

Communication 353: Media Production II

Fall 2015

Mondays and Wednesdays 5:00-7:30pm in CAC 112 (studio) and CAC 301 (computer lab)

Course website: D2L

Instructor: Alex Ingersoll - alex.ingersoll@uwsp.edu

Office Hours: (CAC 309) 12:30-1:30pm Mo/We/Th

Course Objectivesⁱ

"Learn the rules like a pro, so you can break them like an artist."

-Pablo Picasso

Through lecture, readings, discussions, workshops, and hands-on projects, this course provides an engagement with a range of principles and equipment used in film, video, and audio production. By engaging in all steps of the production process, this course provides a forum for continuing the work you began in COMM 253 by gaining technical skills and experience, working collaboratively, exploring different styles and forms of creative expression, and developing critical approaches to film and video making. This course will allow you to gain detailed technical experience with audio/video software and video cameras for projects focusing on image composition, continuity, montage, lighting, audio capture/editing, and fiction/nonfiction/experimental styles.

By the end of this class, students will demonstrate the ability to:

- Gain experience by identifying and developing a range of audio-video projects that focus on the technical, cultural, and historical dimensions of image composition, continuity, montage, lighting, and audio capture/editing.
 - Engage with a range of conceptual and aesthetic approaches to fiction, nonfiction, and experimental styles.
 - Work collaboratively to explore different working methods, techniques, and forms of creative expression.
 - Express their own understanding and interpretation by developing critical approaches to film and video making.
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Required Texts and Materials

- Zettl, Herbert. 2010. *Sight, Sound, Motion: Applied Media Aesthetics*, 6th Ed. Boston: Wadsworth.
 - Other course readings available on D2L.
 - An external hard drive (NOT a flash drive) and a camera memory card.
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Communication

Due to the collaborative nature of media production and the limited time available to complete each project, effective communication among all classmates and the instructor is CRITICAL. I will often send emails to the class through your UWSP account or D2L. You will need to have and regularly check an ac-

ⁱ This syllabus is subject to change as my opinions change and evolve, especially with your help and guidance.

tive UWSP email account. Much of the work in the course is geared toward group coordination and therefore necessitates a willingness to cooperate. This course requires each student to commit to the success of every other student's project at each step of the production process.

Lab & Equipment

You are responsible for knowing and adhering to all Lab Policies and you are responsible for all equipment you check out. Failure to abide by the rules of the equipment check-out room, besides being inconsiderate to your fellow classmates or staff, may affect your borrowing privileges. A final grade for this course will not be issued until any and all equipment you have checked out or have made complete arrangements for replacement restitution. Please remember to always be respectful and courteous to the staff members.

If you are still enrolled in this course on the ninth day of the semester, a \$25 rental fee will be charged to your student account. Paying this fee allows you to access production equipment (cameras, tripods, light kits, etc.) available for checkout through the IT Help Desk.

Evaluation

Your final grade in this course is a composite of the different projects listed below. Detailed explanations of each assignment will be given in class at the appropriate times. Late work will not be accepted past the assigned due date. All work will be collected at the beginning of class unless stated otherwise. All projects turned in on flash drives or online filesharing (in Quicktime .mov format) must be clearly labeled with your name, the project number, and the title of the project (if applicable) with the file name itself.

<u>Category</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Due</u>
Adobe Premiere Quiz	10%	9/14
Continuity Editing Exercise	15%	9/28
Still Image Exercise	15%	10/19
Audio/Video Chase Exercise	15%	10/28; 11/9
Signal/Response Assignments	10%	∞
Final Project	25%	12/14, 7:00pm
Participation/Write-ups/Pop Quizzes	10%	

Grade Breakdown

A (100-93.5%) A- (93.4-89.5%) B+ (89.4-86.5%) B (86.4-83.5%) B- (83.4-79.5%) C+ (79.4-76.5%) C (76.4-73.5%) C- (73.4-69.5%) D+ (69.4-66.5%) D (66.4-59.5%) F (<59.4%)

Evaluation Cont.

