EMF 222  
Film/Video Production

COURSE DESCRIPTION  
The application of film/Video production principles through the art and technique of single camera video production, with focus on learning and exploring methods for camera, lens, lighting, composition and editing. Prerequisite: EMF 221.

COURSE OVERVIEW  
This course is designed to provide knowledge about the basic principles and techniques of visual media production. Through lectures, in-class demonstrations, reading assignments and projects, the students will learn to develop and create aesthetically and technically sound media productions.

COURSE OBJECTIVES  
Students in this class will learn and develop basic skills associated with digital video production including:
1. Understand the camera and lens to create and capture images.
2. Understand the technique of location sound recording.
3. Understand the art and technique of basic location lighting.
4. Understand the production process including production roles, pre-production, production and post-production planning.
5. Understand and practice digital video and audio editing.

REQUIRED TEXT  

RECOMMENDED TEXTS  
The Bare Bones Camera Course for Film and Video by Tom Schroeppel (ISBN 0960371818)  
Additional articles and texts handed out in class throughout the semester. 22nd Edition, 1999.

Final Cut Pro 5 for Mac OS X: Visual QuickPro Guide by Lisa Brenneis  

Film Production Technique: Creating the Accomplished Image by Bruce Mamer (Focal Press, 2005)


CLASS POLICIES  
Attendance: Attendance is mandatory. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. Each unexcused absence will lower the final grade by one full letter. More than three unexcused absences will result in a failing grade in the course. A written note from qualified individuals is required for absences resulting from illness, family emergency, etc. The instructor may allow absences in certain situations, but only if the student has talked with the instructor beforehand. Responsibility of making up missed work will
be solely on the student.

Tardiness: You are considered late if you arrive five minutes after the beginning of class without prior consent from instructor. Every minute of class time is valuable. Just as if you were working on a professional set, being late is just not an option. Three late arrivals will result in lowering of final grade by one full letter. More than six late arrivals will result in a failing grade. It is NOT OK to walk in late to class.

Assignments: Students are expected to complete assigned exercises before class on the due dates listed in the syllabus or as announced in class. All assignments must be handed over at the beginning of the class and all tapes must be properly cued.

A note about written assignments: While this class emphasizes visual literacy over writing abilities, there are nonetheless some assignments requiring basic writing skills. All written assignments are to be typed and grammatically correct. Those students who are not native English speakers or those native English speakers not confident in their writing abilities are encouraged to contact one of the on-campus writing resources.

Late Work: The grade for any late assignment will be lowered by one letter for each day after the due date. Late work will not be accepted without prior discussion with the instructor. Considerably late (more than one week) cannot be made up for more than a D grade.

Time/effort commitment: This is a vigorous and hands-on course made up of lectures, in-class assignments, equipment workshops, so you will need to be sure you make it to every class, AND have time outside of class to do your projects. This level of work and time commitment, inside and outside the class, is the norm for production courses. The class size is limited to a small number of students for a reason – you will all be relying on each other as much of the work is done in teams.

Participation: Students are expected to participate in class critiques, discussions and exercises with undivided attention. Excessive talking in class or during workshops while instruction is going on will be considered negative participation.

Effort and Professionalism: In the business of video and film production, most learning undoubtedly will come through hands-on experiences. Trial and error is a great teacher and your experiences may not always be pleasant when faced with the pressures of deadlines, working with new equipment, and learning to work with others. In light of this, a big emphasis will be placed on personal effort, respect for your classmates, class participation, and a professional attitude INCLUDING a willingness to work with, and learn from others. The instructor acknowledges that the level of prior knowledge among students may vary significantly. The student(s) who may have more experience in production techniques and technology will be expected to exhibit the patience and respect that is the essence of professionalism, and also be willing to help others whose knowledge is less than their own. THIS CLASS IS A COLLABORATION, NOT A COMPETITION.

Academic Integrity: The EMF Department adheres to the Towson University “Student Academic Integrity Policy.” Any form of cheating or plagiarism is prohibited in the policy. Please visit www.towson.edu/student life/judicialaffairs/academicintegrity.html for details. Any violation of this policy will result in a failing grade for the course.

Disability Note: Requirements for EMF Department classes follow Towson University’s disability policy; see www.towson.edu/dss for details. Any student who may need accommodation due to a disability, please
make an appointment to see the instructor during the first week of class. A memo from the Disability Support Services authorizing your accommodation will be required.

Ownership and Use: Please be aware that the professor may keep copies of ANY and ALL student work for future teaching purposes only. If anyone has issues with this policy regarding a student project, it is up to the individual or group to notify the instructor. Also when shooting interview subjects, either a verbal and written release is required.

