

Video Cinema Arts: Syllabus for School Year 2009-10

The mission of the Video Cinema Arts Department is to educate our students in the art, craft, and technology of film, video, and animation. The program offers intensive hands-on production experience. We nurture individual talent and skills, and encourage students to become creative, and thoughtful practitioners in the world of media.

Nature of VCA

Film is both a powerful communication medium and an art form. The VCA aims to develop students' skills so they become adept in both interpreting and making films.

Through the study of films and exercises in filmmaking and analysis, the film course explores film history, theory and socio-economic background. The course will develop students' critical abilities, enabling them to appreciate the multiplicity of cultural and historical perspectives in film. To achieve an understanding of internationalism within the world of film, students should be taught to consider films, theories and ideas from the points of view of different individuals, nations and cultures. Although complete knowledge is impossible, students should be guided in their search for understanding through experiencing a wide range of different films.

The VCA film courses emphasize the importance of working individually and as a member of a group. Students are encouraged to develop the organizational and technical skills needed to express themselves creatively in film. A challenge for students is to become aware of their own perspectives and biases and learn to respect those of others. This requires willingness to attempt to understand alternative views, to respect and appreciate cultural diversity, and to have an open and critical mind. Thus the VCA can become a way for the student to celebrate the international and intercultural dynamic that inspires and sustains a type of contemporary film, while appreciating specifically local origins that have given rise to cinematic production in many parts of the world.

For any student to create, to present and to study film requires courage, passion and curiosity: courage to create individually and as part of a team, courage to explore ideas through action and harness the imagination, courage to experiment; passion to communicate and to act communally, passion to research and formulate ideas eloquently; curiosity about self and others and the world around one, curiosity about different traditions, techniques and knowledge, curiosity for the past and the future and for the limitless possibilities of human expression through film.

In order to create rigorous course, content will be utilized from the International Baccalaureate Film Course.

Goals and Objectives

- To develop individual talent and skills within a collaborative working environment.
- To provide the highest standard of education and training as well as a broad spectrum of visiting artists.
- To encourage artistic, social, and cultural diversity.
- To offer support for an internship program offering a pre-professional experience.
- To provide venues for the presentation and promotion of student work.
- To support student participation in local and national festivals and opportunities.

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What's Expected?

Students must be willing to learn, be a team player, work well in groups, and show respect for you, your peers, and school equipment. You must be available to help your group shoot projects that take place outside of the school day.

Books

Beginner, Intermediate levels.

Tom Schroepel. The Bare Bones Camera Course for Film and Video.

Advanced level

Rea, Peter W., David K. Irving. Producing and Directing the Short Film and Video. 3rd edition

School Supplies

High School: 2 MiniDV tapes, headphones, pens, paper

Middle School: 1 MiniDV tape, headphones, pens, paper

Assessment objectives

VCA students will be expected to demonstrate:

1. an understanding of the variety of ways in which film creates meaning
2. an understanding and effective use of appropriate film language
3. originality and creativity in developing an idea through the various stages from conception to finished production
4. technical skills and an appropriate use of available technology
5. the ability to draw together their knowledge, skills, research and experience, and apply them analytically to evaluate films
6. a critical understanding of the historical, theoretical, cultural, economic or institutional contexts of film in more than one country
7. the ability to plan and organize working processes
8. the ability to reflect upon and evaluate film production processes and completed films.

Assessment

The grading system is set up in the cafeteria style:

Most assignments are mandatory and some are based on choice. In order to have full participation, all students will select from the list below in order to have the same amount of assignments. All assignments are for developing artistic, academic, technical, and leadership skills for preparing students for college and beyond.

Mandatory Assignments: Movie projects (rotation of director, cinematographer, boom pole operator, lighting grip, continuity director, script writer, video and audio editor, story board artist, location scout, casting director, music composer), movie and peer reviews, journals, scene analysis, reviews after attending film festivals, reports and labs, and class participation.

Operations Assignments: Check-out clerk, shooting and directing performances at DSA, editing performances, mentor, assisting in or creating outside or special projects (sometimes non-profits and individuals contact VCA to have projects completed.) In order that everyone participates in this category each student will have to select a job to complete. Each student has to choose one of these assignments per semester. The grade for this section will be based on the complexity of the project, the time involved and the outcome.

