



CTPR 474, Documentary Production

Units: 4

Spring 2025

Wednesdays, 9:00 am - 12:50 pm

Location: SCI 207

Instructors:

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Office: N/A (Zoom)

Office Hours: By Appointment

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SCA Knowledgebase: <https://knowledgebase.sca.usc.edu>

[Creative Technology and Support](#)

(213) 821-4571

creativetech@cinema.usc.edu

Location: SCA 227

Support Hours: Monday - Friday, 8:30 AM - 8:30 PM

Land Acknowledgement

USC acknowledges that we are on the traditional land of the Tongva People. For thousands of years, the Tongva people lived on this land we occupy today and were considered the most powerful indigenous peoples to inhabit the Los Angeles basin. Along with the Tongva, we also recognize the Chumash, Tataviam, Serrano, Cahuilla, Juaneño, and Luiseño People, for the land that USC also occupies around Southern California. To learn about the Indigenous land on which your learning location resides, please visit Native-Land.ca to discover the Original People of your home.

Course Description

This class is an exercise in documentary filmmaking and collaboration between students. During the 15-week course, students work in teams of two to make one short documentary film (10-20 minutes in length). Teams are equally responsible for deciding on the subject and

all aspects of the creative process, as well as the managerial aspects of production (schedules, releases, etc). In addition to swapping roles from time to time during production, students should be prepared to share in all tasks. Each duo will serve as the production unit for the key roles of directing, cinematography, editing, sound recording/mixing and producing. One production assistant may be enlisted to help during production (filming). You may also get help in post-production for finishing steps such as sound mixing and color-grading.

During weekly class meetings, teams will screen short films for inspiration and discuss their structure, themes, tone, subjects—anything related to the process of filmmaking. Some class time will be devoted to developing the ideas for the teams' projects. Once teams begin production, class time will be used primarily for screening selected dailies, first cuts, second cuts, fine cuts and final/locked cuts. We will be your filmmaking community, as well as your first "audience" from a work-in-progress to the final cut. Most learning in this course will be in the making, the doing, the experiential, and in hearing our feedback. All film production and post production work will take place outside of class. You should make sure your work, social and education demands accommodate the requirements of this course before enrolling.

Each documentary may follow any of the traditional formats – from archival to vérité to experimental. The "documentary form" is very flexible and constantly changing. The challenge is to find the best approach for the subject matter. Aesthetic risk taking is encouraged.

Consideration and thought should be given before deciding on the subject(s) for each team's documentary. Teams should take into consideration the following: (1) Do you have access to the subject? (2) Does one of the team members qualify as an expert on the subject/idea? (3) Is the SCALE of the project aligned with the time and technological limitations of the course? (4) Does the schedule for finishing the film align with the subject matter availability? These are but a FEW of the questions you should consider. Most importantly, do not take on a subject matter that is too large.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will learn the importance of collaboration with others, including their filmmaking partners, their classmates and the film participants; to think creatively; to push through diverse challenges; and to pursue best professional practices which includes meeting deadlines, showing up for in-class sessions, replying to emails and messages from the instructors, SA and team members, and participating verbally in class.

Partnerships

Some students have already made films or worked as a part of large crews. Other have not worked on a film at all. This course asks students to share in the workload and the creative decisions. There is no "boss" or "director" in your partnership. All decisions should be made together on all aspects of the project, both aesthetic and practical from initial concept to final completion. Working with equal partners presents unique challenges, mostly enriching, but

sometimes producing conflict. Duos should resolve conflicts. If they cannot, students should contact the SA and instructors before conflict escalates. The SA and the instructors will help work through any partnership difficulties, but ultimately the success of your partnership is up to the duo members. Bottom line: You may not change partners once you have selected a project partner.

Expectation for Class Work

Duos are expected to screen work every week during production. If a participant cannot meet you during one week of the production, duos should shoot something else that supports the story/theme/content of the film and screen that footage in class that week. With few exceptions, no team should ever come to class without having something to screen once productions have begun. Deadlines must be met. The weekly calendar herein lays out expectations. Weekly assignments must be uploaded to the class Google Drive. See calendar for DUE DATES and TIMES. *It sometimes takes a long time to upload large files, so build this into your schedule.*

Attendance

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

- 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 professors or SA 24 hours prior to class start time if they need to miss class for any reason.