Student Agreement: Once this document is issued to, reviewed and read by every student, the act of attending the second-class means you’ve agreed to ALL the requirements of the course outlined in this document.

Grading Policy
The grade of A is awarded for excellence, the very best work in the class. An A student turns in all work on time with consistently very high standards of quality, creativity, and original thinking. This person produces outstanding products and performs exceptionally in presentations and critiques. This grade is for Excellent work in the class.

The grade of B is awarded to students who have turned in all work on time, and consistently completed work in a high quality manner. The work shows creative thinking, extra effort, and care in presentation. This person has demonstrated knowledge that surpasses the basic material and skills of the course. This grade is for Very Good work in the class.

The grade of C is earned when all class work is turned in and the student has mastered the basic material and skills of the course. This person participated in class and demonstrated knowledge of the basic material and skills. This grade is for average work in the class.

The grade of D or F is given for work that is incomplete, late, and/or does not demonstrate mastery of the basic material and skills of the course. This grade below average work in the class.

Grading Scale
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>88-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-65</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 60</td>
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Project Grades:
Each project will be graded on both the TECHNICAL and TECHNIQUE aspects.

1. Technical: Understanding and Use of equipment.
2. Technique: Approach, Planning, Creativity, Direction & Execution.
Project #1: CLASS Scene SHOOT & EDIT 10 points
Project #2: Location as Story Project 15 points
Project #3: Basic Scene Creation 20 points
Project #4: INTERVIEW SHOOT & EDIT 25 points

Production Notebook 10 points
Final Exam 15 points
Participation 5 points

TOTAL points 100

GEAR
Specific Cameras, tripods, sound and light equipment packages are available at the equipment room (ER) located in the Video Media Lab (VML) in the basement of the Media Center. A newly updated VML guide will be issued and reviewed on the proper procedures for checking out equipment and using the VML editing workstations.

REQUIRED SUPPLIES
Digital Tapes (Mini DV): You will require four or five 60-minute Mini DV cassettes. These can be purchased from drug stores, specialty stores, the VML or the campus store. Do not buy cheap tapes – trust brand names like Sony, Fuji, JVC, etc.

External Media Hard-drive: A VML approved FireWire Media Drive is required for this and future EMF production courses. This will allow you to take your projects and edit them on any of the Media Center’s Video Editing Workstations. SO -You MUST purchase a VML approved media drive model so they can support your drive in the labs. The three approved drives are all made by LACIE: the Big Disk Extreme, D2 Triple Interface and D2 Extreme model. These are currently the ONLY drives currently supported. They are stackable as well, so you may buy more later on, for use in your later studies and career.

4 blank NEW VHS Tape(s) for making dubs of your projects if you care to.

Other items you may find helpful for this class (but not required):

1 pkg. of clothes pins $5
2 marking pens - Sharpies – extra fine point (TU Bookstore, office supply store) $2
1 small flashlight, e.g. Maglight (Anywhere, Home Depot, Markertek, StudioDepot) $10-20
1 pair of heavy leather or gaffer gloves (Home Depot, Markertek, StudioDepot) $8-$20
1 pocket knife or multi-tool (Home Depot, Markertek.com, StudioDepot.com) $20-50

Production Equipment Online Sales
- www.studiodepot.com
- www.markertek.com
- www.bhphotovideo.com
PRODUCTION GUIDELINES

You will work in pairs for most of your projects. You can either choose your own partner(s) or have the instructor choose for you. In both cases, you must indicate to the instructor in writing who your team members are going to be. You cannot change your team once a project is underway and production has begun. However, if you want to change your team for the subsequent projects you may.

Visual media production is a team activity and you must try to work amicably with your team members.

TEAM PROJECT PRODUCTION REPORTS (1-2 pages, type written, double spaced)

Each team must submit a production report along with all the projects. In this, you will evaluate your own performance and do a self-critique in terms of what you set out to achieve and what you were able to achieve. You must clearly state the role each member played in the production process.

INDIVIDUAL PROJECT JOURNAL REPORTS (1-2 pages, type written, double spaced)

Each student must submit a short individual journal report on the project. You must also list the problems you faced and how you overcame them and what you would have done differently if you were given another chance to do the same project again. What worked and what did not work. Also, briefly describe (chronologically) the different stages you went through and how you planned your production. These reports are kept strictly confidential.

PROJECT/ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

PROJECT #1: CLASS Scene SHOOT & EDIT Exercise - 10 points
Duration: 1:00 – 2:00 minute maximum in final running time.
Production: Instructor lead class scene shoot.
Post Production: In PAIRS you and a partner will edit the basic scene footage captured by the instructor during a practical exercise of shooting, which will include an intro to FCP editing.

