



# USC

## CTPR 327, MOTION PICTURE CINEMATOGRAPHY

Units: 3

Thursday, 6:30pm - 9:30pm

USC Fall Semester 2023

**Location:** SCA Stage 3

**Instructor:** Gary Wagner

**Office:** Call or email to schedule a meeting

**Office Hours:** Contact professor for meeting

**Contact Info:** will be provided to students enrolled in the class

**Teaching Assistant:** Tomaz Favrin

**Office:** online

**Office Hours:** Contact TA for zoom meeting

**Contact Info:** will be provided to students enrolled in the class

*"Art is the lie that makes us realize the truth."*

Pablo Picasso

**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 how to express ideas, moods, story and character using basic photographic and lighting principals.

**Communication Policies:**

Students are encouraged to contact the instructor by USC email or text. The instructor will reply to emails within 24 hours during the school week, 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..

**Learning Objectives and Outcomes**

- Students will be able to shoot with a HD Motion picture video camra for class exercises. Faculty member and Teaching Assistant will be available to help in this process.
- Students will be able to use the basic functions of a lens: focal lengths, aperture, depth of field, and focus, and how they are used in visual storytelling.
- Students, on USC stage, with instruction from the professor, will be able to work with basic power distribution, and motion picture lighting.
- Students will be able to use professional set protocol.
- Students will light and shoot assigned short scenes and/or class exercises during class period.
- Students will be able to block and cover a scene. Then they will use those principles to complete self- shot assignments.
- Students will be able to utilize pre-visualization techniques to plan shots and coverage for their scenes. Students will be able to execute visual and lighting continuity.

**Course Notes**

This will be an in person course, class will not offer Zoom recordings of class unless specified by Instructor, If Covid restrictions are put in place and lockdown mandated by the state and USC the class will resume online. Resources and uploading will be via a Google drive. Enrolled students will be given access to drive at beginning of the semester.

**Learning Objectives:**

You will be exposed to a wide variety of cinematic challenges, you will develop your "eye". You will be able to properly expose video, as well as manipulate the light, camera and content of your "scenes" into a meaningful, conceptual presentation. If you commit to this 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 we will delve deeper into the principles of Cinematography and after each class lecture and professor led lighting demonstrations, you will be assigned a weekly "Scene Project," the guidelines for which will be provided to you. These shooting assignments will be shot during the class then shared with the class then be viewed and discussed.

**Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required**

Laptop loaner: (This program may not be available during Covid-19 distance learning, please visit the website for up to date guidelines)

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>

### **Required Readings and Supplementary Materials**

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

Recommended Readings will be from:

The Bare Bones Camera Course for Film and Video by Tom Schroeppel

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

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#### **Additional Recommended Reading:**

*The Bare Bones Camera Course for Film and Video* By: Tom Schroeppel

*The Filmmaker's Eye: Learning (and Breaking) the Rules of Cinematic Composition* By: Gustavo Mercado

*Motion Picture and Video Lighting* By: Blair Brown

*Cinematography theory and practice* By: Blair Brown

*Cinematic Storytelling*. By Jennifer Van Sijll

### **Attendance**

For an absence to be excused, you will need to provide me with a doctor's note or other form of verifiable evidence pertaining to a personal or family emergency.

### **Attendance/Tardiness**

Each unexcused absence lowers grade one step. (i.e. from an A to an A- or from an A- to a B+) Tardiness Two late arrivals to class = one unexcused absence

### **Grading Breakdown**

Including the above detailed assignments, how will students be graded overall? Participation should be no more than 15%, unless justified for a higher amount. All must total 100%.

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Assignment	Points	% of Grade
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Midterm	25	25
Notebook assignment	20	20
Class participation	10	10
Weekly assignments	25	25
Final exam	20	20
<b>TOTAL</b>	100	100

### Grading Scale (Example)

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

Assignments will be uploaded to a google drive then email TA and Professor stating that it was uploaded. (please check the drive after your upload to make sure it was uploaded successfully)

### 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 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.

### Academic Integrity

The University of Southern California is foremost a learning community committed to fostering successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Academic misconduct is in contrast to the university's mission to educate students through a broad array of first-rank academic, professional, and extracurricular programs and includes any act of dishonesty in the submission of academic work (either in draft or final form).

This course will follow the expectations for academic integrity as stated in the [USC Student Handbook](#). All students are expected to submit assignments that are original work and prepared specifically for the course/section in this academic term. You may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining

written permission from the instructor(s). Students suspected of engaging in academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Other violations of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

The impact of academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university.

For more information about academic integrity see the [student handbook](#) or the [Office of Academic Integrity's website](#), and university policies on [Research and Scholarship Misconduct](#).

**Use of AI in 327:**

**AI will not be allowed for written or visual assignments in this class. All written and Photography/video is to be performed by the student.**

**Course Content Distribution and Synchronous Session Recordings Policies**

USC has policies that prohibit recording and distribution of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment.

Recording a university class without the express permission of the instructor and announcement to the class, or unless conducted pursuant to an Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) accommodation. Recording can inhibit free discussion in the future, and thus infringe on the academic freedom of other students as well as the instructor. ([Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook](#), page 13).

