

Digital Motion Picture ENG Post-Production

COMM 3680 SYLLABUS

Fall Semester 2006
FAC 164
7:30 AM – 8:45 AM
Office Hours: By Appointment

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Text: Nonlinear Editing: Storytelling, Aesthetics, & Craft, by Bryce Button.

Course Description

This course is designed to develop theory and develop skills in post-production. It is the culmination of COMM 3560 and 3660 in completing the study of the production process in both motion picture and news production. Majors examine editing protocols including line producing, footage and logging reports, digitizing, editing methodology and approaches, Foley and post audio production. Skills developed specific to this course include non-linear editing on Final Cut Pro, post management, shot logging, editing aesthetics and developing transitions.

Prerequisites: COMM 3650 and COMM 3660. 4 lecture hours per week.

Required Skills

Literacy skills beyond the high school level will be expected for all reading and writing assignments. If you feel your skills fall short in reading and writing, please talk to me.

Policies

Final Assessment Every course in Arts, Letters, and Sciences will include a final exam. The final for this class will be Tuesday, December 12th, at 7:00 am.

Class attendance goes without question. Your career in this field begins here. Show up.

Indemnity Agreement Please complete and return the form on the last page of this syllabus.

Assignments are due the date indicated in this syllabus. Late work is not accepted. Plagiarism or the repurposing of previous work will not be tolerated. Any written work containing typos and grammatical errors will not be accepted. Please proof your work. Using "Spell Check" is not proofing your work. Use resources such as a dictionary, the DSC Writing Lab and the DSC OWL (Online Writing Lab). This website includes APA and MLA guides for writing, formatting and editing research papers.

Cell phones While cell phones and pagers are handy little devices they have no place in the classroom, therefore please turn them off during class.

Disability - If you are a student with a medical, psychological, or learning disability or think you might have a disability and would like accommodations, contact the Disability Resource Center (652-7516) in the Student Services Center. The Disability Resource Center will determine eligibility of the student requesting special services and determine the appropriate accommodations related to their disability.

Course Objectives

Through regular attendance and active participation you will be able to:

- Understand the historical evolution of editing theory,
- Develop a knowledge of various Non-Linear Editing Systems and the tools required to effectively perform post-production,
- Understand the process of post-production,
- Identify camera angles and movement in predicting the flow within each scene,
- Recognize the editor's role as a storyteller,
- Identify problems within plot and character,
- Understand how to use transitions to establish pace and rhythm,
- Understand the meaning of color and visual design,
- Recognize the key elements of composition,

- Develop a knowledge of sound as a character,
- Recognize how to work with clients,
- Progress to subsequent offerings in the Communications in New Media program.

Digital Motion Picture Post-Production

Assignments

There are eight assignments and two assessments upon which your achievement in this course will be evaluated. The assignments are designed to deepen your knowledge in digital motion picture post-production through both research and hands on application of the skills that you have learned in class. There are two research activities and six assignments for this course.

NLE System Research Paper

This research project is designed to help you become familiar with the various non-linear editing systems that are available today. You will be required to identify at least three different NLE systems that are available in today's marketplace. List the key features as well as the pros and cons for each system. Finally, in conclusion indicate which system you would choose and why. There is no prescribed length for the paper.

Predicting Flow

This assignment involves an intense analysis of a series of still photographs. You will be required to find four photographic images from any magazine of your choice. These images should be strong in a sense of a moment arrested and should contain human interaction. You will then answer a series of questions as you analysis each photograph. The questions that you will answer will be given to you on the day the assignment is issued.

Visual Story of Your Life

Using nine key images of your choice, I want you to tell me the story of your life, where you have been, where you are, and where you'd like to head. I want you to look for images that are more evocative than necessarily literal; we're using images as metaphors or similes. You can think of this as a basic three-act structure. The images can come from you own photographs, magazine images, or a combination of the two. With the images in hand, create a collage of images. Restrict yourself to three main images per page. You are free to add text as you feel appropriate, however don't use too much.

Scene Breakdown

For this exercise you will be breaking down a series of scenes from the COMM 1700 production, *Number5*. Based on what we have learned it class I want you to identify key moments that you would expect to build up to and away from in each scene. I would also like you to make a list of what shot choices you would like to see arrive in the edit bay to build around these key moments. Make secondary notes that indicate the sense of pace an rhythm you would like to employ in building these scenes. Lastly, identify the elements that would be necessary to justify an edit from one shot to another.

Transition Types

The first step for this assignment is simple, choose a scene from any film that you enjoy. Now watch the scene and make a simple list indicating which edits worked best for you. Next, view the scene a second time, but this time make a list of each edit, shot by shot, with a brief description of each. Finally, view the scene a third time; make notes between each shot identifying the element and then the transition type. Place a star next the edits that you feel best combine a variety of transition types. Now refer back to the notes from your first viewing and see if your stars from the third viewing match your notes from the first.

Art Museum

For this exercise you will need to take a trip to the St. George Art Museum. You will be required to choose three different paintings within the museum and answer a set of questions for each. These questions will help to illustrate the following points learned during our study of Color and Composition: Central Point of Interest, Shading and Size, Lighting, Color, and Core Shapes. Your answers should be typed and handed into me on the date indicated on the syllabus.

Dynamic Sound

You will first choose a 10-minute segment from any film of your choice. Your choice in segments should not be based so much on your visual senses, rather pay closer attention to what you are

hearing. You will then be required to answer a series of questions as you make a close analysis of the dialog, music, and soundfx that are used throughout the segment. Once again, these questions will be given to you on the day that the assignment is issued.

