

CTPR 327, MOTION PICTURE CINEMATOGRAPHY
3 Credit Units
TUESDAY Section 18493
6:30pm - 9:30pm Soundstage #3
USC Fall Semester 2019

IMPORTANT:

The general formula for contact hours is as follows:

Courses must meet for a minimum of one 50 minute session per unit per week over a fifteen-week semester. Standard fall and spring sessions require a final summative experience during the University scheduled final exam day and time.

(Please refer to the *Contact Hours Reference*, located at arr.usc.edu/services/curriculum/resources.html.)

Instructor: Bonnie Blake bsblake@usc.edu
Office Hours: by Appointment

Student Assistant: John Hanle jhanle@usc.edu

Wednesday 6:30pm - 9:30pm Soundstage #3

Instructor: Tristan Whitman

Thursday 6:30pm - 9:30pm Soundstage #3

Instructor: Gary Wagner

Students are encouraged to contact the instructor by USC email. The instructor will reply to emails within 24 hours, 48 hours over a weekend, and the workday following a holiday.

Many questions can be answered by our SAs, so please ask them first. If they are unable to help you or you feel you need to see me, request an appointment..

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.

Learning Objectives:

- Students will learn and shoot with the Canon XC15 camera for class exercises.
- Students will make use of the basic functions of a lens: focal lengths, aperture, depth of field, and focus, and how they are used in visual storytelling.
- Students will work on a stage and exhibit how to work with power distribution, basic professional lighting, and grip equipment.
- Students will demonstrate professional set protocol and function within assigned crew positions.
- Students will light and shoot short scenes and/or class exercises on the stage during class.
- Students will demonstrate how to block and cover a scene.
- Students will learn and utilize pre-visualization techniques to plan shots and coverage for their scenes.
- Students will execute visual and lighting continuity.

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 film, 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.

Note: CTPR 327 requires a mandatory safety seminar. Contact the SCA Student Production Office at (213) 740-2895 for date and place.

Course Notes

Throughout the semester I will refer to information and articles. You will be responsible to have working knowledge of the material. Weekly handouts, downloadable PDF files, and/or links to on-line information will be available online in a "327" folder on "Google Drive."

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

Editing software of some kind is useful, but not required.

Safe Conduct:

The stage is a place where people can be seriously injured or equipment damaged beyond repair. Pay attention, don't run, and ask questions if unsure about use of any equipment.

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.

Appropriate and Professional Behavior:

In all of our classroom activities, scene projects and interaction with one another, I expect that everyone will speak and behave in an appropriate manner for a professional workplace. We will avoid any language or situations that may make others uncomfortable and in turn create a hostile learning environment. In the event that you are unable to comply with this policy, you may be asked to leave the class and will be marked absent for the day.

Technology Policies:

Students may use their personal electronic devices during class sessions. Devices are permitted to the extent that they do not distract your attention, or the attention of your peers. It is up to the instructor's judgment whether a device is distracting. If it is deemed distracting, you will be asked to put away your device for the remainder of the class session.

If you require an internet-enabled device, the USC Computing Center Laptop Loaner Program - USC Information Technology Services provides loaner laptops at the general-use computing centers in King Hall, Ahmanson Information Commons at Leavey Library, and Waite Phillips Hall. This service is only available to currently enrolled USC students with a valid USC ID Card. To check out a laptop, go to the service desk at an USC computing center and log into the laptop checkout webpage: <https://itservices.usc.edu/spaces/computingcenters>.

For more information about the program, see: <https://itservices.usc.edu/spaces/laptoploaner>

Language Difficulties:

Our class discussions, lectures and group activities will require the use of English in both the written and spoken form. Any student who has difficulty understanding English let me know immediately so that I can do my best to help you understand the concepts discussed in class.

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.

In-class Scene Projects:

Cinematography is first "seeing" reality, interpreting that reality, and then recreating our interpretation of that reality on film. 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 be staged and photographed 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 responsibility within the group and will rotate those responsibilities for each weekly exercise. The results of those exercises will be viewed and discussed at the end of the class period.

I will provide you with specific guidelines for your in-class projects.

Each week, the cinematographers will give me 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).