Documentary Production Notes

- **SUBJECT MATTER.** Each duo will determine the subject of their documentary. Each duo must understand the scope of a short documentary which is limited to the workload and schedule of a semester as outlined in this syllabus. Be mindful of the size and scale of topics. It is good to be ambitious; it is important to be realistic. No student duo will have the time, energy, contacts or resources to take on a large-scale project. Choose wisely – starting with something that one or both students may share or have an interest in or connection to. Access to a place or person or institution is the best starting point for approaching a subject. If by week 3 or 4 significant inroads to access have not been attained, duos must quickly choose another subject. Each duo must have a backup plan in place.
- **FOOTAGE AMOUNT.** Students may shoot up to 20 hours of material. This is to encourage teams to film intentionally and to ensure that teams are not overwhelmed with footage

when editing. Remember the more footage shot, the more material that must be organized.

- **LOCATIONS.** Except by explicit permission, all shooting must take place within a 50 mile radius of USC's SCA campus. All locations must be permitted by the owner of the location.
- **SCHEDULING PRODUCTION.** Documentary productions rely on the availability and participation of participants which often is beyond our control. Remain nimble and flexible when approaching production. Provide participants with options for filming that work for everyone involved. When you first approach a participant for filming, it is critical that you propose production dates before doing anything else to see if it is possible and works with our class schedule for production.
- **CREW SIZES.** Duos will execute all roles in production: directing, camera, editing, sound recording, mixing, producing, color grading. There may be situations where you might want to shoot with 2 cameras or have a slightly larger crew. Each team may add one production assistant without obtaining permission from the instructors. If you are unable to secure assistance from other 474 students, PLEASE CONSULT WITH THE INSTRUCTORS OR SA. No industry professionals will be allowed to do any of the roles listed above in any production. Doing so will result in an automatic failing grade for both members of the duo.
- **MINORS.** Strongly discouraged. ~~Normally, filming with any child, even your own, requires a Certified Studio Teacher to be present.~~ Check with the instructor if you intend to use a child in any part of your documentary and bring a written clearance before filming anything with a child. If children are in the background of a location where you are shooting (and they are passing through or otherwise not interacting with the crew), you do not need permission.

Equipment and Other Requirements

- **INSURANCE.** Students must pay an Insurance Fee of \$250.
- **SOUND EQUIPMENT.** USC provides a sound mixer, a shotgun mic, a boom pole, a pistol grip, and cables. Please use only school equipment for production unless otherwise approved by instructor. It is strongly recommended that both members of the duo learn to record and mix sound. It is strongly recommended that teams obtain - either by renting or purchasing - a lavalier microphone system for use in their productions. If this is a problem, consult with the instructors.
- **CAMERA EQUIPMENT.** USC provides a camera for production - the NXCAM. It is strongly recommended that both members of the duo learn to use it. In addition, each duo receives a tripod. Camera pickup times are determined by the SCA camera department. Both members of the duo must be present at time of pickup. Please use only school equipment for production unless otherwise approved by instructor.
- **EDITING SOFTWARE.** Students may edit on AVID or Premiere Pro. It is strongly recommended that both members of the duo learn the software.

- **HARD DRIVES.** Students will provide their own SCA-approved hard drives. (required for shooting and Avid lab). The hard drive should be no smaller than 2TB and be dedicated to your CTPR 474 project alone. It is highly recommended for each team member to purchase one so that each team can have one dedicated as their primary hard drive, and the other for backup.
- **HEADPHONES.** Students must purchase headphones for editing. We recommend Sony MDR 7506, which are available at the USC Bookstore.

Post-Production Considerations

- **MUSIC/SCORING.** It is recommended that all music/score in the film be original. We encourage students to reach out to USC's Thornton School of Music, which is filled with eager composers. Contact them early in the process and involve them in the early stages of editing, if possible. Due to timing restrictions of this course, copyrighted material may be used, so long as rights are cleared and licenses are secured.
- **LICENSING COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL.** All featured **copyrighted material** must be cleared and acknowledged in your credits. Getting clearances can run the gamut from being a giant pain to totally impossible, and copyrighted material can include everything from the obvious (film clips and photographs) to the unexpected (an album cover or a featured baseball cap). So be sure to check that anything of this nature is in the public domain or falls under the guidelines of the [SCA Fair Use Policy](#).
- **FINAL FILM DURATION.** The final length must not exceed 20 minutes, including credits, titles and copyright (see below). No exceptions, please do not ask. Films should be substantive enough that they are longer than 5 minutes.
- **CREDITS AND TITLES.** Each film must include a title card, acknowledgements of all personnel who aided in the making of your film, and all necessary copyrights for material used in the film. See CREDITING GUIDELINES below for specifics.
- **FORMAT.** The finished project will be a digital file – color-corrected, mixed sound, and capable of being screened in an SCA screening auditorium.

