

UCLA DEPARTMENT OF FILM, TELEVISION AND DIGITAL MEDIA
Digital Filmmaking Track – Class Syllabi

Example Syllabus. *The syllabi posted are general syllabi for students and alumni who wish to find out the topics generally covered in these courses*

FTV 72: Film and Television Production Workshop

Course Description & Goals:

This two-week intensive online production workshop is designed to introduce the fundamentals of digital filmmaking from script to screen. Lectures, tutorials, hands-on exercises, and master classes will focus on the basic aesthetic, creative, and logistical decisions of the production process. Students will learn and put into practice the writing, shooting, and editing of moving images. With a practical yet inventive do-it-yourself focus, student will serve as their one-person crew: director, screenwriter, cinematographer, editor, and sound mixer.

Technology Requirements & Troubleshooting: Access to a laptop/computer with reliable wifi is mandatory. All projects will be created using the required apps and software listed below. Option to use other technology will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and granted only with written permission. No drones, animation, or found footage is allowed. It is your responsibility to download or sign up for the required apps and software before beginning the course for troubleshooting purposes.

Required Apps & Software

- Zoom (Video Conferencing)
- FiLMiC Pro (Cinematography)
- Celtx (Screenwriting)
- Adobe Premiere Pro (Editing)

Required Reading:

- *Crafting Short Screenplays That Connect*, Claudia Hunter Johnson

Recommended Readings:

- *Look: A Practical Guide for Improving Your Observational Skills*, James H. Gilmore
- *Cinematography Theory and Practice: Image Making for Cinematographers and Directors*, Blaine Brown
- *Directing Actors: Creating Memorable Performances for Film & Television*, Judith Weston

Approach: For live sessions, please adhere to regular in-class etiquette and refrain from distracting behavior, such as eating, lying down, or walking around. While some sessions are live, all classes will be recorded and viewable online on the course website (CCLE). Zoom link to live classes can be found in CCLE. **Watch all pre-recorded lectures in the order they appear in this syllabus.** Refer to syllabus for live session times, however this is subject to change. Daily completion of lessons, assignments, and projects as noted in the syllabus is mandatory.

COVID-19 Reminder: Health and safety come first. Follow your local city/county/state regulations and do not jeopardize health and safety for any assignment. Wear a mask and keep a safe distance at all times during your shoots. If you or someone in your circle feels ill or is experiencing any symptoms, do not proceed with your shoot. Contact your TAs who will guide you with a new plan if needed. Accommodations will be made without penalization.

Statement of Grading:

40% Attendance & Participation

Attendance is mandatory. All students are expected to attend each live session unless there is an extreme time difference. If this is the case, you must provide a written letter detailing your circumstances from your parent or legal guardian to avoid penalization. All students must participate in time-sensitive online prompts to track attendance and participation. Assignments will be graded based on thoughtfulness, attention to detail, and creativity. Giving and receiving meaningful, constructive feedback on student work in discussion boards is integral.

30% Film Exercises

Students will make a one-minute mise-en-scène, a one-minute photo roman, and two-minute exercise by the end of this course. Projects will be graded for their creative merit. A maximum of two characters is allowed. Students cannot act in their projects.

20% Pre-production Packet

Each student will create a comprehensive pre-production plan before shooting their two-minute exercise.

10% Journal:

Write a two-paragraph journal entry following the prompts in the syllabus. Be as specific as possible and use the film language we learn each day to respond to prompts. Times New Roman 12 pt. font, 1" margins, double-spaced.

Office Hours: Specific times will be posted on CCLE for Instructor and Teaching Assistants.

Please Note: This syllabus is subject to an occasional change, and it is your responsibility to keep track of those changes as the course progresses. Unless otherwise noted, all reading/viewing assignments are to be prepared for the day they appear in the syllabus.

Zoom Notice: Class meetings held with Zoom may be recorded. Zoom uses video recording or other personal information capture for the purpose of facilitating the course and/or test environment. Pursuant to the terms of the agreement with UCLA, the data is used solely for this purpose and any vendor is prohibited from redisclosing this information. UCLA also does not use the data for any other purpose. Students in a class and/or meeting participants and any student-hosted meetings are prohibited from recording of any kind. Accommodations for students with special needs will occur through instructor recording.