Mandatory Assignments:

1. Project & Class participation/work
 - a. Quality of project through all phases of production, project timely completion, participation in class, enthusiasm
 - b. Labs
 - c. Periodic preparation checks (pencil, notebook)
 - d. Punctuality, dependability
 - e. Attitude, cooperation (c and d equal the “Participation grade”)
2. Written work
 - a. Movie reviews
 - b. Director Reports
 - d. Cinematographer, genre, historical reports
 - e. Project reviews
 - f. Journals
 - g. Shot analysis

Operations Assignments:

1. Operations Assignment possibilities:
 - a. Check-out clerk
 - b. Shooting performances
 - c. Directing performances at DSA
 - d. Editing performances
 - e. Assisting in or creating outside or special projects

3. Final or Mid-Semester Exams

Quarter grades are averaged together in order to create a semester grade.

Grading in IC will be laid out in the following way: Pre-Production, Production, Post-Production, and Professional. The production categories include all mandatory assignments accept reviews. Reviews will be included with the operations assignments in the professional category.

Grading Scale

For Middle School

97-100%	=A+
94-96%	= A
93%	= A-
90-92%	= B+
84-89%	= B
83%	= B-
80-82%	= C+
74-79%	= C
73%	= C-
70-72%	= D+
64-69%	= D
63%	= D-

For High School

93-100%	= A	5.2 – Grade Point
90-92%	= A-	4.77
87-89%	= B+	4.33
83-86%	= B	3.9
80-82%	= B-	3.47
77-79%	= C+	3.0
73-76%	= C	2.6
70-72%	= C-	2.17
60-69%	= D	1.3
0-59%	= F	

*(This grading scale for X classes is set up by the Denver Public Schools)

Equipment Responsibility

Each student will have hands on experience with thousands of dollars worth of cameras and computers.

Students will have the opportunity to checkout and use camera equipment, so long as they treat the equipment with respect.

Projects

Students will write, shoot and edit at least 4 short films this year- 2 per semester.

Intermediate and Advanced High School:

Semester 1

Quarter 1

Week one: Production 101 – Handbook, elections, systems of operation and Checkout. Assign shooting of live performances, LAB intro.

Week two: Focus on pre-production – “Documentary Project”

Week three: Three point lighting and activity/ composition exercise, interview methods = Senior Mentoring

Week four: Doc Script Writing

Week five: On-Location shooting. Assemble production notebook, including shooting schedule / Location scouting

Week six: Scene evaluation/Screenplay /
/ Casting – Seniors contact CASA, Colorado Actors Screen actors Guild

Week seven: On-location shooting

Week eight: On-location shooting / Post Production logging - editing

Week nine: Project Lock and off to DVD – Hand in Complete Production Notebook

Written Assignment for Quarter: 1 screenplay, 1 Movie Review, 1 Doc Script -

Quarter 2

Week one: Music creation Lecture / Construct additions to “Green Screen.” Assign shooting of live performances

Week two: Project 2 Screenplay selection from project 1: Collaboration with Drama Department

Week three: Director Notebook created

Week four: Music Creation activity / Location scouting / Casting

Week five: On-location shooting

Week six: On-location shooting / Post Production logging - editing

Week seven: Final -TV production unit and project with the use of the “Green Screen.” Editing of movies and off to DVD

Week eight: Hand in Complete Production Notebook Peer evaluation

Week nine: Editing, Project Lock and off to DVD / VCA Film Festival

Written Assignment for Quarter: 1 Movie Review,

Final: class project

Semester 2

Quarter 3

Week one: Project 3 “Narrative / Focus on Production

Week two: New character and screenplay / Assign shooting of live performances

Seniors begin Zettl, Herbert . Sight Sound Motion: Applied Media Aesthetics. “Light” and quiz / Continue work on pre-production “Senior Project”

Week three: Prod1 Visualization.ppt – review and addition to pre-production order.
Seniors – chapter 2 “Light” and quiz + presentations / Seniors to Sundance

Week four: Camera Basics Lecture – outline on CFS CD / Re-audition workshop

Week five: Sound Lecture outline on CFC CD / Pre-production / Director’s notebook complete / Re-audition
Senior Service Project: To be announced

Week six: Lighting Lecture outline on CFC CD

Week seven: Production – shooting, logging, reviewing footage
Seniors “Sight Sound Motion: Applied Media Aesthetics.” “Color.” Chapter 3 and quiz

Week eight: Production – shooting, logging, reviewing footage
Seniors “Sight Sound Motion: Applied Media Aesthetics.” “Color” Chapter 4 and quiz

Week nine: Project Lock – to DVD / Peer evaluation

Written Assignment for Quarter: 1 Movie Review - IB Course Review, 1 Shot Analysis, CFS

Quarter 4

Week one: Project 4 Use Screenplays developed during second semester
“Director” assignment and project

Week two: Pitch screenplays for grouping / Assign shooting of live performances / Assign shooting of live performances
Seniors edit films

Week three: Breakdown screenplay /Location scouting /Casting / View scenes to demonstrate “Scene Analysis”
Senior Projects - Project Lock/ Assign Copyright Paper / Copyrights & Legal Issues – “Film School CD” & “Bound By Law Comic.pdf” “Aspen Short Film Festival or Los Angeles trip”

Week four: Production shooting / Postproduction logging and reviewing footage
Video Lock to DVD

Week five: Production shooting / Postproduction logging and reviewing footage “Director” paper due

Week six: Techniques of cutting and pacing, cutaways, jump-cutting, editing /Editing

Week seven: Continue editing. Add music and SFX / Film Festival workshop

Week eight: Project Lock – to DVD / Final / Peer evaluation / Production notebooks due

Week nine: Film Festival

Written Assignment for Quarter: 1 Movie Review - IB Course Review, 1 Shot Analysis, CFS

Final: To be written or a class project

Beginners Middle School

Semester 1

Quarter 1

Week one: Handbook, elections, systems of operation and Checkout, group initiative exercises
Project 1 – Claymation animation video presentation, Two minute animation
Minimum. 8th Grade option Flash animation

Week two: walk cycle / Creation of single figure

Week three: Record stop-motion “Walk Cycle” with IStopmotion software

Week four: Cont. record stop-motion “Walk Cycle” with IStopmotion software / Create scripts and groups

Week five: Create scripts and characters

Week six: Record stop-motion using IStopmotion / Sample claymation videos

Week seven: Record stop-motion using IStopmotion / Sample claymation videos, Edit using Final Cut, Resume presentation

Week eight: Edit using Final Cut, Record Voice-overs, and add music

Week nine: Project lock and compilation DVD created / Peer evaluation / Final exam

Written Assignment for Quarter: 1 Movie Review -

Final: To be written on a class project

Quarter 2

Week one:

Week two: Project 2 / Intro to Final Cut editing software – practical and conceptual, Camera operation, exercises/ Project 2 – “Still Frame Project.”

Week three: Story selection, Grouping for movie-making, Script writing instruction, Group scriptwriting instruction, Timeline instruction

Week four: Planning locations, Casting, Schedule, Shooting on location

Week five: Production – equipment checkout, shoot on location / Post-Production – review footage to make editing list, capture

Week six: Production – equipment checkout, shoot on location / Post-Production – review footage to make editing list, capture

Week seven: Intro to Final Cut editing software DVD presentation, editing

Week eight: Editing, add titles and credits, Video Lock/ Audio instruction, music, Audio Lock, and off to DVD

Week nine: Peer evaluation

Written Assignment for Quarter: 1 Movie Review -

Semester 2

Quarter 3

Week one: Project 3 “Helping Hand” Theme / Story writing

Week two: Story individual conferences, “Resume” due

Week three: Individual script assignment, Re-audition workshop

Week four: Scripts due, Assign “School to Career” project, portfolios due

Week five: Grouping for projects “Re-audition” Timelines created

Week six: Planning locations, Casting, Schedule, Shooting on location

Week seven: Production – equipment checkout, shoot on location Post-Production – Instruct in clip selection, Review footage to create edit list, capture, edit

Week eight: Capture, Edit audio and video,

Week nine: Lock project, off to DVD, Peer evaluation

Written Assignment for Quarter: 1 Movie Review -

Quarter 4

Week one: Project 4 “On Your Own” Story writing, Grouping for projects

Week two: Story individual conferences, “Resume” due

Week three: Individual script assignment, Re-audition workshop

Week four: Scripts due, “History of Film” due project,

Week five: Planning locations, Casting, Schedule, Shooting on location

Week six: Production – equipment checkout, shoot on location Post-Production – Instruct in clip selection, Review footage to create edit list, capture, edit

Week seven: Continue shooting, create music, start editing

Week eight: Capture, Edit audio and video,
Week nine: Lock project, off to DVD, Peer evaluation
Written Assignment for Quarter: 1 Movie Review -
Final: To be written or a class project