



CTPR 557 Advanced Cinematography

Units: 2

Fall 2021—Monday—1:00-4:50PM

Location: Stage 3

www.cinematographersportal.com

Instructor: Chris Chomyn, ASC

213-300-2126 (9a-5p)

chomyn@usc.edu

Office Hours: Monday 10a – 12p

by appointment

SA: Vanessa Prathab

508-395-6136

prathab@usc.edu

It is recommended that students enrolling in 557 have completed 546 or 480 as cinematographer. However, 537 or 424 satisfy the prerequisite.

USC IT Help Information Technology Services <https://itservices.usc.edu/>

Computer Loaner Program - <https://itservices.usc.edu/spaces/laptoploaner>

Phone: 24/7 213-740-5555 Hours: 8-6 M-F

Email: consult@usc.edu

USC Computing Centers

<https://itservices.usc.edu/spaces/computingcenters/>

Equipment Help:

Camera Equipment Center (CEC) Cameras and Accessories

HOURS OF SERVICE: 8:30am to 6pm, M-Th, 8:30 to 5pm, Friday By Appointment

CONTACT INFO: 213-821-0951, Craig McNelley, mcnelley@usc.edu

Production Equipment Center (PEC) Lighting and Grip Equipment

HOURS OF SERVICE: 8:30am to 6pm, M-Th, 8:30 to 5pm, Friday By Appointment

CONTACT INFO: 213-740-2898, Hector Trujillo, htrujillo@cinema.usc.edu

Stage Help:

Stage Services

HOURS OF SERVICE: 8:30am to 5pm, M-F

CONTACT INFO: 213-821-0961, Carlos Jauregui, stages@cinema.usc.edu

Communication:

All class related email communications must use your usc.edu or your cinema.usc.edu addresses. It is your responsibility to check for email and to reply, when appropriate, or acknowledge receipt within 24 hours.

Course Description

CTPR 557 – Advanced Cinematography is designed to prepare students for a professional career in cinematography.

At its root, cinematography is about creative problem solving. It is about finding visual solutions to express ideas and emotions in a way that reveals the underlying truth of each moment. The cinematographer uses a wide variety of tools in service of her craft, which ultimately is always in service to the story and the subtext.

CTPR 557 will provide a unique learning environment in which the students can hone their skills, ask questions and learn the ideas and tools of the trade under the guidance of an experienced professional cinematographer.

Class Structure:

Class sessions will include:

- 1) Practical hands-on class sessions that will include: Scene studies where the instructor will guide the students in the recreation of a scene, as well as sessions where students will focus on specific skills to support their creative work. Topics will include creative, technical and interpersonal aspects of the craft. All students are expected to perform at a professional level each week.
- 2) Visiting guests who will share their insights and experiences.
- 3) Working field trips to industry vendors.

In addition to the in-class work, students may be assigned a number of stills photography assignments designed for them to demonstrate fundamental principles of cinematography.

Finally, students will work together to photograph their own digital cinematography projects

In-class Exercises:

The instructor will serve as the cinematographer/director on scenes that present particular cinematography challenges, with the students working as crew. Each scene chosen, will create an opportunity for the class members to develop their skills and to grow by exploring new creative and technical opportunities. Your active participation is essential for the success of these exercises.

Other Classroom Activities:

In addition to on set camera, grip and lighting experience, students will learn about: camera prep, filters, camera movement, rigging and knot tying, basic electrical wiring, color and new technologies and more.

Out of Class Projects:

This is your chance to create something extraordinary, to push yourself and demonstrate your un-tapped talents. It is expected that you make the most of every opportunity.

Your project, including crew assignments, must be approved by your instructor in advance. You may consider any “story” structure that works for your material. Possibilities include: a public service announcement, product photography, a short narrative, a visual poem or other experimental format. A running time between 30 seconds 3 minutes is recommended.

Your out of class project may be photographed on stage or location with the appropriate preparation and permissions. If you want to reserve the stage for your out of class shoot you will need to contact stage services stages@cinema.usc.edu .

Each cinematographer will have one day on a weekend (Fri., Sat. or Sun) to shoot his/her out of class assignment; and will be required to crew on 4 or 5 others across two weekends. These will be assigned by week 4 of the semester.