Distribution or use of notes, recordings, exams, or other intellectual property, based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study. This includes but is not limited to providing materials for distribution by services publishing course materials. This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to all information, which had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the internet, or via any other media. ([Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook](#), page 13).

**Course Schedule: Topics and Lectures subject to change according to wants and needs of students and professor.**

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Deliverable/ Due Dates
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<b>Week 1</b> 8/24	<b>Lecture:</b> Intro to class, class overview. Watch: visions of light Mechanics of camera and lenses	<b>Assign Notebook</b> <b>Read: #1,2 PDF Camera</b>	<b>Noatbook due week 9</b>
<b>Week 2</b> 8/31	<b>Lecture/Demo:</b> Intro to grip & electric equipment	<b>Reading:</b> Color and color temperature	<b>Due:</b> week 3
<b>Week 3</b> 9/7	<b>Lecture/Demo:</b> " inclass shooting assignment #1 Contrast Ratio and exposure latitude	<b>Reading: TBD</b> <b>Assignment: TBA</b>	<b>Due:</b> week 4
<b>Week 4</b> 9/14	<b>Lecture/Demo:</b> iin class assignment #2 A sense of space	<b>Reading: TBD</b>	<b>Due:</b> week 5
<b>Week 5</b> 9/21	Lecture/Demo: <b>in class assignment #3</b> Depth of field		<b>Due:</b> week 6
<b>Week 6</b> 9/28	<b>Lecture/Demo:</b> hooting for coverage/ Understanding the line	<b>Reading:</b> Depth of field	<b>Due:</b> week 7
<b>Week 7</b> 10/5	<b>Lecture/demo:</b> nclass shooting assignment #5 hard and soft light Review for the midterm	<b>Reading: TBD</b> <b>Assignment:</b> Coverage exercise	<b>Due:</b> week 8
<b>Week 8</b> 10/12	<b>FALL RECESS</b>		
<b>Week 9</b> 10/18	<b>Midterm Exam</b>	<b>Reading:</b> exposure and Latitudes Lenses	<b>Notebook Due</b>
<b>Week 10</b> 10/25	<b>Lecture/Demo: "From storyboards to finished product"</b> <b>inclass assignment #7</b> shooting product shots, or Inserts. Grp 1 - project shot in class	<b>Reading:</b>	<b>Due:</b>
<b>Week 11</b> 11/1	<b>Lecture/Demo:</b> inclass assignment #6 "making the light look real" motivated source lighting Grp 2 - project shot in class	<b>Reading: TBD</b>	<b>Due:</b> week 13
<b>Week 12</b> 11/8	<b>Lecture/Demo:</b> inclass lighting assignment #8 lighting for Night exterior  Grp 3 - project shot in class	<b>Reading: TBD</b>	<b>Due:</b>
<b>Week 13</b> 11/15	Grp 4 - project shot in class	<b>Reading: TBA</b>	<b>Due:</b>
<b>Week 14</b> 11/23	<b>THANKSGIVING BREAK</b>		

<b>Week 15</b> 11/29	<b>Grp 5 - Final project shot in class</b>		<b>Edit project for screening</b>
<b>FINAL</b> 12/7, 7:00-9:00	<b>Final Screening, Screening Room TBD</b>		

## 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](http://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](http://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.

### 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:

*Student Health Counseling Services - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call*  
[engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling](http://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*  
[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://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 Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call*

[engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp](http://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](http://equity.usc.edu), [titleix.usc.edu](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://dps.usc.edu), [emergency.usc.edu](http://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](http://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](mailto: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:**

**You will be expected to shoot your projects safely and follow the University's guidelines on practices and protocols during the Covid-19 pandemic**

**Virtual Production and Safe Bubble defined**

Student film production continues during this pandemic, including quarantine or lockdown conditions. Because of the current situation in Los Angeles County, filmmaking in Fall 2021 will be done with great care and safety. This will provide a safe environment for the students.

Filming plans during the time of coronavirus are subject to change.

**Covid Safety Compliance Understanding and Agreement**

Due to concerns regarding the spread of COVID-19 in California and around the world, USC and the School of Cinematic Arts (SCA) have taken a strong stance regarding the need for safe and mindful behaviors among all members of the SCA community. Medical authorities agree that even the young and healthy are capable, if infected, of becoming ill, or of being non-symptomatic, unconscious vectors of the disease's spread.

The health and wellbeing of all community members has to be our paramount concern as we return to learning and collaborating together. We understand that attentiveness to the concerns of all SCA community members – students, staff and faculty, including those with underlying health conditions -- is simply an extension of the key principle of creative collaboration that has guided our school for decades. We're all in this pandemic together and need to behave accordingly.

All of SCA's production work, whether "Virtual" or "in-person, will be governed by rules laid out in each course syllabus. Compliance with these regulations will be monitored by faculty in conjunction with SCA designated Covid Monitors. The rules follow the guidelines in SCA-Covid Production Protocols, which follows SAG/DGA and other industry protocols, and are being interpreted by a SAG-certified SCA Covid Advisor.

Students indicate their agreement to abide by these regulations by enrolling in the production program fall semester 2021.