

MCOM 6373 DIGITAL VIDEO PRODUCTION (3 CREDITS)

FALL 2017

Wednesdays 5:00-7:50 p.m. (TWC 304)

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Office Hours: T/H 1 PM – 4 PM (CB 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:

This Digital Video Production course focuses on the development and presentation of your media arts practice, including placing the work in historical and aesthetic contexts. Through creative assignments, readings, presentations, and critiques the class aims to strengthen the understanding of your own work and how it relates to the broad range of techniques, expressions and ideas that comprise contemporary arts practice.

Through the reading of classic texts (BERGER, BENJAMIN, MULVEY and others), you should come out of this class with a broad understanding of the historical development of the major debates in media art theory; the ability to think historically and theoretically about contemporary media practices; and being able to incorporate that knowledge into your own creative work.

This class encourages the development of your ongoing work, in hopes to expand your capacities to communicate in important, meaningful and amazing ways. You will be evaluated on both the art you make in class and your immersion into the activities and life of the class.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the course, students will have:

1. Developed and expanded their hands-on experience in working with a variety of contemporary media.
2. Gained experience sharing insights and in expressing sophisticated critiques of work.
3. Through relevant academic research, as well as reflection upon their work and that of class peers, explored a series of aesthetic positions and appropriated one or more of them for their art practice.

COURSE QUALIFICATIONS:

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

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.).

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Berger, John. *Ways of Seeing*. London: Penguin Books, 1990.

ISBN-10: 0140135154

ISBN-13: 978-0140135152

McLuhan, Marshall; Fiore, Quentin. *The Medium is the Massage: An Inventory of Effects*. New York: Randon House, Inc., 2001.

ISBN-10: 1584230703

ISBN-13: 978-1584230700

Howarth, Sophie. *Singular images: essays on remarkable photographs*. Tate Publishing; 1st edition (2005)

ISBN-10: 1854376543

ISBN-13: 978-1854376541

Other readings will be posted on Blackboard. See the class schedule for more details.

SUGGESTED TEXT:

Giannetti, Louis. *Understanding Movies*. 13rd edition. Pearson Education, 2014.

ISBN-10: 0205856160

ISBN-13: 978-0205856169

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 uploaded to Blackboard BEFORE CLASS, unless otherwise indicated by the instructor. Late assignments result in loss of points. Please keep track of your own progress in the class. 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.

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

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: 50 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.

This course is highly comprised of critique sessions. Your active collaboration during those is fundamental for the success of the class.

Inspirational Videos: 100 points

Each student will be required to bring a video that inspires you as an artist to share with the class. It can be anything: a short film, a music video, a documentary, a TV commercial, an experimental film, an animation, etc. Show the video and tell the class why and how you are inspired by it. Lead a discussion about it. Maximum length of video: 15 minutes.

Student-led Reading Discussions: 100 points

Students have weekly reading assignments of relevant texts, and each week, a different student is responsible for leading a discussion on that week's text.

Think Pieces: 100 points (10 each)

Students MUST come to class prepared to take an active part in the discussions, having read the text **prior** to our class meeting. In addition to that, each student must write a "Think Piece" on every text **before** the class discussion and post them on Blackboard. These "think pieces" are your thoughts (not a summary) on the reading.

Exquisite Corpse Exercise: 100 points

In groups of four or five, you will produce a script in "Exquisite Corpse" style, shoot and edit it. Your final project should be no longer than 5 minutes and no shorter than 4

minutes. Each student will write, direct and edit their part of the film, but always working as a group to create a unit in the story.

The Video Essay: 100 points

“These videos take footage from films and reconfigure them using editing, text, graphics and voiceover to reveal startling observations and insights, visualizing them in ways that text criticism can't. These videos are typically produced independently by using consumer-level equipment, demonstrating that just about anyone with a computer can be both a filmmaker and a critic. The only limits are those of imagination and intelligence.” Kevin Lee, 2013

For more: <http://www.rogerebert.com/balder-and-dash/the-art-of-the-video-essay-a-page-by-kevin-lee-grandmaster-of-the-form>)

In this individual exercise, students will produce a video essay of any relevant topic of their choice. Proficiency in editing is required for this exercise, as well as careful thought process to support your chosen subject.

The Movie Vlogger: 100 points

In the age of YouTube, anyone can (attempt) to be the new Roger Ebert! Pick a film or TV show of your choice (preferably new releases) and become a critic of the Internet era.

Top 10 YouTube Movie Critics: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fReAdYUwQhM>

Personal Project: 300 points

Throughout the semester, each one of you will be working in your personal projects. They can be anything you want: a short film, a TV pilot, a web series pilot, a documentary, a music video, etc., but I strongly recommend that it's somehow connected with your future thesis work. Early in the semester, you will write a proposal for this project to hand in. During the semester you will describe the project during a class critique, depending on the schedule, you will tell us what you are planning to do, or how far ahead in production you are, etc. You are also welcome to meet me during office hours to discuss the development of your project. The final project is due at the end of the semester.

Extra Credit Opportunities: TBA

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

TUESDAY

Week 1 08/23

Introductions

Syllabus and Assignments.

Week 2 08/30

Screening: “The Exquisite Corpse Project”

Lecture: The Exquisite Corpse

In Class Work: Script Writing

Assign: Exquisite Corpse Exercise

Week 3 09/06

Critique: Exquisite Corpse Exercise

“Personal Project” proposals due.

Week 4 09/13

Reading Discussion #1 – Understanding Movies – Chapter 11 – Part 1 – Critique

Inspirational Video #1

The Video Essay Critique #1

The Movie Vlogger Critique #1

Week 5 09/20

Reading Discussion #2 – Understanding Movies – Chapter 11 – Part 2 - Critique

Inspirational Video #2

The Video Essay Critique #2

Personal Project Presentation #1

Week 6 **09/27**

Reading Discussion #3 – Ways of Seeing – Chapter 1

Inspirational Video #3

The Movie Vlogger Critique #2

Personal Project Presentation #2

Week 7 **10/04**

Reading Discussion #4 – Walter Benjamin - The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction

The Video Essay Critique #3

The Movie Vlogger Critique #3

Week 8 **10/11**

Inspirational Video #4

Reading Discussion #5 – Ways of Seeing – Chapter 3

The Movie Vlogger Critique #4

Personal Project Presentation #3

Week 9 **10/18**

Reading Discussion #6 – Laura Mulvey – Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema

Inspirational Video #5

The Video Essay Critique #4

Week 10 **10/25**

Reading Discussion #7 – Ways of Seeing – Chapter 5

The Video Essay Critique #5

The Movie Vlogger Critique #5

Personal Project Presentation #4

Week 11 **11/01**

Reading Discussion #8 – Mary Warner Marien – Charles Nègre – Chimney Sweeps Walking and Sheena Wagstaff – Jeff Wall: A View From An Apartment

Inspirational Video #6

The Movie Vlogger Critique #6

Personal Project Presentation #5

Week 12 **11/08**

Reading Discussion #9 – Ways of Seeing – Chapter 7

The Video Essay Critique #6

The Movie Vlogger Critique #7

Personal Project Presentation #6

Week 13 **11/15**

Reading Discussion #10 – Marshal McLuhan – The Medium is the Massage

Inspirational Video #7

The Video Essay Critique #7

Personal Project Presentation #7

Week 14 **11/22**

Thanksgiving Break

Week 15 **11/29**

Screening: Personal Projects

**Finals
Week** **TBA**

“Personal Projects” Final.