Whether you elect to shoot your project on campus or at an off-campus location, all regular USC policies and protocols applicable to Production III must be followed. In order to facilitate this, you will be encouraged to enlist the services of a currently enrolled USC Cinema Student as your producer. If you shoot on stage, working with a producer is also strongly advised.

Your out of class project is your project. You may not shoot a project for yourself or for another student in another class and submit it as your own for this course.

1. Anticipating a roster of 12 students, the class will form into two production groups for the purpose of sharing the digital cinema camera package for each group's production weekend.
2. On the days when you are not shooting your own final project, you are required to crew for your classmate who is shooting. Students enrolled in 557 must fulfill the key crew positions: director/cinematographer, camera operator, AC, Gaffer, Grip, you may bring in an outside production designer with the approval of your instructor.
3. Your classmates are not actors, nor extras. You must cast your actors and adhere to the guidelines in USC's agreement with the Screen Actor's Guild (SAG).
4. With the consent of your instructor, you may use additional crew, providing they are USC students who have taken or are taking 327, 424, or 537
5. You may elect to bring in an additional student, not from our class, to coach your actors. This acting coach must be a USC student who has completed 476, 532, 533, 480 or 546 as director. He/she will serve as an acting coach and will not direct the camera nor crew.
6. If you elect to shoot on stage, you must make your own stage reservation.
7. Each team will meet with the professor to consult regarding their plans for this project.
8. Each team is responsible to arrange actors, props, set design and any additional elements needed to mount your production.
9. Before you shoot: A) you will need to submit a brief statement of intent - a series of bullet points indicating what you were trying to accomplish, why and how; and, B) You will need to submit your completed crew list (The template is on the website).
10. Following your shoot: you will submit a DPR and a self-critique of your experience, what went well, what could have gone better, what you learned from the experience. Please label your self-crit as follows: first initial last name_557crit.docx ie: cchomyn_557crit.docx
11. All work for this class, must be completed before we screen final projects. An assembly of both your in class project and out of class project must be uploaded to the Google Drive folder for which I will send you a link.
12. Final format for the screening QT.mov file.

Be safe, inventive, experiment, and create a visually arresting piece that challenges you.

Learning and Outcomes:

557 will address the technical and aesthetic aspects of cinematography with an emphasis on developing techniques and operating methods that will prepare each student to transition to a professional working environment.

In learning to make informed, accurate, and ethically appropriate decisions concerning the cinematography of a film, the students must apply a number of skills necessary for the working cinematographer consistently, effectively, and artistically.

Each student is expected to demonstrate a mastery of his/her ability to:

1. Behave in a safe and professional manner at all times
2. Break down a script visually in terms of mood, shooting style, and pace
3. Make practical and aesthetic choices regarding film stocks and/or digital imaging tools
4. Determine the significance of camera placement as it affects the look and feel of a shot
5. Control depth-of-field
6. Choose an appropriately sized shot and composition for the story
7. Stage actors for compelling shots that serve the story
8. Maintain screen direction and eye lines
9. Design effective camera movement

10. Use both an incident and reflected light exposure meter
11. Light for the mood and tone of a piece while maintaining continuity within each scene
12. Control the four elements of light
13. Use the tools of the cinematographer, lenses, cameras, filtration, etc
14. Use equipment that is available to achieve the desired effect
15. Follow all safety procedures and behave responsibly when making decisions
16. Lead a cast and crew effectively
17. Manage set resources efficiently
18. Communicate clearly
19. Listen carefully
20. Earn the respect of one's colleagues

Final Exam

The final exam will cover the content of the semester. It will test your understanding of the course material including all that is discussed, demonstrated and explored. The format will most likely be essays and short answers. (Subject to change.)

Grading:

Your grade for this class will be based on the quality of your work, your collaboration and support of your fellow classmates, as well as on your participation in all class conversations and activities. Additional consideration will be given for those students who push themselves to take creative risks. Finally, too much ambition that results in not completing your goals, will adversely affect your grade.

- 20% Presentations
- 40% Class Participation
- 40% Out of Class Project

You are expected to act professionally, respect people and property, arrive in class, and on set on time and with enthusiasm regarding your work, as well as the work of your classmates.

