Advanced Television Production  
Spring 2014

Southern Illinois University - Carbondale 
Radio, Television, and Digital Media 465

Mondays 3-6 p.m. 
Class location: Communications 1046

Professor:  Wago Kreider  wkreider@siu.edu
Office: Communications 2226
Office Hours: Mondays 12-3 pm  Wednesdays 2-5 pm

Introduction

This course is designed to provide students who are focused on video production an opportunity to refine their technical and conceptual skills through the creation of advanced level projects. It is primarily a hands-on course, concentrating on the production and critical discussion of short format videos in documentary, narrative, or experimental forms. The course will emphasize producing, directing, and editing skills, and the effective use of camerawork and sound design. Workshops on these topics will be supplemented by readings and in-class discussion on issues that are significant for contemporary media art practice. Screenings will survey a range of traditional and alternative approaches to media production.

We will explore the relationship of video to other forms of contemporary culture, including history, politics, performance, fiction, ethnography and visual art. In class, we will look at a range of video productions, including but not limited to: recent digital fiction, social activist documentary, new ethnography, video diaries, contemporary video art and experimental film. Students are expected to work independently and collaboratively on their video projects, to present work in progress to the class, and to actively participate in screening and workshop discussions.

What to Expect

The goal of this course is to get you to think critically about video as a distinct medium with a unique aesthetic. Class time will be spent screening and discussing work, participating in technology workshops, and developing your critical skills. I will also encourage you to begin thinking about how/where you identify your own interests and practices as a video maker in relationship to the multiple strategies of video production adopted by a range of contemporary media artists and television producers.

My role will be that of a facilitator, one who will focus discussions, ask questions and summarize. I will offer a critical response to your work in class. I will also introduce you to the technology and resources required to complete the assignments. Finally, I will provide additional information on media festival deadlines and other screening, funding or job opportunities as they arise.
What You Will Be Doing

For the production component of this class, you will produce three short videos during the first part of the semester. The remainder of the semester will be devoted to revising and expanding on one of your earlier pieces. This will give you an opportunity to fully develop and perfect a project that you will be proud to include in your portfolio.

To supplement the production component, there will be assigned readings, written assignments, and quizzes.

All students will also make a 15-20 minute presentation on an assigned reading. These readings will include critical essays on visual culture, and how we use images to express ourselves. This exercise will strengthen our critical vocabulary, and introduce us to the key theories and concepts of visual analysis. You should be prepared to engage the class by coming up with relevant questions to spark discussions, and well as talking about your own media-making practices in relation to the issues examined in the readings.

How You Will Be Graded

Participation/discussion during class activities – 10%
Quizzes and written assignments – 10%
Three Short Videos - 45%
Final Video – 25%
In-Class Presentation – 10%

Grading Criteria for Video Projects:

1. Incorporation of information / concepts learned in class
2. Willingness to explore an idea, open it up, and look at it from different angles
3. Participation in and responsiveness to critiques: willingness to rework and improve your projects
4. Self-motivation and direction
5. Conceptual, technical and emotional progress
6. Extent to which your projects are challenging, passionate, interesting
7. Craftsmanship: control of exposure, focus, image stability, editing, composition and sound quality
8. How well the criteria of the assignments are met

Materials Needed:

Compact Flash Memory Cards or MiniDV videotapes
Headphones (to use when editing)
External Hard Drive

This must be formatted for the Mac operating system, and have a Firewire (400 or 800) connection. The RT Department recommends a 160GB drive or higher—preferably higher. The hard drive is a necessary academic expense, so it can be purchased with financial aid funds.
The Policies

Attendance & Participation
Your attendance and preparedness are essential! In-class critiques and discussions depend on the input of the entire class, so missing a screening/discussion day will lower your grade. And because video making is often a collaborative enterprise, you are also expected to "crew" on each other's production exercises and final projects.