Since the success of this class depends upon your presence in class, it is expected that you will come to every class on time and ready to engage in the day's materials. Students who attend every single meeting will see their diligence reflected both in their participation grade, and most likely, in the quality of their work. For an absence to be considered excused, you must present University-approved documentation. Your second and third unexcused absences will result in 1 full letter grade deduction from your participation grade. Your fourth will result in 1 full letter grade deducted from your overall grade. Lateness of more than ten minutes will count as 1/2 of an absence. (Repeated lateness of less than ten minutes will also add up to an absence, at my discretion). **If you have four unexcused absences, you will fail the course.** If you do miss a class, please be sure to check with me and/or your classmates for what you missed and make sure you receive any assignments, handouts, etc.

Some production work will happen during class time using lab equipment. When working outside of class *be sure to make arrangements that includes full participation by your group members*. You will be responsible for extra lab work that must occur outside of class, whether in CAC or the library. When working on lab projects, you will be expected to pull your weight and participate in each aspect of the production process. At the conclusion of the production cycle we will hold a brief in-lab “critique” in which groups will share and respond constructively to each other’s work.

Again, this course focuses on media production as a collaborative process. Creating an environment of mutual respect is *paramount* to successful work. While difference of opinions and vigorous debate are highly encouraged, you will be expected to refrain from using disparaging remarks (e.g., sexist, racist, homophobic language) in class, lab, or written work.

Finally, classes often include screenings of short films or clips from longer works. This material may challenge you as an audience member (or potentially offend) and I expect you to approach these materials in the spirit of the wider educational environment. The selection of these materials are intended to spark a healthy discussion and I expect mature and respectful interactions.

Communicating with Me

The best way to talk to me is during my office hours. I am available over email but it may take me a day to respond. This means that you will need to ask questions about assignments more than 24 hours before they are due. If you are having problems completing the assignments, you need to communicate the issues with me at least 24 hours before the assignment is due so we may lay out alternative courses of action.

Computers, Procrastination & Murphy’s Lawⁱⁱ

Late assignments will not be accepted. Please don’t come to class without homework due to technical difficulties. (My computer crashed, printer ran out of ink, not enough batteries, etc.) Don’t wait until the last minute to carry out your work. If you do, you will be rushed, your work will suffer and you won’t have time to deal with the inevitable computer issues. Expect equipment to malfunction, batteries to run down, and hard drives to crash. ALWAYS make a redundant copy of your work. Save your media into a master directory on your external drive. REMEMBER to save your work to your external drive every time you launch it.

Plagiarism and Copyright

If you plagiarize the work of others, you will fail the course. Please be aware of what plagiarism entails (<http://www.plagiarism.org>). Proper citation is REQUIRED for ALL sources, including information you use from Internet publications and sites. Also, remember that you CANNOT legally use someone else’s music or art work UNLESS you get written permission from the copyright holder, or unless you purchase a license allowing you to use specific music or images. The only exception is if the work in question is in the public domain or explicitly states that you may use it free of charge. Everything and everyone MUST be cited in end credits. Any student caught plagiarizing will receive a grade of “F” for the class.

ⁱⁱ The 4th law of thermodynamics: “Anything that can go wrong will go wrong.”

Community Bill of Rights and Responsibilities

UW-Stevens Point values a safe, honest, respectful, and inviting learning environment. In order to ensure that each student has the opportunity to succeed, we have developed a set of expectations for all students and instructors. This set of expectations is known as the *Rights and Responsibilities* document, and it is intended to help establish a positive living and learning environment at UWSP. Read more here:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Pages/rightsandresponsibilities.aspx>

Academic integrity is central to the mission of higher education in general and UWSP in particular. Academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, etc.) is taken very seriously. Don't do it! The minimum penalty for a violation of academic integrity is a failure (zero) for the assignment. For more information, see the UWSP "Student Academic Standards and Disciplinary Procedures" section of the *Rights and Responsibilities* document, Chapter 14, which can be accessed here:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/SRR-2010/rightsChap14.pdf>

Assistive Accommodations

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal law requiring educational institutions to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information about UWSP's policies, check here:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/ADA/rightsADAPolicyInfo.pdf>

If you have a disability and require classroom and/or exam accommodations, please register with the Disability and Assistive Technology Center and then contact me at the beginning of the course. I am happy to help in any way that I can. For more information, please visit the Disability and Assistive Technology Center, located on the 6th floor of the Learning Resource Center (the Library). You can also find more information here: <http://www4.uwsp.edu/special/disability/>

Advice From Students in Previous Versions of the Course

At the end of every semester I ask my students to reflect on what they learned in the course and to give advice to students who will take this course in the future. Here is a small sample of the most common replies:

"Pre-production!!! Plan each and every step carefully and your project will be MUCH better, easier to execute, and your life MUCH less stressful."

