EXPANDED COURSE DESCRIPTION
FILM AND VIDEO

School of the Arts, Media, Performance and Design
Department of Cinema and Media Arts

FA / FILM 3001 6.0 SECTION A
FICTION PROJECT WORKSHOP I
FALL 2019 / WINTER 2020

Last Modified Date: 09/24/2019

COURSE CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

Explores the practice, aesthetics and theory of fictional narrative filmmaking. Students engage in practical exercises as well as discussions to prepare them to direct the main project of the course, a short, sync sound, colour narrative film. Prerequisites: FA/FILM 2010 6.00 or FA/FILM 2010 9.00 and permission of the Film Department.

This project workshop will concentrate on the process of learning about film language as a set of collectively generated conventions that enable us to tell stories to each other through the medium of images, sounds, music and words and, ultimately, on the fulfillment of the emotional, psychological, and intellectual needs of an audience. It will aid the student in shaping a directorial artistic identity and vision, through writing, basic screen craft, aesthetics and authorship, textual interpretation, rehearsal and performance. Composition, visual and aural rhythms, amount and complexity of movement within the frame, and length and placement of shots will also be studied. The students will gain knowledge of concepts related to richness and ambiguity of characters and theme, and about developing a cinematic language in order to show less and imply more. They will learn about how cinema can alert us to what exists at the very edge of our perception and beyond. Directing means also bringing together people of different skills and the students will work in collaboration with students enrolled in specialty courses in Screenwriting, Cinematography, Editing, Sound and Producing. Including lectures, screenings, and workshops on short scenes shot on video in class, guest speakers and discussions on the required readings, the main focus of the course is the production of a major narrative project of approx. 10 minutes length shot on 16 mm color film. Each student enrolled in the course will be responsible for directing one project. To be considered for admission to the course, all applicants must submit a proposal which includes a draft screenplay which they hope to produce in class.

INSTRUCTOR(S)

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SPECIAL FEATURES

Expanded Course Description

FA/FILM 3001 6.0 is an advanced course in the four-year film and video production stream in the Faculty of Fine Arts. It involves the intensive study of narrative story telling through the color film medium and synchronized sound. The course will focus mainly on the aesthetic aspects in the creation of narrative films, while touching also upon the technical state of affairs from concept to release. The course aims to prepare and shape the director's artistic identity, writing, basic screen craft, aesthetics and authorship, textual interpretation, and rehearsal as well as how to fulfill the emotional, psychological, and intellectual needs of an audience.

Class members will study concepts related to richness and ambiguity of characters and theme, and about a cinematic language that must be developed in order to show less and imply more. Learning about the film language as a set of collectively generated conventions that enable us to tell stories to each other through the
medium of images, sounds, music and words; composition, visual and aural rhythms, amount and complexity of movement within the frame, and length and placement of shots….

to create a cinema able to alert us to what exists at the very edge of our perception, and beyond.

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Organization of the Course

The course involves formal lectures by the teaching team and invited guests as well as film screenings. Major attention will be given to class participation and to the scripts debates. All students are expected to be familiar with their peers’ work and support each other’s productions since this course is intended to work as a workshop where every member’s participation is critical.

LIST OF LEARNING OUTCOMES AND EXAMPLES OF

Brief list of specific learning objectives of the course:

- Shaping and stimulating the critical thinking.
- Shaping and stimulating the emotional perception of the reality.
- Understanding and mastering traditional film techniques.
- Controlling the relationship of the camera to the subject and surroundings.
- Translating a story into an articulated and aesthetically challenging visual language.
- Team spirit; working as members of a film crew, which creates an efficient set.

Each student will act as the Director on a project, being responsible for its visual aesthetics as well as for its reflective content. Besides fully participating in the pre-production and the shooting stages, the Director’s other tasks include: the assembly of a crew, providing the crew with a shooting script, partaking in the post-production stages (editing & conception of the sound track), and making sure that the deadlines are respected.