You are expected to attend all classes. However, you can miss up to two classes without penalty. If you miss more than two classes, your final grade will automatically be lowered a full letter grade per additional class missed. Additionally, you will be marked "late" if you are not in the classroom five minutes after class begins. Two "lates" equal one absence. Leaving during class and/or leaving class early will be considered equivalent to being late.

Deadlines
Deadlines are critical in our field. All assignments are due by the beginning of class on the specified due dates. Any work received after the deadline will be considered late and the grade will be reduced one letter grade per day. In the event of illness or injury, contact the instructor. This initial notice must be followed up with a written notice documenting the reason for absence (e.g. with a doctor's signature).

Freedom of Expression
In this class, you are free to express whatever you like, both in the content of your work, and in class discussions. Of course, since everyone else is free to express their opinions as well, be prepared for disagreement, and be prepared to defend your ideas, work, etc. If a video screened in class shocks or offends you, and you feel you must leave the classroom, please let me know. Do not simply leave the class without returning, as this will be counted as an absence. Be prepared to share your response as a part of class discussions.

Accommodating Students with Disabilities
If you think you need an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Some aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and the way the course is usually taught may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make me aware of your needs, we can work with Disability Support Services to help us determine appropriate academic accommodations. Disability Support Services (618-453-5738; http://disabilityservices.siu.edu/) typically recommends accommodations through a small card they prepare for the student and the student gives to their faculty. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

Academic Integrity
Students are expected to do their own work and to conform to SIUC's standards for academic integrity. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating will be prosecuted under the Student Conduct Code. For more information, ask the instructor or read the Student Conduct Code published online: http://srr.siu.edu/student_conduct_code/index.html
Building Emergency Response Protocols

University’s Emergency Procedure Clause:

Southern Illinois University Carbondale is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. Because some health and safety circumstances are beyond our control, we ask that you become familiar with the SIUC Emergency Response Plan and Building Emergency Response Team (BERT) program. Emergency response information is available on posters in buildings on campus, available on BERT’s website at www.bert.siu.edu, Department of Public Safety’s website www.dps.siu.edu (disaster drop down) and in the Emergency Response Guideline pamphlet. Know how to respond to each type of emergency.

Instructors will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting your location. **It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during an evacuation or sheltering emergency.** The Building Emergency Response Team will provide assistance to your instructor in evacuating the building or sheltering within the facility.

**Students With a Disability:**

Instructors and students in the class will work together as a team to assist students with a disability safely out of the building. Students with a disability will stay with the instructor and communicate with the instructor what is the safest way to assist them.

**Tornado:**

During the spring semester we have a **Storm Drill**.

Pick up your belongings and your instructor will lead you to a safe area of the basement. No one will be allowed to stay upstairs. Stay away from windows. The drill should not last more than 10 minutes. You must stay with your instructor so he/she can take roll. Students need to **be quiet in the basement** as the BERT members are listening to emergency instructions on handheld radios and cannot hear well in the basement.

**Fire:**

During the fall semester we have a **Fire Drill**.

Pick up your belongings and your instructor will lead you to either the North or South parking lot depending on what part of the building your class is in. You must stay with your instructor so he/she can take roll. As soon as the building is all clear, you will be allowed to return to class.

**These drills are to train instructors and the Building Emergency Response Team to get everyone to a safe place during an emergency.**
Bomb Threat:

If someone calls in a bomb threat, class will be suspended and students will be asked to pick up their belongings, evacuate the building and leave the premises. Do not leave anything that is yours behind. We will not allow anyone back into the building until the police and bomb squad give us an all clear. **DO NOT USE YOUR CELL PHONES.** Some bombs are triggered by a cell phone signal.

Shooter in the Building:

If it is safe to leave, move to a safe area far from the building away from where the shooter is located. If anyone has any information about the shooter, please contact the police after they have gone someplace safe.

