

CTPR 535 INTERMEDIATE EDITING

Fall 2025

USC School of Cinematic Arts

Section: 18642D

Instructor: Professor John Rosenberg, A.C.E.

Phone:

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Office Hours: By appointment

SA:

Phone:

Email:

Class Meetings: Tuesdays 4-6:50pm

Room: SCB 101

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Editing and post production have become the **pillars of modern filmmaking**, and the need for talented, experienced editors (as well as directors, writers and producers who understand the post production process) continues to grow. In this class you will begin to refine your editing skills to meet the expanding needs of the profession and your own creative aspirations.

The goal of this workshop is to explore **how editing shapes storytelling**, using content from a variety of media and in various styles. It will deepen your knowledge of modern non-linear editing equipment, primarily the **AVID Media Composer**, and techniques.

This is a **hands-on course** combined with lectures, guest speakers from the industry, and demonstrations relating to **aesthetic and technical skills** in post production. You will be editing a variety of scenes from popular films and television shows. This will require you to use your storytelling, problem solving and technical abilities to solve the myriad of challenges that confront the editor in the editing room.

Editing is not merely sticking the pieces together so they fit. It's about fulfilling an overall vision, creating a captivating flow of sound and images, and revealing the story's text and subtext. Emotion, pace and rhythm are **important components of a well edited film**. These are the purview of the editor. We will explore how these aspects at times supercede the time honored tradition of story and plot. We will look at examples of well edited scenes as well as short films that you and your professor will screen and discuss.

This class will also include **an examination of genre** as it relates to story and structure. Genre holds precedence in the world of film because it speaks to the audience's emotional engagement and response. You will be given **professionally shot dailies from major motion pictures and TV** to edit in various genres. These will be critiqued by your professor and your colleagues in class. Afterwards you will have an opportunity to re-cut your projects based on these notes. Some of these scenes will be re-edited to alter the genre, for instance a comedy may become a thriller. You will discover how each genre has its own demands and creates particular expectations in the audience which the editor must address. Along the way we will also discuss the **organization and politics of the editing room**, from working with directors and producers, to interactions with studios and clients, the preview process, as well as the rising **influence of artificial intelligence**. These and other topics will be reinforced by short reading assignments from your textbook, **THE HEALTHY EDIT: Creative Editing Techniques for Perfecting Your Movie** (2nd edition). We will also have some excellent guest speakers, accomplished editors who have worked on films you may have seen.

This class will prepare you – both aesthetically and technically – to assume a role as editor on a CTPR 546 and 547, as well as in your post-school careers, on films edited either by you or others. We are going to concentrate primarily on the aesthetic aspect of editing. In addition, 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 from the point of view of editing and post production which are becoming more and more prominent in the filmmaking process. Along the way, therefore, 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 technical aspects of editing. A portion of the class will be devoted to editing and/or critiquing edited scenes. I encourage you to ask questions and give comments. Your participation is a significant part of this course. If you don't understand something, ask. If you disagree with a concept or idea, say so. We all need to be challenged.