"Push yourself to be as creative as possible."

"Use the techniques you learn with lighting, audio, composition, etc. to enhance your creativity."

"Be prepared to be challenged. Don't hesitate to think outside the box."

"...ask Alex for help if you need it! No matter how stupid you think your question may be, I promise it's not."

"There isn't enough time in class to work on projects, devote time outside of class! Don't be afraid to ask questions and challenge Alex. Never be ashamed or embarrassed of what you made."

Course Schedule

Week 1 - Introduction

9/2	Introduction, course overview, and checkout policies Discussion: Creative Sparks and Process
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Week 2 - FCP / Creative Process

9/7	<i>No Class - Labor Day</i>
9/9	Review: Video and audio editing in Adobe Premiere Reading: Zettl Chapter 1

Week 3 - Continuity Editing and Beyond

9/14	Adobe Premiere QUIZ Lecture/discussion: Editing- conventions of continuity Reading: Zettl Chapters 17 & 18
9/16	Introduce Continuity Editing Exercise (Due 9/28)

Week 4 - Camera Operation / Composition & Montage

9/21	Lecture/discussion: Controlling the Image: Composition and Montage Reading: Artis, pp. 70-77 (D2L); Zettl Chapters 10 & 11 Workshop: Camera operation
9/23	Lecture: Camera and On-Screen Motion Screening: <i>Punch-Drunk Love</i> (2002; 95 min) Introduce film write-up (Due 9/30)

Week 5 - Continuity Editing / Still Image Project

9/28	Continuity Editing Exercise DUE ; Screen and Critique Editing Exercises
9/30	Workshop: camera exercise Screening: Still Image Projects from previous classes Reading: Still Image Assignment (Due 10/19); Zettl Chapters 12, 13, & 14

Week 6 - Lighting

10/5	{Alex submits first Signal/Response} Reading: Zettl Chapters 2, 3, and 4; Lecture/discussion: Lighting
10/7	Workshop/discussion: Lighting Kits and Studio Lights

Week 7 - Sound

10/12	Reading: Zettl Chapters 15 & 16 Sound recording technology and techniques (Terms, physics and microphones)
10/14	Audio sweetening in Premiere (Mixing, Corrections, etc) Reading: Audio/Video Chase Exercise (Due 10/28; 11/9) Homework: Brainstorm final project ideas / sketch storyboards, treatments, etc

Week 8 - Final Preproduction

10/19	Still Image Project DUE ; Screen and Critique Still Image Project
10/21	Final Project General Discussion (DUE 12/14) Screening : Final Projects from previous classes

Week 9 - Continue Preproduction

10/26	Final Project Pitch Sessions Final Project Preproduction: Draft Storyboards/Treatments/Schedules DUE
10/28	Audio for Chase Exercise DUE (Groups work on preproduction for video portion)

Week 10 - Documentary/Non-fiction

11/2	Lecture/Discussion: Documentary Style and Approach Reading: Nichols, pp. 32-75 (D2L)
11/4	In-class editing day

Week 11 - Audio-Video Chase / Animation & Experimental Techniques

11/9	Audio/Video Chase Exercise DUE Screen and critique Audio/Video chases Discussion: Animation Techniques
11/11	Discussion: Experimental Techniques Optional Reading: Bordwell and Thompson, pp. 355-377 (D2L)

Week 12 - Export Authoring / Color Correction

11/16	Lecture: Codecs; Color Correction/Grading
11/18	Workshop: Color Correction/Grading

Week 13 - Titles & Credits / Final Footage

11/23	Lecture: Typography, Titles, and Credits Initial footage for final project DUE
11/25	<i>No Class - Thanksgiving Break</i>

Week 14 - Final Editing/Postproduction

11/30	In-class editing day.
12/2	In-class editing day.

Week 15 - Final Editing/Postproduction

12/7	In-class editing day.
12/9	In-class editing day.

Week 16 - Final Editing/Postproduction

12/14	In-class editing day. FINAL PROJECTS DUE by 7:00pm
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Final Project Screening

12/21 - 7:15pm	Screen and Celebrate Final Projects!
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