Department of English & Writing Studies
Film Studies Program

Film 3368F (001)
Film Production
Fall 2025

Instructor: Greg De Souza

Office hours: Wednesdays12:30-1:30
UC1122

Anti requisites: The former Film Studies 2270F/G

Prerequisites: At least 60% in Film Studies 1020E or Film Studies 1022, or 1.0 of English 1000-1999 plus English 2112F/G, Film 2212F/G, or Theatre Studies 2212F/G, or permission of the department.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees if you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Description

This course will explore the stylistic functions of basic film elements, e.g., camera movement, editing, sound, and colour, through the analysis and production of films. You will practice storytelling skills and evaluate various AI-powered script generation tools and platforms available, considering factors such as ease of use, customization options, and output quality.

Students will work through a series of collaborative studio projects aimed at developing knowledge and technical proficiency regarding: pre-production planning and scriptwriting, composition and visual communication, manual camera control, colour grading, lighting, audio recording and sound design, as well as editing and stylization in post-production.

Studio production and experimentation will be complemented by online technical demonstrations, lectures, readings, discussions, and viewings aimed at developing critical response skills, conceptual foundations, and language appropriate for image evaluation and analysis. These will provide students with versatile tools and approaches through which ideas about filmmaking may be explored, and developed, culminating in a video production project. Remote production techniques related to the pandemic will

be explored if necessary. No prior experience with digital technology and/or video production is required.

Objectives:

Upon completing the course, you will be able to:

- Effectively use a DV camera in manual shooting mode to focus, white balance, adjust exposure and audio levels.
- Apply conventions of shot framing, movement, sequencing and continuity.
- Effectively use the Final Cut Pro X, or Davinci Resolve Non-linear editing software.
- Demonstrate an understanding of basic approaches to studio and outdoor reflective lighting.
- Effectively select and use appropriate technology for audio capture and sound design.
- Effectively use primary and secondary colour grading tools for colour design.
- Critically evaluate how meaning is generated through the organization and manipulation of sound and image, over time.
- Actively and constructively engage in critiques of peer's work and integrate feedback to further develop their own work.
- Use the terminology of video production to articulate ideas and intents in a clear, effective, and professional manner.

Course Materials

- Required Text: available at the Book store or Amazon.ca -*How to Shoot Video that Doesn't Suck* by Steve Stockman ISBN: 978-0-7611-6323-7
- SDHC or SDXC card class 10. A Micro SD card in an adapter will also work. A 64 to 128GB card will be adequate. (*only required using a school camera or recording device*)
- A laptop/desktop computer and external hard drive (recommended: 4TB, Headphones with 1/8" plug (preferably not ear buds) would be an asset.
- A non-linear digital editing program. Davinci Resolve can be downloaded for free but requires a robust computer with adequate RAM and graphics card. Final Cut Pro X is recommended for Mac users. **IF YOU USE ANOTHER NLE IT MUST HAVE SCOPES FOR COLOUR AND A BUILT IN DAW (Digital Audio Workstation)**
- School equipment is available for sign out. Create an account at ArtsGear
- Instructional videos and other supplementary material will be posted on OWL.

Contingency plan for an in-person class pivoting to 100% online learning

- In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, affected course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on Bright Space for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will **not** change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

Methods of Evaluation

The grade for the course will be arrived at as follows:

Assignments

Assignments are designed to incorporate ideas and approaches learned both in class and through independent practice and experimentation. Students are encouraged to challenge themselves to explore, personalize, and expand on the creative potential of these skill sets. **There is no final written exam.**

Student performance will be evaluated in terms of technical proficiency, conceptual focus, synthesis, and work ethic. Successful projects will clearly demonstrate knowledge in four key areas:

- **preproduction** - research/planning,
- **production**, - capture of video/audio, and experimentation,
- **post production** effective editing including synchronizing audio and video, and color grading.
- **distribution** exporting video using an appropriate codec for YouTube and use on social media.

