CTPR 385: Colloquium on Motion Picture Production Techniques
Units: 4
Spring 2024: Session 001 | CTPR-385 | Section 18515R|
THURSDAY 10am-12:50pm. RZC Stage E

Instructor: Joselito Seldera seldera@usc.edu
Office Hours: By appointment. In Person or Online.
Student Assistant: Chirsten Vanderbilt chirstee@usc.edu

Course Description
From idea and script, to shooting and editing, you will learn the fundamental components of motion picture production while collaborating with classmates on short form digital video projects.

The class will take a hands-on approach and introduce you to both the creative side (script analysis, working with actors, visualization, etc.) and the basic technical side (camera, lights, editing, etc.) of the filmmaking process.

No experience necessary. This course is ideal for students seeking an introduction to all aspects of film production, and for students who have some experience but are seeking to continue expanding their knowledge and experience.

Learning Objectives and Outcomes
Beginning with a well-written scene, we will uncover:
- Character emotional beats, beats that the actors and director will develop;
- Body language, shot selection and blocking of action that is as powerful as dialogue;
- Cinematic elements (lighting, visual design, picture editing and sound design) that grow out of these elements and magnify their effect a thousand-fold.

Through class exercises, analysis of films and completion of your own projects you will begin to understand how the many layers of cinematic storytelling - technical, aesthetic, and emotional- work together to reach an audience. Students will also become familiar with the business side of filmmaking through class assignments, lecture, and discussion.

Co-Requisite(s): Mandatory Safety Seminar required at the beginning of the semester.

Recommended Preparation: Reading of screenplays, both produced and un-produced, viewing of movies and television shows.

Description and Assessment of Assignments
Each student must participate in ten main projects/assignments:

1.   SCENE ANALYSIS ASSIGMENT

2.   CAMERA EXERCISE: CHANGE

3.   CAMERA EXERCISE: MOVEMENT

4.   CAMERA LIGHTING EXERCISE: 3-POINT LIGHTING

5.   PREVISUALIZATION ASSIGNMENT

6.   EDITING EXERCISE

7.   COVERAGE PROJECT
- 2-3 page scene maximum, (2-3 minutes) from an existing FILM SCREENPLAY. NOT TV.
- 2 actors MAXIMUM (negotiable) 1 location.
- Each student will act as PRODUCER, DIRECTOR AND EDITOR.
- YOU CANNOT ACT IN YOUR SCENE. If you do, you will receive a ZERO for the coverage project.

8.   THE PITCH
- Each student will pitch a script idea for their final project to the class.

9.   FINAL PROJECT SCRIPT
- Each student will write one drafts of a short script, not more than 5 pages in length, to be pitched to the class and voted on to produce for the final group project. DIALOGUE IS ALLOWED.
- See parameters for final project to be followed for final project script.
- Includes Prewriting Assignment.

10.   FINAL PROJECT
- To be produced with limited budget, no more than three actors (negotiable) and a limited number of locations.
- YOU CANNOT ACT IN YOUR SCENE. If you do, you will receive a ZERO for the coverage project.

VIDEO PROJECT REQUIREMENTS:
- All projects will be shot on digital video and edited in the editing program of their choice.
- Include a mandatory and readable USC credit at the end of your other credits:

"Student Produced at the University of Southern California (year)"

- Project must be brought to class as a Quicktime file on a portable hard drive or flash drive, AND uploaded to Youtube or Vimeo, password protected, as a backup.

Participation
Participation includes attendance, punctuality/tardiness, participating in discussions, class exercises, etc. All of the above affects your potential to earn full credit.

Grading Breakdown
Your grade for 385 will be based on your personal growth as a filmmaker, your willingness to explore themes and techniques, your mastery of craft and your development in relation to your classmates. It will be measured with a variety of assignments (see following assignment page). You will be graded A through F (including pluses and minuses) upon completion of the course. Grades of "Incomplete" are given for medical emergencies only. Emergencies are narrowly interpreted.

385 Grading Breakdown - Attendance and promptness mandatory
15%   Class participation (discussions, feedback, attendance, etc…)
5%   Scene Analysis Assignment
5%   Camera Exercise: Change
5%   Camera Exercise: Movement
5%   Camera Exercise: Lighting

Coverage Project is divided between Previs and Film for a total of 15% of your grade:

5%	Previsualization Assignment for Coverage Project
15%	Coverage Project

5%	Prewriting Assignments: Freewrite/Outline or Beatsheet/Treatment
10%	Final Project script (first draft)
5%	The Final Project Pitch

Final Project is divided up for a total of 20% of your grade:

15%	Final Project (based on your work in your crew position)
	Planning & preparation tools
	Producers: Production Book – assembled and a copy turned in on Finals Day.
5%	Final Movie (Includes Personal Reflections on collaboration experience (Everyone)
5%	Final (Attendance Mandatory. Just showing up gives you the full 10%. Not showing up = 0%.)