Specs for screenings:

We accept .mov and .MP4 files

Acceptable codecs are: H264, AVC

File resolution should be 1920x1080 (Do not deliver 4K resolution files)

Audio should be 2.0 stereo or LtRt

- **FINAL FILM OUTPUT (AVID).** For those of you editing on AVID instructions can be found on the SCA Knowledgebase. If you're experiencing Avid issues, reach out to Toi Juan at the Avid Genius Bar. Here's his e-mail: tshannon@usc.edu. Files must be delivered to SA.
- **FINAL FILM OUTPUT (PREMIERE).** Final output recommendation: ProRes 422 HQ (MOV). [Here is a link to a tutorial](#). Files must be delivered to SA.
- **POST-SEMESTER SCREENING.** If you wish for your film to be considered for festivals or any release outside of this class or for personal use in a public space, each partnership

must collect photocopies of all required permits, releases, emergency medical information, etc., and put them in a production notebook for archival purpose. Necessary items see below: *What Do I Need To Get My Film Cleared*.

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

Unlike fiction films, documentaries regularly turn out not to be the film you started to make in the first place. Such unpredictability makes it easy to fall behind and get swamped in the end. Keeping to the timetable and deadlines for this class will prevent that from happening. So, look ahead and keep up.

SCHEDULE OF PRODUCTION & CLASS WORK

	In-Class	Outside of Class + Deliverables
Week 1 1/15	<p><u>LECTURE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intros, orientation, syllabus & calendar • Introduction to documentary form • Screen documentary examples. <p><u>BREAKOUT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will be given time to develop ideas • Each student shares elevator pitch w/class • Students pair up into production teams & determine story idea • Teams apply for Production Number in class 	<p><u>ASSIGNMENTS DUE BY NEXT CLASS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch 2 short films in the style/tone of the film you want to make • <i>Get Your Supplies and Tools:</i> Purchase good headphones (we recommend Sony MDR 7506, which are available at the USC Bookstore), hard drive (see Equipment and Facilities addendum) and rent/purchase lavalier mics. • Teams to meet and finalize documentary story to present in next class

<p>Week 2 1/22</p>	<p><u>PRESENTATIONS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duos present elevator pitch of final story <p><u>LECTURE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-production: research, story development, organization • Working Hypothesis <p><u>BREAKOUT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duos begin writing Working Hypothesis document in class • Duos will be given time in class to begin organizing research & ask specific questions <p><u>EQUIPMENT CHECK-OUT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production # (needed to check out gear) • Camera check out • Sound equipment picked up 	<p><u>ASSIGNMENTS DUE BY NEXT CLASS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duos will meet outside of class continue developing your story and begin securing participants • Duos will complete Working Hypothesis Document & upload to Google Drive no later than 1/28 • Bring gear to next class
<p>Week 3 1/29</p>	<p><u>TUTORIAL</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camera & Sound tutorial <p><u>LECTURE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production: Interview technique / framing, verite & b-roll, what is a scene (beat sheet handout), Backing up your footage • Discuss team portrait assignment 	<p><u>ASSIGNMENTS DUE BY NEXT CLASS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Film Team Portraits which are to include 1 brief interview, b-roll, and 1 observational moment / verite scene (shoot no more than 1 hour of raw footage total). <p><i>Objective: Practice using camera and sound, ingesting footage, comparing sound quality, discovering problems, finding solutions.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring all of these elements to the Lab for next class: all your footage, transcription of interview; archival materials (if any); Headphones; external hard drives (or wherever you have stored the accessible materials).

