

**FILM 215: FILM & NEW DIGITAL MEDIA
SPRING 2016 THURS. 6:10-10PM**

INSTRUCTOR: ELENA OXMAN

OFFICE: BUILDING 15, ROOM 156

OFFICE HOURS: THURS. 4-6PM AND BY APPT.

OXMANE@SMCCD.EDU

DESCRIPTION

This course will focus on the impact of digital technology on film art, with a focus on the feature-length narrative film. We will develop a basic historical sense of the emergence of digital technology and consider the ways it has influenced filmmakers, creating new possibilities for cinematic storytelling. Simultaneously, we will work as a class to create a short digital film. Each student will be assigned roles in either the cast or crew based on their interests, and we will submit the final film to the CSM student film festival in May.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course you should be able to:

- 1) Identify critical concepts in the study of film and digital media aesthetics.
- 2) Articulate the impact of digital technology on film style and storytelling techniques.
- 3) Understand the process of digital filmmaking from pre- to post-production.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADES

Assignments for the class include: 1) a two-page character study 2) a short film treatment and pitch (may be done with a partner) 3) participation in creating the final class film. The midterm and final exams will cover material from lecture, assigned readings, and films shown in class. All readings are available on WebAccess; each week I will expect you to both read them in advance of class and *print them out and bring them to class*. Screenings are mandatory, and students are responsible not only for watching the films but also for taking notes during the screenings.

The grade breakdown for this class is as follows:

- Character study (10%)
- Short film outline and pitch (10%)
- Midterm (20%)
- Final (20%)
- Participation (40%)

Participation includes regular attendance, contributing to class discussions, and active participation in the class film project.

Character Study: a 2-page description of someone you knew (but not very well) in high school.

Short Film Outline and Pitch (can be done in partners): a 2-minute presentation to the class in which you share your idea for a short film that follows the parameters below:

- Can be shot on campus during the hours of our class.
- Can be shot using only people in our class as actors and crew.
- Uses only props/accessories that we already have or can borrow.

You will also turn in a 1-2 page scene outline of the film.

COURSE POLICIES

- 1) All course work must be completed to pass this course.
- 2) Two or more unexcused absences will affect your participation grade (thus your overall grade) and may result in being dropped from the class (arriving late or leaving early counts as half an absence).
- 3) Late work will be graded down one full grade for each day late.
- 4) Please keep all graded work until after you receive your final grade.
- 5) This class will be graded using the plus/minus grading system.
- 6) Dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly furnishing false information to the College and its officials is prohibited and may lead to appropriate disciplinary action.
- 7) Please turn off your phones during class and all screenings. If there is a reason you must have it on, notify me in advance of class.
- 8) You must have a .smccd email account that you check regularly, as I will be corresponding with the class via email.

DISABILITY POLICY STATEMENT

If you have a documented disability and need accommodations for this class, please advise me as soon as possible and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) for assistance. The DRC is located in building 10, room 120 – (650) 574-6432

SCHEDULE

1/21: Film vs. Digital

Side by Side (Kenneally, 2012)

1/28: Found Footage

Reading due: Holly Willis, “The Future of the Feature”; “Basic Storytelling” (*The Tools of Screenwriting* p. 21-31)

The Blair Witch Project (Myrick & Sánchez, 1999)

2/4: Dogma 95

Reading due: Dogma 95 Manifesto and Vow of Chastity

The Celebration (Vinterberg 1998)

Character Studies due

2/11: Digital Shorts

Reading due: Alexander MacKendrick, “What is a Story?” and “The Outline and the Step Outline” (*Tools of Screenwriting* p.76-78)

Selected short films

2/18: InDiGent and Mumblecore

Selections from *Personal Velocity* (Rebecca Miller, 2002)

The Puffy Chair (Mark Duplass, Jay Duplass 2005)

Film Outlines and Pitches due

2/25: Digital Indies

Reading due: “Activity and Action, Dialogue, Visuals, the Dramatic Scene” (*The Tools of Screenwriting* p. 81-94)

Medicine for Melancholy (Barry Jenkins, 2005)

Turn in Role Request Forms

3/3: iPhone films

Reading due: “Shot Flow” (*Film Directing Shot by Shot*, p. 159-171)

Tangerine (Sean Baker, 2015)

3/10: Pre-production meeting

Role assignments
Rehearsal
Storyboarding

3/17: MIDTERM EXAM

10/24: Pre-production meeting (part 2)

Formulate shot list
Run-through

3/31: NO CLASS—SPRING BREAK

4/7: Shoot

4/14: Shoot

4/21: Editing workshop

Meet in DGME Lab

4/28: Editing workshop

Meet in DGME Lab

5/5: Desktop Documentary

Reading due: *WebAccess*

Tarnation (Jonathan Caouette, 2003)

5/12: Rotoscope

Reading due: *WebAccess*

A Scanner Darkly (Richard Linklater, 2006)

5/19: 3D Animation

Reading due: *WebAccess*

Film TBA (class vote!)

5/26: FINAL EXAM

TO DO

Lab?

Anyway we can use their sound equipment?

How to post links to WebAccess?

Digital Technology: the question is, why *not* make a film?

High School Character Study, 2-3 pages

Think of someone you went to high school with that you didn't know very well. Perhaps someone you were curious about or maybe someone you thought you had pegged, but never took the opportunity to get to know. Write a 2-3 page story from their Point of View. It can be related to a particular incident, an average day at school, home life, etc.

But go deep in imagining their inner life, thoughts, feelings, desires, etc.

Watch scenes from:

Medicine for Melancholy (Barry Jenkins 2008)