



CTPR 327, MOTION PICTURE CINEMATOGRAPHY

Units: 3

Thursdays, 6:30pm - 9:30pm

USC Spring 2025

Location: SCA Stage 3

Instructor: Gary Wagner

Office: Call or email to schedule a meeting

Office Hours: Contact professor for meeting

Contact Info: Given 1st day of class

Teaching Assistant: Anmol Bajpai

Office: online

Office Hours: Contact TA for meeting

Contact Info: Given 1st day of 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. You will be exposed to a wide variety of cinematic challenges to develop your "eye". 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. This will be an in-person course, class will not offer Zoom recordings of class unless specified by Instructor. Resources, readings, assignments and uploading will be via a Google drive. Enrolled students will be given access to drive at beginning of the semester.

Learning Objectives

- Each student will manipulate lights, camera and content of their "scenes" into a meaningful, conceptual presentation.
- Students will be able to shoot with a HD Motion picture video camera for class exercises. A 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, in visual storytelling.
- Students, on a 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 in a group setting.
- Students will be able to block and cover a scene. Then they will use those principles to complete a self-shot notebook assignment out of class.
- 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.
- 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, class lectures/exercises and professor led lighting demonstrations.