

FIL 122 M001 SOUND / IMAGE  
FALL 2016  
wednesday 5:15pm – 9:35pm  
room 216, shaffer art building

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### Course Description

This multi-dimensional course is aimed at building a solid foundation of practical filmmaking for further learning in the film program. You will be introduced to the basic technology of film practice, including the use of video cameras, lighting, sound recording, and digital editing. The ultimate goal of the course is to develop technical and conceptual skills through the use of film screenings, lectures, demonstrations, readings, exercises and projects in order to successfully put your thoughts and ideas onto film.

### Expectations

This course is a rigorous introduction to the film/video mediums. In order for you to make films/videos successfully you must achieve technical proficiency. Therefore, completion of the readings by the dates listed, active participation, and regular attendance is crucial. There are three overarching principles that the class must follow:

#### *1. Responsibility about time*

Given the time consuming nature of filmmaking, you are required to spend substantial out-of class time shooting and editing your films. Consider the due dates of the assignments and make plans accordingly. Late projects will result in lower grades.

#### *2. Responsibility about equipment*

Be careful when using the equipment. If anything doesn't work please notify the equipment cage immediately at [cagehelp@syr.edu](mailto:cagehelp@syr.edu) Do not attempt to fix anything yourself. You must be especially considerate about the equipment you check out, as other people will also need to use it.

#### *3. Integrity and tolerance of expression*

You are expected to cooperate in group projects, actively share ideas and provide constructive and critical responses to the work of others.

## Readings

The required text for this class is *Voice & Vision*, 2nd edition, by Mick Hurbis-Cherrier (Available at SU Bookstore). Additional reading material may be reserved online. The readings for each class are specified on the syllabus. Students may be selected each week to present on the reading.

## Recommended readings

“Points of view - An anthology of short stories” by James Moffet

“The Filmmaker’s Handbook” (FH) by Steven Ascher and Edward Pincus

“In the Blink of an Eye” by Walter Murch

“Elements of Style for Screenwriters” by Paul Argentini

## Required films (subject to change)

Before the last assignment of the course students are required to watch the following films:

- In the Mood for Love (Wong Kar Wai)
- Dogville or The Five Obstructions (Lars von Trier)
- La Teta Asustada (en: The Milk of Sorrow) (Claudia Llosa)
- La Grande Bellezza (en: The Great Beauty) or Youth (Paolo Sorrentino)
- An oversimplification of her beauty (Terence Nance)
- Ida (Pawel Pawlikowski)
- Soy Cuba (en: I am Cuba) (Mikhail Kalatozov)
- Ashes and Snow (Gregory Colbert)
- Life in a Day (Kevin McDonald)
- Une Histoire du Vent (Joris Ivens)

## Required data storage

You will need to get your own external hard drive and you are expected to bring it to class for in class exercises. You will also need memory cards for your cameras and sound recorders.

## Software

Editing software: Adobe Premiere Pro - install on your own device (Adobe Creative Cloud - student discount) or use it while working in the video labs (free - sign up for door access at [trm.syr.edu/access](http://trm.syr.edu/access))

Scriptwriting software: Celtx - free software, pay attention that the website tries to make you buy it so go to the free trial/access [www.celtx.com](http://www.celtx.com)

## Other required material

You will be required to purchase, rent or borrow (at your own risk) all of the materials necessary to complete your production exercises and projects. This may include lighting gloves, lens cleaners, props, costume, etc. These costs are entirely the responsibility of the production team. Planning and organization will help you keep the expense to a minimum. If you fail to learn how to use equipment properly, your expenses will increase since you will need to re-shoot to correct your mistakes. Lack of funds will not be accepted as an excuse for incomplete or late work.

### Writing journal

You will keep a journal (small notebook) with you at all times and write down ideas, observations, and overheard dialogue as they occur. Throughout the class, you will turn to your journal for ideas and inspiration. This exercise is for your eyes only.

### Attendance and participation

No unexcused absence is allowed. **YOU MUST NOT MISS MORE THAN THREE (3) CLASSES FOR ANY REASON. FOUR (4) OR MORE ABSENCES WILL RESULT IN NO CREDIT.** Two unexcused absences (i.e. no Dean's letter or medical documentation) will result in a half-letter grade reduction of your final grade. In the event that you know you will be absent — for any reason — **PLEASE** notify me **PRIOR** class by email. Tardiness of more than 15 minutes will be considered as an unexcused absence. You are responsible for seeking out any missed announcements or lecture material.

