

Communication 253 Section 1: Video Production I

Spring 2020

Mondays & Wednesdays 1:00-2:50pm in CAC 112 (studio) & CAC 301 (lab)

Course website: Canvas

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

Office Hours: (CAC 309) Tue & Thur 2:00-3:00pm

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 105 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.

Required Texts and Materials

- Course readings available on Canvas.
 - 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 Canvas. You will need to have and regularly check an active 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.

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

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 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>
Adobe Premiere Quiz	10%
Continuity Editing Exercise	15%
Still Image Exercise	15%
Audio/Video Chase Exercise	15%
Signal/Response Assignments	10%
Final Project	25%
Participation/Write-ups/Assignments	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 five 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.

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.

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: <https://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Pages/Student-Conduct.aspx>

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: <https://www.uwsp.edu/hr/Pages/ADA-Resources.aspx>

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: <https://www.uwsp.edu/datc/Pages/default.aspx>

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

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 / Creative Process

1/20	No Class - MLK Jr. Day
1/22	Introduction, course overview, and checkout policies. Discussion: What are media?

Week 2 - Sparking Ideas / Editing Review

1/27	Discussion: Creative Sparks and Process Read: Shot by Shot Ch. 9
1/29	Review: Video and audio editing in Adobe Premiere

Week 3 - Continuity Editing and Beyond

2/3	Adobe Premiere QUIZ Lecture/discussion: Editing- conventions of continuity Reading: Zettl Ch. 17 & 18
2/5	Introduce Continuity Editing Exercise (Due 2/19) Reading: Murch, Selections from 'In the Blink of an Eye'

Week 4 - Camera Operation / Composition & Montage

2/10	<i>{Alex submits first Signal/Response}</i> Lecture/discussion: Controlling the image: Composition and Montage Reading: Shot by Shot Ch. 4; Bare Bones Ch. 2, 3, 4 & 5
2/12	Lecture: Camera and On-Screen Motion Workshop: Camera operation

Week 5 - Continuity Editing / Still Image Project

2/17	Studio Workshop: Advanced Camera Mobility
2/19	Continuity Editing Exercise DUE ; Screen and Critique Editing Exercises Screening: Still Image Projects from previous classes Reading: Still Image Assignment (Due 3/9); Zettl Chapters 12, 13, & 14

Week 6 - Lighting

2/24	Reading: Shot by Shot Ch. 10 Discussion: Lighting Kits and Studio Lights
2/26	Studio Workshop: Lighting

Week 7 - Sound

3/2	Reading: Shot by Shot Ch. 11 Sound recording technology and techniques (Terms, physics and microphones)
3/4	Audio sweetening in Premiere (Mixing, Corrections, etc) Reading: Audio/Video Chase Exercise (Due 3/25; 4/6) Homework: Brainstorm final project ideas / begin developing preproduction materials

Week 8 - Final Preproduction

3/9	Still Image Project DUE ; Screen and Critique Still Image Project
3/11	Final Project Preproduction: Draft Preproduction Materials DUE In Class: Final project class pitch

Week 10 - Continue Preproduction

3/23	Final Project General Discussion (DUE 5/6) Screening : Final Projects from previous classes
3/25	Audio for Chase Exercise DUE (Groups work on preproduction for video portion)

Week 11 - Documentary/Non-fiction

3/30	Lecture/Discussion: Documentary Style and Approach Reading: Nichols, pp. 32-75
4/1	Lab: In-class editing for Audio/Video Chase

Week 12 - Audio-Video Chase / Animation & Experimental Techniques

4/6	Audio/Video Chase Exercise DUE Screen and critique Audio/Video chases Discussion: Animation Techniques
4/8	Exploration: Experimental Techniques

Week 13 - Titles & Credits / Color Correction

4/13	Lecture: Typography, Titles, and Credits
4/15	Lecture: Codecs; Color Correction/Grading Workshop: Color Correction/Grading

Week 14 - Final Editing/Postproduction

4/20	Studio available for shoots (No Class Meeting)
4/22	Works-in-Progress Materials DUE Lab: In-class editing day

Week 15 - Final Editing/Postproduction

4/27	Studio available for shoots (No Class Meeting) Submit Works-in-Progress to Critique Partner
4/29	Works-in-Progress Formal Critiques DUE Lab: In-class editing day

Week 16 - Final Editing/Postproduction

5/4	Studio available for shoots (No Class Meeting)
5/6	Final Projects DUE via WeTransfer or Flash/Hard Drive Transfer Screen and Celebrate Final Projects! (First Half)

Final Project Screening

5/13 - 2:45pm	Screen and Celebrate Final Projects! (Second Half)
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