**Comm 3201 Section 003 Intro to Electronic Media Production - Spring 2010**

**Rarig Studio B**

Instructor: Anthony Nadler

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Office Hours: Tues, Thur 10:20 – 11:05, Thurs 12:40 – 1:10

Classroom: Rarig Studio B

Class time: T/TH 8:00 – 9:55

Studio Reservations/Tutorials/Guidelines*:* [http://studios.cla.umn.edu](http://studios.cla.umn.edu/)

**Course Materials**

* Zettl, *Sight, Sound, Motion, 5th Edition*
* Additional Readings on **WebVista**
* Clipboard
* Check UMN email at least daily

**Learning Goals:**

This course is designed to enhance your understanding of television and film through understanding its aesthetic and composition principles as well as gaining production skills. You will be responsible for three video production projects. The video productions involve hands-on learning in a multi-camera studio. The learning goals for this class are:

1. To learn the fundamental techniques of in-studio live-on-tape (l-o-t) video production
2. To write and produce as a part of a video production team
3. To learn the communicative aspects of visual and sound aesthetics
4. To write competent critical analyses of video media

**Content and Methodology:**

This course emphasizes a mixture of learning abstract principles as well as applied skills. In-studio work and group projects, for which we have a limited time to complete, are absolutely crucial to this process and therefore **full class attendance is required.** Students are expected to read assigned texts, handouts, and any online materials in advance of scheduled class discussions.

This class demands critical thinking and hard work. Full participation is required on each production project both in terms of your creative input and operation of video equipment. To understand electronic media production, you need to be able to operate each element involved in a production. You will also have to understand the theory behind the application, which makes understanding lecture, class discussions and the reading assignments essential. Hopefully, you’ll have fun exercising your creativity and learning some new skills, but you must be willing to work for it. You may have to meet or work outside of class time with your group to meet production project deadlines. As a rule of thumb, it’s best to keep your projects simple overall but to also be willing to take risks and experiment creatively.

**Disabilities:**

Students with disabilities that require special accommodations should contact Disabilities Services, 180 McNamara Alumni Center, or see <http://ds.umn.edu/>). They will provide paperwork, and you should discuss your needs with me.

**Evaluation:**

Final grades will be derived from quizzes, participation in class discussions, and video production projects (and papers) in the following manner:

* Class Participation: 200 points (about 8%) .
* 4 Quizzes (T/F, multiple choice, short answer and/or short essay): 200 points each for a total of 800 points (about 34% of your grade).
* 3 Production Papers: Project 1: 125points; Project 2: 150 points; Project 3: 200 points, for a total of 475 points (about 20% of your grade).
* 3 Production Projects: Project 1: 200 points; Project 2: 300 points; Project 3: 400 points, for a total of 900 points (about 38% of your grade).
* Total course points: 2375

“A” quality of video production projects, papers, and quizzes will demonstrate an excellent grasp of the theories, equipment and concepts discussed, will be fully prepared and articulate or precise, and will exceed the minimum requirements of the assignment. “A” quality participation includes active engagement in class discussions and a reliable level of significant class contribution.

“B” quality of video production projects, papers, and quizzes will demonstrate a good grasp of the theories, equipment and concepts discussed, will be mostly prepared and articulate or precise, and will exceed the minimum requirements of the assignment. “B” quality participation includes active engagement in class discussions and a reliable level of class contribution.

“C” quality of video production projects, papers, and quizzes will demonstrate an adequate grasp of the theories, equipment and concepts discussed, will have some preparedness and articulation or precision problems, but will still meet the minimum requirements of the assignment. “C” level of participation includes active engagement and a reliable level of class contribution most of the time.

“D” quality of video production projects, papers, and quizzes will demonstrate a less than adequate grasp of the theories, equipment, and concepts discussed, will have significant preparedness and articulation or precision problems, and will fail to meet the minimum requirements of the assignment.

“F” quality of video production projects, papers, and quizzes will demonstrate an inadequate grasp of theories, equipment, and concepts discussed, will be unprepared or inarticulate, lack participation in class discussions and assignments, and will unacceptably fail to meet the minimum requirements of the assignment.

