

IML 435
DIGITAL NARRATIVE DESIGN II

Fall 2018
4 units
Weds, 1:00-3:50pm
SCI L104

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Building on the skillset developed in IML 335 - this course will delve deeper into audio/visual scholarship through the development and production of a 5-15 minute video project. The class will follow a classic production process from scripting through dailies screenings to a rough and final cut - all while providing the opportunity for students to examine and better understand the techniques necessary to effectively author the story they developed.

In addition to continued development of camera skills, key topics include digital nonlinear editing with special attention to structure, as well as in-depth workshops on sound design, editing, and mixing. Topics will also include new media skills that will contribute to the success of student projects, exploring how a work of scholarly production functions in the larger ecology of networked media. Skills might also include motion graphics, photo design, web-based interactive production, and other topics decided according to student interest.

This semester is focused on the individual needs of students and their projects. Students are required to meet with instructor early in the term to discuss and create personalized plans for completion of their projects. Class meetings may then be tailored to address student needs. Though technical proficiency is a key aspect of these endeavors, all technical pursuits are meant to serve the academic goals and integrity of student projects.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to offer the students an opportunity to advance their understanding of and skills needed for audio/visual storytelling, communication, and scholarship.

TECHNOLOGY/HARDWARE/SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS

Students must purchase/have available an external hard drive for use with their video projects.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

- Murch, W. (2001). *In the Blink of an Eye: A perspective on film editing* (2nd ed.). Los Angeles, California: Silman-James Press.
- Rabiger, M. (2015). *Directing the Documentary* (6th ed.). Boston: Focal Press.

GRADING BREAKDOWN

DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT OF ASSIGNMENTS

Please note - The class **requires a final written 500-750 word reflection and analysis** that discusses the student's work process, strategies employed, and what particular concept or concepts influenced their final project. It should offer insight into what the student has learned and where they see need for further improvement. Students are also asked to provide a works cited that covers references and materials used in both the project and reflection.

1. Video Project Script/Production Timeline – 15%

Due Week 4 / Sep. 12

Students must write a script that clearly tells the story of their video project. This can be provided in either a screenplay-like format, or an audio/video template format that describes the audio content in one column and its corresponding visuals in a second column. The script must be an appropriate length for a 5-20 minute video and producible in the time frame and within the given limitations of the course. This becomes a living document that students can continue to add to and adjust to reflect the current status of their film.

Students must use Google Docs to create their script to allow for online commenting/feedback throughout the semester.

Students must also create a Production Schedule/Timeline that clearly outlines their semester plan for pre-production, production, and post-production.

2. Audio Soundscape - 10%

Due Week 5 / Sep. 19 (rough cut due week 4, Sep. 12)
Approximately 2-3 minutes

David Sonnenschein says in his book, "Sound Design", that "the intuitive nature of sound, unlike the obvious, categorical presence of sight, allows our minds to create more internal images and relationships." Using a single image as their backdrop, students must create an audio soundscape by combining a selection of sound effects, voice over, and music that brings the image to life, and expands the world represented in the image by imagining a story about what they perceive might have occurred (or is occurring) in the image. Multiple layers of audio should be used to convey tone and to reveal narrative elements that might not be readily evident in the image, allowing the audience to infer an even richer story of their own creation.

Tone is a key element in storytelling. A filmmaker's confidence in their story's tone allows the audience to relax and willfully follow the journey. In this project students must establish a clear tone from the beginning, then manipulate it, at some point, in order to shift the tone in such a way that deepens the story.

3. Dailies Screenings - 10%

Due Weeks 6-8
Approximately 30 minutes of footage

Over the course of the first part of the semester, students must bring in raw footage that they've shot to screen and discuss in class. The footage can be comprised of multiple selections from your shoot, or simply unedited/raw dailies. This will provide us the opportunity to get to know your characters and story better, as well as to review technique in shooting.

4. Edited Scenes - 10%

Due Week 10 or 11 (Oct. 24 or OCT 31)
Variable length – 3-10 minutes

Using the footage you've shot for your projects, you will edit scenes together to screen in class. This is to give you the opportunity to see how your coverage is working when placed into scene format, and to have the opportunity to play with visual aesthetic, tone, and pacing. These scenes may or may not make it into your final version of your film, but are excellent practice no less.