Academic Integrity: When accusations of academic dishonesty occur, The Office of the Dean of Students is charged with investigating and adjudicating suspected violations. Academic dishonesty, includes, but is not limited to, cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, multiple submissions

or facilitating academic misconduct. Plagiarism is a serious offense. It is the presentation of another author's words or ideas as if they were your own. If you have any questions about documentation, quotations, and related matters, please do not hesitate to ask your instructor before submitting your work. More information on UCLA's Rules of Student Conduct can be found at the following website: <http://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/Student-Conduct>

Accessibility: Students needing academic accommodations based on a disability should contact the Center for Accessible Education (CAE) at (310) 825-1501. When possible, students should contact the CAE within the first two weeks of the term, as reasonable notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. For more visit www.cae.ucla.edu

University of California Diversity Statement: *[Adopted by the Assembly of the Academic Senate May 10, 2006 Endorsed by the President of the University of California June 30, 2006]* The diversity of the people of California has been the source of innovative ideas and creative accomplishments throughout the state's history into the present. Diversity – a defining feature of California's past, present, and future – refers to the variety of personal experiences, values, and worldviews that arise from differences of culture and circumstance. Such differences include race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, language, abilities/disabilities, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and geographic region, and more. Because the core mission of the University of California is to serve the interests of the State of California, it must seek to achieve diversity among its student bodies and among its employees. The State of California has a compelling interest in making sure that people from all backgrounds perceive that access to the University is possible for talented students, staff, and faculty from all groups.

The knowledge that the University of California is open to qualified students from all groups, and thus serves all parts of the community equitably, helps sustain the social fabric of the State. Diversity should also be integral to the University's achievement of excellence. Diversity can enhance the ability of the University to accomplish its academic mission. Diversity aims to broaden and deepen both the educational experience and the scholarly environment, as students and faculty learn to interact effectively with each other, preparing them to participate in an increasingly complex and pluralistic society. Ideas, and practices based on those ideas, can be made richer by the process of being born and nurtured in a diverse community. The pluralistic university can model a process of proposing and testing ideas through respectful, civil communication. Educational excellence that truly incorporates diversity thus can promote mutual respect and make possible the full, effective use of the talents and abilities of all to foster innovation and train future leadership.

Therefore, the University of California renews its commitment to the full realization of its historic promise to recognize and nurture merit, talent, and achievement by supporting diversity and equal opportunity in its education, services, and administration, as well as research and creative activity. The University particularly acknowledges the acute need to remove barriers to the recruitment, retention, and advancement of talented students, faculty, and staff from historically excluded populations who are currently underrepresented.

WEEK 1 CLASS SCHEDULE

Course Meeting 1

Program Orientation & Course Intro

- Discuss expectations, goals, and projects
- Share welcome portraits in breakout rooms
- Journal: Find one daylight exterior you have easy access to. Observe this space for one hour without technology and note your findings on paper. Type your notes and submit to your TA website on CCLE.
- Film Screening: *Rashomon* (all film screenings are viewable on CCLE with a UCLA VPN on the “Media resources” page, in the “Video Reserves” tab)

Course Meeting 2

Lecture: Story

- What is story? Analyzing basic elements

Lecture: Structure

- Narrative approaches in short film
- Screen clips and analyze

Writing Workshop: ○ Read pages 11-16 of Chapter 2 in *Crafting Short Screenplays that Connect* ○ Assignment: “The Menu”

Lecture: Mise-en-scène

- Worldbuilding: what’s in the shot?
- Composition, movement, and spatial relationships
- Elements of style, mood, and design

TA Tutorial: Shooting on your Phone

- How to set up full kit (lenses, phone case, gimbal, tripod, slate, audio)
- How to clear storage from your phone, Filmic Pro Presets (resolution, bit rate)
- Watch Filmic Pro tutorials and practice on your phone

Course Meeting 3

Lecture: Locations

- Using Place to Tell a Story

TA Tutorial: Basic Uploading & Editing

- How to upload phone footage to your computer, import and export in Premiere

****Film Assignment: Shoot Mise-en-Scène Exercise****

Find one location and depict two characters having a connection or disconnection in one shot. One-minute maximum, no sound. Horizontal compositions only. You must shoot with your phone. Apply what you've learned about mise-en-scène and place as best as you can. D

Lecture: Production Crews & Set Etiquette

- Define crew roles and expectations, review set etiquette
- Assign "moods" to each student for photo roman

Course Meeting 4

Lecture: Camera & Framing

- Designing the shot: shot sizes, focal length, aspect ratio
- Camera movement, optical axis, and key visual rules
- Screen and critique select mise-en-scène exercises

Production Workshop: Coverage

- How to shoot a scene
- Screen and analyze film clips

****Film Assignment: Shoot Photo Roman****

A photo roman or "photo story" is a storytelling format consisting of photographs. Using no more than 60 still photographs, edit your photos into a compelling simple story that explores your assigned mood. The entire photo roman can be up to one minute long. You must use only ONE DAYTIME EXTERIOR for this project. You are the photographer. Horizontal compositions only. You must shoot with your phone. No stock or online images are allowed, along with no text (including dialogue, subtitles, title cards, speech bubbles, and so forth). No sound is allowed either (including voiceover, music, score, etc). Up to two characters maximum.