**Final Grade Letters and Percentages:**

A 100-92 B 87-82 C 77-72 D 68-63

A- 91-90 B- 81-80 C- 71-70 F 62-0

B+ 89-88 C+ 79-78 D+ 69

U of M grading policy: <http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/GRADINGTRANSCRIPTS.html>

**Attendance and Participation:**

Full attendance is expected, and projects cannot be made up. I will take attendance. Failure to attend on days in which we are training, in pre-production, or in production will result in a failing grade for the whole course. We will work with high-voltage electricity and equipment worth half a million dollars; if you don’t know how to work the equipment, you could damage it or yourself or someone else. Missing any other days will drop you a letter grade per day for the next production assignment. If you cannot come to class and participate, drop this class. Exceptions to the absence policy will only be provided in case of documented emergencies and missing days will always entail make-up alternative assignments.

Your participation in class discussion is highly encouraged. Your input will help strengthen the class when you bring your ideas and background knowledge to our class, as well as when you speak up whenever ideas, concepts, or instructions are not clear.

**Assignments:**

All work and production projects must be done by the due date. Any written work must be handed to me in typed, printed copies; emails will not be accepted. Late assignments will be lowered one letter grade for each day it is late. All written assignments should be typed using a 12 point font and double-spaced unless stipulated otherwise by formatting requirements.

**Production Projects:**

You will be divided into groups for each video production project. Except in rare circumstances, each member of the group will earn the same grade for the production project. Being respectful and supportive of your group members is key to both a successful project and a good time. I encourage every group to try to find means for settling any artistic disagreements among themselves before speaking with me.

**Incompletes:**

Incompletes will only be considered under extreme circumstances. Unfinished assignments, projects and quizzes count as zeroes, not incomplete.

**Complaints and Grade Disputes:**

As per departmental procedure, any student who wishes to contest a grade on an assignment must submit his or her complaint, in writing, within one week of the date the instructor returned the assignments to the class. This complaint should describe, with adequate documentation, the reasons the student believes another grade is warranted.

**Scholastic Misconduct:**

Scholastic Misconduct is defined as “any act that violates the rights of another student with respect to academic work or that involves misrepresentation of a student’s own work. Scholastic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to) cheating on assignments or examinations, plagiarizing (misrepresenting as one’s own anything done by another), submitting the same or substantially similar papers (or creative work) for more than one course without consent of all instructors concerned, depriving another of necessary course materials, and sabotaging another’s work.” (CLA, 10). <http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/humanresources/Academic_Misconduct.pdf>

**Study Abroad:**

The University of Minnesota and the Department of Communication Studies is committed to helping students learn and test their knowledge in a global context. If you are interested in seeking the opportunity to study, work, intern or volunteer in another country you should contact the Learning Abroad Center in 230 Heller Hall and [www.UMabroad.umn.edu](http://www.UMabroad.umn.edu/)

**In-Studio Production Projects:**

I will form groups for each production project based in part on what roles you want to play for the project. Everyone in your group will earn the same grade, so working together is crucial. Group work can be stressful, but it can also be motivating, please try to make the most of it. Each group will have one class meeting to tape their production and a designated time for pre-production work in the studio. Each group needs to determine how their class time will be used to finish the project on time. Completing a group project includes striking the set after production.

Your group will typically consist of a director (DIR), an assistant director (AD), a technical director (TD), a floor director (FD), a lighting director (LD) and an audio director (AD). Other class members will fill the BTL (below the line) crew and talent roles.

To be able to complete a production and strike it in just one class session, your sets, props, microphones, sound, and lighting should be organized for easy set-up. Also, each person involved must be familiar with his or her roles. You need to be able to complete a final take in order to earn your group production grade.

**Syllabus Changes**

We will try to stick closely to the syllabus but I may make changes when necessary. I will keep the class abreast of any changes to the syllabus via in-class announcements or emails.

**Production Projects**

**Production Project 1:**

Pick a script from the Project 1 folder on WebVista.

Using the Sample Paperwork found in the 3201 WebVista Packet as an example and the "Paperwork forms" as templates, finish a script annotation, storyboard, master shot sheet, individual camera shot sheets, sound design, and lighting design for one of the scripts in the folder. The sound design is a short description of audio used in the production. The lighting design includes a short description of your lighting scheme and studio floor plan with light location and type of instrument used. This is your production book. It is **due February 11th at the beginning of class. Bring two copies** – one is for me, the other will be for another group that might produce your script.Please include **your name and the lighting and sound design forms only for my copy.**

We will form groups and each group will select one set of annotation, shot sheets, and storyboard to produce. Group 1 will shoot first, Group 2 will shoot second, and last Group 3. **Each group must also complete their own production book consisting of the same forms as the individual production books; these will be due February 18th.** Your group should try to stick closely to the original storyboard, but please explain any deviations on a separate sheet included in group production book.

