

LMC 3406 Video Production
Instructor: Simon Ferrari

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Course Description

LMC 3406 combines hands-on production work with the in-class analysis of video and narrative techniques in order to expand skill in audiovisual communication. The course covers the basics of preproduction, production, and post-production video. Technical processes such as videography, lighting, sound recording, non-linear editing, and video for the web are covered through in-class workshops and individual and group projects completed outside of class. This class is for beginning videographers only, and it focuses on YouTube as a medium (rather than on traditional narrative film-making).

Course Prerequisites

All LMC classes require students to take ENGL 1102.

Core Area/Attributes Fulfilled

None of the core attributes are fulfilled by this class.

Learning Outcomes

Textual/Visual Analysis: Students will learn to read, analyze, and interpret not only cultural products such as film, literature, art, and new media, but also scientific and technical documents.

Interpretive Frameworks: Students will become familiar with a variety of social, political, and philosophical theories and be able to apply those theories to creative and scientific texts, as well as to their own cultural observations.

Communication Skills: Students will be able to gather, organize, and express information clearly and accurately, with sensitivity to audience. They will be able to do so both by using traditional media and by tapping the potential of new digital media.

Required Texts

The Videomaker Guide to Video Production, Fifth Edition (Paperback)
by Videomaker
Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art (Paperback)
by Scott McCloud

Supplemental readings will be provided via hyperlink or in PDF form through T-square.

Screenings

You will get a list of movies you need to see. Knowledge of these movies will factor into your short assignments and class participation grades.

Supplies

You will be responsible for purchasing your own DV tape from the multimedia desk in the library or somewhere else (but sometimes cameras will have a memory card).

Our lab computers have Adobe Premiere, but we will be doing lessons on Final Cut Pro 7 and associated software. The lab computers are always available, even on weekends. If you choose to edit on your own laptop, then you must bring that laptop with you to class.

You need to purchase an external hard drive to store and transfer video files. All other means are simply not feasible. You need to bring this to class, so store it somewhere close to the lab and/or get used to carrying it around with you.

Digital video cameras, tripods, and lighting kits are available through the lab. You are personally responsible for any equipment you lose or damage.

You'll want to put together a kit of tools that help you shoot, such as reflective boards, lens cleaners, and whatever else you personally rely on when shooting video.

Rules

All assignments are due by the start of class on the due date. One letter grade will be deducted for each class that the assignment is late, and we will begin counting with the due date if you are not present with your assignment at the start of class on that date.

If you miss class, you are responsible for contacting another student to catch up on missed material. The instructor will only catch you up if you attend office hours.

Cell phones should only be answered in the case of an emergency, and you should excuse yourself from class in order to do so. Cell phones and computers can only be used to browse the web or access video editing software when the instructor tells you to do so.

If you are not prepared to work on your edits during lab days, then you will be counted as absent for the day. Do not show up to class without the gear you need to actually complete your workload. This means bringing your hard drive with you (and if you are editing on your own laptop, it means bringing your laptop with you) on lab days.

Equipment check out

Checkout times will be posted on the door of Skiles 369 (the video production lab).

Lab

Should you have any technical problems with a LMC lab computer, server, or server account, please send an email to LMC Computing Support: lcc-support@iac.gatech.edu. Please cc me on this email so that I am aware of the problem.

The video lab is available for use 24 hours per day, except during periods where the university is officially closed. Beware that the lab may be closed during official school holidays. You will need to have your Buzz Card activated to gain access. You will also need to know the security system code.

If you accidentally set off the alarm, please telephone Kenya Wootson in the LMC office during office hours at 404.894.1052 or Georgia Tech Security at 404-894-2500 if after office hours.

Do not store your video files on the hard drive of the lab machines. All lab computers are re-imaged regularly and without warning by support staff. Use server space or removable media to store your files. Remember, late assignments are docked a letter grade for each class period the assignment is missing. I will not accept that you lost your files as an excuse. It is your responsibility to keep your files safe.

Office Hours:

MW 2:15pm-3:15pm
TSRB Room 323

Grading

You will receive three major grades in this course. Short assignments will add up to one major grade. Your midterm and final assignments will each count as a major grade. The grade breakdown is as follows:

40% Short assignments (cumulative)

25% Midterm assignment

25% Final assignment

10% Class participation and attendance

Attendance Policy

You are informally allowed 3 unexcused absences per semester. One letter grade will be deducted for each additional unexcused absence. If you miss half a class session this will count as an absence.

Georgia Tech Honor Code:

You are required to familiarize yourself with the material online at: <http://www.honor.gatech.edu/>. The issue of plagiarism in the context of video production is a bit different from in text-based media. All of your assignments will need to be published on YouTube. This means that you'll have to do proper citation/formatting of remixed video and audio. You can “quote” (edit in) material from other films, but this has to be done artfully and sparingly (and you need to cite it). Emulation of specific shots or edits from other films should also be cited. All high concepts will need to be original.