Suggested Reading:

The Filmmaker's eye: *Learning (and Breaking) the Rules of Cinematic Composition*

By: Gustavo Mercado

Motion Picture and Video Lighting

By: Blain Brown

The Bare Bones Camera Course for Film and Video Third Edition

By: Tom Schroepel

(You can buy these used from Ebay or Amazon)

Production Division Attendance Policy:

Students are expected to be on time and prepared for each class.

Two unexcused absences over the entirety of the course will result in a student's grade being lowered by one full letter grade (i.e. an A becomes a B). One absence will not count against you.

Each additional unexcused absence after the second absence, will result in an additional full letter grade deduction per absence (i.e. with a third unexcused absence, an A becomes C).

Two late class arrivals equate to one absence. One late arrival will not count against you.

However, a second late arrival will equal one full absence with resultant letter grade adjustment.

Each two additional late arrivals will equate to additional absence penalties. (i.e. Four late arrivals would result in two absences, which would equate to two full letter grades.)

In order for an absence or lateness to be excused, the student must have approval from the professor and provide documentation at the next attended class session.

If a student misses class due to an emergency, the student must contact the professor prior to class or contact the Production Office at 213-740-3317.

Grading:

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| Mid-Term Exam | 25 points |
| Notebook Assignment (Due Nov. 6) | 20 points |
| Class Participation / Discussions | 10 points |
| Weekly Scene Crew Participation & Collaboration (prep, shoot & wrap) | 15 points |
| DP Projects (#7-12, prep, shoot) | 20 points |
| Final Written Exam | 10 points |

1. Quizzes and the Mid-Term are written individual exams that test your understanding of the material presented through lectures and reading assignments.
2. The Notebook is an individual assignment. **NO LATE NOTEBOOKS ACCEPTED!!**
3. Class Participation is defined as constructive in-class activity, including, but not limited to, asking questions, giving constructive opinions on lessons and other students' work. Your thoughts, questions and ideas are valuable to the class as a whole.
4. Crew Participation is essential to the collaborative process of filmmaking. It is essential that each of you participate in the class exercises. Come to the set/class prepared and on time. Your performance will be evaluated on preparedness, collaboration, efficiency, respect for the equipment and for crew members of your team..
5. Collaboration is defined as working well with your classmates and fellow crew members, both in spirit and as equal contributing partners. Create an environment in which your crew feels their suggestions are welcome. Treat your crew with respect and at no time should your behavior impede the learning experience of other students.
6. Scene Projects: This portion of the class will be graded, both individually and for the group. Each cinematographer must submit the above described paperwork for their scene.

Grading Scale

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale

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|----|--------------|
| A | 95-100 |
| A- | 90-94 |
| B+ | 87-89 |
| B | 83-86 |
| B- | 80-82 |
| C+ | 77-79 |
| C | 73-76 |
| C- | 70-72 |
| D+ | 67-69 |
| D | 63-66 |
| D- | 60-62 |
| F | 59 and below |

Missing a Quiz or Exam and 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.

Statement of 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 Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards," <https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/>. 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>.

Support Systems:

Student Counseling Services (SCS) - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling/>

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1-800-273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 - 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/>

Sexual Assault Resource Center

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: <http://sarc.usc.edu/>

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. <https://equity.usc.edu/>

Bias Assessment Response and Support

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/>

The Office of Disability Services and Programs

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. <http://dsp.usc.edu>

Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa/>

Diversity at USC

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. <https://diversity.usc.edu/>

USC Emergency Information

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, <http://emergency.usc.edu>

USC Department of Public Safety – 213-740-4321 (UPC) and 323-442-1000 (HSC) for 24-hour emergency assistance or to report a crime.

Provides overall safety to USC community. <http://dps.usc.edu>

PLEASE NOTE:

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

Course Schedule

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

| Class | Topic |
|-------------------------|--|
| Class 1 August 27 | Introduction to Class & Students Class Overview, Assign Readings, Lecture on Mechanics of Camera & Exposure Safety on Stage, Demo Color Temperature with Daylight & Tungsten, First Portrait Assignment- Slide Show Film Grab Portraits |
| Class 2 September 3 | Quiz 1; Screen Still Photographs from Class Review Mechanics of Camera, Exposure Basics Lecture: Space and Lenses, Depth of Field Demonstration: Intro the XC15 Camera Basic Exercise #1 - Help each other in your group to learn to use the camera (ISO, shutter speed, f/stops, ND filters, white balance, etc.) and light meter by doing the same 2-person shot w/ different focal lengths - 24, 32, 40, 55, 75, 100. Look at differences in spatial relationships, compression, and field of view with the different lenses. As time permits, pick a focal length between 32-55mm, and expose the same 2-person shot correctly but at different f/stops (f/4 - f/11) observing the difference in depth-of-field. Homework Read: Class 1 & Class 2 PDF Downloads (Camera) |
| Class 3 September 10 | Quiz 2 Assign: Notebooks - Due Class 9, October 22 Demonstration: Stage Safety, Electrical Distribution Introduction to Grip and Lighting Equipment Building the Image, Exposure Latitude, Demo 1 Light Only, Light Meter Basic Exercise #2 - One (1) light only. Hard Light Use various light placements/directions & exposure w/ only 1 light to see how the light & shadows create different visual moods (front - different heights, 3/4 front - different heights, side, 3/4 back, back, etc.). Include both over and underexposed images to see how those affect mood. Learn to use the light meter for exposure settings. Light the character/scene in as many ways as you can using only one light. Assign: Notebooks - Due Class 9, October 22 Homework Read: Class 3 PDF Downloads (Exposure & Latitude) |
| Class 4 September 17 | Quiz 3 Lecture: Quality of Light, Hard light, Soft Light, composition, contrast ratios Basic Exercise #3 - Sense of Place Using the provided photo, create a beginning frame that resembles the photo. Create a character and short visual scene motivated by the photo Reading -Class 4 PDF Downloads (Color and Color Temperature) |

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| Class 5 September 24 | <p>Quiz 4 Lecture: Different Lights, electricity calculations, Inverse Square Demo additional Grip: nets, flags, diffusion, 3-pt. lighting</p> <p>Basic Exercise #4 . Soft Light. Explore soft light variations by using different light sources (soft lights, bounced, and/or different diffusions). Learn how to control lights w/ grip equipment. Look at the quality of the light and shadows, ease/difficulty of controlling the light. Reading –Class 5 PDF Downloads (Lenses)</p> |
| Class 6 October 1 | <p>Quiz 5 Demo Matching Stage Lines & CUs, 180 degree rule</p> <p>Basic Exercise #5 - Hard Light, Day</p> <p>Reading – Class 6 PDF Downloads (Depth of Field) – review for quiz</p> |
| Class 7 October 8 | <p>Basic Exercise #6 re-create scene from Movie/TV (Shooting for Coverage and the Line) Reading – Class 9 Download article</p> |
| Class 8 October 15 | <p>Midterm Lecture- Composition, Look Books, Visual References - Paintings, Still Photography, Color Palette</p> |
| Class 9 October 22 | <p>Notebooks Due! Demo; Product Shots, Insert Shots, Motivated Source Lighting</p> <p>Basic Exercise #7 Hard Light/Soft Light Reading – Class 11 Download article</p> |
| Class 10 October 29 | <p>Basic Exercise #8 Shooting Products, Commercial, Insert Shots (Montage sequence) Reading – Class12 Download – article</p> |
| Class 11 November 5 | <p>Basic Exercise #9 Motivated Source Lighting Reading – Class 13 Download - article</p> |
| Class 12 November 12 | <p>Lecture - Camera Movement; Demo/Safety: Dolly, Handheld</p> <p>Basic Exercise #10 Product shots/commercial Reading – Class 14 Download - article</p> |
| Class 13 November 19 | <p>Basic Exercise #11 Music Video (Edit for Final Class)</p> |
| Class 14 November 26 | <p>Basic Exercise #12 Mixing Color Temperatures</p> |

Class 15
November 26
Final Class Mtg

Shoot Final Exercise #13 - Scene (Open Scene)

Each group will share the same simple scene idea without stage directions. Each DP/group will interpret and create a scene based on the dialog. This is a chance to create a short scene utilizing the stage, props, creative lighting, etc. and apply your visual storytelling skills learned this semester to make a fun short scene. We'll get to see, and compare each group's interpretation in the final screening. (Edit for Final Screening Class)

Final

Screening and Discussion of Exercises (& any other exercises that you wish to Screen)
Final Written Exam

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