

VIS 175 - Editing: Theory and Production SPRING 2017

MCC 221

Monday / Wednesday 9:00a – 11:50a

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Office hours: Monday 12:00 - 1:00 PM MAN B111C

(Or by appt.)

COURSE OVERVIEW

The evolving aims and grammars of editing practice in film and digital media will be examined. These histories will create a context for exploring contemporary editing strategies. The production projects will be centered on digital editing practice.

This is an intermediate level studio course that will focus on understanding and practicing editing grammars and workflows with respect to the cinematic medium's contemporary tools. Students will also work to identify and augment their individual relationship with the cinematic medium vis-a-vis editing. The framework of our theoretical investigation comprises the classic continuity system (methodical), documentary (editor as writer / intuitive), and structural / experimental approaches (oppositional / algorithmic). Special attention will be given to issues of time and montage: tempo, rhythm, narrative pacing, spatial and temporal continuity, and image / sound relationships. Of concern will also be the relationship between contemporary and historical practices, with the goal of understanding aesthetic decisions within a historical continuum.

METHODOLOGY & REQUIREMENTS

The first half of the quarter will comprise a series of exercises that involve realizing short vignettes within particular cinematic editing paradigms, as well as exercises that involve editing material that was shot by others. In the second half the quarter, footage for a longer project will be produced in teams, from which final cuts will be completed individually, with a focus on individual augmentation and alteration of common content. Throughout the quarter, we will refine and document organizational and workflow methodologies, as a means for structuring practice, and optimizing efficiency. Moreover, we will consider the entire production process for how it hinges on editing. (Framing a shot is the first editing decision).

In addition to exercises and projects, the following will be required, and will contribute to the structure of our discourse:

- Completed reading response prompts (10% of final grade)
- 3 In-Class Workshop Projects (Documentary, Structural, Animation)(10%)
- One individual presentation of a shot-by-shot analysis of an excerpt of a film / video / media work of choice. (10% of final grade)
- One terminology and concepts quiz (this will be announced). (10%)
- Attendance at 3 editing workshops at the media center, at least 1 of which focuses on Avid Media Composer. (After Effects and Pro Tools strongly recommended) (5%)

During screenings and lectures, LAPTOPS ARE CLOSED, SMART PHONES ARE SILENCED AND STOWED. Take notes in a notebook. You *should* be keeping a sketchbook / journal, either way.

Project presentation details will be discussed per assignment.

COURSE TEXTS

<http://www.charlesgmiller.com/teaching/VIS175>

URL above for the latest course texts. Readings and the dates they will be due will be announced.

Each assigned reading will include prompts to address in a brief written response.

LATE WORK

Projects not submitted on the due date will receive a reduced mark at a rate of 10% (one letter grade) per class late. Late work also waves its right to critical feedback.

ATTENDANCE

3 late (over 10 minutes) arrivals will count as 1 unexcused absence. 1 unexcused absence will be permitted without penalty. Each additional unexcused absence will reduce your participation mark by 3 percentage points. Unexcused absences on scheduled critiques will qualify your work as LATE. 4 or more absences (excused or unexcused) is grounds for automatic failure, and you will be advised to withdraw from the course. Incomplete marks will not be issued.

GRADES

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|---------------------|--|
| PROJECT 1: | 10% (5% for shots, 5% for cuts) |
| PROJECT 2: | 15% |
| IN-CLASS WORKSHOPS: | 15% |
| SHOT BY SHOT PRES.: | 10% |
| READING RESPONSES: | 5% |
| QUIZ: | 10% |
| AVID ETC. WORKSHOPS | 5% |
| PARTICIPATION: | 10% |
| FINAL: | 20% (5% pre-production, 5% rough cut, 10% final cut) |

(A range: 100-90%, B range: 89-80% . . . F-59% and below)

Rubric: grading will assess these criteria, in order of importance: Creative effort, technical execution, and conceptual depth. You will be informed of your grades once after midterm, and once more after finals.