Interview With an Editor

For this research project, I want you to choose your favorite editor and write a paper about him or her. Tell me who they are, where they came from, what they have accomplished, and what they had to do to get to where they are today. I would also like you to make an analysis of some of their work. What techniques do they use that you particularly like and why do you like those techniques? There is no prescribed length for the paper.

Assessments

All assessments are designed to give me an idea of how you're doing in understanding and applying the objectives of this course, and how I'm doing in teaching them. Assessments may be a combination of multiple choice, true/false fill-in-the-blank, and short answer. You will be accountable for and assessed on principles discussed in class and in the book.

Grading Philosophy

Grades will represent the following criteria:

A – The student surpasses the requirements of the research and hands on activities, reaches above 90% on assessment rubrics, executes original critical thinking in non-linear digital editing contexts, demonstrates achievement of the objectives evidenced in written and oral communication as well as practical application, and asks good questions and engages others, including the instructor.

B – The student meets the requirements of the research and hands on activities, reaches above 90% on assessment rubrics, executes original critical thinking in non-linear digital editing contexts, demonstrates achievement of the objectives evidenced in written and oral communication as well as practical application, and asks good questions and engages others, including the instructor.

C – The student meets most of the requirements of the research and hands on activities and reaches above 70% on assessment rubrics, demonstrates identification of the objectives evidenced in written and oral communication as well as practical application, and asks good questions and engages others, including the instructor.

D – The student meets less than half of the requirements of the research and hands on activities, only reaches above 60% on assessment rubrics, and acknowledges the objectives evidenced in written and oral communication as well as practical application.

F – The student's apathy outweighed achievement.

Points Breakdown

Keep track of your scores and grade using the matrix below:

Item	Points	Your Score
NLE: System Research Paper	125	_____
Predicting Flow	75	_____
Visual Story of Your Life	75	_____
Scene Breakdown	75	_____
Midterm Assessment	150	_____
Transition Types	75	_____

Art Museum	75	_____
Dynamic Sound	75	_____
Interview with an Editor Research Paper	125	_____
Final Assessment	150	_____

Points Possible 1000

Grading Breakdown

900 - 1000 = A range

800 - 899 = B range

700 - 799 = C range

600 - 699 = D range

Below 599 = F

Cut off for minus to straight grade = 35

Cut off for plus to straight grade = 65

Digital Motion Picture Post-Production

Schedule

Date	Discussion	Reading	Assignments
22-Aug	<i>Orientation</i>		
24-Aug	<i>Historical Evolution of Editing Theory</i>		
29-Aug	<i>Gathering the Editor's Tools - Part 1: "You"</i>	1	
31-Aug	<i>Gathering the Editor's Tools - Part 2: "The Stuff"</i>		
5-Sept	<i>Planning the Process</i>	2	
7-Sept	<i>First Rough Cut</i>		
12-Sept	<i>Script as Architecture</i>	3	<u>NLE System Paper Due</u>
14-Sept	<i>Camera Angles and Movement</i>		
19-Sept	<i>Reading the Light / Reading the Actor</i>		
21-Sept	<i>Stories and Their Purpose</i>	4	
26-Sept	<i>The Editor's Role as Storyteller</i>		<u>Predicting Flow Assignment Due</u>
28-Sept	<i>Problems of Plot</i>	5	
3-Oct	<i>Problems of Character</i>		
5-Oct	<i>End-desired Structure</i>	6	<u>Visual Story of Your Life Due</u>
10-Oct	<i>Midterm Assessment</i>		
12-Oct	<i>Semester Break – No Class</i>		
17-Oct	<i>Six Elements of an Edit</i>		
19-Oct	<i>Meaning of color and Visual Design</i>	7	<u>Scene Breakdown Due</u>
24-Oct	<i>Rule of Thirds, Depth and Position</i>		
26-Oct	<i>Compositing and the Editor</i>	8	
31-Oct	<i>Editing in the Vertical Plane</i>		<u>Transition Types Assignment Due</u>
2-Nov	<i>Weight and Meaning</i>		
7-Nov	<i>Sound as Character</i>	9	
9-Nov	<i>Preparing for the Composer</i>		<u>Art Museum Assignment Due</u>
14-Nov	<i>Career Day – No Class</i>		
16-Nov	<i>How Do I Break In</i>	10	
21-Nov	<i>Who Actually Hires</i>		
23-Nov	<i>Thanksgiving Break – No Class</i>		
28-Nov	<i>Clients and Chaos</i>	11	<u>Dynamic Sound Assignment Due</u>
30-Nov	<i>Educating and Maintaining Yourself</i>		
5-Dec	<i>The Path of the Craft</i>	12	
7-Dec	<i>Review for Final</i>		<u>Interview With an Editor Paper Due</u>
12-Dec	<i>Final Assessment - 7:00</i>		

Dixie State College Digital Motion Picture Production

Indemnity Agreement

I, _____, the undersigned, in consideration of DIXIE STATE COLLEGE, a member of the Utah Colleges and Universities Division of Higher Education, with principal office at St. George, Utah, allowing me to participate in Dixie State College's Communication 3680 class, do freely and voluntarily agree to release, save, hold harmless, and indemnify said college from any and all claims of loss, injury or damage, suit, action, demand, fine, judgment or decree and any expense thereof, including a reasonable attorney's fee that may happen or occur to me as a result of or consequence of my having attended and/or participated in and production of Dixie State College's Communication in New Media Program, whether the same be caused by the negligence of the College or of its officers, agents, employees or otherwise.

DATED this _____ day of _____, 20__.

Participants Signature

Signed in the presence of:
