

SCA CTPR 421 PRACTICUM IN EDITING

SPRING 2024

Section: 18532
Instructor: Katz
Phone: 310-936-7777
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Office Hours: By appointment on Zoom

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Class Meetings: Tuesdays, 4–6:50pm SCA 316

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The goal of this class is to explore how editing shapes storytelling. You will study how editing becomes the ultimate tool to create or heighten emotions while telling a story. A workshop will also be held to expand your knowledge of Avid and Sapphire. This is a hands-on course combined with lectures and demonstrations relating to aesthetic and technical issues in post-production. You will be editing a variety of scenes. This will require you to use your storytelling ability, character development aptitude, sensibility, problem solving capacity and technical skills to solve the myriad of challenges that confront an editor in the editing room. As you know, editing is not merely sticking the pieces together. It's about fulfilling an overall vision, creating a captivating flow of sound and images, and revealing the story's text and subtext. In this class, we will look at how the two most crucial components of a well edited film are emotion and rhythm. Examples of well or "not so well" edited scenes will help in engaging analysis and discussion. Throughout the course, we will explore and examine genres and how they relate to story and structure. Genre holds precedence in the world of film because it is essential to an editor's understanding of how to cater to the emotional expectations of the audience. Each week, you will be given dailies to edit in various genres. These scenes will then be analyzed in class by your professor and your classmates. Once given feedback, you will have an opportunity to re-cut your projects based on these notes. For some, you will re-edit a scene to alter the genre, for instance a comedy may become a thriller. Through these exercises, you will discover each genre's demands in honoring the specific expectations of the audience, always to be addressed by the editor. Other topics include the organization and politics of the editing room, from working with directors and producers, to interactions with the studios and the preview process. This class will prepare you – both aesthetically and technically – to assume a role as editor on an advanced project, as well as in your post-school careers, on films edited either by you or others. In summary, we are going to concentrate primarily on the aesthetic aspect of editing. You will be given a working knowledge of how to organize an editing room and operate the various tools that you need to make your editing decisions.

CLASS FORMAT:

The class is structured to give you an overview of how a film is made in the final phase of post-production. Along the way, you will get a sense of the entire flow of film editing – including its thought processes, technical needs, scheduling, and politics. Each week we will discuss various aesthetic and practical aspects of editing. A portion of the class will be devoted to editing and/or analyzing edited scenes. During this time, *you will be editing in pairs, except for the final project where you will be on your own.*

1	1/09/24 Class introduction	Survey Select partners. Intro to the Editing Thought Process. Editing while failing. Review of Basic Principles. Editing Trifecta and The editing Triangle. Focus on story. Focus on emotions Selects/Gems The first shot we see. The first character we see.	Reading: The Healthy Edit. Chapter 1. Intro pages 1-8 Chapter 2. Pages 9-14 (The edit)
2	1/16/24 Refresh and let's get started.	Questions about Avid and workflow. Select a partner Thinking like an editor. Translation from script to screen Script supervising (scripty paperwork, organization, naming conventions, slating, naming takes)	Chapter 2. Pages 15-20 (Principles) Assignment Exercise#1
3	1/23/24 Working with a script	Examining the Scene. Viewing Dailies. Dailies Notes. Storyboards and animatic. Shot sizes and their use. (6K and beyond) frame extraction.	Chapter 5. Pages 66-75 (Organization) Chapter 7. Pages 100-103 (Montage) Assignment Exercise#2
4	1/30/24 Editing techniques 1	The Sequence. (How to start and end it) Re-arranging Rule of 3's Eisenstein's school (Metric, rhythmic, Tonal, Over tonal, Intellectual, montage.) Editor's cut VS director's vision (trying stuff, be bold) When to cut or not cut. Edits & Transitions (straight cuts, dissolves, wipes, fades, shot size, sound) J-cut/L-cut.	Chapter 12. Pages 177-186 (Dialogue) Assignment Exercise#3

5	2/6/24 Editing techniques 2	Dialogue editing Text and subtext. Insert VS CU Reaction shots Slow-Mo, undercrank, freeze. Intro to Video Effects	Chapter 16. Pages 229-245 (Transitions) Assignment Exercise#4
6	2/13/24 Editing sounds	Sound & Music Spotting sound Sound design Pre- dubs Mixing Using music to tell a story Spotting Music/Styles Source VS Score Final Mix	Chapter 18. Pages 253-271 (Music editing-sound design) Assignment Exercise#5
7	2/20/24 Editing Action	What is "genre" Genre: Action scenes (cop, battle, western....) "Rubber Band" editing Jump cuts Time wrapping	Chapter 8. Pages 115-119 (Genres) Chapter 9. Pages 139-147 (Action) MID TERM EVALS
8	2/27/24 Editing tension	Genre: The Thriller vs. Mystery. What the audience knows. What the protagonist knows. Creating suspense. Shot length.	Chapter 10. Pages 149-154 (Horror- mystery) Assignment Exercise#6
9	3/5/24 Editing funny	Genre: Editing Comedy. Structure in comedy editing. The Banana Peel Effect. Sight gags and visual comedy. Rule of Threes as it applies to comedy. Comedic timing.	Chapter 9. Pages 131-136 (Comedy) Assignment Exercise#7
10	3/19/24 Editing fantasy	Genre : Fantastic- Sci-Fi- Animation Traditional optical CGI Green screen/Keying Motion control Motion capture Pre-viz	Chapter 8. Pages 120-130 (VFX) Assignment Exercise#8 Guest speaker