Groups will alternate between above the line (ATL) and below the line (BTL) positions. ATL people are in charge of “their script.” It is their duty to be sure the BTL people for their project know what they will be doing on the shoot. It is the duty of the BTL people to know what they will be doing and what is expected of them on that shoot (so ask questions!). ATL groups need to make enough copies of shot sheets and all other paperwork for all members and crew who need them on the day of the shoot.

ATL Positions BTL Positions

Director (DIR) Camera Operators

Assistant Director (AD) Talent

Technical Director (TD) Assistants

Floor Director (FD)

Lighting Director (LD)

Audio Controller (AC)

Graphics Design (CG)

These roles may shift depending on the final enrollment in the class.

**Minimum Production Project 1 Criteria:**

* Must have a ramp up.
* Talent must have lines memorized
* Lighting must match mood of scene
* The aesthetic use of color must be included in the production
* Shot framing must demonstrate thoughtful composition techniques
* Shots must match shot sheets and match director’s cues
* Audio and mix should be high quality with mic noise minimized
* The scene should be driven by the aesthetic techniques and skills learned in class
* Both ATL and BTL crew know their assignments and demonstrate this through their actions

Project point breakdown is as follows:

**100 points – Your individual production**

**200 points – Group grade for the production**

**Production Project 2:**

Pick a script from the Project 2 folder on WebVista.

Select one script that you would like to shoot in class for Production Project 2, taking special consideration of the minimum project criteria and how those criteria might be demonstrated and exceeded during the production. Write a 2-4 page paper, 12-point font, double-spaced with 1” margins explaining how you would produce the script considering the media aesthetics we have been studying. This is your Production Design. You should consider the minimum criteria for this project when presenting why your chosen script will meet or exceed expectations. This paper is **due on March 9th**. Groups will annotate and storyboard the script, complete master and camera shot sheets, overhead and lighting design for the production. This is the group’s production book and it is **due March 25th**.

ATL Positions BTL Positions

Director (DIR) Camera Operators

Assistant Director (AD) Talent

Technical Director (TD) Assistants

Floor Director (FD)

Lighting Director (LD)

Audio Controller (AC)

Graphics Design (CG)

These roles may shift depending on the final enrollment in the class.

**Minimum Project 2 Criteria:**

* Must have a ramp up.
* Must include an opening title graphic
* Talent must have lines memorized
* Talents’ portrayals must match mood of script
* Must have talent blocking, there must be a reason for talent to move
* There must be three on-camera talent parts.
* Lighting must match mood of scene and establish setting
* The aesthetic use of color must be included in the production
* There must be at least two audio cues
* Audio and mix should be high quality with mic noise is minimized
* There must be at least two camera moves; these must be motivated
* Shot framing should show thoughtful composition techniques
* Shots must match shot sheets
* Shots and transitions must match director’s cues and instructions
* Must have end-credit sequence
* The scene should be driven by the aesthetic techniques and skills learned in class
* Both ATL and BTL crew must know their assignments and demonstrate this through their actions

Point breakdown is as follows:

**150 points – Your paper**

**300 points – Group grade for the production and production book.**

**Production Project 3:**

For this production you will be creating an original script. You may write a public service announcement (aka, a PSA - addressing a topic of legitimate social concern) or an original fiction script featuring a key moment of climatic tension. The script must use conventional script formatting following Peter Gregg's "Screenplay Format Guide" as a model for your own formatting.

In addition to writing your own script, you should write a "story synopsis," a paragraph on who is your intended audience. You need to **post your script and story synopsis by April 13th to WebVISTA**; these scripts will be read by a group (not yours) for consideration for their production. **On April 15th** you should bring **two copies** of your script and synopsis to class along with an annotation and storyboard for your script. In writing your screenplay and crafting your production - be imaginative, but also consider production feasibility. After each group chooses a script, they should complete a group production book including a properly formatted script, annotation, storyboard, shot sheets, audio design and lighting design. **The group production book is due April 22nd.** You may deviate from the writer's original storyboard and annotation, but you should explain any significant departures on a separate page in your group production book

This will most likely be your most complex production. Work toward pressing the limits of what you've learned, and taking chances with elements that will add significant energy to your production. However, keep in mind the need to balance these risks with your ability to create a successful final product in a short time span. Grading will take into account your group’s risk-taking and final polish.

Groups will be formed similarly to Production Projects 1 & 2.