ASSIGNMENTS (Links to prompts will be provided on the course site)

Exercise 1: WARM UP! Framing / Cutting [Agency]

Presentation: Shot by Shot Analysis

Exercise 2: Continuity Objects / Rhythm Objects

Exercise 3: Editing as Writing: Documentary

Exercise 4: Shape: Structural film / Rule Sets

Exercise 5: Sound + Motion [Time] / Animation

Final: Collaborative Production / Individual Cuts

SCHEDULE

Week 1 **Mon 4/3** - Introductions. Editing modalities overview and framing. Exercise 1 assigned. Read: Excerpt from Eisenstein: "Collision of Ideas", Excerpts from Walter Murch: In the Blink of an Eye: Why Do Cuts Work? (5-9) Edwin Porter: Life of an American Fireman (Original and Crosscut 1903). DW Griffith: A Corner in Wheat (1909). The Cutting Edge: The Magic of Movie Editing (2004). Hollis Frampton: Lemon (1969), Nostalgia (1971) Doug Aitken: Black Mirror (2011).

Wed 4/5 - 1+1=3 and commonalities / time: Tempo, Rhythm, and Pacing (In that order). Exchange assets for exercise 1. Read: Remainder of Excerpts from

Walter Murch: In the Blink of an Eye, Hegel, introduction to dialectical thinking.
Sergei Eisenstein: October (1928)
Lev Kuleshov: Untitled demonstration (1920)
Quentin Tarantino: Inglorious Basterds (2010)

- Week 2** **Mon 4/10** - Continuity and terminology (Hegel: Thesis (subject), Antithesis (cut), Synthesis (narrative / concept)). Rhythm Cont. Exchange Assets for Project 2 assigned. Read: Blindsided: A Case Study on Editing a Documentary.
Sergio Leone: Once Upon a Time in the West (1968)
Joel and Ethan Coen: Raising Arizona (1987)
Happiness is Calling: San Diego Tourism Promo (2011)
Darren Aronofsky: Pi (1998)
Spike Lee: Do The Right Thing (1989)
Wong Kar-wai: In the Mood for Love (2000)
Francis Ford Coppola: The Conversation (1974)
- Wed 4/12** - Documentary Modality: (Film texts: Editor as Writer) Non-Linear tools Tools and Shortcuts. EDL and File Organization workshop.
Robert Flaherty: Man of Aran (1934)
Chris Marker: Sans Soleil (1983)
Sam Green: The Weather Underground (2002)
Alan Sekula and Noel Burch: The Forgotten Space (2012)
- Week 3** **Mon 4/17** - PROJECT 1 DUE. Screening and Discussion.
- Wed 4/19** - Project 1 cont. Documentary Workshop.
- Week 4** **Mon 4/24** - Documentary workshop cont. Notes on "Film Essay" / Primer for Shot by Shot presentations.
Alan Sekula and Noel Burch: The Forgotten Space (2012)
Linda Harrar, John Else. Cadillac Desert (1998)
- Wed 4/26** - PROJECT 2 DUE. Read: Raskin, 5 explanations for Jump Cuts in Godard's Breathless. Structural Film: Mediations Through Simple Forms.
- Week 5** **Mon 5/1** - 1st Shot by shot presentations. Contrary to continuity, patterns, and de-familiarization. Structural Film: The "shape" of time.
Jean Luc Godard: Breathless (1959)
Yvonne Rainer: Film About a Woman Who (1974)
William Greaves: Symbiopsychotaxiplasm Take One (1968)
Hollis Frampton: Poetic Justice (1972)
Ernie Gehr: Serene Velocity (1970), Shift (1972)
John Smith: Associations (1975)
Michael Snow: Presents (1981)
- Wed 5/3** - Shot by shot presentations. Screen Documentary Workshop Exercise. Final Project Assigned.
- Week 6** **Mon 5/8** - Shot by shot presentations. Structural / Experimental film workshop
- Wed 5/10** - Shot by shot presentations. Animation and Keyframe workshop. Script format overview / Digital Scripts.
- Week 7** **Mon 5/15** - Final Script / Treatment for final DUE. Shot by shot presentations. Screen and discuss structural film exercise.

Wed 5/17 – Shot by shot presentations. Keyframe Animation workshop. Editing with Music / Sound

Week 8 **Mon 5/22** - Meta Editing: Seriality.
Francois Girard: 32 Short Films about Glenn Gould (1993)
Maria Bamford: The Maria Bamford Show (2007)
Peter Greenaway: The Falls (1980)
Jim Jarmusch: Coffee and Cigarettes (2004)

Wed 5/24 - QUIZ. Shot by Shot catch up. Screen and review animation exercise.

Week 9 **Mon 5/29** – NO CLASS (Memorial Day)

Wed 5/31 – Individual critiques on final rough cuts.

Week 10 **Mon 6/5** – Individual critiques on final rough cuts.

Wed 6/7 - Final screening @ SME Performance Space.

[Schedule subject to change. Changes will be announced]