Students may be assigned an additional minor role on another film if the number of films in production makes it necessary.

The level of ability to work with other crew members (this includes the staff members of the Department) and individual contribution to the production will also be taken into account.

Each student must keep a personal log book showing times, dates, and production activities, as well as reflexive notes on the personal contribution to the completion of each project.

This book will be submitted as part of each completed assignment.

The students enrolled in this class, are required to work on scripts that may be provided by the director or by the screen-writing students, may be adaptations, or may be written by another author.

The aim of this course is not to write original material but to visually interpret it from a directorial standpoint.

No script will go into the Production stage without the Course Director's approval.

Please Note: Screenplays longer than 15 pages will not be accepted.

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Course Text / Readings

REQUIRED READING:


RECOMMENDED READING:

GENERAL -

DIRECTING -

PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT -

CINEMATOGRAPHY -
Practical Cinematography, Paul Wheeler, Focal Press, 2000

SOUND

LIGHTING -
EDITING -
Rosenbulum, Ralph. When the Shooting Stops...the Cutting Begins. Penguin
Dancyger, Ken. The Technique of Film and Video Editing. Focal Press,
Boston, 1993

ACTING -
Weston, Judith. Directing Actors. Michael Wiese Productions, Studio
City, CA, 1996
Hagen, Uta. Respect for Acting. A Simon & Schuster Macmillan Company,

Additional readings may be assigned or recommended during the course.

GRADED ASSESSMENT

Evaluation

GRADING:
The grading scheme for the course conforms to the 9-point grading system used in undergraduate programs
at York (e.g., A+ = 9, A = 8, B+ = 7, C+ = 5, etc.). Assignments and tests will bear either a letter grade
designation or a corresponding number grade (e.g. A+ = 90 to 100, A = 80 to 90, B+ = 75 to 79, etc.)
(For a full description of York grading system see the York University Undergraduate Calendar -
http://calendars.registrar.yorku.ca/pdfs/ug2004cal/calug04_5_acadinfo.pdf)

GRADING:

VISUALISATION Fall Term 25%

FILM PROJECT Winter Term 40%

ESSAYS Fall & Winter Term 15%

COMMITMENT, CLASS
PARTICIPATION, ATTENDANCE,
ATTITUDE AND PROFESSIONALISM
including proper booking and
handling of equipment Fall & Winter Term 20%
Attendance and participation in classes are essential for the successful completion of the course requirements.

All course assignments must be completed in order to have final grades released by the Department of Film.

The main requirement for the advancement into the fourth year is to participate on the complete film project based on the approved script to the end of the year Screenings. **However, this alone cannot insure you a passing grade in this Course.**

- In grading your film the following components of the cinematic aesthetic will be considered: script, narrative coherence, (flow and pace) dialogue, casting and acting, editing (length, pace and placement of shots), complexity of frame composition, mis-en-scène, sound and music.

- **Assignment Submission**

Proper academic performance depends on students doing their work not only well, but on time. Accordingly, assignments for this course must be received on the due date specified for the assignment.

- **Deadlines are absolute.** There will be intermediate stage deadlines and final deadlines for all projects announced in class and given on assignment sheets. Various stages of the production must be completed within "windows" allocated for any given stage.

The Course Director will act as an Executive Producer, assuring that crews are working to the schedule. Should there be a potential problem with meeting a deadline, the entire crew must arrange a meeting with the Course Director well in advance of the deadline to discuss available options to solve the problem.

Students may take a limited number of courses for degree credit on an ungraded (pass/fail) basis. For full information on this option see Alternative Grading Option in the Film Department section of the Undergraduate Calendar: yorku.ca/finearts/film

**Lateness Penalty:** Assignments received later than the due date will be penalized. In the case of not meeting the deadline without a legitimate reason grade penalties will be assigned, *(5% of the grade will be deducted for every late day)* and in extreme cases, access to equipment and/or facilities may be denied and the production stopped.