5. Rough Cut of Video Project – 20%

Due Weeks 13 or 15 (Nov 14 or 28)
Can be up to 30 minutes long

Students must screen, for in-class discussion, a rough-cut of their video project. This version of the project must exhibit a general sense of the narrative arc, the characters' journeys, and a strong control of the tone and visual style to the piece. Audio can be untreated and require sound editing at a later date. Temporary versions of titles, graphics, and special effects should be in place. The expectation is that, using the feedback from class, there will be substantial changes made to the final cut of their project.

6. Final Cut of Video Project – 25%

Due Week 16 – Finals – WEDNESDAY, December 12, 11am-1pm
5 - 15 minutes long

The final version of the video project must be delivered and screened during the exams period (week 16) for the class and invited MA+P faculty. The video will be no less than 5 minutes and no more than 15 minutes in length. All titles, graphics, and effects will be completed. Audio mixing will be smooth and consistent. The narrative structure and story will feel complete, and clearly exhibit the advanced use of the skills developed during the semester.

EVALUATION

In general, you will be graded using these criteria:

Conceptual Core

- Is the project's thesis clearly articulated?
- Is the project productively aligned with one or more of the multimedia genres outlined in lab?
- Does the project effectively engage with the primary issues presented in the assignment?

Research Competence

- Does the project display evidence of substantial research and thoughtful engagement with its subject?
- Does the project use a variety of types of sources (i.e., not just websites)?
- Does the project deploy more than one approach to its topic?

Form and Content

- Do structural and formal elements of the project reinforce the conceptual core in a productive way?
- Are design decisions deliberate and controlled?
- Is the effectiveness of the project uncompromised by technical problems?

Creative Realization

- Does the project approach its subject in creative or innovative ways?
- Does the project use media and design principles effectively?
- Does this project achieve significant goals that could not have been realized on paper?

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION POLICY

All projects are due, posted to the course wiki (<https://mapwiki.sca.usc.edu>), by 11pm the night before the class presentation date. All written reflections are due one week after the presentation date.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES

This course relies on the participation of the students in their group projects. As such, missing class is only justified for health or family emergencies. A doctor's note will be required to excuse the absence.

No social media/mobile phone use will be tolerated during class. It is expected that you stay 100% focused on the lecture/screening/presentation.

POLICIES

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](#). Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on [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](#) or to the [Department of Public Safety](#). 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](#) provides 24/7 confidential support, and the [sexual assault resource center](#) webpage 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](#), which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. The [Office of Disability Services and Programs](#) 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](#) will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

Disruptive Student Behavior

Behavior that persistently or grossly interferes with classroom activities is considered disruptive behavior and may be subject to disciplinary action. Such behavior inhibits other students' ability to learn and an instructor's ability to teach. A student responsible for disruptive behavior may be required to leave class pending discussion and resolution of the problem and may be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs for disciplinary action.

PLEASE NOTE:

FOOD AND DRINKS (OTHER THAN WATER) ARE NOT PERMITTED IN ANY INSTRUCTIONAL SPACES IN THE CINEMATIC ARTS COMPLEX

Citation Practices

Fair use is a legal principle that defines certain limitations on the exclusive rights of copyright holders. Media Arts + Practice seeks to apply a reasonable working definition of fair use that will enable students and instructors to develop multimedia projects without seeking authorization for non-commercial, educational uses. Four factors that should be considered when determining whether a use is fair: (1) the purpose and character of use, (2) the nature of the copyrighted work, (3) the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole, and (4) the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work. In general, we regard the reproduction of copyrighted works for the purposes of analysis or critique in this class to be covered by the principle of fair use.

All projects will need to include academically appropriate citations in the form of a Works Cited section, which covers all sources, in order to receive a passing grade. The Works Cited is either included in the project or as a separate document, as appropriate to your project. There are several different citation styles and practices; please ask your professor(s) what style manual s/he would prefer.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

You may find the weekly schedule on our course wiki at - <https://mapwiki.sca.usc.edu>