

APP 030: Introduction to Digital Filmmaking (4 units)
Professor Sean Pratt, Spring 2020

Please note that APP 030 fulfills the Working Artistically requirement in the Common Inquiries section of Westmont's General Education Academic Program.

Tuesday and Thursday 3:15pm – 5:05pm

Class Location: Porter Hall 109

Office hours Monday and Friday 9 – 12 and by appointment

* please note that there is a lab fee of \$150 for editing software and equipment, camera access and upkeep, and memory cards. Students will need access to their own large external hard drive (60 GB or greater) to back up their media work.

Overview

From the earliest moments of human history, people have represented the joys and vicissitudes of human life through creative expression. Though the various arts have many purposes, they have always deepened and enlivened people's understanding of what it means to be human, and offered distinctive insights regarding how people formulate, make sense of, and at times challenge the nature and shape of reality. Westmont believes that the arts are important to a fully rounded educational experience, and that the study of the art of film is a sure way to become more lively, sensitive, and expressive individuals, while becoming conversant in the history, theory, and practice of the field.

This course is an introduction to the art of digital filmmaking. Students will work collaboratively on film production, including conceptual work, storyboarding, storytelling, techniques of pre- and post-production, culminating in the public presentation of their work. In addition to learning the introductory creative and technical components of film production, students will study the use of film for the development of the moral imagination.

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Course Objectives:

- Students will learn how to develop a story from idea to script
- Students will learn the basics of visual story telling
- Students will learn the basics of film production including how to use various cameras, lighting and audio equipment, editing software, etc.
- Students will have the opportunity to consider fiction and nonfiction filmmaking as similar and distinct creative processes

- Students will receive an overview of the state of the local and national film community, including the opportunities available to them as potential interns, freelance filmmakers, and creative professionals
- Students will consider the ethics of nonfiction and fictional filmmaking practices and the use of film in culture to develop the moral imagination

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Vocalize understanding of filmmaking concepts (in class discussion post-readings)
- Demonstrate core knowledge of introductory principles of filmmaking (assignments)
- Apply foundational principles of filmmaking (final project)
- Demonstrate an understanding of the impact of film in culture and the role of the moral imagination in society (in class discussion post-readings)

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Prerequisite: None

Textbooks:

The Filmmaker's Handbook: A Comprehensive Guide for the Digital Age, Steven Ascher and Edward Pincus, Penguin Books.
ISBN-13: 978-0452297289

Produced by Faith: Enjoy Real Success Without Losing Your True Self, Devon Franklin, Simon and Schuster
ISBN-13: 978-1451671964

Evaluation:

Attendance	15%
In-Class Participation	15%
Assignments	20%
Final Project	50%

Schedule

Week 1 (Week of 1/6):

- Introduction to Westmont Film production facilities and equipment
- Overview of the stages of film production (development through distribution)
- **Forms** and styles of filmmaking (narrative, documentary, experimental, commercial)
- Reading Assignment

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Week 2 (Week of 1/13):

- Developing story ideas for screen
- Script writing and creative organization (screenplays, treatments, research, storyboards)

- Reading Assignment
- Due: Story Development Writing Exercise

Week 3 (Week of 1/20) and 4 (Week of 1/27):

- Introduction to visual storytelling and five elements of mise en scène: cinematography, editing, movement, sound, and storytelling
- Reading Assignment
- Due: Visual Story Telling Exercise

Week 5 (Week of 2/3):

- Introduction to digital cinematography (basic camera operation and terminology, exposure and white-balance, focus and depth-of-field, format settings, composition).
- Reading Assignment
- Due: Digital Cinematography Exercise

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Week 6 (Week of 2/10):

- Lighting (types of lights, operation and handling of lights, safety, color temperature, 3-point lighting).
- Reading Assignment
- Due: Lighting Exercise

Week 7 (Week of 2/17):

- Audio recording and dual-system sync-sound production (types of microphones, audio-recorder operation, slates and sync-sound procedures, mic-ing dialogue).
- Reading Assignment
- Due: Sound Exercise

Week 8 (Week of 2/24) and 9 (Week of 3/2):

- Pre-production planning
- Planning and shooting coverage for continuity editing
- Crewing and on-set protocols
- Reading Assignment
- Due: Pre-production for Final Projects

Week 10 (Week of 3/9 – SPRING BREAK):

- NO CLASS

Week 11 (Week of 3/16):

- PRODUCTION OF FINAL PROJECTS

- Directing Actors (Theory, different techniques)
- Reading Assignment

Week 12 (Week of 3/23):

- PRODUCTION OF FINAL PROJECTS
- Introduction to Documentary Filmmaking (history of documentary, different sub-genres, purpose and causes, ethics of documentary)
- Reading Assignment

Week 13 (Week of 3/30):

- **I**ntroduction to editing (software/hardware overview, non-destructive editing, project set-up, footage ingest, sound syncing, file management, media storage)
- Editing (types of edits, track management, creative considerations, basic multi-track sound mixing)
- Reading Assignment

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Week 14 (Week of 4/6):

- Editing and mastering (titles, codecs and export, digital/online distribution and sharing)
- Reading Assignment
- Due: Assembly Edit of Final Project

Week 15 (Week of 4/13):

- Ethics and legal issues surrounding motion picture production
- Professionalism, career development, and landscape of media industry
- Reading Assignment
- Due: Rough Cut for Final Projects

Final (Week of 4/20):

- **I**n-class screening of final projects

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Class participation: I expect you to be fully involved in the various activities, exercises, and discussions we have in class. Tardiness to class will adversely affect your class participation grade.

Attendance: Filmmaking is by its very nature a collaborative endeavor. You need one another for group work and audience support. Attendance is crucial. College Policy allows you two excused absences. For every two absences beyond these, your final overall grade will be lowered by 1/3 (i.e. A- to B+, C to C-).

Phone and Computer Policy: Though computers and phones (and the use of technology) are important and useful, they often limit our ability to be completely present in the here and now in the actual physical space we are in. To encourage true presence, then, the use of phones are prohibited during class. Except in emergencies, those using such devices must leave the classroom for the remainder of the class period. Students are permitted to use computers during class for note taking during lecture days.

Plagiarism Statement: To plagiarize is to present someone else's work—his or her words, line of thought, or organizational structure—as your own. This occurs when sources are not cited properly, or when permission is not obtained from the original author to use his or her work. Another person's "work" can take many forms: printed or electronic copies of computer programs, musical compositions, drawings, paintings, oral presentations, papers, essays, articles or chapters, statistical data, tables or figures, etc. In short, if any information that can be considered the intellectual property of another is used without acknowledging the original source properly, this is plagiarism. Please familiarize yourself with the entire Westmont College Plagiarism Policy. This document defines different levels of plagiarism and the penalties for each. It also contains very helpful information on strategies for avoiding plagiarism. It cannot be overemphasized that plagiarism is an insidious and disruptive form of academic dishonesty. It violates relationships with known classmates and professors, and it violates the legal rights of people you may never meet.

Academic Accommodations: Students who have been diagnosed with a disability (learning, physical/medical, or psychological) are strongly encouraged to contact the Disability Services office as early as possible to discuss appropriate accommodations for this course. Formal accommodations will only be granted for students whose disabilities have been verified by the Disability Services office. These accommodations may be necessary to ensure your full participation and the successful completion of this course. For more information, contact Sheri Noble, Director of Disability Services (565-6186, snoble@westmont.edu) or visit the website http://www.westmont.edu/_offices/disability.