

USC CINEMA 241 (23437) CLASS SYLLABUS (Spring, 2005)

Class meeting times: Mondays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in RZC 124
Office hours: Immediately before class, by phone and by appointment.

Directing-Editing:

DUKE UNDERWOOD 213-740-7374 Email: duke@cinema.usc.edu

Cinematography:

MARK W. GRAY 818-787-3110 (home) Email: mwgray@mac.com
310-989-1520 (cell)

Class Assistant (CA):

EDWARD ALBOLOTE 310-936-7107 (cell) E-mail: caaylogg@yahoo.com

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of CNTV 241 is to examine the basic technical, and creative aspects of film and video production. During the semester students will be introduced through lectures, in-class exercises, and take-home assignments to the fundamental components of pre-production (which includes scripting, storyboarding, budgeting, and casting), production (which includes directing, lighting and shooting), and post-production (which includes editing and sound editing). Whereas 290 is a creative course in which you will gain practical experience through the production of five digital films, 241 is an instructional course. Though the courses are taught together, please be aware that they are graded separately, and have different expectations and grading criteria. This syllabus will outline for you the nature of 241. It is a guideline, however, and it should be noted that adjustments to this syllabus can be made at any time by the Instructors as they deem necessary.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

Digital Cinematography, Paul Wheeler. 2001

Bare Bones Course for Film & Video, Tom Schroepfel. 1982

TESTS AND GRADING

Grading for this course will be based on the following:

- 50% In-Class Exercises & Take-Home Assignments.
- 30% Vagabond Project - Prep & Shoot.
- 20% Class Participation.

All exercises and assignments are expected to be completed on time, and grades will be lowered substantially for overdue assignments. There will be no make-ups of either exam without a written medical excuse signed by a doctor.

MID-SEMESTER CONFERENCES (290/241)

These mandatory conferences allow you to get a sense of your overall progress, areas for improvement, and an estimated grade at mid-point in the semester. If you are in danger of failing, you will be alerted both in writing and in this conference. We will then outline together what steps must be taken in order for you to pass the course.

DEADLINES, ATTENDANCE, PARTICIPATION AND GRADES

Attendance, being on time to class, meeting deadlines for assignments, and full class participation are expected of you in this course. The Instructors will not remind you of these obligations. Unexcused absences, tardiness, or disruptive behaviour in class will count against your grade. Written medical explanations are required for excused absences. Inform us before class of an emergency; excuses for absences delivered after the fact are suspect to us. Two un-excused absences will affect your grade by

half a letter. There are no incomplete grades available for any reason other than severe medical cases or serious emergencies.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

It is expected that you will observe the University and 241 class standards for honesty and integrity. In conjunction with class exercises and written portions of assignments, it should be noted that severe penalties — including failure in the course and expulsion from the University — may be applied for any infraction of accepted academic rules of honesty. All work on any written portion of an assignment shall be an individual and original effort (except where collaborative team projects are specifically designed).

IN-CLASS EXERCISES & TAKE-HOME ASSIGNMENTS

Over the course of the semester there will be several in-class technical exercises that each student will conduct as part of his or her production group. These exercises are directly related to concepts that will have been discussed in class. It is expected that you will execute and finish each exercise in the class time allowed, and then present your work at the end of class for feedback and discussion. These exercises are not optional, and should be understood as a serious component of your 241 grade. At the Instructors' discretion, take-home assignments may also be a required part of this course. These assignments will most likely focus on the creative aspects of the topics discussed in class. You will be expected to conduct these assignments on an individual basis, unless otherwise noted.

VAGABOND PREP, SHOOT & REVIEW

We are very fortunate in this course to have the opportunity to shoot on location as part of class time. We will devote four classes to this exercise. The first will be for pre-production and location scouting. The second will be an hands on set procedure/crew tutorial. The third is for rehearsal with your actors. The fourth will be the shoot itself. The fifth will be the editing and the sixth the screening and review of the scenes shot. This shoot will be conducted as professionally as our course permits, meaning that you will need to hold pre-production meetings, cast actors, provide props, complete all required paperwork (such as release forms), and edit dailies into a finished product. Both Instructors, and the CA will be available both before and during the shoot to answer questions, and to help you solve creative and technical issues that you may encounter.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

As you may already have noted from the above, class participation is a vital part of this course. It is expected that each student will participate in all class discussions, exercises, and in the Vagabond shoot. Participation is also an integral part of your 241 grade, and it is up to each of you to be mindful of your obligations.

SAFETY

AS WITH 290, THE NEED FOR SAFETY IS A VERY REAL CONCERN IN THIS CLASS. IT IS EXPECTED THAT EACH STUDENT WILL FOLLOW ALL CAMPUS AND DEPARTMENT SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR ALL EXERCISES, ASSIGNMENTS, AND CREATIVE WORK DONE IN CONJUNCTION WITH THIS COURSE.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or the TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301, and is open 8:30am-5:00pm Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.