<p>Week 4 2/5</p>	<p><u>LECTURE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-production basics: setting up a project, importing footage, bin structure <p><u>BREAKOUT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting Place: TBD <p>Please be on time and bring proper equipment as outlined in the week 3 assignments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During this session you will ingest the audio and visual materials into the editing software. 	<p><u>ASSIGNMENTS DUE BY NEXT CLASS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finish editing your Team Portraits. You should have a final film that is entirely made up of images you shot or ingested and audio you recorded. All portraits should be 2 minutes or less. Output and place into Google Drive no later than EOD 2/11. • Teams should begin scheduling production
<p>Week 5 2/12</p>	<p><u>SCREENING</u></p> <p>Each duo presents their Team Portraits</p> <p><u>LECTURE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is a Pitch Deck • Clearance (Film LA) & Releases (Location, Volunteer, and On-Camera Subject Release Forms) 	<p><u>ASSIGNMENTS DUE BY NEXT CLASS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each team will prepare a Pitch Deck to present in next class (15 mins or less) which will include Topic/Background, Participant(s) & Access, Central Question, Theme(s), Style/Execution, Pre, Production and Post timeline with dates, breakdown of group member roles/responsibilities • Teams should have at least one interview confirmed for the first week of production

<p>Week 6 2/19</p>	<p><u>PRESENTATIONS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teams present Pitch Decks • Presentations should be about 10-15 mins each <p><u>LECTURE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are DAILIES, developing visual language, shot lists, scouting locations <p><u>1-ON-1's</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teams get the “green light” or the “continue to prep” from Instructor. <p><i>*You need green light, so please be prepared*</i></p>	<p>PRODUCTION WEEK 1</p> <p><u>ASSIGNMENTS DUE BY NEXT CLASS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start shooting your film! • Prepare for next class: Each team selects and prepares 15-20 minutes of shot footage to screen in class (this should be decided together as a team). Please remember how to present dailies and follow those best practices as demonstrated in class. • Upload the footage to Google Drive no later than EOD 2/25 Be mindful of upload times so you meet this deadline! Start EARLY.
<p>Week 7 2/26</p>	<p><u>SCREENING</u></p> <p>DAILIES 1: Each team screens 15-20 minutes of dailies pre-selected for class; students give and receive feedback</p> <p><u>LECTURE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music licensing • Working with a composer <p><u>BREAKOUT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duos continue working on film • Opportunity for project specific questions 	<p>PRODUCTION WEEK 2</p> <p><u>ASSIGNMENTS DUE BY NEXT CLASS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal photography & editing continues! • Start interviewing composers if you intend to include music/score • Prepare for next class: Each team selects and prepares 15-20 minutes of shot footage to screen in class (this should be decided together as a team) • Upload the footage to Google Drive no later than EOD 3/4. Be mindful of upload times so you meet this deadline! Start EARLY.

<p>Week 8 3/5</p>	<p><u>SCREENING</u> DAILIES 2: Each duo screens new footage — 15-20 minutes of dailies pre-selected for class; students give and receive feedback</p> <p><u>LECTURE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Story development, outline vs script • Transcriptions <p><u>BREAKOUT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teams begin working on outline/script • Opportunity for project specific questions 	<p>PRODUCTION WEEK 3 <u>ASSIGNMENTS DUE BY NEXT CLASS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for next class: Each team creates an outline for their film • Upload the OUTLINE to Google Drive no later than EOD 3/11
<p>Week 9 3/12</p>	<p><u>PRESENTATIONS</u> OUTLINE: Each team presents a selection from their outline; students give and receive feedback</p> <p><u>LECTURE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review how to build a scene • Scene examples <p><u>BREAKOUT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teams begin discussing scene • Opportunity for project specific questions 	<p>PRODUCTION WEEK 4 <u>ASSIGNMENTS DUE BY NEXT CLASS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal photography ends; editing continues. • Prepare for next class: Each team prepares one scene from their film (5 min max) • Upload the SCENE to Google Drive no later than EOD 3/25
<p>Week 10 3/19</p>	<p>NO SCHOOL</p>	<p>Spring Recess</p>

<p>Week 11 3/26</p>	<p><u>SCREENING</u> Each team will share a scene from their film (5 mins max); students give and receive feedback</p> <p><u>LECTURE</u> • What is an Assembly? A First Cut? A Fine Cut? A Final Cut?</p> <p><u>BREAKOUT</u> • Opportunity for project specific questions</p>	<p><u>ASSIGNMENTS DUE BY NEXT CLASS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teams output an Assembly of the film for screening in next class. This should be MINIMUM 20 minutes but not over 30 minutes. • Upload the ASSEMBLY CUT to Google Drive no later than EOD 4/1. Be mindful of upload times so you meet this deadline! Start EARLY
<p>Week 12 4/2</p>	<p><u>SCREENING</u> ASSEMBLY CUTS: Each team screens Assembly of film, between 20-30 minutes; students give and receive feedback</p> <p><u>BREAKOUT</u> • Opportunity for project specific questions</p>	<p><u>ASSIGNMENTS DUE BY NEXT CLASS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire composer; start collaborating by sharing the assembly or footage • Prep any last-minute pickups • Teams output a ROUGH CUT of the film. It should have structure and a semblance of story at this point (20 minute max). • Upload the ROUGH CUT to Google Drive no later than EOD 4/8. Be mindful of upload times so you meet this deadline! Start EARLY.
<p>Week 13 4/9</p>	<p><u>SCREENING</u> ROUGH CUT: Each team screens Rough Cut of film, 20 minute max; students give and receive feedback</p> <p><u>BREAKOUT</u> • Opportunity for project specific questions</p>	<p><u>ASSIGNMENTS DUE BY NEXT CLASS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teams output a FINE CUT of the film (20 minute max). • Upload the FINE CUT to Google Drive no later than EOD 4/15. Be mindful of upload times so you meet this deadline! Start EARLY. • Bring your working hard drive to the room and be able to cut and mix your project IN PERSON. Each duo must have at least ONE shared workstation. You may also have your own in order to better learn.

<p>Week 14 4/16</p>	<p><u>SCREENING</u> FINE CUT: Each team screens Fine Cut of film, 20 minute max; students give and receive feedback</p> <p><u>TUTORIAL</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An in-class, live demo of basic sound mixing, including levels, room/world tone, environments, and adding design and music to your final mix. <p><u>BREAKOUT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity for project specific questions 	<p><u>ASSIGNMENTS DUE BY NEXT CLASS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teams output a PICTURE LOCK of the film. This cut should be close to the final length of the finished film. • Rough cut of Score/Music should be in PICTURE LOCK • Upload the PICTURE LOCK to Google Drive no later than EOD 4/22. Be mindful of upload times so you meet this deadline! Start EARLY.
<p>Week 15 4/23</p>	<p><u>SCREENING</u> PICTURE LOCK: Each team screens Picture Lock of film, 20 minute max; students give and receive feedback</p> <p><u>TUTORIAL</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Color Grading Resources <p><u>BREAKOUT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity for project specific questions 	<p><u>ASSIGNMENTS DUE BY NEXT CLASS:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last editing decisions made; Sound Work and Color Grading happens • Score/Music Locked and incorporated into the FINAL CUT • Teams bring FINAL CUT to next class. Bring hard drives and all assets in case you need to make changes. • IMPORTANT: Bring hard drive and project to the next class instead of uploading.

<p>Week 16 4/30</p>	<p><u>1-1 SCREENING</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Cuts w/color correction and sound work. • All titles and credits must be in the film and complete • Last notes on the cuts <p><u>LECTURE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribution 	<p><u>ASSIGNMENTS DUE BY FINAL SCREENING:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Film must be delivered to SA by NOON THURSDAY 5/1
<p>Friday 5/2</p>	<p><u>FINAL SCREENING</u> Students invite friends and family to USC to watch the finished film on the big screen! Also be sure to Invite people who were involved in the film, especially participants.</p>	<p>Screening Room TBD</p>

EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES (Addendum)

Camera

Sony HD 1080/60i FX (59.94i)

Camera cheat-sheet provided in a separate PDF.

Hard Drives

Students should consider purchasing an SCA-approved hard drive which are readily available at many vendors. The USC book store carries many of them, as well as some SDHC memory cards. The hard drive should be no smaller than 2TB and be dedicated to your CTPR 474 project alone. It is highly recommended for each team member to purchase one so that each team can have one dedicated as their primary hard drive, and the other for backup.