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 Rubrics

For Coverage and Group Projects: Delivered films will be assessed on the following components, on a scale of 1-5, 1 being poor and 5 being excellent:

1. Story (clarity)
2. Performances
3. Composition/Shot Selection
4. Lighting
5. Editing
6. Sound (including post)

Written assignments (except creative workouts) will be based on the same scale, except on the following components:

1. Clarity (including grammar)
2. Point-of-View (Exploration of arguments/opinions)
3. Adherence to guidelines

Assignment Submission Policy

Assignments will be due as specified by the Instructor. All assignments will be uploaded by the date and time due to Google Classroom, and all video projects will be submitted by class time on Google Classroom, a shared Google Drive folder, and with an online link in reserve. If an assignment is submitted late, your grade for that assignment will be lowered one notch (ie: A becomes A-). You have 2 weeks to turn in an assignment after it's due before it becomes a zero. I will not accept late assignments after 2 weeks.

Grading Timeline

The instructor will return assignments with grades and feedback by the following class after it was due.

Additional Policies

MID-SEMESTER CONFERENCES:
Your instructor may request a mid-semester conference. At your request, your instructor will definitely allow time for mid-semester conferences to discuss your work and your progress. Your instructor may also request a mid-semester conference if he feels it is necessary. If at any time you wish to discuss your work, your progress, or anything else, please contact your instructor to set up an appointment. My office hours will be done by appointment primarily on Thursdays, by phone or Skype.

Production Numbers:

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 SCAcommunity 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 may still 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, student 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.

Attendance:

Timely attendance is mandatory and failure to attend all class sections from beginning to end may affect grades.

- You are allowed 2 absences without consequence. After a third absence, your participation grade will be lowered a notch (IE: A becomes A-). A fourth absence will lower your participation grade two notches (IE: A- becomes B), and a fifth absence or more will lower it by full points (B becomes C).
- A student is deemed late if they arrive after the class has started. One late arrival may not affect your grade. Two late arrivals equate to one full unexcused absence. (IE: A becomes A-). Three late arrivals may result in your grade being dropped by two portions (IE: A- becomes B). Four late arrivals may result in your grade being dropped three portions (one full point: B becomes C). Lateness of more than 30 minutes will count as an absence, as will leaving class early (IE: leaving at the break, etc.).

- Exemptions will be allowed on a case-by-case basis, and must be supported by a written accommodation request from the USC Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS).
- Students who become ill and need to self-isolate will be supported in their efforts to stay current with classwork and assignments. Faculty are no longer required to provide an option for students to zoom into class. However, Faculty may choose to use zoom at their discretion in an effort to help students stay current in their course work.

Students must contact the professor or SA 24 hours prior to class start time if they need to miss class for any reason.

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.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy:

In this course, you are allowed to use artificial intelligence (AI)-powered programs to help you with assignments that indicate the permitted use of AI. You should also be aware that AI text generation tools may present incorrect information, biased responses, and incomplete analyses; thus, they are not yet prepared to produce text that meets the standards of this course. To adhere to our university values, you must cite any AI-generated material (e.g., text, images, etc.) included or referenced in your work and provide the prompts used to generate the content. Using an AI tool to generate content without proper attribution will be treated as plagiarism and reported to the Office of Academic Integrity. Please review the instructions in each assignment for more details on how and when to use AI Generators for your submissions.

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).

