Production Still from set of *Citizen Kane* (1941)

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Hours: Mondays 1:00pm - 3:00pm  
Tuesdays 1:00pm – 2:00pm  
Wednesdays 1:00pm – 3:00pm  
or by appointment
Course Description --

This course will explore advanced techniques in lighting, cinematography and recording of media production. COMM3313: Production I is a prerequisite for this class. This course will prepare you to move on to COMM4310: Advanced Production: Documentary and/or COMM4312: Advanced Production: Narrative

This course will be hard! Media production is a complicated endeavor, and will require a mix of academic and artistic work on the part of each student. The course work will build off of the foundation set in Production I, and further your skills in many aspects of film/tv production. You will be required to spend a significant amount of time working outside of our normal class meeting time to succeed in this course. If you are not committed to putting in this level of work, I would advise you not to take this course!

Where as COMM3313: Production I focused on non-fiction filmmaking, this semester we will explore the world of narrative fiction filmmaking. Instead of just capturing the world around us, how can we create a new reality using the tools of cinema? In the world of filmmaking, you are only limited by your own creativity. So, dream big, and we will work, as a creative team, to figure out ways to achieve it!

This class, like most film productions, will require a substantial amount of collaboration. Collaboration can be beautiful, but it can also be messy. Check your attitudes at the door. So long as we share the same common goal of producing high quality films, we will succeed.

Learning Objectives --

Students participating fully in this class will...
- solidify and deepen their knowledge of film/video gear and equipment.
- engage in the pre-production/production/post-production processes of fiction filmmaking.
- produce 5 short films that can be added to their portfolios.
- practice working collaboratively to achieve greater success on film productions.

Course Materials --

Each student is required to purchase the following class materials:
- A digital camera (a DSLR, point-and-shoot, or even a cellphone camera)
- A 256gb (or larger) external hard drive (Thunderbolt interface strongly advised).

While not required, the following materials a recommended to aid students in completing work for this class:
- A Netflix and/or Hulu Plus membership.
- A subscription to Adobe Creative Cloud software.
Course Requirements --

Attendance/Punctuality
Class starts promptly at the indicated time. Coming to class late, even by just a few minutes, will negatively impact your final grade. Unexcused absences are unacceptable, and will result in an automatic reduction in your final grade by 5%. In the event that you have a health or family emergency that will require you to miss class, you must notify me as early as possible, and you may be required to do additional work to makeup for missed class time. Missing class for any other reason does not count as an excused absence. If you have 3 or more absences this semester, you will fail this course.

Active Class Participation
Your full and undivided attention is required during class meeting times. You are expected to contribute in all phases of the class: lectures, demos, in-class shoots, critique sessions, etc. Active class participation can take many forms, but basic characteristics include: initiative, involvement, collaborativeness, intellectual growth and impact on the class by the student. Participation in online/email discussions will also factor in to this grade. We will chat about your individual progress during one-on-one meetings throughout the semester, but I encourage you to check in with me at any time if you have questions about your participation level.

Reading Quizzes
To ensure completion and comprehension of reading assignments, a series of short quizzes will be administered throughout the semester. These quizzes are not designed to be difficult, but merely review the basic material cover in the reading assignments. Students who complete the reading assignments should have no trouble on each quiz. Students who fail a quiz will be required to meet with me outside of class.

Production Assignments
This semester, you will be required to complete five production assignments. Each assignment is designed to put the theories, concepts and skills you learn in class in to practice. Projects will be assessed on both technical and creative merits.

Production Assignment #1: Experimental Self-Portrait
This project invites you to practice experimental film production techniques. I want you to make an unconventional film that introduces yourself to me and the rest of the class. There is no template for what you will do here, just make something that you’ve never made before. Project must be 1 minute or shorter, and will be due in Class #3. Successful projects will have a clearly visible or articulated experimentation with film form.

Production Assignment #2: Silent Film
This project will exercise your fluency in visual storytelling. Working in small groups, you will take a simple, silent, original script and film it, adhering to common film language conventions. Choose your script carefully: Filmmaking is often about identifying the resources you have, and working within your
limitations, so plan for something that you can film and edit in a short amount of time for this project. Final, edited cuts of this project are due in Class #5.

**Production Assignment #3: Music Video**

For this project, you will produce a music video! You may use any music from any source of your choosing. The big challenge: you must shoot the entire music video, or at least appear to shoot it, in one, continuous take. No cuts should disrupt the spatial and temporal continuity. You must use the entire song (no fading out in the middle). I strongly suggest choosing a song of a manageable length (under 4 minutes). No additional sounds, outside of the song may be incorporated. This project will be filmed OUTSIDE of class time between class meetings #8 and #10. We will work together as a group to determine equipment needs, and availability for that week. Final projects are due in Class #10.

**Production Assignment #4: Practice Scene Studies**

This project serves as preparation for Production Assignment #5. I will give the class two short scripts, and for two consecutive weeks, you will work as a team to shoot them. We will divvy up crew roles and responsibilities for each shoot. Each student be responsible for editing together versions of BOTH scenes that are shot. Both cuts are due in Class #13.

**Production Assignment #5: Final Production**

The class will work as one team to write, produce and shoot a single short film. The concept and scope of the project will be determined by the collective interests of the students, though I reserve the right to shape the final project in order to best serve class needs. **Principle photography for this project will take place the weekend of Friday, April 22nd - Sunday, April 24th. Students must make themselves available these dates for the shoot.** No exceptions.