Approved External Hard Drives:

- GLYPH ATOM RAID SSD Bus-powered, USB-C**, laptop friendly (*Approximate retail price \$250 and up*)
- SAMSUNG T5 SSD Portable (bus-powered, USB-C**, laptop friendly), approximate retail price \$170 - \$370
- OWC MERCURY ELITE PRO MINI SSD Bus-powered, USB-C**, laptop friendly (*Approximate retail price \$150 and up*)
- G-TECH G-DRIVE (requires AC power), approximate retail price \$149 and up
- G-TECH G-DRIVE MOBILE USB-C Bus-powered, USB-C**, laptop friendly (Approximate retail price \$120)
- LACIE RUGGED Bus-powered, USB-C and USB-A cable included. Lower cost, but not as shock resistant or fast as an SSD drive. (Approximate retail price \$100-\$150)

Notes:

- The hard drives listed are recommended to have a drive speed of 7200rpm.
- Capacity: We do not recommend hard drives over 2TB.
- **All of the "mobile" drives are USB-C, also known as USB3.1
- Check SCA Approved Drives at <https://cinema.usc.edu/Laptops/> before purchasing a drive.
- A second drive or 16GB flash drives are highly recommended to back up material in the case of drive failure.

Sound

A boom mic is not always practical when shooting a documentary. You'll need to be prepared to either rent or purchase a lavalier microphone system (at least 1 transmitter, 1 receiver) for your film. They are available to rent for approximately \$30 for 7 days at LensRentals.com. If this is prohibitive, discuss it with the instructors and they'll find a way to supply you with one.

Grading Breakdown

Assessment Tool (assignments)	Points
Team Portraits	5
Pitch Deck Presentations	5
Dailies 1	5
Dailies 2	5
Scene	5
Assembly	10
Rough Cut	10
Fine Cut	10
Picture Lock Cut	10
Final Project Overall	20
Professionalism (Deadlines met, attitude, attendance, participation). Students will earn one point per week. Punctuality, non responsiveness, attitude, participation, worth ethic.	15
TOTAL	100

“Professionalism” includes, but is not limited to, making deadlines; participating in the in-class discussions and critiques; attitude in class, in meetings, and in duo collaboration; problem solving abilities; and work ethic.

Grades on cuts, dailies, assembly and presentation are based on the following: quality of presentation, meeting guidelines for duration, on time and prepared, correctly formatted for screening, and demonstration of work, in addition to the more subjective evaluation of quality or creative execution. We are learning, so expectations of quality are measured by successful progress week to week.

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

WHAT DO I NEED TO GET MY FILM CLEARED?

Please send all materials listed below items 1 - 3 digitally to SCA Cataloger Chelsey Young
cyoung@cinema.usc.edu

1- Production Book Checklist (PLEASE COMBINE ALL PAGES INTO A SINGLE PDF--Please do not make us download each page separately)

- Production Number
- Final Title of the Project
- Tech Specs (Color or Black & White / TRT / Audio / Image Size / Aspect Ratio)
- Language
- Countries (Shot in)
- Faculty Mentor Name
- All Credits (As they appear on screen)
- One Line Summary
- Two to Three Sentence Synopsis
- Student Certification Form
- ~~Actor Release Forms~~
- Extra Release Forms (if non speaking extras were used)
- Minor Release Forms (if minors were used)
- ~~Minor Work Permits (if minors were used)~~
- ~~Minor Studio Teacher Confirmation Forms (if minors were used)~~
- ~~Exhibit G for SAG Members (only if SAG actors used)~~
- ~~Nudity Releases~~
- Documentary Release Forms
- Volunteer Agreements for ALL students working on the film
- Original Writing Release Forms (for all films including non dialogue and documentary films)

- Music Release Forms (Original Music)
- Pre-Existing Music Release Forms (Published Music)
- Library Track Information (Please list Library and Track info on the Music Clearance Document)
- Music and Footage Clearance document
 - * Not to be confused with the Music cue sheet. This document is crucial for both the Archive and Industry Relations to easily identify that all music and non-original footage contained within the show have been properly dealt with. REMEMBER - It is USC policy that ALL licensing be cleared for Commercial use, worldwide, all media, in perpetuity.
- Complete and accurate credit list for Completed Film
- Students-these will be identified by the included Volunteer Release forms
- Staff-no paperwork needed-just point out any staff that are listed
- Independent Contractors-All paid workers who are not students or staff must be identified and please include any contracts/documentation related to their job/ payment.
- Original Art Release Form (for all art/posters/photos visible in film)
- Trademark or Logo Release Form (if needed based on content of film)
- Proof of Public Domain Material (if needed based on content of film)
- Fair Use Arguments from USC Law School Clinic combined with Intellectual Property and Technology Law Clinic (IPTLC) letter (if seeking fair use claim)
- Music Cue Sheet
- Dialogue List
- Contact Information for Filmmaker (Non-USC Email, USC Email, Phone, Social Media)
- ~~List of filmmakers who got credit for the class for accounting purposes (names of trio—480 and 546 and 547 all students who need to be paid)~~
- ~~Listed Stark Producers (if applicable)~~

