

MCOM 3351 MOVING IMAGES AESTHETICS (3 CREDITS)

FALL 2017

Tuesdays and Thursdays – 11:00-12:20 p.m. (CB 305)

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Office Hours: T/H 1 PM – 4 PM (314)
Wed 2 PM – 5 PM (TWC)
Or by appointment.

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*“Teachers open the door, but you must enter by yourself”
Chinese Proverb*

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:

The purpose of this class is to introduce students to the short experimental narrative film through challenges to traditional narrative structure and image construction.

Students will script, shoot and edit short films, identifying challenges to the form, and discussing the success of these challenges. You will work in small groups and individually on short script assignments and exercises.

To this end, the structure of this class ensures that it is production intensive. The assignments and exercises are intended to allow you to experiment and explore, and to receive and give constructive criticism. You are experimenting. A workshop is like a rehearsal: it is a place to experiment and fail.

Grading: Students are expected to attend all classes, complete all assignments on time, and to work successfully within their small groups. Failure to do these things will adversely affect a student's grade.

In this class, you may be exposed to images and ideas that you find disturbing; they are a part of the learning process of the class. Please decide early on if you are willing to open yourself to these images and ideas, and are prepared to experience and discuss them in class.

COURSE QUALIFICATIONS:

This is an advanced filmmaking course; therefore, you are expected to know your way around cameras, lighting, audio recording, and editing.

Pre-requisites: MCOM 1332, MCOM 1371, MCOM 2371.

IDEA OBJECTIVES:

- Gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends)
- Developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course.
- Developing creative capacities (writing, inventing, designing, performing in art, music, drama, etc.).

SUGGESTED TEXT:

Ascher, Steven; Pincus, Edward. *The Filmmaker's Handbook: A Comprehensive Guide for the Digital Age*. 4th Edition. Plume: 2013.

ISBN-10: 0452297281

ISBN-13: 978-0452297289

REQUIRED MATERIAL:

You are required to have an **EXTERNAL HARD DRIVE** (formatted MAC OS Journaled or ExFat) with at least 500GB of memory and preferably with a USB 3.0 connection. Sharing hard drives or saving your assignments in the school computers or server is not allowed. It is highly recommended that you backup your project files on a separate flash drive after quitting each edit session to avoid the loss of your edited work in case your hard drive crashes. You are also required to have an **SDHC (CLASS 10) MEMORY CARD** (min. 8GB) and **HEADPHONES** or **EARBUDS**.

ATTENDANCE:

Your participation is important. You are allowed **THREE** unexcused absences. Every absence after that will cause you to lose 5 points of your Attendance grade.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING:

All written assignments must be typed and handed in during class, unless otherwise indicated by instructor. Late assignments result in loss of points. If you have to miss a class when an assignment is due, have another student turn it in for you, or hand it in ahead of time. Please keep track of your own progress in the class. Keep all of your handed back assignments. Late assignments are docked one full letter grade per day. An "F" is equal to "0" points. The final film cannot be handed in late.

COLLABORATION AND CREW FORMATION:

One major assignment of this course will be group centered. The class will break into groups and each member of the group will present concepts to the other group members. Collaboration cannot be avoided in this course. Learning to work with your classmates and respect their ideas will be your strongest asset. Fundraising and/or financial contributions may be necessary for the overall completion of a project. A

strong sense of responsibility and teamwork is expected of each and every student. All Group members must be present for the production of their own group project.

ACADEMIC HONESTY:

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials.

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT:

Active and constructive participation in class discussions is required. However, both listening and speaking are involved in successful participation, and this requires sensitivity to the ideas and methods of participation of others in the class. This is a workshop environment, and all ideas, thoughts and critiques are welcomed. You are beginning, and a workshop environment will allow and encourage you to take risks, to try out new ideas.

PROPER CLASSROOM DEMEANOR/ RULES OF CONDUCT:

Students will refrain from behavior in the classroom that disrupts the learning process and, thus, impedes the mission of the university. Please turn off or mute your cellular phone and/or pager before class begins. Students are prohibited from eating in class, using tobacco products, making offensive remarks, reading newspapers, sleeping, talking with each other at inappropriate times, wearing inappropriate clothing, or engaging in any other form of distraction. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result in, minimally, a directive to leave class or being reported to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action in accordance with University policy.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES POLICY:

If you have a disability that may affect your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: No accommodation can be made until you register with the Counseling Center.

STUDENT ABSENCES ON RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS POLICY:

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be

penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

University policy #861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s). This request must be made two weeks in advance of when the absence(s) will occur. The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examination are to be completed.

SHSU REQUIRED POLICIES:

Please visit <http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/>

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Participation: 50 points

Attendance: 50 points

Each student is allowed 3 unexcused absences, after that, each absence will cost the student 5 points from the Attendance grade.