PROJECT #2: Location as Story Project - 15 points
Duration: 1:00 – 2:00 minute maximum in final running time. Exterior - Day.
Working individually – EACH STUDENT will use the camera to its utmost potential as an image gathering device, and practice the use of lens techniques such as exposure and depth of field. Through careful composition and cuts only editing on Final Cut Pro, you will construct a sequence of STATIC images that delivers a strong sense of place. The location MUST be off campus, and include the use of visual design elements such as perspective, contrast, and framing. Since this video has no accompanying sound, it is important to make sure ALL the visuals are carefully crafted to have the most impact. EVERY SHOT WILL REQUIRE THE USE OF A TRIPOD!

This exercise will require the following shots:
1. An Object(s) in focus with the background out of focus
2. Telephoto shot(s)
3. Wide Angle shot(s)
4. Normal Focal length shot(s)
5. Exposure favoring shadow area(s)
6. Exposure favoring Sky/Bright area(s)

For this project a supplemental shot log will be required including:
- The shot (number, type and description)
- Length of shot
- Focal Length
- F-stop
- Lens mm
- Shutter Speed
- Shot assessment: pictorial quality, tone, lighting contrast, and composition

PROJECT #3: Basic Scene Creation - 20 points
Duration: 1:00 minute minimum and 2:00 minute maximum
EXT: DAY

You must discuss your project idea at least once with the instructor.

Working in PAIRS – each team will build a small story (narrative), into the production, of an individual engaged in an activity that could be as simple as walking or having a drink of coffee. EACH TEAM MEMBER MUST SHOOT 1/2 THE SHOTS.

The main purposes of this project are to apply the basic principles of composition and continuity covered in the classes and to continue to learn how to use the video recording and editing equipment. The end product will be a sequence that creates the illusion of real-time and spatial continuity, without any jump cuts.

The visual must include the following (at least one each):
- Establishing shot
- Point of View Shot
- Hand held Shot
- Pan or Tilt
- Match cut
- Eye-line Match
- Crossing over the 180 degree axis of continuity

Project #4: INTERVIEW SHOOT & EDIT - 20 points
Duration: 3:00 minute minimum and 4:00 minute maximum.
INT: DAY and INT: NIGHT

In Pairs – you will shoot TWO interviews that require lighting and external microphones.
The DAY interview MUST use a window as a source of light combined the location lights, and The NIGHT interview must only use the location lights. The teams will rotate roles: One will be responsible for operating the camera while the other acts as sound recordist/assistant, then reverse the roles for the other interview. Additional visuals will need to be shot of each subject doing some activity.

After shooting is completed, each team will edit their interview into a short segment, with the interviewee as the primary source of video and audio, combined with the some of the visuals shot.

The purpose of this project is to not only execute the proper techniques in lighting, composing and editing an interview, but also to learn about vital interview and performance issues and techniques. Learning how ask questions and directing the participant will be an important part of this project. Editing the footage you will learn how to tell a story based on interview bites and visuals.

The Production Notebook – 10 points
A three ring binder containing ALL relevant production information for EACH production project will be turned in at the end of the semester. Students’ will EACH generate and organize material throughout the course. Each project will introduce new pre-production concepts, designed to help students maintain clarity and organization in their preparations and, in addition, introduce students to the basics of professional, pre-production techniques and strategies. The instructor can at any time during the course check the progress of these notebooks; students must maintain them throughout the semester.

Pre-production concepts:
Project #1 (in class exercise): script/lined script/script breakdown pages; shot list; basic shooting schedule.
Project #2: Location evaluations/releases; basic production schedule; camera logs/reports.
Project #3: Lined script/script breakdowns; location evaluations/releases; crew/cast list production schedule/daily shooting schedule; shot list; storyboards; camera/sound logs/reports.
Project #4: Location evaluation/releases; production schedule; personal releases; camera/sound logs/reports.

Quizzes & Final Exam- 15 points
Quizzes will be given throughout the semester, as well as Final exam will be in the form of a take-home exam, distributed during the last week of regular class and due during the final examination meeting time.

An Extra Credit short production: at the discretion of the instructor and gear availability.