Standards:

- A Work that is excellent meets professional standards of safety and creativity. The working practices demonstrate a mastery of the leadership skills necessary to inspire a crew to deliver their very best. The images created demonstrate a thorough understanding of the technical craft and clearly serve the themes and subtext of the story, avoid cliché, and are not derivative.
- B Work that is very good meets professional standards of safety and creativity. The working practices demonstrate the ability to lead the crew, and an understanding of the leadership skills necessary to be a department head. The images demonstrate a solid grasp of the technical craft and serve the themes and subtext of the story, the avoid cliché, and are not derivative.
- C Work that is good meets professional standards of safety and creativity. The working practices demonstrate a one's ability to lead the crew. The images created demonstrate control in the execution of the technical craft and clearly serve the themes and subtext of the story, avoid cliché, and are not derivative.
- D Work that below average meets professional standards of safety and may demonstrate some creativity. The working practices demonstrate the cinematographer's shortcomings as a creative collaborator and department head. The images created demonstrate a lack of control over the technical craft of creating moving photographic images. They may fail to serve the subtext, they may include cliché and may be derivative.
- F Work that fails to meet acceptable standards or is not conducted safely. Does not demonstrate creativity in story telling or execution. One who is unable to lead their crew. The images created are inadequate

and demonstrate a fundamental lack of understanding of the technical craft as well as the ways in which the craft is used to convey subtext and text.

Attendance:

Attendance is mandatory. Engaging in a professional manner is an integral part of a cinematographer's formal training. By learning the details of the job, a cinematographer can better understand the inner workings of the set and the crew at large.

Arriving early to class is on time, arriving on time is late. Late arrivals are disruptive to the class. Should circumstance necessitate your absence, then you are expected to call your instructor before the beginning of class.

All assignments are due on time. Absences and Late arrivals are considered when evaluating your class participation.

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 and appropriate tools.

Recommended Reading Materials:

- o American Society of Cinematographers Manual, 10th Edition
- o Kodak Cinematographers Field Guide
- o Digital Cinematography: Fundamentals, Tools, Techniques, and Workflows by David Stump

Recommended Websites:

- o www.cinematographersportal.com
- o <https://www.oscars.org/science-technology/projects>
- o www.theasc.com
- o <https://rondexter.com/>
- o <https://www.dga.org/Craft/VisualHistory.aspx>
- o <https://www.cambridgeincolour.com/>
- o <https://www.linkedin.com/learning> (formerly Lynda.com)

Additional Policies

Production Numbers will be given to any class who normally receives numbers. Students will be instructed when it is possible for them to go onto SCA community and create numbers where authorized for their class. Class SAs will aid students in making, or correcting, production numbers if needed. Note many classes work in teams where they share a production number. Ask your SA about the needs for your particular class.

Students will be required to use approved "Fast Track" Insurance companies only for rentals and equipment. No other insurance requests will be honored. USC does not insure Sharegrid or companies not on the "Fast Track List."

Students may make requests for location insurance verifications (or COIs) when requested by locations. Students are reminded that these requests can take 3-10 days from request to final approval.

All necessary forms and online request forms are available on SCAcommunity under the "Student Productions" heading. Contact your SA with any questions that you may have.

In terms of shooting plans, students are required to vet their plans with their faculty including discussing any Hazardous Shooting Conditions as defined by the SCA's Safety Book as posted on SCACommunity. This semester students will also be required to vet their plans for remaining Covid-safe with our Covid Safety Monitor. Ask your SA if you are unclear about these protocols.

Couse Evaluation:

Student feedback is essential to making this course the best it can be. In addition to the standard USC course evaluation survey at the end of the semester, your feedback throughout the semester is always welcomed and appreciated.

Wait List

Any student interested in taking 557 must attend the first class to be eligible for the roster. Missing a class in the first three weeks removes you from eligibility.

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.

Safety:

All students are expected to abide by USC School of Cinematic Arts Safety Guidelines. Violations of any of the safety guidelines may result in disciplinary action ranging from confiscation of footage to expulsion from the University

Disruptive Student Behavior:

Behavior that 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.

