scene?

Where to start? When to cut? Where to cut?

Dialog prelaps and overlaps

Rule of Threes

Keep rolling

View and assess

Show Editing Exercise

Begin Cut First Scene

Class 4 (Jan. 31)

Revise and Recut

Respond to Feedback

What changes can fulfill the original intent for the scene?

Does your original idea have to be changed in any way?

Restructuring

Pacing

The key relationship with the director or producer

How to deal with an audience?

Notes Given on First Scene

Class 5 (Feb. 7)

Sound Design

How can sound contribute to your intension for a scene?

Spotting Sound, Foley, and ADR

Sound used for story

Stylized sound

Mixing

Begin Cut Second Scene

Class 6 (Feb. 14)

Music

Spotting music

Musical style

Music enhancing story

Temp score

The elements of a final score

Notes Given on Second Sc.

Class 7 (Feb. 21)

Action Editing

Different Styles

Telling the story

Backed by sound or music?

Begin Cut Third Scene

Class 8 (Feb 28.)

Visual Effects

Avid opticals

Saphire Plug-in

Blue Screen

Editing process for visual fx.

Notes Given on Third Scene

Class 9 (Mar. 7)

Comedy Editing

Setting up the Beat

Pacing

Character comedy

Slapstick

Begin Cut Fourth Scene

Class 10 (Mar.21)

Horror and Suspense

Setting up the Scare

What is film tension and how to grow it

Notes Given on Fourth Scene

Begin Cut Fifth Scene

Class 11 (Mar. 28)

Avid Lab 2

Preparing for online

-adding bars, tone and slates

-cleaning up video and audio tracks

-adding titles and end credits

-adding final vfx

-video mix down

Preparing turn over for picture

-linking back to AMA

-transcoding to high resolution

Preparing turn over for sound

-AAF export

-adding visible time code

-JPEG QT movie

Editor Skills

Extra tools, FX palette and FX Editor, using basic Avid Fx (ie timewarp, green screen), and extra sound tools (ie EQ, D-Verb, Filters). Color Timing

Class 12 (Apr. 4)

Notes Given on Fifth Scene

Documentaries

Following a written treatment, or creating one
Selects and non-selects
Assembling sequences
Seeing the story emerge
Adding voice-over or narration

Class 13 (Apr. 11)

Begin Cut 6th Sc.
(Final Project)

Continuity and Structure

Why and How to alter the beats of a story
Changing the opening or Having a different End
Creating new transitions
Losing dialog or whole scenes

Class 14 (Apr. 18)

Feedback on Final Project to date

Career in Editing?

What jobs are available?
Networking
Building a Reel
Determining Goals

Class 15 (Apr.25)

Students show outside work
Bring in Favorite Edited Scenes from
Features, TV, or other Media.

Summary and Review

Possible guest speaker

May 2, 2018

Cuts Must Be Uploaded by 3:00 pm
Students must include a Written
Scene Analysis in which they state,
scene by scene, their Editorial
Intention.

Final Projects Due

Course Requirements

You and your partner will be required to edit and/or re-edit a scene every week. You will present it at the next class - either in class or on-line - and accept criticism from your classmates and me. You will then re-edit the scenes for a screening the following week.

You will be required to attend two Avid Lab Classes taught during regular class time in the Post Production Area (room TBA). These Labs are essential for your editing progress.

At the end of the semester you will assemble a few consecutive scenes from a film that you will be editing into one long sequence with sound effects and music. The

Wednesday (May 2) of Finals Week you will post the Final Sequence along with a written scene analysis explaining your editing choices.

Students will be required to **attend and participate in Every Class**. Written explanations will be necessary in advance for all excused absences. Unexcused absences **will be reflected in the course grade**. In addition students are expected to be **in class on time**. If you have a valid reason for missing a class, please let me know via email by the evening before the class.

Since film editors are judged by their ability to complete their work in a timely manner, you will similarly be responsible for completing each stage of every project on time and in a professional manner.

RESEARCH AND READING

lynda.com: Very helpful Tutorials that will further your knowledge of the Avid and answer Avid technical questions that you have. (available at <http://itservices.usc.edu/lynda>). You are encouraged to explore these Tutorials!

Avid Editing by Sam Kaufman and Ashley Kennedy. This book goes over many of the basics of the Avid Media Composer (with the exception of the latest 8.0 changes) and can be used in combination with the lynda.com courses.

The Lean Forward Moment by Norman Hollyn. Highly recommended book by a colleague and professor here at USC. This book breaks down and clarifies important stages in storytelling. It explores important considerations for the editor, as well as the other significant movie crafts.

Avid Uncut by Steven Hullfish, *Avid Agility* by Steve Cohen, *Avid Media Composer Cookbook* Ben Hershhelder: Three great books for Avid technical knowledge.

In the Blink of An Eye by Walter Much. An interesting personal view about the basis for editing decisions from a top, innovative film editor.

The Conversations: Michael Ondaatje, Walter Murch and The Art of Editing Film. A fascinating series of discussions from collaborators on *The English Patient* about story telling and shaping performances.

First Cut: Conversations with Film Editors by Gabriella Oldham. Valuable, in depth interviews with working editors .

Selected Takes: Film Editors On Editing by Vincent Lo Brutto. Another series of illuminating interviews with editors.

The Technique of Film Editing by Karel Reisz and Gavin Miller. The standard text explaining editing, but it's a little dated.

When The Shooting Stops...The Cutting Begins by Ralph Rosenbloom and Robert Karen. A fascinating account of the editing process of a number of important films Rosenbloom edited including *The Pawn Broker* and *Annie Hall*, emphasizing the key role of the editor.

Dream Repairman: Adventures in Editing by Jim Clark. Another fascinating memoir by a great editor.

On Filmmaking: An Introduction to the Craft of the Director by Alexander Mackendrick. An important dissection of the craft of storytelling by the director of *The Sweet Smell of Success*.

Hitchcock/Truffaut: A series of interviews conducted by Truffaut of the master director Alfred Hitchcock describes his theories of suspense.

On The WEB

Art of the Guillotine. Website that publishes news about and interviews with editors.

Digital Production Buzz hosted by Larry Jordan. Interviews diverse people involved in post production.

Creative Cow a website devoted to filmmakers. Also an essential source for troubleshooting.

KCRWs The Business: A weekly program about the entertainment business.

That Post Show: Topics of interest to post professionals at all levels.

The Terrence and Phillip Show; Discussion between two top post professionals.

OFFICE HOURS

I do not have regular hours but am available through mutual arrangement. Please email me at rickshai@aol.com to make an appointment, or for any other class related matter.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The School of Cinematic Arts expects the highest standards of excellence and ethics from every student. You must avoid plagiarism, cheating, 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 about these policies consult "Scampus" or talk with your SA or me.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Any student requesting academic accommodation based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30am-5:00pm, Monday Through Friday, ph. 213 740 0776.