DATE	IN CLASS	DELIVERABLES	ASSIGNMENTS
WEEK 1 **1/11/24**	**INTRODUCTION** Introductions Syllabus Review Story of Self **WHAT IS PRODUCING? Creative vs. Line Producing** **LECTURE: IDEA TO STORY** - What is story? Where does it come from? Architecture of a Movie - Who, not what. - Why, what, where, how. - Character, Objective, Backstory,, Obstacles Stakes - Conflict – Change **VISUAL LANGUAGE** - Shot selection, Composition, Camera Movement **WATCH:** Caroline		**SCENE ANALYSIS ASSIGNMENT: Choose a short scene (no more than 3 minutes) from a favorite movie and identify the shots used to make up this scene. Use a screen-capture program such as VLC to capture the shots in the scene from the movie. Upload to Google Drive Folder by TUES @ 6PM**
WEEK 2 **1/18/24**	**PRODUCTION NUMBERS/CHOOSE CAMERA GROUPS** **REVIEW: Scene Analysis Assignment** **LECTURE: VISUAL PLAN** **Storyboards** **- Overheads** **- Shotlists** **DISCUSSION: CREW POSITIONS IN PRODUCTION** **DISCUSS:** COVERAGE PROJECT **WATCH:** The Climb; Brought to You By Satan	**SCENE ANALYSIS ASSIGNMENT**	**- Start thinking about what scene you want to do for your coverage project. Scene due TUES @ 6pm.** **- Meet at SCA for camera checkout.**
WEEK 3 **1/25/24**	**CAMERA CHECK-OUT Meet at Equipment Center. Meet back at soundstage.** **CAMERA INTRO WORKSHOP** Camera demo/Learn about how to use cameras. Go through settings:	**MEET AT SCA FOR CAMERA CHECKOUT**	**BRING CAMERAS, SUPPORT GEAR, CARDS TO CLASS** **Submit Scene (Script pages) for coverage project. Due TUES @ 6pm** **Camera Exercise 1 : Change. Due Classtime.**

	Frame rate Focal Length/Lenses ISO/GAIN Aperture Shutter Speed White Balance		
WEEK 4 **2/1/24**	**REVIEW: BEFORE SHOOTING (Settings) LECTURE: LIGHTING AND PRODUCTION SOUND** Terms, Properties of light, 3-point lighting. Lighting Demo/Exercise Blocking Exercise **SOUND DEMO** (SA CHECK OUT SOUND GEAR FOR EACH GROUP?) **LIGHTING EXERCISE (Photo provided)** **DISCUSS: LIGHTING PROJECT EXERCISE**	**CAMERA EXERCISE: CHANGE (1 minute). Due Monday 6pm.** **BRING CAMERAS, SUPPORT GEAR, SD CARDS** **SCRIPT PAGES FOR COVERAGE PROJECT SCENE** **Coverage Camera Exercise**	**CAMERA EXERCISE 2 : Coverage (script provided) Due class time.** **Submit Coverage Project Previs: Due TUES @6pm.**
WEEK 5 **2/8/24**	**REVIEW: COVERAGE PROJECT PREVIS** **LECTURE: WORKING WITH ACTORS** Objectives - Beat Breakdowns (go over sample scene) - Demo a rehearsal (use second sample scene) **AUDITIONS** - Actors Access, L.A. Casting, etc. - Breakdowns Sides **Preproduction meetings in crews**	**Camera Exercise 2** **Coverage Project Previs (due 9/19)**	**WATCH: AVID Editing:** **Tutorial 1 (8:20:** **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6z86DD6IYSA** **Tutorial 2 (7:34):** **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6xcHYVjyri4** **Tutorial 3 (14:30):** **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4UHP1kO1ZQs** **- Bring raw footage of all camera exercises to Avid labs.**

WEEK 6 **2/15/24**	**WATCH: Camera Exercises** **MEET IN AVID LAB: EDITING/AVID TUTORIAL 1** **LECTURE: POST-PRODUCTION** - Workflow - Working with picture editors and sound editors - Assemblies, rough cuts, fine cuts, picture lock, sound design and dialogue editing Music/composers – Color correction/DI Finishing/Final – Delivery/Deliverables **LECTURE: CINEMATIC TIME & SPACE** - Continuity - 180 Degree Rule 30 Degree Rule **EDITING** Accessing AVID Knowledgebase Starting a Project, Ingestion, importing footage. Basic Editing Tools/Techniques **BEGIN EDITING SCENE FROM PROVIDED FOOTAGE INDIVIDUALLY**	**RAW FOOTAGE FROM CAMERA EXERICISES**	**SHOOT AND EDIT COVERAGE PROJECT. DUE: CLASS TIME.**
WEEK 7 **2/22/24**	**MEET IN AVID LAB: EDITING/AVID TUTORIAL 2** **DISCUSS: Coverage Project Previs** **WATCH: CLIP FROM The Hobbit (Post sound)** **REVIEW: SOUND DESIGN AND EDITING** **INTRO: SOUND LIBRARY** **FINISH EDITING IN CLASS. VIEW AT END OF CLASS IF TIME**	**Coverage Project Previs**	**SHOOT AND EDIT COVERAGE PROJECT. DUE: CLASS TIME.**
WEEK 8 **2/29/24**	**SCREEN: COVERAGE PROJECTS**	**COVERAGE PROJECT** **(Group 1)**	