11	3/26/24 Editing life	Genre: Documentaries. Telling a story with real footage. Style in documentaries. (scripted vs non scripted) The Auteur Editor. Voice-over and montage. Script Sync	Chapter 10. Pages 155-161 (Documentary) Assignment Exercise#9
12	4/2/24	1-Preparing for Online: - Cleaning up Video and Audio tracks - Adding final titles and end credits - 3D titles and Blue Titler - Adding final VFX. - Video Mixdown 2- Preparing turn over for picture: - Linking back to AMA - Transcoding to higher resolutions 3- Preparing turn over sound: - AAF export - Adding visible Timecode burn-in - JPEG QT movie 4- Editor skills - Review VFX and tricks.	Assignment Exercise#10
13	4/9/24 The world of an editor	Freelance VS company Agents/Negotiation Editing team Working with an AE	Guest Speaker (Cosmo team)
14	4/16/24 Conclusion	Review of the semester	Chapter 21. Pages 306-308 (Wrap up)
15	4/23/24	Finals	

*I encourage you to ask questions, give comments and challenge my approach to editing. Your participation is a essential aspect of this course. If you don't understand something, ask. If you disagree with a concept or idea, say so...Nicely. ask.

WEEKLY COURSE BREAKDOWN:

This breakdown may change several times during the course of the semester, depending on feedback and the progress of your work.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

You will be required to edit and/or re-edit a scene each week, *sometimes on your own, sometimes with a partner*. You will have the opportunity, *on a rotating basis*, to present your cuts in class, and accept comments from your classmates and me so you can re-edit the scenes for a screening during the following week. My notes will be given verbally for most of you during the class and the rest will get an email. Projects will be edited using the state-of-the-art nonlinear digital editing system used in features and television today: Avid Media Composer. You will also be given a background in some assistant editor techniques. Katz will be teaching a practical class to review and refresh your Avid knowledge along with tutorials on Knowledgebase. You will learn supplemental techniques that good editors and assistant editors need to know about the editing process and be able to ask questions that arise during the editing of your own scenes.

REQUIRED READING:

Rosenberg, John, *THE HEALTHY EDIT: Creative editing Techniques for perfecting your movie*. (second edition). Routledge-Focal press book.

SUGGESTED READING:

Yorke, John, *INTO THE WOODS: How stories work and why we tell them*. Penguin books, 2014
Hollyn, Norman, *THE FILM EDITING ROOM HANDBOOK*. Peachpit press, 2010
Hollyn, Norman, *THE LEAN FORWARD MOMENT: Creating compelling stories for film, TV, and the Web*. Voices that matter, 2009
Dancyger, Ken, *THE TECHNIQUE OF FILM EDITING*. Focal Press, 2006.
Dmytryk, Edward, *ON FILM EDITING*. Focal Press, 1984.
Eisenstein, Sergei, *FILM FORM*. Mariner Books, 2014 (reissued).
Kauffman, Sam, *AVID EDITING: Guide for Beginning & Intermediate Users*. Focal Press, 2012.
Hurbis-Cherrier, Mick, *VOICE AND VISION*. Focal Press, 2011.
Reisz, Karel and Millar, Gavin, *TECHNIQUE OF FILM EDITING*. Focal Press, 2009.

SUGGESTED ON THE WEB:

ArtoftheGuillotine.com, editor Gordon Burkell. Interviews with film editors (including your professor), reviews and news about editing and post-production.

Avid Technology Podcast Interviews with filmmakers and software designers such as Jabez Olssen, editor of King Kong, and Phil Avanzatto, lead animator at PURE.

Creative Planet's Digital Production Buzz ~ Interviews authors, filmmakers and people involved in post-production and production.

Creative Screenwriting Magazine. USC alum Jeff Goldsmith interviews screenwriters of all levels of film. A great resource for the people who do the original writing of the script (since editors do the final rewrite).

CreativeCOW.net. A good series of interviews from the people at Creativecow, one of the premiere website/bulletin boards for the DV filmmaker. Lots of great topics.

DV Show. A weekly podcast devoted to all things digital video.

Film Editing Podcast. Assistant editor/editor Patrick interviews editors and directors with the constant emphasis on editing.

KCRW's The Business. A weekly half-hour program about the entertainment business. Usually some good discussion about issues involved in production or distribution.

GRADING:

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 63-66D- 60-62
- F 59 and below

Grades will be calculated based on a multiple choice midterm (20%), participation and preparedness for class (50%) and the final project (30%) at the end of the semester where you will assemble a few consecutive scenes from a film that you will be editing into one long sequence with music and sound effects. On the Monday of finals week, you will submit a Quicktime of your edit. I expect you to attend that final class.

