

# Aesthetics and Techniques for Film and Television

COMF 353 -- Fall 2010

Dr. Cameron A. Pace, Professor

Office phone - ext. 8413, Email: [pacec@evangel.edu](mailto:pacec@evangel.edu) or [info@doctorpace.net](mailto:info@doctorpace.net)

Web sites: <http://www.doctorpace.net> & <https://angel.evangel.edu>

Evangel University Communication Department

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course includes a combination of lecture and out of classroom experiences focusing on production aesthetics and techniques for motion media. Special attention will be given to documentary film production, aesthetics, production planning, computer/video interactivity, and overall film and television operations on an advanced level. This course features the study of electronic and photographic effects and the production techniques necessary to produce them.

## REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS & MATERIALS

Zettl, Herbert. (2011). *Sight, sound, and motion, 6th ed.* Belmont, California.

Hampe, B. (2007). *Making documentary films and reality videos, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.* New York: Henry Holt Publishing.

1 or 2 mini-DV videotapes for recording. (May use 8 GB SDHC memory card on some cameras)

2 DVD-R discs for turning in assignments.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Students will have a basic understanding of applied media aesthetics as it relates to light, space, time-motion, and sound and how these are used in television production.
2. Students will be able to fully explain the three-step process of television production.
3. Students will demonstrate competency in preparing for a documentary production by planning, researching, and designing a video project of their own.
4. Students will develop new skills and enhance old ones in the use of production equipment while working as a team member with other students on productions during the semester.
5. Students will be able to produce short productions using computer technology that is interactive with video/audio post-production techniques including computer graphics, special effects, and various non-linear editing systems.
6. Students will be familiar with the processes and procedures related to the creation of special effects, animation, and filters used in video and film.

## METHODOLOGY

Classroom lecture and discussion accompanied by occasional lab applications will be the primary method of instruction along with text readings. Videotaped materials will be shown for further clarification. Groups will work together at times to prepare for projects produced later in the semester. Students will be producing projects using the TV Studio facilities and field equipment.

## ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to be present at each class period or assigned lab session. On the eighth (8) absence a student will be DROPPED from the class and receive an F for the course. Extenuating circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Arrangements for make up work should be discussed with the professor for excused absences.

## POLICY ON INCOMPLETE WORK

All assignments given during this course must be completed by the end of the course. Once the semester ends, a student will receive an F if any major assignment is missing. Assignments due on Final Exam day will not be accepted more than two days late. All late assignments may be penalized up to 20% off the grade the assignment has earned. Students receiving an F due to incomplete work should repeat the course. Extended illness and other legitimate reasons for late work will be considered on an individual basis.

## GRADING

Production proposal	10%
Biographical project	15%
Group documentary project	25% (includes group and individual grades)
Exams and quizzes	25%
After Effects project	15%
Final - montage project	10%
	100%

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- 1. Production Proposal.** Each student will prepare a proposal for a documentary film or informational video production approximately 9 to 12 minutes long. The proposal will contain the following: a background research summary, a list of technical and personnel requirements, process message explanation, treatment, proposed budget, show time and distribution, target audience analysis, title, and set design. Proposals should be constructed for programming on the ECTV channel and with TV Studio facilities in mind. Must be approx. 5 - 7 pages, typed.
- 2. After Effects Promotional Project –** Students will work in small groups to produce a 3-minute promotional video using digital camcorders and the computer editing systems in the TV Studio. This project will use the process of non-linear (i.e. non-videotape editing) editing and, more significantly, *Adobe After Effects*. Students will hand in a **DVD** of the project and a **short paper** describing their experience in producing this project including what effects were used and what each person contributed to the project. The project must be an informative promotion relating to one of the departments/organizations on campus. This project will be evaluated for aesthetics, content, use of AE, and technical quality.
- 3. Group Documentary Project.** The class will be divided into groups for the purpose of producing a selection of the production proposals submitted by the class. Each group will complete the necessary steps to produce the project on HD video for cable broadcast. Groups will meet with the professor during the planning stages to help in structuring each project for production. These films must be 8 to 10 minutes in length and be ready to air by the deadline given. Project is to be handed in on DVD-R (WMV-HD file). Each group will receive a DVD-R disc for final mastering of the program. Each student will complete a group evaluation sheet for this project.
- 4. Exams and Pre-quizzes.** One take home exam will be given during the semester related to the documentary film text. All pre-quizzes will be related to the Zettl text and will be given throughout the semester using the Angel website. Make sure to check the Angel site weekly for all quizzes assigned.
- 5. Final - editing montage project.** Students will work in groups of 2 or individually to shoot (using a field camera from the TV Studio) a short video segment (1 minute exactly.) that implies a message or theme (not topic) indirectly through video photography and non-continuous montage editing. Music and/or sound effects should be used as background, but no lyrics or narration should be used. The message or theme may be intellectual, emotional, or spiritual in nature and could be expressed in a written statement or phrase. This will be handed in on DVD on exam day with a paper in an envelope stating the intended message and how it was achieved. Groups/students are not to share their message with others students until after the showing of their video in class. No assignments will be accepted before exam day.
- 6. Biographical (Final Cut) video project.** Students will work in groups of 2 to produce a 2 to 3 minute biographical video about someone in the community. Videos must include interviews, video, photos, sounds, etc. that tell the story about the subject. The video should have an overall theme or emphasis that is

reinforced through the video. Edit on Final Cut Pro or Express. Turn in on DVD. Biographical subjects must be approved by Dr. Pace.