**Minimum Project 3 Criteria:**

* Must have a ramp up
* Must have an opening title graphic and closing credits with appropriate audio
* Talent must have lines memorized and talent portrayals must match mood of script
* Talent blocking, there must be a reason for talent to move in the scene written in the script, using at least the horizontal and z-axis
* Maximum of 3 on-camera roles
* Must have at least three audio cues, which could include narration, music, or sound effects
* Audio and mix should be high quality with mic noise minimized
* Lighting plan must match mood and/or establish the setting
* The aesthetic use of color must be included in the production
* Shot framing must show appropriate composition
* Director’s cues and instructions must match storyboard shots and transitions
* Must make artistic choices to convey an aspect of subjective or objective time, and/or use an idea-associative montage.
* Must have at least 2 camera moves
* Must have an inductive or deductive shot sequence
* The scene is driven by the aesthetic techniques and skills learned in class
* Both ATL and BTL crew must know their assignments and demonstrate this through their actions
* Script must follow story structure discussed in class
* Script must have a runtime of between 2- 4:30 minutes

Point breakdown is as follows:

**200 points – Your paper**

**400 points – Same grade for the group production**

Week 1

Jan 19 Course introduction, discuss ATL & BTL positions

Jan 21 Writing for video, introduction to project 1

Read: Zettl Ch 1, sample annotation, storyboard, and shot sheets

Week 2

Jan 26 Studio Training

(I highly recommend staring on next week’s Zettl reading during this training week)

Jan 28 Studio Training

Week 3

Feb 2 Discussion/lecture: Lighting – Principles and video techniques

Read: Zettl 2, 3

Feb 4 Discussion/lecture: Lighting cont., Color

Quiz 1: Roles, studio training, lighting principles

Read: Zettl 4,5, Lighting Training document

Week 4

Feb 9 Discussion/lecture: Framing and 2-D shot composition

Read: Zettl 6, 7, 8

Due: Position preferences for project 1

Feb 11 Discussion/lecture: Project 1 pointers, groupwork

Due: **Project 1 Production Books**

Week 5 Production 1

Feb 16 Pre-production: All groups

Feb 18 Production 1: Group 1 ATL, Group 2 BTL

Week 6 Production 1

Feb 23 Production 1: Group 2 ATL, Group 3 BTL

Feb 25 Production 1: Group 3 ATL, Group 1 BTL

(Recommendation: Get a good start on Week 7-8 Zettl reading!)

Week 7

Mar 2 Discussion/lecture: 3D Images on Screen, Z-axis

View and Discuss: Project 1

Read: Zettl 9, 10, scripts for project 2

Mar 4 Discussion/lecture: Visualization

Quiz 2: Lighting, color, framing and composition, Z-axis,

Read: Zettl 11

Week 8

Mar 9 Discussion/lecture: Sound in Video

Read: Zettl 17, 18

Mar 11 Discussion/lecture: Scriptwriting basics

Due**: Project 2 Paperwork** , groupwork begins

Week 9 - Spring Break!

Mar 16 XXXX

Mar 18 XXXX

Week 10 – Production 2

Mar 23 Production 2: Pre-production – all groups

Mar 25 Production 2: Group 1 ATL, Group 2 BTL

Week 11 – Production 2

Mar 30 Production 2: Group 2 ATL, Group 3 BTL

Apr 1 Production 2: Group 3 ATL, Group 1 BTL

(Start reading Zettl for the upcoming weeks and working on scripts for project 3)

Week 12

Apr 6 Discussion/lecture: Screenplay writing, project 3

View: Production 2

Read: Sample screenplays

Apr 8 Discussion/lecture: Persuasion on video, editing

Read: Zettl 15, 16

Due: Project 3 Scripts

Week 13

Apr 13 Discussion/lecture: Editing continued, time & motion

Read: Zettl 12, 13, 14

Quiz 3: Visualization, screenplay formatting

Due: **Project 3 scripts posted to WebVISTA**

Apr 15 Discussion/lecture: groupwork

Due: **Project 3 paperwork (beginning of class)**

Week 14 – Production 3

Apr 20 Pre-production all groups

Apr 22 Production 3: Group 1 ATL, Group 2 BTL

Week 15 – Production 3

Apr 27 Production 3: Group 2 ATL, Group 3 BTL

Apr 29 Production 3: Group 3 ATL, Group 1 BTL

Week 16

May 4 View production 3,

Quiz 4: Editing, Audio, commercial techniques.

May 6 TV analysis