This project emphasizes the power of imagery and the relationship photographs can have with one another to create meaning. A photo roman is not just a simple slideshow of images however. Edit the photographs with intention, rhythm, and pacing.

Course Meeting 5

TA Tutorial: Basic Intro to Premiere II

- Organizing files, how to edit still photographs in on-line editing system

Lecture: Editing

- Basic history of editing and the editor's vocabulary

Coverage Study

- Analyze scene coverage and review floorplans in breakout rooms

Film Assignment: Edit Photo Roman and submit video file to CCLE. Think of a simple story for your two-minute film to pitch in your breakout room tomorrow.

Film Screening: *Cameraperson*

- Journal: What specific elements stood out to you in *Cameraperson* and why?

Course Meeting 6

Pitch Workshop:

- Loglines, synopses, outlines
- Students pitch their ideas for a 2-minute exercise in breakout rooms. What works in the story? Is it feasible?
- Screen and critique photo romans in breakout rooms

Writing Workshop: The Big Picture

- Effective treatments and look books with examples

Lecture: Scripts & Critique

- Professional script formatting
 - How to give effective feedback on projects

Assignment: Read pages 65-77 of Chapter 6 *Crafting Short Screenplays that Connect*. Write a 1-page maximum treatment for your 2-minute film. Write down ONLY what the audience will see and hear. Provide a brief look book addressing major creative decisions.

Course Meeting 7

Writing Lab: Draft I

- Work with assigned groups to provide treatment & look book feedback in breakout rooms

Assignment: Draft I of two-page screenplay

Lecture: Casting

- What to look for in casting

Workshop: Acting with Guest TBD

- Directing Actors using Action Verbs
 - Working with untrained actors

Course Meeting 8

Writing Lab:

- Work with assigned groups to provide feedback on Draft I in breakout rooms
- Assignment: Draft II of 2-page screenplay due

Lecture: Shooting Plans

- Shot Lists, Floorplans and Storyboards, Script Breakdowns, Shooting Schedule

Lecture: Exposure & Lighting

- Qualities of light and shadow
 - Basic lighting setups and rules

WEEK 2 CLASS SCHEDULE

Course Meeting 9

Writing Lab: Draft II

- Assigned groups receive feedback on Draft II in breakout rooms
 - Assignment: Final draft of two-page screenplay due by 9 PM PST. Work on production packets.

TA Tutorial: Do-It-Yourself Lighting

- Tips and tricks using EQ and household items to shape light

Course Meeting 10

Pre-Production Meetings

- Assignment: Students review pre-pro plans in breakout rooms

Lecture: Sound Design Is Half the Picture

- Diegetic vs. non-diegetic sound
- Using sound design to bring film to life

Course Meeting 11

Film Assignment: Shoot Two-Minute Exercise

You have 4 hours to complete production and will be required to check in with TAs before and after your shoot. Up to two characters maximum. No drones, animation, or found footage is allowed. Horizontal compositions only. You must shoot with your phone and use the FiLMiC Pro App. TAs on stand-by for technical problems.

- Journal: What did you learn about your production experience? What did you enjoy? What was a struggle? What can you do differently next time?

Course Meeting 12

TA Tutorial: Editing

- Additional editing functions, credits, transcoding, exporting

Editing Lab

- Individual work time, TAs available for live technical support

- Assignment: Assembly Cuts

Film Screening: *A Serious Man*

- Journal: What specific elements stood out to you in *A Serious Man* and why?

Course Meeting 13

Assembly Cut Critiques

- Screen and critique assembly cuts in breakout rooms

TA Tutorial: Editing

- Students learn basic color correction, sound editing, and search for/add music

TA Tutorial: Posters

- Students learn how to make a poster for their two-minute exercise

Editing Lab

- Individual work time, TAs available for live technical support

Assignment: Rough Cuts

Film Screening: *La Ciénaga*

- Journal: What specific elements regarding editing and sound design stood out to you in *La Ciénaga* and why?

Course Meeting 14

Editing Lab:

- Individual work time, TAs available for live technical support

- Assignment: Deliver film poster and work-in-progress screeners

Course Meeting 15

Work-in-Progress Screenings & Ceremony