Stressful Times:

These are stressful times in our country, and Graduate School in and of itself is stressful. I encourage you to take care of yourself and your fellow students. USC provides opportunities for Mindful Meditation <http://mindful.usc.edu> and Mental health counseling is available at the Engemann Student Health Center, 1031 W. 34th Street, 213-740-9355.

Support Systems:

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call
studenthealth.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

suicidepreventionlifeline.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 and Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press "0" after hours – 24/7 on call

studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault

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

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)- (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298

equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by 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. The university also prohibits sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, stalking, malicious dissuasion, retaliation, and violation of interim measures.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, 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 Campus Support & Intervention - (213) 821-4710

campussupport.usc.edu

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) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.

Office of the Ombuds - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)

ombuds.usc.edu

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

Schedule

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

Class

Topic

Week 1
8/23

- Introduction to Class
- Stage Safety and Electricity
- What is beautiful?
- Presentation: What is Cinematic?
- Camera Reports

Week 2
8/30

- Build and Prep the Panavision G2
- Loading Panavision G2 Magazine
- Assign: Each student to have one 10' length of rope for the next class (cotton sash cord/clothes line is fine)
- Assign: In Class Presentations Due Week 4

Week 3
9/6

- **LABOR DAY – NO CLASS**
Outlines for Presentations due Tuesday 9/7 by 1pm

Week 4
9/13

- Student Presentations

Presentation on the four characteristics of light	Photosites v Pixels & Bayer Sensor
Bit Depth and Exposure Latitude	HDR v SDR
ACES	Illusion of movement & Flicker Free Photography
SSI	Depth of Field
Using Mired Values	Perspective
How to Measure Light using Light Meters, Histograms, Waveforms and False color	Understanding the Characteristic Curve

- Objective: students will demonstrate their understanding of key concepts related to the creative use of the technology of cinematography. They will also demonstrate their ability to make a concise, interesting and informative presentation using Power Point, Key Note or Slides.
- Camera Operating
- Assign Pitch Deck
- Assign: Bring to next class an idea for a product to photograph week 7

Week 5
9/20

- Build , thread and test the Panavision G2
- Exposure
- Mechanical Camera Tests
- In Class Crew Rotation Schedule
- Out of Class Production Schedule
- Tying Essential Knots
- Discuss Product Shot

Week 6
9/27

- Shoot 35mm Day Exterior Scene

Week 7
10/4

- Screen Dailies
- Shoot 35mm Commercial – product shot lighting
- Pitch Deck and script for Out of Class Project due

Week 8
10/11

- Screen Dailies
- Shoot 35mm Scene on Stage – getting the shots you need to make your day

Week 9
10/18

- Screen Dailies
- Shoot 35mm Scene on Stage – Lighting for different moods

Week 10
10/25

- Screen Dailies
- **DIGITAL CAMERA OVERVIEW**
- Shoot Scene Diffusion and Distance

Week 11
11/1

- Screen Dailies
- Shoot - The color of Light (Incandescent and LED)

Week 12
11/8

- Screen Dailies
- Guest Speaker (Panavision Optics)
- Guest Speaker (LED Color Science)?

F, S & S
12, 13 & 14

- Out of Class Shoots

Week 13
11/15

- Shoot on Stage
- Guest Speaker (Lenses)
- Guest Speaker (Color Science)

F, S & S
19, 20 & 21

- Out of Class Shoots

Week 14
11/22

- Screen Dailies
- Guest Cinematographer

Week 15
11/29

- Screen Out of Class Projects

SCA Fall 2021 Production Protocols

08/17/21

Vaccination

- Only fully vaccinated individuals or approved exempt USC students are allowed to participate on SCA productions. This applies to all members of the cast and crew — including but not limited to extras, production assistants, stunt coordinators, make-up artists, studio teachers, etc.
- An individual is considered fully vaccinated two weeks after receiving a single dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine or two weeks after receiving the second dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine or a vaccine authorized for emergency use by the World Health Organization.
- At least 7 days before the start of production, the Student Producer must obtain proof of vaccination from every member of the production team — crew, cast, and anyone else present on set.
- The Student Producer must submit proof of vaccination to the Lead SA and Lead Faculty of the class before the start of production.
- USC students who are unable to receive a Covid-19 vaccine because of approved medical contraindication, disability, or sincerely held religious belief, practice, or observance, may seek an accommodation by which they are tested a minimum of 3 times per week in lieu of vaccination. This applies only to USC students who have received an approved exemption from the University.