### Production workshops

Attendance at workshops is **mandatory**. Only students who have completed the workshops will be allowed to use the equipment for this course. Schedule TBA

### Shooting in public locations

It is a policy of the Film Program that permission be sought and granted for any filmmaking activities that take place in a public space. For locations beyond Syracuse University property, the Syracuse City police or any other relevant municipal or government authority (i.e.: County Sheriff's Office) must be contacted. Syracuse Public Safety must be contacted, and permission granted for any filmmaking activities taking place in a public space on Syracuse University property. To shoot interiors in Syracuse University buildings, permission must be granted by that building's coordinator or by the faculty or staff member who controls that space. Students not abiding by these policies risk disciplinary action from SU and/or the city or municipality in which they are transgressing; including the possibility of arrest and suspension. In all instances students are expected to use good common sense in regard to the specific content being shot and the potential safety and security issues as pertains to shooting in a particular location. If you are unsure about how to secure access or notify police of your film shoot, contact your faculty member for assistance.

### Assignments

During the course of FIL122 the students will have to complete 5 assignments. The production assignments will have to be completed on time in order for us to be able to have discussions. Any late completion will have your points deducted.

### ASSIGNMENT 1: A FASCINATING PLACE

**DUE : WEEK 2, SEPT. 7**

**\*\*This assignment will be completed individually.**

Choose a SPACE. Construct motivated compositions. Explore lines and shapes. Think about the place as a future location for your film (prospection). Use only one location. Create consistency and coherency among the shots

You will submit:

- a) 6-10 photos with natural light; use digital camera (optional: analog)
- b) Written description of your idea/concept; title of the project (250 words or less)

#### ASSIGNMENT 2: ONE SHOOT/NO DIALOGUE

**DUE : WEEK 4, SEPT. 21**

**\*\*This assignment will be completed individually.**

Establish the relationship between TWO PEOPLE in one shoot and no use of dialogue. Portray their emotions (What do they do? How do they feel? Where are they?).

Establish a mood through composition, framing and camera movement/stillness. Use only one location (try more if you feel adventurous)

You will submit:

- a) 2-3 minutes video
- b) Written description of your idea/concept; title of the project (250 words or less)
- c) Camera log (iso, exposure, shutter speed, focal length, focus distance)

#### ASSIGNMENT 3: SOUND RECORDING EXERCISE

**DUE: WEEK 6, OCT. 5**

**\*\*This assignment will be completed individually.**

Demonstrate your understanding of proper microphone selection and field recording levels. Use minimum 3 different environments. Submit a brief write-up explaining why you selected the microphone you did. Record your audio to a separate audio device and sync the sound to the video in post.

You will submit:

- a) 2-3 minutes video
- b) Written description of microphones and their use

#### ASSIGNMENT 4: EDITING

**DUE: WEEK 9, OCT. 26**

**\*\*This assignment will be completed in groups of two.**

Combining with found footage, edit the film you created for the assignment number 2

You are allowed to use no more than 4, no less than 2 found footages from online sources. Use the sound recorded for assignment number 3. If needed you can record more (voice, music, sound effects, foley).

You will submit:

- a) Final video (H.264 quicktime mov file)
- b) Synopsis and 5 lines describing the editing technique
- c) List of found footage used

#### ASSIGNMENT 5: FINAL PROJECT

5-1: Pitching/Treatment (**DUE WEEK 10, NOV. 2**)

5-2: Script (**DUE WEEK 11, NOV 9**)

**\*\*This assignment will be completed in groups of 2-3**

5-3: 1st Rough Cut (DUE WEEK 12, NOV 30)

5-4: Final Film (DUE WEEK 13, DEC 7)

5-5: Portfolio Review DECEMBER 12

Length: 7 minutes max

Format: HD Video

In the final project you will create an original 5-7 minute film that emphasizes VISUAL STORYTELLING. Think of an idea that can be explored in a creative and compelling way through visual means and a strong use of cinematography. Feel free to combine experimental, narrative, and/ or documentary genres. This is also an opportunity for you to explore your personal voice.

Think creatively about the relationship between sound and image. The sound track for this film will be created entirely out of sound YOU record. Your soundtrack should utilize at least two sound elements: ambiance, sound effects, foley, and/or voice. Use of music must be minimal (i.e no music videos). Shaky camerawork will be downgraded unless it follows the logic and aesthetic of your piece.

#### PLEASE NOTE:

Some of you will meet unexpected problems (such as camera jams, processing errors, personal misunderstanding with cast & crew etc.). However, working under a production deadline and overcoming production problems are part of the demands of the course.

Your final project will be graded on its technical quality and its conceptual use of medium. There will be NO INCOMPLETE GRADES except for the most extenuating circumstances. *Failing sometimes is part of the process.* I do not expect masterpieces but I know that if you tried but failed you did your part. Laziness or comfort are not part of those “accepted” processes.