A **5%** penalty may be deducted from assignments submitted late, or those not presented in the required format**.** It is the student's responsibility to remain informed as to submission details and requirements. Assignments without official documentation will not be accepted after grades have been released. ***By communicating/negotiating with the instructor before missing a due date you will avoid penalty.***

Note: You may negotiate a change to any given project. If you have an idea for a different project speak to Greg De Souza and prepare a written project proposal showing how your project will illustrate the same elements of the project you are substituting. You must complete 3 of the 5 mini assignments. You may choose to opt out of either assignment 4 and/or 5

Value of Assignments

- Mini Assignments Portfolio 35%(best 3/4)
- Practical Editing quiz 10%
- Culminating Project 1 25%
- Culminating Project 2 30%

Please note: The Department of English & Writing Studies does not release final grades. All undergraduate grade reports will be available online from the Office of the Registrar.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory in all classes and tutorials. In cases of excessive absenteeism (e.g. more than 9 unexcused hours for a half course, 18 for a full course), which are not accounted for by either academic consideration or accommodation, students may be debarred from taking the final examination, and will receive an official warning to this effect by or before the course drop date (see Senate policy). In classes with or without final exams, students who do not attend class will receive 0% for course participation grades. Unless other policies dictate a different set of penalties in specific English and Writing Studies programs, this will apply to all department programs

Gender-Based and Sexual Violence

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca

Intellectual Property/Copyright

All instructor-written materials (e.g. PowerPoints, lecture notes, oral lectures) for this course are created solely for students' personal use within the course, and remain the instructor's intellectual property. Further reproduction, fixation, distribution, transmission, dissemination, communication, or any other uses, without securing the consent of the copyright owner (the course instructor) may be an infringement of copyright. You may not distribute, email, or otherwise communicate these materials to any other person.

These limitations extend to recording, photographing, or sharing lectures (online or in-person) and lecture material without permission. Posting the instructor's content from this course to online course sharing sites like OneClass or Course Hero without permission is both an infringement of intellectual property law and a violation of academic integrity guidelines. The instructor will pass these cases on to the Western University Ombudsperson or their Department Chair as appropriate.

Religious Accommodation
Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the Western Multicultural Calendar.

Support Services
Registrarial Services http://www.registrar.uwo.ca
Student Support Services https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login
Services provided by the USC http://westernusc.ca/services/
Academic Support & Engagement http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

The Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)
In this course, students are permitted to use AI tools. The use of AI tools can serve as a starting point for developing scripts; however, students are expected to uphold academic integrity by appropriately attributing all sources and avoiding plagiarism. Assignments should reflect the students' own thoughts and independent work. By adhering to these guidelines, students contribute to a responsible and ethical learning environment that promotes critical thinking, independent inquiry and allows them to produce original contributions.

Academic Offences
Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Plagiarism

There are no written tests or exams in Film Production 3368

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

Important Sessional Dates

September 4:	**First day of classes**
September 12:	Last day to add or drop a Fall half course or Fall/Winter full course
September 30:	National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (non-instructional day)
October 13:	Thanksgiving
November 3-7:	**Fall Reading Week**
December 1:	Last day to withdraw without penalty from a Fall half course
December 5:	**Class Film Festival**
December 9:	Fall classes end
December 10:	Study Day
December 11-22:	Exam period
January 30, 2025:	Last day to drop a full-year course

3368F- ASSIGNMENTS

GREG DE SOUZA | INSTRUCTOR

TASK	DUE DATE
Culminating Project 1 – work with a partner or two – each producing their own video - Due Nov 12 Option 1: Who are you? How did you get here? Where are you going? Are you lost? What does your life say to the world? What are three words that guide how you live? Option 2: Immigration Story: How did you or your family arrive in Canada? Are you a settler, immigrant or refugee? What challenges did you face? Have you been welcomed? **This video must be a minute or less. (5% penalty for exceeding 60 sec)** - Deconstruct a story board of a 1 minute sample commercial - Dieppe Bell Commercial - Coca Cola - Brotherly Love | Coke / Avicii Hey Brother - proud fathers - Tim Hortons True Stories TV Commercial - Dad's Place - Olympic Coke Commercial - Coke Masterpiece - Create a story board or shot list for the CP1 project - Share the storyboard with friends, classmates and Greg. - Describe the shots you will employ. Ex. establishing shot, close up, medium, long shots etc - Record the audio and video **with a partner/s**. If you must work alone look for remote control apps to control your camera. - You may include personal photos/home videos, or recordings. - Rely on images, colour and music to communicate your story and evoke feelings. Use narration sparingly. - You may include sound effects, or royalty free music. You can use commercial music with a caution. The owner of the copyright will often allow you to post but they will claim your work. In a sense it is no longer yours. - Edit with Final Cut Pro X or Resolve.	November 12