ADAPTS:

If you have special educational needs or if you have a disability of any kind that might interfere with class attendance or the timely completion of assignments, you will need to report this through the proper channels at: <http://www.adapts.gatech.edu/>. You should also email me or meet me during office hours to tell about your needs and issues. Please do this at the beginning of the semester. If an ADAPTS-related problem occurs mid-semester, report it immediately instead of waiting until a due-date. If you are sick or have a major personal/family emergency, let me know as soon as possible via email.

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Simon Ferrari, Spring 2014

Course schedule

Week 1 (January 6-10): VISUAL LANGUAGE

Readings: *Videomaker Guide* chapters 31 & 33

Topics: visual language, shot coverage, framing, composition

Midterm assigned, due February 24: Select a YouTube genre to research. Make a short-form video, utilizing the methods and techniques of that genre as well as the general skills you will learn during the first half of the semester. You will work alone for this project. Total length of the finished video should be 3-6 minutes.

Week 2 (January 13-17): STORYBOARDING

Readings: *Videomaker Guide* chapters 18-19 & 22-23, *Understanding Comics* 1-2

Topics: storyboarding, production design, location scouting

Short Assignment 1, due next Wednesday, January 24:

Create a 12 - 20 panel storyboard for your midterm project. Include production design elements of blocking, framing, camera angle, depth of field, lighting and location. Note the key actions, lighting, and location information for the shot in text below the image of the appropriate shot. Use symbols to describe camera movements and placements.

Week 3 (January 22-24 – No Class MLK Day): FILM GENRE AND STORY

Readings: *Videomaker Guide* chapter 17, *Understanding Comics* chapters 3-4

Topics: contrast, beats, metaphors, and passage of time,

****DUE DATE**** Short Assignment 1 due Wednesday, January 24. Critique storyboards.

Short Assignment 2, due in two weeks (Monday, February 3):

Create a screenplay for your midterm project. Include character histories, description of action, dialogue, direction for the actors, and location concepts.

Week 4 (January 27-31): WRITING

Readings: *Videomaker Guide* chapters 21 & 25

Topics: script, voiceover, screenplay format

Week 5 (February 3-7): CAMERA (Student shadow day Friday, January 31)

Readings: *Videomaker Guide* chapters 1, 3, 6 & 32

Topics: f-stops, camera angles, lenses, using a tripod, camera preparation, white balance

***** DUE DATE***** Short Assignment 2 due Monday, February 3.

Week 6 (February 10-12 – No Class February 14): EDITING

Readings: *Videomaker Guide* chapters 45, 47, 49,

Topics: nonlinear editing, continuity, Final Cut, workflow

Week 7 (February 17-21): MIDTERM EDITING

Readings: *Videomaker Guide* chapters 52, 53, 54

Topics: transitions, pacing, montage, and experimental techniques.

Week 8 (February 24-28 – February 28 last day to drop with W): MIDTERM SCREENINGS AND CRITIQUES

*****DUE DATE***** *Midterm Assignment, due Monday February 24.*

Week 9 (March 3-7): LIGHTING & SOUND

Readings: *Videomaker Guide* chapters 10, 12, 34-35 & 39

Topics: midterm project crews, 3-point lighting, sound recording for live action.

Week 10 (March 10-14): DOCUMENTARY

Readings: *Videomaker Guide* chapters 40, 41, 42

Topics: interview tips, makeup and wardrobe, documentary strategy

Final Group Project assignment, due last week of term:

You will be planning, shooting, and editing a video. There are three parts to this assignment. Parts 1 and 2 are group preproduction and shooting projects, graded separately. Part 3 is an individual editing project. We will form groups for Part 1 today.

(Short assignment 3) Part 1 is a group preproduction project.

(Short assignment 4) Part 2 is a group shooting project.

(Final) Part 3 is an individual editing project due on May 2 (finals week).

Part 1, due March 26. Create a formatted script and storyboard for your piece. Include elements required in Short Assignments 1 and 2. There will not be a presentation for Part 1 or Part 2. Instead, the group will discuss their production materials with the instructor. Total length of the finished video should be 5-10 minutes.

Week 11 (March 17-21): SPRING BREAK

Week 12 (March 24-28): FINAL PROJECT SCRIPT & STORYBOARD

Readings: *Videomaker Guide* chapters 64-67 & 69

Topics: web video

Short Assignment 3, due Wednesday 26 March: Pitch your final project script and storyboard me. If your project is approved, begin shooting.

Week 13 (March 31 – April 4): PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Readings: *Videomaker Guide* chapters 26-28 & 30

Topics: movement, shooting for editing, roles of crew

Review final project progress.

Week 14 (April 7-11): SPECIAL FX AND MOTION GRAPHICS

Readings: *Videomaker Guide* chapters 43 & 57

Topics: green screen, motion graphics

Week 15 (April 14-18): TEXT

Readings: PDFs will be provided

Topics: font, composition, titles, credits

Short Assignment 4 (due Wednesday 16 April): Review unedited footage of final project. At this point, primary photography should be completed. Begin editing.

Week 16 (April 21-25): FINAL PROJECT EDITING

Week 17 (April 28-May 2): FINAL PROJECT DUE

Final project screenings during exam period: Friday, May 2 from 2:50pm to 5:40pm.