#### Grading

In addition to learning the basics of film technology, you will learn to work as a team. Active participation in the workshops and discussion is required. Punctuality is essential. If you fail to turn in your assignment on time, you will receive a failing grade for that assignment. If you know you

Attendance / Participation	20
Assignment 1	10
Assignment 2	10
Assignment 3	20
Assignment 4	10
Assignment 5	30

will be absent, you must arrange to turn in material prior to the class meeting. Weather will not be accepted as an excuse for late work. The use of cellphones and laptops other than for class purpose is not permitted and it can affect your grade.

A	100 – 93
A-	92 – 90
B+	89 – 87
B	86 – 83
B-	82 – 80
C+	79 – 77
C	76 – 73
C-	72 – 70
D	69 – 60
F	59 – 00

## Disability Statement

Students who are in need of disability-related academic accommodations must register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS), 804 University Avenue., Room 309, 315-443-4498. Students with authorized disability-related accommodations should provide a current Accommodation Authorization Letter from ODS to the instructor and review those accommodations with the instructor. Accommodations, such as exam administration, are not provided retroactively; therefore, planning for accommodations as early as possible is necessary.

## Religious Observance

Students must notify instructors by the end of the second week of classes when they will be observing any religious holiday(s). In fall and spring semesters, students fill out their notification forms online through MySlice.

### SCHEDULE (subject to change)

Week 1 - Aug. 31st

Introduction. Server.

Cage policies. Filmmaking process.

Short films screenings and discussions

Shot composition and framing

*Assignment 1: A fascinating place*

\*Reading

Chapter 3: Visual Language and Aesthetics of Cinema

Chapter 12: Basics of Exposure

Week 2 - Sept. 7

#Review Assignment1

Lighting. Light Meter. Exposure/Temperature

3 point lighting

Working in class with 2 different kinds of digital cameras and lighting equipment

\*Reading

Chapter 10: The Lens

Chapter 13: Basic Lighting for Film and DV

Week 3 - Sept. 14

Lenses

Camera movement/Stillness

Storytelling through lighting

Visual strategy and continuity

Film excerpts and discussion

*Assignment 2: One shot/No dialogue*

\*Reading

Chapter 17: On-Set Procedures

Chapter 18: Set Etiquette and Production Safety

Week 4 - Sept. 21

#Review Assignment 2

Workshop #1

\*Reading

Chapter 15: Sound for Production

Chapter 16: Location Sound Techniques

Week 5 - Sept. 28

Discussion Exercise

Image and sound: various ways to use sound to change/improve storytelling

Screening examples

Recording Sound: The Basics. Microphones. Sound syncing

*Assignment 3: Sound recording+video*

\*Reading

Chapter 20: The Process of Digital Editing

Chapter 21: The Art and Technique of Editing

Week 6 - Oct. 5

#Review assignment 3

Sound mixing

Sound design

\*Reading

Sound design in film

Week 7 - Oct. 12

Editing methods. Concepts. Types of editing

Guests presenting their work. Q&A

Week 8 - Oct. 19

*NO CLASS: Syracuse Film Festival (mandatory attendance)*

Written exercises:

1. identify the theme of 2 films (recommendations will be made in class): 2 paragraphs
2. use different transportation methods (bus, car, walk) to reach the event, observe people and the town, write a short observation on what you experienced and people that got your attention. Think about it as a field trip, a prospection to find a story, pay attention to details around you: 1 page
3. write 2 film ideas that you want to pursue and you might want to turn into a film for your final project: approx. 1 page

*Assignment 4: Editing*

\*Reading

Chapter 2: The Screenplay

Week 9 - Oct. 26

#Review Assignment 4 & written exercises

3 Act Structure. How to Construct a Drama

Introduction to script process (logline, treatment, synopsis)

Dialogue in film. Present pitching format

!Think about your script idea, locations, actors, permissions!

Have your celtx installed!!!

*Assignment 5: Final Project*

\*Reading

Chapter 4: Organizing Cinematic Time & Space

Week 10 - Nov. 2

*#Review Assignment 5-1: Prepare for a 5' pitch*

Pitching exercise in class. Treatment to be written/discussed in class. Create teams

Script formatting

Week 11 - Nov. 9

*#Review Assignment 5-2: Script*

Pre-production organization, schedule, budget, location, cast&crew  
Work in teams in class  
Storyboard. Shot list

\*Reading  
Chapter 6: Preparing for Production

Week 11 - Nov. 16

PRODUCTION WEEK  
on set

Week 12 - Nov. 23

NO CLASS - Thanksgiving Break

Week 13 - Nov. 30

*#Review Assignment 5-3: Rough Cut*

Editing approaches. Discussions. Future improvements

Week 14 - Dec. 7

*#Review Assignment 5-4: Final Project*  
Last details

Week 15 - Dec. 12, Monday!

*#Review Assignment 5 - Portfolio review (for film majors)*  
*Strongly recommended to non-majors in order to listen to feedback from faculty's perspective*