Testing

- All cast and crew must provide the Student Producer a copy of a negative Covid-19 PCR lab-based test taken within 72 hours of the start of shooting.
- Any unvaccinated USC student who has received an approved exemption from the University must show proof to the Student Producer of three (3) negative PCR lab-based Covid-19 tests taken within the week prior to the start of shooting.
- The Lead SA and Lead Faculty must be given proof of all negative Covid test results prior to the start of shooting.
- If any individual tests positive for Covid-19, that person will not participate in the production and will immediately inform the Student Producer and the University by contacting the USC COVID-19 hotline at 213-740-6291 or covid19@usc.edu.
- NOTE: If the individual who tested positive for Covid-19 used the USC Student Health's Pop Testing program, you do not need to notify the University, as positive results are automatically followed-up with contact-tracing interviews.
- The Student Producer must immediately inform the Lead SA and the Lead Faculty of the class of any positive test results and will make certain that the individual who tested positive immediately contacts the USC COVID-19 Hotline.

Symptoms

- If during production, any individual has any symptoms related to Covid-19, they must report the symptoms immediately to the Student Producer, who will inform the Lead SA and Lead Faculty of the class.
- The individual will immediately get tested, self-isolate, wear a mask, and practice social distancing. This individual will not return to the production unless they have a negative Covid-19 test 72 hours prior to returning to the set and then another negative test 36-48 hours prior to returning to the set.

Masking

- During shoot days, all personnel must always wear a mask while on set. Performers in the film will only remove masks on set during takes and rehearsals.

Meals

All meals will be eaten outdoors, away from the shooting area. Individuals may remove their masks for eating or drinking, and they will maintain a social distance of at least six feet from other cast and crew members.

- All meals must be in individually packaged servings, and beverages will come in individual bottles. No shared or buffet-style food or drinks will be allowed. Cast and crew have the option of bringing their own meals, as long as they are not shared with other cast and crew members.

Cast and Crew Limitations

The number of cast and crew members on CTPR 294, 310, 507, and 508 productions must not exceed a total of 10 people on set on any production day. The number of cast and crew members on CTPR 290 productions must not exceed a total of 7 people on set on any production day.

- All SCA productions are encouraged to limit on-set intimacy and stunt work.

Casting, Rehearsals, and Production Meetings

- All SCA productions are encouraged to cast performers who are above 12 years old. If you have a minor on your set, the minor, the guardian on the set, and the studio teacher all need to follow testing protocols.
- All casting must be done remotely by video conference. Production meetings and rehearsals should be done remotely whenever possible.
- If you have an in-person production meeting, individuals must wear face masks at all times. If you have an in-person rehearsal with an unmasked actor, they must produce a current negative Covid test. Everyone must follow proper health and hygiene protocols and attempt to maintain social distancing.

Student Producers

- Although Student Producers are responsible for ensuring that SCA Safety Protocols are strictly followed by all cast and crew members, it is incumbent on all key crew to make sure these rules and regulations are followed.
- Student Producers are responsible for submitting all the necessary Covid-related documentation — including proof of vaccination for all cast and crew members and proof of negative test results for all cast and crew members — to the Lead SA and Lead Faculty prior to the start of production.
- If all the necessary Covid-related documents are not submitted to the Lead SA and Lead Faculty prior to the start of production, the project will not receive a greenlight and will not be allowed to begin production.

Violations of Covid Protocols

- If any of the Covid-19 safety protocols are violated, the SCA production may be suspended or shut down immediately and students could potentially receive a failing grade for the project.

USC Covid-19 Resource Center

- For the latest Covid-19 information, updates, and support for the USC community, visit the USC COVID-19 Resource Center at <https://coronavirus.usc.edu/>

SCA COVID Advisor

- David Maquiling will be on staff to answer any questions regarding COVID compliance. There will be a COVID Production Protocols Seminar recording for students and faculty to view on SCA Community. David can be reached at maquilin@usc.edu.