WEEK 9 **3/7/24**	**FINISH SCREENING COVERAGE PROJECTS** **LECTURE: SCREENPLAY AND STORY STRUCTURE** Development/Treatment/Outline Format Screenplay language and style Rewriting Go over examples	**COVERAGE PROJECT (Group 2)**	**WRITE FIRST DRAFT OF GROUP PROJECT SCRIPTS. Upload to Google Drive Folder by TUES 3/19 @ NOON.**
3/10/24 - 3/17/24	**SPRING BREAK**		
WEEK 10 **3/21/24**	**WORKSHOP: CHOSEN SCRIPTS/Common "mistakes"** **LECTURE: THE PITCH** Logline vs. Elevator Pitch When you're in the room, approach, what to focus on Presence, enthusiasm, passion, personality Practice	**SCREENPLAY DRAFT**	**Prepare to Pitch your script idea during next class**
WEEK 11 **3/28/24**	**PITCHES** **VOTE ON PITCH TO PRODUCE FOR FINAL PROJECT** **CREW SCRIPT MEETINGS IN CLASS**	**PITCH** **SCRIPT: FIRST DRAFT**	**Preproduction for Final Group Project: Actors/Auditions, Locations** **HOLD CASTING SESSION/START AUDITIONING VIA SELF-TAPE. BRING IN SELF-TAPES OF TOP 2 CHOICES FOR EACH ROLE TO CLASS**
WEEK 12 **4/4/24**	**LECTURE: RUNNING THE SET** Protocol **WATCH: Clip from Living in Oblivion** **WATCH: CASTING TAPES.** **Crew meetings.**	**Casting tapes or dailies**	**START SHOOTING FINAL PROJECT BRING IN DAILIES, ASSEMBLIES, OR CUTS.**
WEEK 13 **4/11/24**		**DAILES OR ASSEMBLY/CUT**	**BRNIG DAILIES, ASSEMBLIES, OR CUTS.**

	WATCH: DAILIES/ASSEMBLIES/CUTS **LECTURE: AFTER THE FILM IS COMPLETED** Film Festivals and Markets Distribution Sales Agents Exhibition (theatrical,VOD,online, etc.)		
WEEK 13 **4/18/24**	**WATCH: DAILIES/ASSEMBLIES/CUTS**		
WEEK 13 **4/25/24**	**GUEST: TBA** **FINAL CLASS**		
STUDY DAYS: **4/27-4/30**			**Continue working on/finish movie.** **PRODUCERS finalize production book.**
FINAL SCREENING DAY **TUESDAY** **5/7/24 11am-1pm**	**ATTENDANCE MANDATORY. SHOW UP ON TIME!** **Just attending is 5% of your grade. BE ON TIME!**	**FINAL MOVIE** **PRODUCERS: BRING PRODUCTION BOOKS**	

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Integrity:
The University of Southern California is a learning community committed to developing successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the dissemination of ideas. Academic misconduct, which includes any act of dishonesty in the production or submission of academic work, compromises the integrity of the person who commits the act and can impugn the perceived integrity of the entire university community. It stands in opposition to the university's mission to research, educate, and contribute productively to our community and the world.

All students are expected to submit assignments that represent their own original work, and that have been prepared specifically for the course or section for which they have been submitted. You may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s).

Other violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), collusion, 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. All incidences of academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity 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.

Please ask your instructor if you are unsure what constitutes unauthorized assistance on an exam or assignment, or what information requires citation and/or attribution.

Students and Disability Accommodations:

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at osas.usc.edu. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu.

Support Systems:

Counseling and Mental Health - *(213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call*
Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline - *988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call*
The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 200 local crisis

centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new, shorter phone number makes it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273-8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

[Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP)](#) - (213) 740-9355(WELL) – 24/7 on call
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm (including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking).

[Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX (EEO-TIX)](#) - (213) 740-5086
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.

[Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment](#) - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298
Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

[The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS)](#) - (213) 740-0776
OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

[USC Campus Support and Intervention](#) - (213) 740-0411
Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

[Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#) - (213) 740-2101
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
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
Non-emergency assistance or information.

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

[Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice](#) - (323) 442-2850 or otfp@med.usc.edu
Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.

PLEASE NOTE:
FOOD AND DRINKS (OTHER THAN WATER) ARE NOT PERMITTED IN ANY INSTRUCTIONAL SPACE IN THE SCHOOL OF CINEMATIC ARTS COMPLEX