*Exceptions to the lateness penalty for valid reasons such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc., may be entertained by the Course Instructor but will require supporting documentation (e.g., a doctor’s letter).*

**Missed Tests:** Students with a documented reason for missing a course test, such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc., which is confirmed by supporting documentation (e.g., doctor’s letter) may request accommodation from the Course Instructor. *(e.g., allowed to write a make-up test on a later date.)* Further extensions or accommodation will require students to submit a formal petition to the Faculty.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**
IMPORTANT COURSE INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

All students are expected to familiarize themselves with the following information, available on the Senate Committee on Curriculum & Academic Standards webpage (see Reports, Initiatives, Documents)

http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/senate_cte_main_pages/ccas.htm

- York's Academic Honesty Policy and Procedures/Academic Integrity Website
- Ethics Review Process for research involving human participants
- Course requirement accommodation for students with disabilities, including physical, medical, systemic, learning and psychiatric disabilities
- Student Conduct Standards
- Religious Observance Accommodation

Academic Honesty and Integrity
York students are required to maintain high standards of academic integrity and are subject to the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty (http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/legislation/senate/acadhone.htm).

There is also an academic integrity website with complete information about academic honesty. Students are expected to review the materials on the Academic Integrity website (http://www.yorku.ca/academicintegrity/students.htm).

Access/Disability
York provides services for students with disabilities (including physical, medical, learning and psychiatric disabilities) needing accommodation related to teaching and evaluation methods/materials.

It is the student's responsibility to register with disability services as early as possible to ensure that appropriate academic accommodation can be provided with advance notice. You are encouraged to schedule a time early in the term to meet with each professor to discuss your accommodation needs. Failure to make these arrangements may jeopardize your opportunity to receive academic accommodations.

Additional information is available at www.yorku.ca/disabilityservices or from disability service providers:

- Learning and Psychiatric Disabilities Programs - Counselling & Development Centre: 130 BSB, 416-736-5297, www.yorku.ca/cdc

Ethics Review Process
York students are subject to the York University Policy for the Ethics Review Process for Research Involving Human Participants. In particular, students proposing to undertake research involving human participants (e.g., interviewing the director of a company or government agency, having students complete a questionnaire, etc.) are required to submit an Application for Ethical Approval of Research Involving Human Participants at least one month before you plan to begin the research. If you are in doubt as to whether this requirement applies to you, contact your Course Director immediately

Religious Observance Accommodation
York University is committed to respecting the religious beliefs and practices of all members of the community, and making accommodations for observances of special significance to adherents. Should any
of the dates specified in this syllabus for an in-class test or examination pose such a conflict for you, contact the Course Director within the first three weeks of class. Similarly, should an assignment to be completed in a lab, practicum placement, workshop, etc., scheduled later in the term pose such a conflict, contact the Course director immediately. Please note that to arrange an alternative date or time for an examination scheduled in the formal examination periods (December and April/May), students must complete an Examination Accommodation Form, which can be obtained from Student Client Services, Student Services Centre or online at http://www.registrar.yorku.ca/pdf/exam_accommodation.pdf

**Student Conduct**

Students and instructors are expected to maintain a professional relationship characterized by courtesy and mutual respect and to refrain from actions disruptive to such a relationship. Moreover, it is the responsibility of the instructor to maintain an appropriate academic atmosphere in the classroom, and the responsibility of the student to cooperate in that endeavour.

Further, the instructor is the best person to decide, in the first instance, whether such an atmosphere is present in the class. A statement of the policy and procedures involving disruptive and/or harassing behaviour by students in academic situations is available on the York website http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/legislation/senate/harass.htm

*Please note that this information is subject to periodic update. For the most current information, please go to the CCAS webpage (see Reports, Initiatives, Documents):* http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/senate_cte_main_pages/ccas.htm.

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Many courses utilize Moodle, York University’s course website system. If your course is using Moodle, click here to access it.

**Moodle @ York University**