

### **Course Description**

Students learn practical and theoretical elements of HD cinematography with an emphasis on lighting and camera technique. Technical topics include camera operation, composition, HD video basics, and camera settings including ISO, aperture, shutter speed, focus, and focal length. Lighting basics include working with both indoor and outdoor lighting, using professional light kits, and lighting accessories (flags, gels, cookies, filters), as well as important information on lighting safety. Practical tests and scenes are shot during class time with an eye towards solving practical problems and learning both cinematography and lighting well enough to design and shoot your own films. Students will have the opportunity to create one short film project and one longer final project during the semester.

### **Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of the course, a student should possess the following abilities and knowledge:

1. Understanding of the role of the cinematographer and the effectiveness of attention to cinematography and lighting design in the creation of a film/video
2. Proficiency in operation of HD cameras; fundamentals of shutter speed, ISO/gain, depth of field, white balancing, color temperature, lens selection
3. Proficiency in use of camera supports – tripods, slider, dollies
4. Fundamentals of lighting theory and basics of lighting design for video production
5. Competence with proper selection and use of light kits, flags, gels, bounce cards and diffusion filters
6. Understanding of crew responsibilities, proper slating, lighting safety, electrical safety
7. Ability to design production situations in terms of framing, lighting, and visual storytelling skills

### **Skill Level**

Students generally come into this class at various skill levels from beginner to having previous classes or experience in video and film production. If you have no experience, this is a good place to get started. If you already have experience, it's a good place to refine your skills. Students should know something about digital editing since these skills will not be covered in class. If you have no digital editing experience, you will learn a lot about production and can go from here to any kind of basic editing – guidance and University resources can be provided.

### **Recommended Texts**

1. *Cinematography Theory and Practice* by Blain Brown, third edition, Focal Press, 2016  
ISBN 978-1138940925, available in Kindle version
2. *Lighting for Cinematography* by David Landau, reprint, Bloomsbury Academic, 2014  
ISBN 978-1628926927, available in Kindle version

### **Materials and Supplies**

Students are expected to purchase at least one SD card for recording their video work. Recommended to use an external drive for storing media files and projects. External drive should be 500GB-1T and should have a default spin rate of at least 7200rpm.

### **Assignments**

Group Project 1 – Documentary sequence/framing & shot types Mar 9

Midterm – written exam, Week 8, Mar 16

Group Project 2 – Narrative sequence/camera movement, actors, lighting 40%

### **Attendance**

Attendance is required for each class period. Repeated lateness counts as absence. More than two absences not due to illness may result in grade reduction.

### **Participation**

Most of our exercises in class will be hands-on and students will have to participate in production and lighting workshops during class time. First priority for the course is to give each student enough experience with the camera and lighting equipment so you can have a practical basis for using these techniques in your own work and in any further film classes you may take, as well as being able to build on these techniques.

### **Grading**

Participation in instruction workshops 10%

Midterm exam 20%

Group Project 1 – Documentary sequence: framing & shot types 30%

Group Project 2 – Narrative sequence: camera movement, actors, lighting 40%

Attendance – more than 2 unexcused absences results in grade reduction

Grading the two production projects takes into account ability to work in crews, originality, ambition of concept, willingness to take chances, and final product.

### **Late Work and Makeup Policy**

If illness prevents a student from completing an assignment on time, the student should notify the Professor as soon as possible that the assignment will be late. Other late papers will be marked down one-half to one full grade.

### **Incompletes**

A grade of “incomplete” may be assigned by an instructor at his/her discretion. If an instructor is inclined to offer an incomplete, then the student has a maximum of 4 weeks after the last day of class to complete and submit to the instructor the outstanding work and/or the work agreed upon by the instructor and student. An incomplete becomes an “Unofficial Withdrawal and Failure” (WF) if the work is not submitted by due date.

## **Class Sessions**

### **Week 1 Jan 26**

Introduction to the cameras

Panasonic AF 100

Panasonic HMC 150

Setting up the tripod

Assignment: bring previous work in film/video to screen in class next week. Format should be .mov, .mp4 or other uploadable file formats or viewable via Vimeo, Youtube, etc.

### **Week 2 Feb 2**

Continue camera and tripod

Fundamentals of framing, shot types, camera movement

### **Week 3 Feb 9**

Screen work students produced previously

Camera settings: frame rate, shutter speed, ISO/gain, white balance

The lens: aperture, f/stop, focal length, depth of field, ND filters

Focusing the lens; using the follow focus

### **Week 4 Feb 16**

Screen work students produced previously

Camera settings: frame rate, shutter speed, ISO/gain, white balance

The lens: aperture, f/stop, focal length, depth of field, ND filters

Focusing the lens; using the follow focus

### **Week 5 Feb 23**

Cinematography: Fundamentals of framing, shot types, camera movement

Class forms 3 groups. Each group will create the first project, a short non-fiction/documentary sequence that will be shot in class on March 2. A shot list will be provided.

### **Week 6 Mar 2**

Lighting: Introduction to studio lighting, basic 3-point/4-point lighting

Lighting safety

Color temperature, lighting theory

Groups meet to discuss their topic, location, subjects, and shots

Groups provide list of equipment needs for next week's shoot

### **Week 7 Mar 9**

Group Project 1 - groups create their non-fiction sequence which we will screen and critique at the end of class

**Week 8 Mar 16**

Film crews – who does what on a film shoot?

The dolly shot - using the spider dolly

Using the doorway dolly; using the slider

Small crew workshop: cinematographer/director, camera, focus puller (1<sup>st</sup> AC), gaffer, grip – class works in 2 groups to design and shoot sequence using dollies

NO CLASS MAR 23 – SPRING BREAK

**Week 9 Mar 30**

**Midterm written exam** covering shot types, camera movement, aperture & f-stop settings, focal length, shutter speed, color temperature, 3-point and 4-point lighting, and anything else we cover in class up to this point

**Week 10 Apr 6**

Return of graded midterms.

Lighting continued: Filters, gels, diffusion materials, cookies, bounce cards and flags

Using kinoflo and other professional lighting systems

**Week 11 April 13**

Shooting outdoors: working in groups, each group works as a small crew and designs and shoots a project using available light out of doors

Screen each group's shoot and discuss process

**Week 12 April 20**

Shooting for editing. Continuity, moving through the scene, working with actors

Practice shooting for continuity and shooting with actors moving through a scene

**Week 13 April 27**

Class forms 2 groups. Each group will create a short narrative sequence that will be shot in class on May 4 with emphasis on film crew positions, lighting actors, and camera movement

Groups meet to discuss their story, location, and shot types

Groups provide list of equipment needs for next week's shoot

**Week 14 May 4**

Group Project 2 - each group formed last week will create a short narrative sequence that will be shot in class today and screened at the end of class.

**Week 15 May 11**

Filmmaking on a budget; DIY lighting techniques

Where to go from here – jobs, internships, and grants for filmmakers

## **Policy, Protocol, and Student Resources**

### **Cell Phones**

Cell phone use during class is prohibited.

### **Academic Honesty and Integrity**

Compromising your academic integrity may lead to serious consequences, including but not limited to one or more of the following: failure of the assignment, failure of the course, academic warning, disciplinary probation, suspension from the university, or dismissal from the university.

The full text of the policy including adjudication procedures is found at <http://www.newschool.edu/leadership/provost/policies>.

Resources regarding what plagiarism is and how to avoid it can be found on the Learning Center's website: <http://www.newschool.edu/learning-center/virtual-handout-drawer>.

### **Instructor Delay**

In rare instances the Professor may be delayed arriving to class. If she has not arrived by the time class is scheduled to start, you must wait a minimum of thirty minutes before leaving. In the event that the instructor will miss class entirely, a sign will be posted on the classroom door if the Professor is unable to notify students before-hand.

### **Resources**

The University provides many resources to help students achieve academic and artistic excellence. These resources include:

- The University (and associated) Libraries: <http://library.newschool.edu>
- The University Learning Center: The University Learning Center provides individual tutoring sessions in writing, ESL, math and economics. Sessions are interactive, with tutor and student participating equally. Appointments can be scheduled on [Starfish](#) or stop by for a walk-in session, available every hour from 10:00am to 7:00pm. The ULC is located on the 6th floor of 66 West 12th Street. For more information, please visit their website: <http://www.newschool.edu/learning-center/>.
- University Disabilities Service: [newschool.edu/student-disability-services/](http://newschool.edu/student-disability-services/) In keeping with the university's policy of providing equal access for students with disabilities, any student with a disability who needs academic accommodations is welcome to meet with me privately. All conversations will be kept confidential. Students requesting any accommodations will also need to contact Student Disability Service (SDS). SDS will conduct an intake and, if appropriate, the Director will provide an academic accommodation notification letter for you to bring to me. At that point, I will review the letter with you and discuss these accommodations in relation to this course.