Course Schedule
Week 1

Course Overview: Syllabus, class projects, technology/equipment/facilities, basic visual language

- Re-introduction to visual media – its stages, functions, outlets and values
- Primary video and film formats – a discussion and presentation (visual material, rushes, Kodak Side by Side DVD.)
- Equipment Introduction
• The single image – discussion and presentation
• READING: Voice and Vision, Chapter 3: The Visual Language and Aesthetics of Cinema

Week 2

Basic pre-visualization practices
• Basic pre-production/pre-visualization discussion (script, marked script, overheads, storyboards, shot list, schedule.)
• Introduce script and pre-visualization materials for Project #1 (In-class production; editing footage in teams)
• Introduce the production notebook (due at semester’s end)
• VML orientation
• READING: Voice and Vision - Chapter 5: From Screenplay to Visual Plan; Appendices 4-4 & 4-5 (Storyboards)

Week 3

Production Techniques including camera, lens, framing, production protocol, crew roles.
• Practicum: In-class production (footage for project #1).
• READING: Voice and Vision, Chapter 21: The Art and Technique of Editing

Week 4

Introduction to Editing
• Practicum: Final Cut Pro intro. (media management/capture/assembly/print to tape)
• Practicum: Basic editing principles
• Introduce project #1: in groups of two: edit the in-class footage into a coherent scene, using Final Cut Pro (Due week six).
• READING: Handout on FCP basics

Week 5

Introduction to editing (con’t); editing tips and techniques; intro project #2; pre-production.
• Practicum: Final Cut Pro introduction, continued; troubleshooting – project #1/FCP issues (ad hoc)
• Practicum: Basic editing principles, continued
• Introduce Project #2: location as story (proposals due: week seven. Project due: week ten)
• Pre-production discussion, project #2 (location evaluation/strategies/releases; production scheduling, camera logs/reports); maintaining the production notebook
• READING: Voice and Vision, Chapter 6: Preparing for Production; Appendices 1, 4-3, 4-7, 4-8 & 5-2

Week 6
• Project #1 Due (screening and critique in class – instructor will assign revisions if needed. All revisions are due week six)
• READING: Voice and Vision, Chapter 10: The Lens

Week 7
The image: composition; color; location lighting for video – interior/exterior; artificial (creating) & natural (shaping), Pt. 1
• Discussion & practicum: Visual design (composition, mise-en-scene, mood & montage)
• Practicum: lighting demonstration/class exercise
• Project #2 Proposals Due (you must meet with the instructor)
• READING: Voice and Vision, Chapter 13: Basic Lighting for Film and DV

Week 8
Location Sound recording principals & best practices
• Practicum: working with audio, pt.1 (physical properties of sound, microphones and location recording techniques, slating for camera and sound, logs for sound and image)
• Reading: Voice and Vision, Chapters 15: Sound for Production & 16 (only 311-315) microphones

Week 9
• Introduce project #3: Basic scene creation (Proposal due: week 11. Project due: week 14)
• Pre-production discussion, project #3 (Lined script/script breakdowns; location evaluations/releases; crew/cast list; production schedule/daily shooting schedule; shot list; storyboards; camera/sound logs/reports); maintaining the production notebook.
• Ad hoc – Project #2 issues
• READING: Voice and Vision, Chapter 4: Organizing Cinematic Time and Space

Week 10
• Project #2 Due: (screening and critique in class – instructor will assign revisions if needed. All revisions are due week 12)
• **Practicum**: Directing the scene, project #3 (shot selection, shooting-to-edit, continuity, working with actors)

• READINGS: Voice and Vision, Chapter 7: The Cast and Crew

Week 11

*Putting it all together: The art & technique of recording an interview.*

• **Project #3 proposals due** (you must meet w/ instructor)

• **Introduce Project #4**: interview shoot and edit (Treatment due: week 14; Project due: Week 16)

• Pre-production discussion, project #4 (Location evaluation/releases; production schedule; personal releases; camera/sound logs/reports).

• Directing the interview (researching subject, working with people, asking questions, shaping the interview).

• READINGS: TBA

Week 12

*Location Lighting for Video Production - interior/exterior; artificial (creating) & natural (shaping), Pt 2*

• **Practicum**: lighting demonstration/class exercise

• READINGS: Voice and Vision, Chapter 18: On Set!

Week 13

*Thanksgiving holiday – No Class*

Week 14

• **Project #3 due** (screening and critique in class). If necessary, all revisions are due by week 16.

• **Project #4 treatments due**

• Framing the interview: frame sizes and the human body/face

• Continued discussion: Directing the interview.

• READINGS: TBA

Week 15

• Take home final (hand out and review)

• Instructor evaluations

• Lab time to review/troubleshoot project #4
Week 16

- **Project #4 due** (screening and critique in class)
- Final exams due

**Course Bibliography:**


Schroeppel, Tom. *The Bare Bones Camera Course for Film and Video*. CMP Books.