2- Film Deliverables

- Master Copy (.mov file with ProRes or DNxHD codec) for All Films
- H264 smaller version for online access.
- Individual 5.1 Mono Wave Files for 5.1 DCPs
- ATMOS Sound Files (If mixed that way)
- AC3 Combined Wave File for 5.1 Blu-ray if needed
- Subtitled Copy and Clean Copy for Subtitled Films
- SRT file - All films must now create srt files for CLOSED CAPTIONING *****
Trailer and/or 10-30 Second Short Clip (Clip recommended for films shorter than 10 minutes)
the only acceptable end copyright text is as follows and should be the final thing on screen:

Student Produced at The University of Southern California

© 2025 (or current year) University of Southern California. All Rights Reserved.

all films must now include the following credit:

Festivals & Distribution/Licensing: Sandrine Faucher Cassidy

*If there are versions of the film in other languages or subtitled it would be good to have and log to offer for distribution

3- Image Files

- Production Photos
- Film Stills
- Film Poster
- Title Card
- Digital Press Kit

*All image files should not be embedded in the production book. Images should be delivered in a separate folder. Please make the entire folder downloadable as a single file.

**PRODUCTION NOTEBOOK ARCHIVAL MATERIALS ACCURACY & COMPLETENESS
STATEMENT**

To be included in Production Notebook File

I certify that the attached archival materials (including all relevant permits, rights and releases) are accurate and complete.

I agree to uphold copyright laws & agreements that govern the exhibition of my film.

Producer/Sound: (print name)_____

(Signature)_____

(Date)_____

Writer/Director: (print name)_____

(Signature)_____

(Date)_____

DP/Editor: (print name)_____

(Signature)_____

(Date)_____

Crediting Guidelines

Order of Credits: Credits should appear in the following order:

1. **Principal Crew Credits** (usually in cards, with each crew position being one card)
Usually, the only appropriate card credit after the registered crew members is for the composer (usually: Original Music by).

2. **Additional Crew Credits**

Animation (or graphics, visual effects, etc)

Colorist:

SCA Business Affairs: Cassidy Melton

Still Photographer

Transcriptions: Rev or Kristin Muller Transcription Services, etc.

Sound Engineer: (if recording music)

Other credits, such as: Second Unit, Dive Operations Coordinator, Studio Teacher, Steadicam Operator, Drone Operator, etc

3. **Musicians** (credit by instrument)

4. **"Documentary Faculty"**

Patrick Shen

Heidi Burkey

5. **"Graduate Assistants"**

Amirah Adem

6. **Acknowledgements / Thank You's**

This may include experts and others who gave behind-the-scenes help to your production.

It may include people who you filmed, but who have ended up on the cutting room floor.

Other thank you's might include: PA's; visual artists/illustrators, or creators/copyright owners of work you licensed or commissioned; etc.

7. **Also include the following:**

Festivals & Distribution/Licensing: Sandrine Faucher Cassidy

Your credits must be economical, but you should strive to acknowledge those who have helped you. Alphabetize all thank you credits within sections (by last name); & you will probably need to put them in double columns. Make sure you spellcheck Everything!

8. **Music Clearance Information** (title; performer; composer; publisher; etc):

9. **Other Clearance Information** (articles, headlines, stock footage, movie/tv clips, animation, fotos, etc)

10. **Any logos**, such as for Avid, Foto-Kem, Dolby, Panavision, Kino-Flo, etc.

11. Student Produced at the School of Cinematic Arts, University of Southern California.
(The USC seal or Cinema Logo may also be used at the beginning of the production and at the close of all credits.)

12.(Film Title) Copyright 2024 University of Southern California, All Rights Reserved

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.

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 micro-aggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity |Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Student Accessibility Services - (213) 740-0776
<https://osas.usc.edu/> OSASFrontDesk@usc.edu (213) 740-0776

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.

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.

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.

Statement for Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from OSAS. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. OSAS is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for OSAS is (213) 740-0776.