



CTPR 327, Section 18495
MOTION PICTURE CINEMATOGRAPHY
3 Credit Units
Thursday, 6:30pm - 9:30pm
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 15-week semester. Standard fall and spring sessions (001) require a final summative experience during the University scheduled final exam day and time.

Location: SCC, Soundstage #3.

Instructor:

Office: SCA 410

Office Hours: By appointment. Please contact me in advance to arrange a meeting.

Contact Info:

Teaching Assistant:

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.

Learning Objectives and Outcomes:

- 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.

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. 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. Equipment is not available outside of class periods.

Prerequisite(s): 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.

Recommended Readings and Supplementary Materials

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

Motion Picture and Video Lighting

By: Blain Brown

Description and Assessment of Assignments

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. You will be required to work with your individual groups outside of class time to create your shot list and a detailed plan for each in class project.

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).

Grading Breakdown

Mid-Term Exam	25 points	25%
Notebook Assignment (Due Oct.31)	20 points	20%
Class Participation / Discussions	10 points	10%
Weekly Scene Crew Participation & Collaboration (prep, shoot & wrap)	15 points	15%
DP Projects (#6-11, prep, shoot)	20 points	20%
Final Written Exam	10 points	10%

1. Quizzes and the Mid-Term are written individual exams that test your understanding of the material presented through lectures and reading assignments. Weekly quizzes are to aid in your understanding and will not be graded. The Mid-term is a graded exam.
2. The Notebook is an individual photography assignment to aid in your aesthetic application of principals discussed in class.
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 and environment in which your crew feels their suggestions are welcome. Treat you 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

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

Assignment Submission Policy

The Notebook Assignment is due on Oct. 31, submitted to an individually assigned folder on our 327 Google Drive folder. **No late submissions will be accepted!**

Grading Timeline

The mid-term exam grades will be available at the next class after the exam. We will review the exam at that time and answer any questions.

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.

Production Division Attendance Policy

Students are expected to be on time and prepared for each class. Two absences will result in a student's grade being lowered by one full letter (IE: A becomes B). A third unexcused absence will result in a student's grade being lowered by one, additional full letter (IE: B becomes C). A student's grade will be lowered by one full letter for each additional unexcused absence. Two late class arrivals equate to one full absence.

If you arrive late, you **MUST** come to me during a break and let me know you are present. Please don't assume I saw you arrive. If you fail to do so, you may be marked absent.

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.

Course Schedule

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

Week 1, August 29

Introduction to Class & Students

Review Syllabus & Discuss Class Objectives

Lecture: Set Safety Basics, Mechanics of Camera & Lenses, Basics of Exposure

Week 2, September 5

Quiz 1

Review Exposure

Lecture: Space and Lenses, Depth of Field

Demonstration: Electrical Distribution, 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.) 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.

Week 3, September 12

Quiz 2

Review Lenses, Depth of Field, XC15 questions

Lecture: Color Temp and Color, Use of Light Meters

Introduction to Grip and Basic Lighting Equipment

Basic Exercise #2 - Explore lighting moods created by placement and exposure w/ only 1 light.

Using various light placements/directions & exposure w/ only 1 light to see how the light & shadows create different visual moods (front - different heights, $\frac{3}{4}$ front - different heights, side, $\frac{3}{4}$ back, back, etc.). Include both over and underexposed images to see how those affect mood. Learn to use the light meter for exposure settings.

Basic Exercise #2 -

Week 4, September 19

Quiz 3

Lecture: Quality of Light, composition, contrast ratios

Basic Exercise #3 - Lighting Basics w/ 3 Pt. Lighting.

Create various lighting setups with different key light direction, shadow placement, fill light/contrast ratio, back light, background light, etc. Use the light meter to set f/stops, establish contrast ratios, etc.

Week 5, September 26

Quiz 4

Lecture: Different Lights, electricity calculations, FC, Inverse Square

Demo additional Grip: nets, flags, diffusion, 3-pt. lighting

Basic Exercise #4 - Soft Light only.

Explore soft light variations by using different lights (direct or bounced) with 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.

Week 6, October 3

Quiz 5

Demo Matching Stage Lines & CUs

Basic Exercise #5 - Single Source.

Light scene using multiple lights so it looks like it is only being lit by one source of light (one shadow).

Week 7, October 10

Demo Product Lighting, Additional Special Lights

MID-TERM EXAM

Week 8, October 17

FALL RECESS

Week 9, October 24

Review Mid-Term Exam

Basic Exercise #6 – Lighting Faces & Matching CUs w/ stage lines

Create a short scene w/ 2-3 people. Shoot a master shot to establish placement and mood, then coverage of both (or each) character(s). Do matching reverses paying attention to stage lines, lens selection, lighting, etc. You should relight your CUs and you may need to do small “cheats” with the set.

Week 10, October 31

STILL PHOTO NOTEBOOKS DUE

Exercise #7 - Motivated Source

Find or create a scene and light it so it feels natural and motivated. Keep the source, shadows, contrast, stage lines and matching CUs in mind. You may choose to replicate a scene w/ motivated light for this exercise.

Week 11, November 7

Exercise #8 – Product Photography.

This exercise emphasizes creativity, looking at small details, and the use of grip gear for controlling the lights. It is also useful to understand for doing inserts in films. You should explore various shots/lighting setups and not just try one idea as time permits. Depending on your product choice and next week’s DP, this product may also be used as part of the commercial if desired. (Edit for Final Screening Class)

Week 12, November 14

Exercise #9 – Music Video or Commercial

This week’s project may be either a short commercial (with or w/out last week’s product) or a short music video. This is a chance to be very creative, w/o necessarily telling a story. It is also a great chance to explore the use of colors and mixing colors in shots if you have not done so already. (Edit for Final Screening Class)

Week 13, November 21

Exercise #10 – Shadows

Find a photo of someone or something w/ deep shadows that hide something (eyes of person or an object somewhat hidden but in plain sight). Stage & light the talent, or the shot, to match the photo but then have the scene evolve to reveal the person or object in a creative way. Let the negative space create drama. (Edit for Final Screening Class)

Week 14, November 28

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY BREAK

Week 15, December 5 - Final Class Mtg

Shoot Final Exercise #11 - Chekhovian 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)

December 12, Final Exam, 7:00-9:00 PM

Screening and Discussion of Exercises (& any other exercises that you wish to screen)

Final Written Exam

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

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” 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, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Support Systems:

Student Health Counseling Services - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call
engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

Student Health Leave Coordinator – 213-821-4710

Located in the USC Support and Advocacy office, the Health Leave Coordinator processes requests for health leaves of absence and advocates for students taking such leaves when needed.

<https://policy.usc.edu/student-health-leave-absence/>

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call

suicidpreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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

engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) | Title IX - (213) 740-5086

equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help a survivor of harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations.

Bias Assessment Response and Support - (213) 740-2421

studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions for appropriate investigation and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776

dsp.usc.edu

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710

studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101

diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost’s Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.

Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity and Inclusion are foundational to the SCA community. We are committed to fostering a welcoming and supportive environment where students of all identities and backgrounds can flourish. The classroom should be a space for open discussion of ideas and self-expression; however, SCA will not tolerate verbal or written abuse, threats, harassment, intimidation or violence against person or property. If students are concerned about these matters in the classroom setting they are encouraged to contact their SCA Diversity and Inclusion Liaison, <http://cinema.usc.edu/about/diversity.cfm>; e-mail diversity@cinema.usc.edu. You can also report discrimination based on a protected class here <https://equity.usc.edu/harassment-or-discrimination/>

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