A	900 – 1000
B	800 – 899
C	700 – 799
D	600 – 699
E	500 – 599
F	Below 500

Use of Language & Imagery: 100 points

During class critiques you will be required to justify your choices individually and as a group, and your grades will highly depend on your ability to talk about your work and your decisions.

Points that will be graded are: Story; Experimentation; Camera Work (focus, white balance, audio, exposure, framing, etc.); Edit; Sound Design/Music; Titles; Acting; Ability to work in groups and comply with deadlines.

Film #1 Five-Second Films: 100 points

For this assignment, in groups of four or five, each student will produce a five-second film with the help of the group members. Each student is responsible for writing, producing, directing and editing their own film, the other members of the group will help as crew members and talent.

Film #2 Food: 300 points

Inspired by this year's common reader, in groups of 4 or 5, students will produce a film of their choice; the only obstruction is that the central theme of the film should be food. The film will be no longer than 15 minutes and no shorter than 5 minutes.

Film #3 Sound Film: 100 points

Individually, you will produce a Short Sound Film (1 to 3 minutes without credits), composed only of Still Images and Sounds (Dialogue, Narration, Music, Sound FX, Noise, etc.).

Film #4 Characterization and Authorship: 300 points

What happens when an author becomes a character in his/her own story? In this film (1-3 minutes), you will write your own self into the story, produce, direct, and act in it.

Extra Credit Opportunities: TBA

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

	<u>TUESDAY</u>	<u>THURSDAY</u>
Week 1		<u>08/24</u> Syllabus and Intro to Course <i>Screening:</i> "The Perfect Human", Jorgen Leth, 1967.
Week 2	<u>08/29</u> <i>Screening:</i> "The 5 Obstructions", Lars Von Trier and Jorgen Leth, 2005.	<u>08/31</u> Lecture: Lars Von Trier and Dogma 95 <i>Discussion:</i> The 5 Obstructions
Week 3	<u>09/05</u> Lecture: Traditional Script Structure Challenges to narrative structure and image construction <i>Assign:</i> Film #1 – "Five-second films" (Due 09/12)	<u>09/07</u> WORK DAY – Shoot/Edit Film #1
Week 4	<u>09/12</u> <i>Critique:</i> Film #1	<u>09/14</u> Lecture: The Logline and The Pitch <i>In class work:</i> divide the groups and brainstorm. <i>Assign:</i> Film #2 – "Food" (10/26) The Pitch (09/19)
Week 5	<u>09/19</u> <i>In class work:</i> Pitch <i>Assign:</i> The Screenplay (09/26)	<u>09/21</u> Lecture: The Pre-Production <i>Assign:</i> Pre-Production Binder (10/19)
Week 6	<u>09/26</u> Lecture: The AD and How to Budget <u>Due:</u> The Screenplay	<u>09/28</u> Lecture: The Director's Job

Week 7	<u>10/03</u>	<u>10/05</u>
	Lecture: The Storyboard and Shot List	WORK DAY: Production
	<i>In class work:</i> Storyboard and Shot List	
Week 8	<u>10/10</u>	<u>10/12</u>
	WORK DAY: Production	WORK DAY: Production
Week 9	<u>10/17</u>	<u>10/19</u>
	WORK DAY: Editing	<i>Critique:</i> Rough Cut 1
		<u>Due:</u> Pre-Production Binder
Week 10	<u>10/24</u>	<u>10/26</u>
	<i>Critique:</i> Rough Cut 2	<i>Critique:</i> Final Films
Week 11	<u>10/31</u>	<u>11/02</u>
	<i>Screening:</i> “La Jetée”, Chris Marker, 1962.	WORK DAY: Shoot Film #3
	Lecture: Sound & Perception in “La Jetée”	
	<u>Assign:</u> Film #3 – “Sound Film” (Due 11/09)	
Week 12	<u>11/07</u>	<u>11/09</u>
	WORK DAY: Edit Film #3	<i>Critique:</i> Film #3
		<u>Assign:</u> Watch “Adaptation” Spike Jonze, 2002.
Week 13	<u>11/14</u>	<u>11/16</u>
	Lecture: The Auteur Theory	WORK DAY: Shoot/Edit Film #5
	<u>Assign:</u> Film #4 – “Characterization and Authorship” (Finals Week)	
Week 14	<u>11/21</u>	<u>11/23</u>
	WORK DAY: Shoot/Edit Film #5	Thanksgiving Break

Week 15 **11/28**

Critique: Film #4 (Fine Cuts)

11/30

Critique: Film #4 (Fine Cuts)

**Finals
Week** **TBA**

Screening of Final Films

Due: Final Film