**COURSE SCHEDULE** (*Reading assignments should be completed by the day they are listed*)

8/26 - Introduction to course/text/studio - discuss assignments

8/31 - Documentary and informational video production – Hampe chaps. 1 - 3 (discuss proposals)

9/2 - Documentary filmmaking as “infotainment” – Read Hampe chaps. 4 - 6

9/7 – Applied media aesthetics – the “whys” of video – Zettl chap. 1 (discuss info. video project)

9/9 - Interviews and working with people – Read Hampe chaps. 25 - 27

9/14 – Functions and structures of Light - Read Zettl Chaps. 2 & 3 (intro to After Effects)

**9/16 - After Effects lab session - Project Proposals Due Today!**

9/21 – Special speaker – video professional - “After Effects in the workplace”

9/23 – Function and structure of color – Zettl chaps 4 & 5 - After Effects lab session

9/28 – Promotional video production – After Effects lab – Read Hampe 7 - 10

9/30 – Shooting the documentary – Read Hampe chaps. 21, 22, & 24

**10/2 – Communication Dept. Fall Party**

**10/5 – Documentary production techniques – Read Hampe chaps. 11 - 15 Biographical video due today!**

10/7 – *No class – start work on mid-term.*

10/12 – The two-dimensional field – composing space – Zettl chaps. 6 - 8

**10/14 – The Three-dimensional field - Zettl Chaps. 9 - 11 (Take home exam due on Angel by 11 PM)**

10/19 - Writing and producing the documentary – Hampe chaps. 16 – 21

10/21 – Visualization/Camera angles – Read Zettl Chap. 11

*10/26 - FALL BREAK - NO CLASS*

10/28 – Aesthetics of editing – time and motion – Read Zettl Chaps. 12 - 14

**11/2 – Locations and verisimilitude in documentary – Hampe 28 & 29 - After Effects Project Due Today!**

11/4 – Documentary Post-Production – Read Hampe chaps. 30 - 32

11/9 – Sound and Picture combinations – Zettl chaps 15 & 16

11/11– Documentary sound and audio techniques – Hampe chap. 23

11/16 – Syntax of Continuity Editing – Zettl Chap. 17

11/18 – Syntax of Complexity editing – the montage – Zettl Chap. 18

11/23 – Documentary ethics and legal issues – Hampe chap. 15

*11/25 - Thanksgiving Break! - NO CLASS*

11/30 – Working with symbols and editing – lab session

12/2 – Work session on group projects in TV Studio area.

**12/7 - GROUP PROJECTS DUE TODAY!**

**FINAL EXAM - Saturday, Dec. 11 – 3:00 PM - MONTAGE PROJECT DUE - Bring tape and envelope containing montage explanation to class.**

**REMINDERS:** The TV Studio does not provide students with videotapes, DVDs, or flash memory for personal use such as class projects. Students must use their own tapes for field recording, editing, etc. All projects must be turned in on DVD-R unless otherwise noted. Tapes for the group project will be provided, but will remain property of ECTV.

Students needing to check out cameras or other equipment from TV Studio must first be trained or have experience with the equipment. Please see Dr. Pace or TV Studio employees for additional information.

### **BROADCAST RIGHTS**

As with all productions, student or otherwise, produced at ECTV, your show may be selected to be aired over the ECTV cable access channels in whole or in part. Each show is to be considered an ECTV Presentation with copyrights belonging to ECTV.

**EXERCISES & ASSIGNMENTS** – These projects are completed using the equipment at the TV Studio. Start working on these assignments early to avoid the rush that occurs just before the deadline. Equipment non-availability is not an excuse for late assignments. Equipment breakdown is also not an excuse for late work. Start early, practice your skills, and pay attention to assignment details – these will help you to be successful.

**TV STUDIO FACILITIES** – Evangel University does not charge a lab fee for using the TV Studio facilities. Students are given the privilege to use school equipment for the purpose of completing assignments in Communication coursework. Misuse, neglect, or carelessness by a student while using school equipment may be cause for privileges to be withdrawn or restricted. TV Studio equipment is to be used for Evangel Communication coursework only and not for other courses offered at Evangel or elsewhere.

### **POLICY ON INCOMPLETE WORK**

All assignments given during this course must be completed by the end of the course. Once the semester ends, a student will receive an F if any major assignment is missing. Assignments due on Final Exam day will not be accepted more than two days late. All late assignments may be penalized up to 20% off the grade the assignment has earned. Students receiving an F due to incomplete work should repeat the course. Extended illness and other legitimate reasons for late work will be considered on an individual basis.

### **TESTS**

Students who are absent the day of a test may only be excused because of sickness (with doctor or nurse signature), family emergency, or administrative permission. Unexcused absences during tests will require the student to take a similar test at the first opportunity. A late penalty up to 20% off the grade earned may be applied. Failure to take a test (including the final exam) during the period scheduled will result in a loss of points.

### **USE OF ELECTRONICS IN CLASSROOM**

Students using laptops, cell phones, PDAs, and other electronic devices when in class create a distraction in the classroom. Therefore, the use of these components is prohibited by the professor during class sessions (this includes texting). Students who violate this policy will receive a reduction in class participation points. Continued violations may be cause for withdrawal from the course. Please turn off or completely silence your cell phone (do not put on vibrate). For security reasons, the professor will carry an active cell phone to receive emergency messages should they be distributed.

### **ANGEL**

Part of the requirements of this course is to use the software system called Angel, which is provided by Evangel. Students must be financially registered to use Angel. Angel logins are the same as your student portal or email. Check Angel frequently to see if anything is due or coming up soon.

### **PACE'S ACAMANIA WEB SITE**

This Web site is a place to find help for Dr. Pace's classes by providing syllabi, forms, handouts, and assignments anytime, 24/7. Any computer with Internet access can connect to it. Type in the browser address window the following URL: <http://www.doctorpace.net>

**Email Dr. Pace:** [pavec@evangel.edu](mailto:pavec@evangel.edu)