Each student will be responsible for creating their own cut of the film. We will debate the strongest elements of each student’s edited version, and compile them all to create a final, completed film.

**Grading --**

Your final grade for this class will be determined as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance &amp; Punctuality</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Active Class Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Quizzes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Production Assignment #1: Experimental Self-Portrait</td>
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<td>Production Assignment #2: Silent Film</td>
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<td>Production Assignment #3: Music Video</td>
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<td>Production Assignment #4: Practice Scene Shoots</td>
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<td>Production Assignment #4: Final Production</td>
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Grade Appeals --

Students who feel that they have not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in this class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, http://cla.tamu.edu/students/studentinfo.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s Office.

Course Calendar --

Wednesday, January 20th - Class #1
Introductions / Review Syllabus / Experimental Film / Canon 60D Tech
HW: Production Work on Assignment #1
Reading: Chapter 1 - Introduction to Digital and Film Systems

Wednesday, January 27th - Class #2
Reading Review & Quiz / Fictional Narrative Filmmaking / Visual Storytelling Language
HW: Production Work on Assignment #1
Reading: Chapter 5 - The Video Image

Wednesday, February 3rd - Class #3
Reading Review & Quiz / Review Production Assignment #1 / Scripting / Storyboarding
HW: Write scripts/visual plan for Production Assignment #2
Reading: Chapter 9 - Shooting the Movie

Wednesday, February 10th - Class #4
Reading Review & Quiz / Production Assignment #2 - Silent Films
HW: Edit Production Assignment #2
Reading: Chapter 17 - Producing and Distributing the Movie

Wednesday, February 17th - Class #5
Reading Review & Quiz / Review Production Assignment #2 / Producing 101 / Movie Magic Software
HW: Create mock budgets and schedules
Reading: Chapter 8 - Color and Filters

Wednesday, February 24th - Class #6
Reading Review & Quiz / Advanced Camera & Lighting Techniques / Music Videos
HW: Write scripts, storyboard and shot list for Production Assignment #3
Wednesday, March 2nd - Class #7
Review & Critique Scripts, and shooting plans for Production Assignment #3
HW: Revise shooting plans and schedule for Production Assignment #3

Wednesday, March 9th - Class #8
Check out Gear for Music Videos
HW: Shoot Music Videos, Prepare Final Project pitches
Reading: Chapter 13 - Picture and Dialogue Editing

Wednesday, March 16th - NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK

Wednesday, March 23rd - Class #9
Reading Review & Quiz / Pitches for Final Projects / Short Film Analysis
HW: Edit Music Videos
Reading: Chapter 15 - Sound Editing and Mixing

Wednesday, March 30th - Class #10
Reading Review & Quiz / Review Music Videos / Short Film Analysis
HW: Pre-Production Production Assignment #4

Wednesday, April 6th - Class #11
Practice Scene Shoot #1 (w/o dialogue)
HW: Pre-Production Production Assignment #4

Wednesday, April 13th - Class #12
Practice Scene Shoot #2 (w/ dialogue)
HW: Edit Practice Production Assignment #4 / Pre-Production for Final Production

Wednesday, April 20th - Class #13
Review Practice Scene Shoots / Prep for Final Production Shoot
HW: Editing for Final Projects

Friday, April 22nd - Sunday, April 24th - Class Shoot!

Wednesday, April 27th - Class #14
View Rough Cut of Final Production / Distribution Strategies
HW: Editing for Final Projects

Wednesday, May 11th - Final Exam [4:30pm - 7:00pm]
Final Project Critique
Additional Notes --

- Bring a notebook and pen to every class!

- It is essential that you are familiar with the Adobe Premiere editing software to complete course assignments. It is the responsibility of each student to get up-to-speed on the software. Please connect with me immediately if you feel that you need extra guidance in this.

- I’m planning to use Facebook as the platform to organize the classes online component. If you all would prefer to use Blackboard for this, I am open to switching. We will discuss in class the first class meeting. Be sure to ‘like’ the Media Production at TAMU-CC Facebook page!

- Feel free to call/email/message me any time. I’ve given you options by which to contact me, and I expect you to use them as needed.

- My classroom technology policy is always evolving… I will use my cell phone throughout the semester to check the time and keep us on schedule. You are allowed to do the same. Anything more involved that that (writing text messages or emails, browsing the internet) constitutes an inappropriate use of technology, and will not be tolerated. First violation, you will get a warning. Second violation, you will be dismissed from that class meeting.

- You must create original work for all assignments this semester. If you wish to combine production work for this class with an assignment from another class, you must notify me so that appropriate expectations can be set by all parties. These are academic integrity issues, and if violated, will be reported to the Department Chair for review.

- Attendance to our Final Exam meeting time is mandatory. Make all travel plans after the exam time.

- Work produced in this class will be eligible for selection into the TAMUCC Media Production Track Student Showcase in the spring semester. Selective inclusion in the showcase provides students with networking opportunities and serves as a portfolio-building event.

- The South Texas Cinémathèque, a collaborative screening series run by The Department of Communication and Media and the Art Museum of South Texas, is designed to broaden Media students’ exposure to independent film by bringing internationally recognized filmmakers to Corpus Christi, Texas for discussions, screenings and lectures. Keep your eyes peeled for the date, and make every effort to attend. You won’t regret it!

- Bring this syllabus to class each week. It is subject to change due to contingencies.
Academic Advising --

The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

Statement of Civility --

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

Disabilities Accommodations --

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism --

University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work. In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in a failing grade for the semester.

Classroom Behavior--

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.