TASK	DUE DATE
Mini Assignment 1 – Rule of Thirds/ Daily Movement Due Sept 26 Story board and capture the steps of three everyday activities. For example, making coffee, putting on socks and shoes, entering a doorway, starting a car. Connect these scenes to tell a story of loss without dialogue. Follow the rule thirds for all shots with **one shot using diagonal composition**. Use a music track and cut to the music. Include a variety of shots including a shallow depth of field. Capture a still life with varied **camera movements**. • Capture a **moving object** i.e. Someone moving, a vehicle traveling away from, towards or parallel to the camera. *Use the tripod, fig rig, slider or dolly for this assignment. You may have to improvise.* • Capture a shot **combining camera and object movement** Group members can use the footage to cut their own videos. Tip: Use a story board or shot list before you begin to shoot. Tip: Break down the steps for each activity using a variety of shots. Tip: Cut to the changes in the music. Tip: Make edits on the action. Tip: Reframe each shot moving from one angle to another while maintaining the rule of thirds. Tell a story in these three shots. Tip: Hold the beginning and end of each shot for 5 seconds. Tip: Create transition shots by tilting/panning to the sky, a solid object like a tree, pillar or wall or the ground or covering the lens with a hand or other object. Consider how the direction of these transitions will flow.	Sept 26
Mini Assignment 2 – Colour –work in groups of two or three- produce individual videos. Use music and dialogue to enhance the project. **Due Oct 10** Story board and create an establishing scene of a main character and his/her journey. Draw the viewers' attention using colour. Mute the background colors and make the character's costume or eyes "pop." Create the "Sin City" effect Tip: Use of lighting and costume during production can make life easier in post. Tip: Film a 18% grey card, white card, or pantone colour swatches at the beginning of each shot for reference. Tip: Use the hue vs hue/ hue vs saturation and/or RGB curves to adjust luminance, white balance, hue and saturation in Postproduction Tip: Masking and tracking tools can be a significant help in secondary colour grading	October 10

TASK	DUE DATE
Mini Assignment 3 - Over the Shoulder – in person group of four – online group of two. Due Oct 24 Recreate a scene of dialogue between two people (from a play, a book or movie.) Using one camera create an OTS angle of this scene. Consider carefully the lighting, capture of sound, camera movement, continuity and editing to create an overall design. Tip: Use rack focus to direct the audience's attention. Tip: A shallow depth of field may be useful in this setting You will have to film the scene at least three times. You need a wide shot and an OTS angle for each character. **Your actors may read from a script.	October 24
Mini Assignment 4 Option 1– Multiple camera and audio **Due Nov. 14** Part 1: In two groups video an interview, a short reading or performance with two or three cameras and at least one digital recorder. Part 2. Each group member will create their own edit of the video using the mutlicam timelines in FCPX or Resolve. Tip: Mark the beats and important points on the audio and video files. These points will help you align your cuts.	Nov 14
Mini Assignment 5 Stop Motion Animation option 2 Create stop motion story between 20 and 60 seconds long using your choice of Claymation, lego or brickfilms, puppet or model animation, cutout animation. Tips • Set your stage, lighting and camera. Do not move it until you finish the project. • Story board creating a shot list with the length of time for each shot. • Take 7 photographs for each second of video • Use you NLE to edit • Add music or voice over as required. (keep dialogue to a minimum.)	Nov 21
Practical Editing Quiz We will meet over ZOOM or in person. You will have 10 minutes to demonstrate proficiency on Final Cut Pro X, or DaVinci Resolve. The questions and practice materials will be provided before the quiz.	Nov 12 & 14

TASK	DUE DATE
Culminating Project – Production Company simulation – one group video Work together in your production company to produce the culminating video. Assign roles to share the work of preproduction, production, post and distribution. Each group member will complete assessments of their contribution and the contribution of other group members. Upload the final video or a trailer to YouTube, to promote it through social media and discuss the analytics after one week. You will introduce your video at our Film festival organized by your marketing team. The **Film Aesthetic RGB Trophy** will be awarded. Tip: Create a company logo Tip: Remember to include a complete credit roll. Tip: Cut on the action Tip: Audio is half the video.	**Dec 5**

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