If it is not safe to leave, go into a room, lock the door and turn out the lights. Everyone should spread out and not huddle together as a group. Don't stand in front of the door or in line of fire with the door. Students' chair and desks should be piled in front of the glass and door as a barricade and the teacher's desk, podium and anything movable can be pushed against the door. This is intended to slow down any attempts to enter the classroom. If it looks like the shooter is persistent and able to enter, make a lot of noise and have the students use everything in their backpacks to throw at the shooter to distract him.

Silence all cell phones after one person in the room calls the police and informs them of their location and how many people are in the room. **Be quiet and wait for the police to arrive.** The police are looking for one or more shooters, and they have no way of knowing if the shooter is in the room people are hiding in. For this reason, when the police enter the room, no one should have anything in his/her hands and each person MUST raise his/her hands above his/her head.

Earthquake:

In the event of an earthquake, you are advised to take cover quickly under heavy furniture or crouch near an interior wall or corner and cover your head to avoid falling debris. Outside the building are trees and power lines and debris from the building itself that you will need to stay away from. In the building, large open areas like auditoriums are the most dangerous. Do not try to escape on a stairway or elevator. Do not hide under a stairway. We do not recommend that you stand in a doorway because the door could shut from the vibrations and crush your fingers trapping you there.

Women's Self Defense Classes are offered to female students faculty and staff by the Department of SIU Public Safety. For more information, contact Officer Russell Thomas russellt@dps.siu.edu.
**Advanced TV Production Course Schedule**

Week 1  
January 13

Introduction to course requirements and procedures  
Overview of syllabus and course schedule  
Student and instructor introductions  
1st short video project assigned

LABOR DAY HOLIDAY  
January 20

Week 2  
January 27

Sony HVR-Z7U camcorder demonstration and shooting workshop

Week 3  
February 3

1st video project DUE  
2nd video project assigned  
Student presentations assigned

Week 4  
February 10

Lighting techniques for video production  
Lighting demonstration and workshop

Week 5  
September 17

Testing of Sony HVR-Z7U camcorder operation  
Student presentations #1

Week 6  
September 24

2nd video project DUE  
3rd video project assigned

Week 7  
March 3

Audio techniques for video production  
Audio demonstration and workshop  
Student presentations #2
SPRING BREAK  March 10

Week 8  March 17
Post-production workshop I
Student presentations #3

Week 9  March 24
3rd video project DUE
4th video project assigned

Week 10  March 31
Post-production workshop II
Student presentations #4

Week 11  April 7
Workshop on shooting/editing RAW (Arri Alexa, Red Scarlet, Blackmagic Cinema Camera)
Student presentations #5

Week 12  April 14
4th video project (rough-cut) DUE

Week 13  April 21
Distribution and grant writing workshop
Student presentations #6

Week 14  April 28
4th video project (final-cut) DUE

FINALS WEEK  May 5

FINAL EXAM PERIOD for RT 465 is on Monday, May 5 from 8-10 pm
1st Video Project - Autobiography
Due in class: Monday, February 3

For your first video project, you will work from autobiographical material to create a self-portrait. This can take the form of a personal documentary that re-create an important past event, a fictional narrative that puts your alter ego in conflict, or an experimental dream-space meditation.

Create a 3 to 5 minute video using one of the following topics as a take off point:

1) Self-inventory: Think about an important incident in your life, and recreate it on video. Incorporate on-camera interviews with yourself or use voice-over narration to tell a compelling story about this experience. Show how it affected you emotionally, how it transformed the way you think about yourself, or how it changed your perception of your relationship to others.

2) What if your life took a radical turn, and you took a different path from the one you are currently pursuing? Create an alter ego or fictional persona who represents someone that you can imagine yourself becoming. Situate this “alternate you” in a fictional narrative that includes an antagonist, rising conflict, a climax, and a transforming resolution.

3) Dreams: Start by writing down any dreams that you have had recently that made a strong impression on you, especially ones with emotional content. Based on this material, create an experimental video meditation that captures the emotional resonance of your dream without directly re-telling it in the sequence that you remember it.