

MIT 2601A-002 / Introduction to Video Theory and Production

Course Outline – Fall 2018

Instructor Information:

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Course Information

Lectures: Monday / 3:30 – 6:30 pm, FNB 2070

Course Description:

An introductory course in digital video production that will engage students in the production, history, and theories of moving images. Through the integration of lectures, screenings, and studio assignments, students will obtain the necessary critical and technical skills to produce short, creative digital video projects.

Every session will involve two learning streams:

- 1) **Media Production: history, concepts and resources**
- 2) **The Production Process: design and implementation of a production plan**

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

Develop a creative project, from the idea to the final product.
Assess ideas in terms of their artistic and narrative potential, production feasibility and audience engagement.
Design a plan for the production of a creative digital video project.
Work in teams and understand collaboration as one of the basic principles for the production of media content.
Gain familiarity with the basic functions of entry-level video production equipment.
Produce a creative digital video project by implementing a production plan.

Weekly Schedule:

1. **Introduction: From the Idea to the Product** (Sep 10)
2. **Ideas and Research** (Sep 17)

Hewitt, John and Gustavo Vazquez. *Documentary Filmmaking: A Contemporary Field Guide*.

Chapter 1, Begin the Journey by Developing your Idea

Meigh-Andrews, Chris. *A History of Video Art: The Development of Form and Function*.

Chapter 3, Technology, Access and Context: Social and Political Activists and Their Role in the Development of Video Art

3. Narrative and Experimental Structures and Modes – Part 1 (Sep 24)

Fox, Broderick. *Documentary Media: History, Theory, Practice*.

Chapter 2, A Brief History of Documentary: Movements and Modes

Ingall, Andrew, Daniel Belasco, Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art, and Videofreex. *Videofreex: The Art of Guerrilla Television*.

Sections 1, 2, 3 and 6

4. Narrative and Experimental Structures and Modes – Part 2 (Oct 01)

Jong, Wilma de, Jerry Rothwell, and Erik Knudsen. 2011. *Creative documentary practice*.

Chapter 5: Developing Ideas

Chapter 6: From the Idea to the Pitch

Vertov, Dziga. "WE: Variant of a Manifesto," in *The Documentary Film Reader: History, Theory, Criticism*, ed. Jonathan Kahana.

5. Fall Reading Week (Oct 08)

6. Visual Principles (Oct 15)

Hurbis-Cherrier, Mick. *Voice & Vision: A Creative Approach to Narrative Film and DV Production*.

Chapter 3, The Visual Language and Aesthetics of Cinema

Hewitt, John and Gustavo Vazquez. *Documentary Filmmaking: A Contemporary Field Guide*.

Chapter 9, Field Production: Shooting the Documentary

7. Light and Sound (Oct 22)

Hurbis-Cherrier, Mick. *Voice & Vision: A Creative Approach to Narrative Film and DV Production*.

Chapter 13, Basic Lighting for Film and DV

Hurbis-Cherrier, Mick. *Voice & Vision: A Creative Approach to Narrative Film and DV Production*.

Chapter 15, Sound for Production

8. Ethics, Copyright, Labour Issues and Legislation (Oct 29)

Fox, Broderick. *Documentary Media: History, Theory, Practice*.

Chapter 5, Documentary Ethics: Focusing Your Professional Gaze

9. Editing – The Construction of Meaning (Nov 05)

Bordwell, David, Kristin Thompson, and Jeff Smith. *Film Art: An Introduction*.

Chapter 12, Film Art and Film History I The Soviet Montage

10. Editing –Tutorial (Nov 12)

Hurbis-Cherrier, Mick. *Voice & Vision: A Creative Approach to Narrative Film and DV Production*.

Chapter 21, The Art and Technique of Editing

Hewitt, John and Gustavo Vazquez. *Documentary Filmmaking: A Contemporary Field Guide*.

Chapter 12, Finding Structure for Short and Feature Length Documentaries

Chapter 13, Editing the Documentary

11. Editing –Tutorial (Nov 19)

12. Editing – Final Version revision and approval (Nov 26)

13. Distribution – Screening of Students' Projects (Dec 03)

Assignments:

Description	Due Date	Weight
Attendance and Participation (*): Classroom Work – Students are expected to: Participate in discussions based on each week’s lectures, readings and screenings. Actively engage in weekly individual and group activities, all of which will be exercises designed for the application of the basic principles of media production.	Weekly (in-class)	15%
Idea (individual proposal): Students will present the proposal for a short video project. It will summarize what the project is about (theme, character/s and objectives). 750 words. Material (photos, video, archive material, storyboards etc.) illustrating the proposal will be welcomed. Instructions will be explained in class and posted on OWL.	Week 03 (Sep 24)	15%
Project Development (in groups): Throughout the last weeks of the course, students will work in teams of three people. Each group will select one of the individual proposals to develop. The members of the group will work collaboratively on the production of the project. Individual reports will be required to grade each member’s contribution. Marks may be different, depending on the involvement and work of each student. Instructions will be explained in class and posted on OWL.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production Plan - First Version (for revision and feedback) 	Week 06 (Oct 15)	5%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production Plan - Final Version 	Week 07 (Oct 22)	20%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rushes + First Report (for revision and feedback) 	Week 09 (Nov 05)	5%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Class Editing Tutorial – edited version 1.0 (for revision and feedback) 	Week 10 (Nov 12)	5%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Class Editing Tutorial – edited version 2.0 (for revision and feedback) 	Week 11 (Nov 19)	5%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final Version + Final Report (for revision and feedback) The final submission should also include: Releases (consent forms): interviews, locations, music, still images and footage. Report of learning outcomes (individual)	Week 12 (Nov 26)	30%
TOTAL		100%

(*) Attendance and Participation:

Students are expected to:

- Participate in discussions based on each week's lectures, readings and screenings.
- Actively engage in weekly individual and group activities, all of which will be exercises designed for the application of the basic principles of media production.

Attendance will be taken in every session. Please do not forget to sign the attendance sheet at the end of each session.

Please arrive on time to all sessions. Lateness and/or early departure will adversely affect your participation grade.

Screenings are mandatory, even if you have seen the material before or recently.

If you are absent from one session, or an assignment is late due to illness or other legitimate reasons, please contact the instructor as soon as possible and forward supporting documentation to your Faculty.

For more information on Academic Accommodation, please see **Notes from the Dean's Office of the Faculty of Information and Media Studies** at the end of this document.

Reading and Viewing Materials:

The required readings are extracted from textbooks that were conceived as media (video and film) production guides. They reflect different approaches to the production process. Students are encouraged to read other chapters from these guides, depending on their interests and the characteristics of their individual projects.

Additionally, students will be provided with a list of viewing suggestions; they are encouraged to watch the material included in this list to 'train their eye'.

All Western students have free, unlimited access to Kanopy, a streaming service that provides access to more than 26.000 titles: <https://uwo.kanopystreaming.com>

Equipment Access:

Policies and Procedures for the use of technical equipment will be posted on OWL

Bring Your Own Software:

This course requires the use Adobe Premiere and Adobe Media Encoder software. As part of the required materials, you are expected to purchase a subscription to **Adobe Creative Cloud from Adobe**. The student rate is \$19.99 US per month with a 50% penalty for cancellation. You will be able to access your Adobe Creative Cloud account not only on the Mac computers in FNB 2070, the new lab in FNB (replacing the IMC in NCB), but also on any other computer or device you use to do work on.

The use of a **Bring Your Own Software** model for Adobe Creative Cloud means that as a student using these applications you will be working on industry standard software, and will be easily able to move your projects between devices. Students are expected to pay for their subscription, as you would for any other materials, such as textbooks, lab books, or software, required for courses taught at Western.

Lynda.com:

Lynda.com offers on-demand courses to help you build professional skills across a vast range of job functions, including creative and technical aspects of the media production process. All Western students have free, unlimited access to this resource. For more information: <https://lynda.uwo.ca/>

The instructor will share links to some Lynda.com video-tutorials. Students are also encouraged to explore this resource on their own time for skill development.

Submission of assignments

All written assignments have to be submitted both through OWL and in print to the instructor. If you fail to submit your essay in either one format or the other by the due date and time, it will be considered a late submission and it will be marked accordingly. The assignment you submit through OWL and the one that you hand in have to be identical. Students have to keep a copy of every assignment they hand in.

Instructions will be provided and posted on OWL for the submission (upload) of photo and video assignments.

Penalty for late assignments:

There will be a 5 points penalty for each day the assignments are late.

Weekends and holidays do not count in this late assignment penalty policy.

Assignments won't be accepted after the assignment grades are published.

Use of Electronic Devices:

Laptops, tablets, phones and other electronic devices are not allowed during lectures and screenings. These devices not only distract you, but can also distract your instructor and classmates.

Research indicates that active, focused listening and taking notes by hand facilitates better learning and retention:

Mueller, Pam A. and Daniel M. Oppenheimer. "The Pen is Mightier than the Keyboard: Advantages of Longhand Over Laptop Note Taking." *Psychological Science* 25, no. 6 (2014): 1159-1168.

<https://doi-org.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/10.1177/0956797614524581>

<https://www.npr.org/2016/04/17/474525392/attention-students-put-your-laptops-away>

Copyright and Right to Privacy:

Any recording (photo, video or audio) produced in the classroom is not to be shared privately or publicly, in any media. The instructor and your classmates own the rights on their respective name, voice and likeness.

No material produced in the context of this course is to be shared without the written consent of all the people involved in its production (on and off camera).

For all video assignments, you need to obtain releases (written consent forms) for the use of any interviews, locations, music, still images and footage. Forms and templates will be provided.

Emails and OWL:

Announcements, detailed assignments instructions when needed, links and references of interest will be emailed. Please check your UWO email regularly.

Please use your UWO e-mail account when sending messages to the instructor.

Generally, e-mails will be responded within 24-48 hours during weekdays and regular work hours. You should not expect replies overnight or during holidays and weekends.

E-mails will not be used to explain and discuss class concepts or to provide detailed advice on assignments. Please see your instructor during office hours or request a meeting if you need some assistance.

Grades will not be communicated or discussed via email.

NOTES FROM THE FIMS DEAN'S OFFICE

Fall 2018

Rights and Responsibilities

The conditions governing a student's ability to pursue their undergraduate education at Western are ratified by Senate and can be found on the Academic Policies section of the University Secretariat:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic_policies/rights_responsibilities.html

Statement on Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Plagiarism

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software Turnitin under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system.

Accommodation Policies

Students with disabilities work with Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_disabilities.pdf

Medical Consideration

Students seeking academic consideration on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth **10% or more of their final grade** must apply to the Academic Counselling

office of their home Faculty and provide documentation in the form of a [Student Medical Certificate](#). It will be the Dean's Office that will determine if consideration is warranted.

For work worth **less than 10% of the final grade**, the instructor will consider requests for academic consideration on medical grounds made in a timely manner in writing or by appointment in office hours. Such requests need not be accompanied by documentation. The instructor may decide to require documentation be submitted to the appropriate Academic Counselling office.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. **All documentation must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's home Faculty.**

For Western University policy on consideration for medical illness, see: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_illness.pdf and for the Student Medical Certificate (SMC), see:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

Compassionate Accommodation

Academic accommodation (extensions, makeup tests and exams, additional assignments etc.) may be given to students on compassionate grounds. The situations for which compassionate accommodation can be given must be serious, including significant events such as death in the immediate family, trauma (fire, robbery, harassment, muggings, car accidents, etc.) or emergency situations. Documentation is required.

If a member of your immediate family is seriously ill, obtain a medical certificate from the family member's physician and submit the documentation to your Academic Counsellor. If you have been involved in a severe accident, fire or some other exceptional crisis, obtain a copy of the police report or be prepared to provide the necessary documentation upon request. Generally, for deaths within a student's immediate family (parents, guardians, caregivers, siblings, spouses), bereavement leave is granted, upon provision of documentation. For deaths within a student's extended family, academic accommodation is given for one to three days, upon provision of documentation. Students seeking additional bereavement leave should contact their Academic Counsellors with valid documentation.

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Academic Calendar](#).

FIMS Undergraduate Grading Policy

The MIT, MPI and MTP programs now have the following class average policy:

- Normally, first year courses required for entry into an MIT or MPI module (MIT 1020E and MIT 1025F/G) are expected to have a course average between 68-72%.
- Normally, second year required courses (MIT 2000, 2100, 2200, 2500) are expected to have a course average between 70 and 75%.
- Normally, third year required courses (MIT 3000, 3100) are expected to have a course average between 72 and 77%.

Elective courses and 4th year seminars have no recommended course averages.

Support Services

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

<http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/>

SUPPORT SERVICES – LINKS

Office of the Registrar:

www.registrar.uwo.ca

Student Development Centre:

www.sdc.uwo.ca

Psychological Services:

www.sdc.uwo.ca/psych

Services for Students with Disabilities:

www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd

Accessibility Information:

www.accessibility.uwo.ca/

Writing Support Centre:

www.sdc.uwo.ca/writing

Learning Skills Services:

www.sdc.uwo.ca/learning

Indigenous Services:

<http://indigenous.uwo.ca/>

International and Exchange Student Centre: www.sdc.uwo.ca/int

Career Centre at Western:

www.success.uwo.ca/careers/

Appendix A: Suggested Grade Ranges in MIT, MPI and MTP

Guidelines to the MIT Grade Range

These guidelines are benchmarks, and are not to be followed as rigid regulations. They will be adjusted as appropriate to take into account the level of the course and any specific instructions given by a professor. As well, competency in English language usage (including spelling and grammar) may be taken into account in the assignment of grades by individual instructors. Note that the 70-79 grade range is broken into two divisions, as this is the grade range into which a large number of students fall.

90-100 (Outstanding, A+)

The report shows sparkling originality and exhibits a high degree of critical analysis of the topic. Sophisticated synthesis and analysis of the theoretical and conceptual dimensions of the topic are demonstrated. Mastery of complex material and ideas is immediately evident. The topic is treated with sensitivity and subtlety of thought. The quality of the writing and background research is exemplary.

80-89 (Excellent, A)

The report shows originality and exhibits a high degree of critical analysis of the topic; it gets to the heart of the matter with comments and/or questions. It is clearly focused and logically organized. The quality of writing makes the report immediately understandable. Mastery of complex material and ideas is demonstrated. The report is of appropriate length, while preserving the priorities and emphasis of the material, so that the result is meaningful, not simplistic.

75-79 (Very Good, B+)

The report shows above average analysis, critical thinking and independent thought. Claims are supported by ample evidence and the components of the topic are well-researched and presented. The topic is addressed in reasonable depth and/or breadth and covers material appropriate to the course. The analysis is organized around focal points and the argument is easily followed. The report demonstrates an above average ability to write in an intelligible style and to condense material meaningfully and with a concern for priorities of that material.

70-74 (Good, B)

The report shows an attempt at analysis and critical thinking. Claims are supported by reasonable evidence. The topic is addressed in some depth and/or breadth, with references to the appropriate literature and course material. The analysis is organized around focal points. The report is generally well written and well argued.

60-69 (Competent, C)

The report demonstrates adequate comprehension of the topic. The report is on topic and is a reasonable summary of material covered in the course, but goes no further. Facts are stated accurately; the quality of writing is sufficiently intelligible with enough elaboration and enough connections made between ideas to permit a reader to understand the point of the report.

50-59 (Marginal, D)

The report shows less than adequate comprehension of the topic and of the material covered by the course. The report is a less than adequate summary of sources and/or is considerably off-topic. Facts are stated inaccurately or ambiguously; the writing style is difficult to follow; there is insufficient elaboration to permit reader's comprehension of relations among ideas; little judgment is shown in selecting detail for inclusion in the report.

Below 50 (Unacceptable, F)

The report demonstrates a failure to comprehend the topic. The material is disorganized and unintelligible. The report clearly does not meet the minimal requirements of the assignment.

Appendix B: Guidelines of Academic Appeals for FIMS Students

Grounds for Appeal:

The Faculty of Information and Media Studies does not view the appeals process as an opportunity for students to solicit a second opinion on a grade assigned to a particular piece of work. Appeals must pertain to the final grade in a course, and will only be entertained if sufficient grounds for appeal can be met, including: medical or compassionate circumstances, a defect in the evaluation process, bias, inaccuracy or unfairness.

Stages in the Appeals Process:

The first stage of the process is a discussion of the disputed grade with the appropriate Teaching Assistant (if applicable), and subsequently, the course Instructor. For grades assigned to individual assignments, essays, lab reports, projects and tests completed throughout the term, the student first must appeal to the Teaching Assistant or Instructor of the course, within three weeks of the date on which the Instructor or Teaching Assistant returned the assignments to the class. The Appeals Committee will not hear any further appeals about the final grade in any course unless this first step has been taken.

If completion of the first stage has not resolved the matter, the student may appeal the final grade in the course to the FIMS Appeals Committee. Appeals of final grades must be **within the time frame indicated in the Undergraduate Calendar**. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the appeal is submitted within the deadline. The student shall submit a formal letter to the FIMS Appeals Committee outlining the grounds for the appeal, the remedy sought and relevant materials including the information about when and with whom (Teaching Assistant and/or Instructor) the student met, as described in Stage 1. If the appeal involves a request for work to be regraded, the original marked work and a clean copy (if possible) must be included. If the appeal is commenced once the deadline has passed, it will not be considered either by the Appeals Committee or by the Associate Dean.

The FIMS Appeals Committee has the discretion to determine whether the grounds for appeal have been met.

If the Committee deems that the reasons for the appeal are not legitimate, the Associate Dean will be informed. The appeal will be terminated and the student will be informed.

If the Committee decides that the grounds for appeal have been met, the following steps will be taken:

1. the course Instructor will be shown the appeal letter and offered an opportunity to make a written response;
2. if work is to be regraded, a reader will be appointed who is competent in the area in question and was not involved in the assignment of the original mark. The reader will consider the work in question and will arrive at an independent evaluation. If there is a large discrepancy between the original mark and the regraded mark, a second reader may be appointed by the Committee. **If the appointed reader(s) arrive at a grade within five marks of the original, the original grade will stand.**

The FIMS Appeals Committee will review the evidence and will make a recommendation on the case to the Associate Dean Undergraduate.

The Associate Dean Undergraduate will consider the recommendation from the Appeals Committee, and will make a decision. The student and the instructor will be notified promptly and in writing by the Associate Dean of the decision and of the change in grade, if any. Within the Faculty of Information and Media Studies, the Associate Dean's decision on the matter is final.

Further appeals are possible under certain circumstances to the Senate Review Board Academic (for Undergraduate students) or to the Faculty of Graduate Studies (for Graduate students) but the student should carefully consult the guidelines regarding such Appeals.