ATTENDANCE:

Students will be required to attend and participate in all classes. Attendance will be taken at every class. Written explanations will be necessary *in advance* for all absences. Unexcused absences will be reflected in the course grade.

Two absences will result in a student's grade being lowered by one full letter (IE: A becomes B). A third 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 absence. Two late class arrivals equate to one full absence. In addition, students will be expected to be at class *sharply* on time; *lateness will also be reflected in your grade*. Please make use of my email address above if you have an unavoidable problem. If you cannot make the class or will be late, let me know by the evening before the class. Since film editors are judged on their ability to complete their work in a timely manner, you will likewise be responsible for completing each stage of every project on time and in a professional manner.

OFFICE HOURS:

My office hours are by appointment. The best way to reach me is my USC SCA email address: roebanka@usc.edu. But preferably text me at: 310-936-7777

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

The School of Cinematic Arts expects the highest standards of excellence and ethics from all of you. It is particularly important that you avoid plagiarism, cheating on our quiz, submitting any work that you or your partner have not done. Violations of this policy will result in a failing grade and be reported to the Office of Student Conduct. If you have any questions or doubts about these policies, consult "Campus Guide" and/or confer with your SA or me.

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
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

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 micro aggressions 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/note takers/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

ASYNCHRONOUS LEARNING:

All class sessions will be Zoom recorded and made available for asynchronous viewing until end of the grading period in early December. Students enrolled in this course from outside the U.S. Pacific Time Zone will still be expected to participate in real time assuming that the official class time falls between 7am and 10pm in their time zones. Wherever possible faculty will be understanding and make accommodations to ease the inconvenience of asynchronous learning.

Students from outside the U.S. Pacific Time Zone for whom the class falls between the hours of 10pm and 7am may still be required to complete certain components of the course synchronously. These components will be announced at the beginning of the semester and students with concerns about meeting these requirements should discuss them with their faculty at that time.

Here is a memo from our dear Track Head, Nancy Forner:

Dear SCA Fall 2020 Students:

Welcome to the Film & Television Production Division in the School of Cinematic Arts at USC. My name is Nancy Forner. I am a Film Editor, a Professor and Head of the Editing Track at USC SCA. I wanted to introduce myself and also give you some **important information** about Picture Editing at SCA.

As you prepare to start the fall semester, I need to remind you that we edit only on AVID Media Composer and due to Personal Protection Protocols, all editing will be done on-line in the Fall.

Please be informed that The School of Cinematic Arts Production Division has Mandatory Editing Requirements:

All students are required to have the following:

- A laptop that meets the SCA computing requirements
- A hard drive that meets SCA hard drive requirements
- Headphones with a 1/4-inch phone jack
- Avid software, as specified in the link below
- Sapphire software, which is free, as specified in the links below

SCA computing requirements for laptops and hard drives can be found at <http://cinema.usc.edu/laptops/>. Any inquiries about which laptop might be right for you should be directed to: laptops@cinema.usc.edu.

Apple computers are available, with an educational discount, online through the [Apple Education Store](#) or at the USC Bookstore. AppleCare extended warranty is recommended.

If you experience technical difficulties, please email our Creative Technology & Support team at creativetech@cinema.usc.edu with as much detail as possible about the issue you are experiencing.

I highly recommend you attend our online SCA Laptop Orientations.

A Zoom invitation will be provided closer to the start of school.

August 18th 10:00 AM

August 19th 1:00 PM

The Laptop Orientation sessions will be recorded for you to access at a later time if you are unable to attend and the location of these sessions will be provided closer to the start of school.

Throughout the semester we also have an AVID Genius Bar to help with any technical editing questions.

This Fall, the AVID Genius Bar will be both in-person or on-line **by appointment only**. Please e-mail the specific instructors for the hours you would like to attend. As the instructors receive emails, they will respond with either an email answer or Zoom invite or arrange and schedule a time for an in-person meeting.

AVID Genius Bar, open all semester:

Monday 12pm-5pm (Location: B149) Toi Juan Shannon

Tuesday 2pm-4pm (On-Line only) John Rosenberg

Tuesday 4pm-9pm (On-line only) Toi Juan Shannon

Thursday 12pm-5pm (On-line only) Toi Juan Shannon

Toi Juan Shannon:

tshannon@usc.edu

John Rosenberg:

jrosenberg@cinema.usc.edu

Editing is a very important and integral part of the Film/Television/Media Industry. It is my hope that your experience editing at SCA will be a rewarding and creative one. Please feel free to contact me regarding any questions concerning Editing Instruction or the Laptop/Equipment Requirements at USC SCA. I will try to answer your questions and/or direct you to the right person to help. nforner@cinema.usc.edu

Again, welcome and Edit ON!

Nancy Forner

Nancy Forner, ACE

Professor, Film and Television Production

Track Head Editing

Michael Kahn Endowed Chair for Editing

USC School of Cinematic Arts

[IMDB](#)