

ENG 4136. Film and Video Production: “Introduction to Independent Filmmaking”**Fall 2022, 4 credits, #27055, Section 011F****Professor: Dr. Trevor Mowchun**

Class (TUR 2322): Tuesday Period 10 - 11 (5:10 PM - 7:05 PM), Thursday Period 10 (5:10 PM - 6:00 PM)

Screening (ROL 115): Wednesday Period E1 - E3 (7:20 PM - 10:10 PM); Projectionist: Brooke Whitaker (bwhitaker@ufl.edu)

Course website (Canvas): elearning.ufl.edu

Office hours (TUR 4336): Thursday 3:45-4:45pm, or by appointment.

Email: tmowchun@ufl.edu (please allow at least 24 hours for a response)

Film lab technician: Chance Freytag (TUR 4303)

Email: freytagc@ufl.edu

Phone: 850-499-7647

Lab hours (with Chance):

- Monday: periods 6-7 (12:50pm - 2:45pm)
- Tuesday: periods 5-7 (11:45pm - 2:45pm)
- Wednesday: periods 8-9 (3pm - 4:55pm)
- Thursday: periods 5-7 (11:45pm - 2:45pm)

*Chance’s lab hours are subject to change.

Course Description

Cinema is a unique, complex, evolving, and visionary artform with great individual and social impact. Cinema is also a language, and speaking it with conviction requires far more than mastering its technical equipment. To learn to “speak” cinema clearly and evocatively, the student filmmaker working within an independent production model must develop a wide array of skills, such as conceptualization, visual thinking, dramatic construction, acting, continuity, cinematography, stylistic expression, spatial and temporal manipulation, to name but a few. This course explores both the artistic and technical aspects of filmmaking in tandem, considering the varied and inexhaustible ways that the medium of film activates the synergy of these aspects and leads the imagination into free, perhaps uncharted territory. Throughout the semester we will open a window into the inner workings of the creative cinematic process, analyze films from the perspective of their own making, and continually search for ways to enrich, stimulate and guide creativity throughout the entire filmmaking process from concept to screen.

Students will discover the expressive potential of cinema through the creation of a series of short “film sketches” or “micro films” based on concrete themes, concepts, forms, or narrative structures. These sketches are an opportunity to explore the medium’s inherent aesthetic characteristics or “grammar” (i.e., image, movement, silence, sound, time, space, montage, the frame, the face) without one’s attention being diverted or burdened by the demands of an overly complex storyline or cluster of themes. Students will then have an opportunity to make a short film based on a work of micro-fiction or poetry. Finally, with direction from the instructor, the class as a whole will collaborate on a film throughout the semester.

Students will be given access to the English Department's media lab, fit with ample production and post-production equipment. Our lab technician will hold weekly office hours to provide workshops with the equipment and answer any technical questions that come up. Students are also free to use their own film equipment with prior approval from the instructor.

Books

*For purchase at the UF bookstore or another vendor. Copies will be placed on reserve at the library when possible.

- Robert Bresson, *Notes on the Cinematograph*, trans. Jonathan Griffin (New York: New York Review of Books, 2016).
- Blain Brown, *Cinematography: Theory and Practice: For Cinematographers and Directors*, Fourth Edition (London and New York: Routledge, 2022).
- Lydia Davis, *Can't and Won't* (New York: Picador 2015).
- Alexander Mackendrick, *On Film-making: An Introduction to the Craft of the Director*, ed. Paul Cronin (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2004).
- Arthur Rimbaud, *Illuminations*, trans. John Ashbery (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2011).

* All remaining readings will be available on Canvas.

Online Technical Resources

- Video Production Tips (from Penn State Media Commons):

<https://mediacommons.psu.edu/2017/02/01/video-production-tips/>

- Basic camera manual—Canon Rebel T5i (information about video starts on page 173; page 176 discusses manual video settings): <http://gdlp01.c-wss.com/gds/5/0300010905/07/eos-rebel5i-700d-im7-en.pdf>

- Film glossary (from New York Film Academy):

<https://www.nyfa.edu/student-resources/glossary/>

- Basic Adobe Premiere editing tutorial: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hls3Tp7JS8E>

Equipment, Technical Assistance, and Proficiency

- The Department of English provides production and post-production equipment, including Adobe Premiere editing software, however you are free to use your own equipment with approval from me. Please be aware that basic proficiency must be met before checking out equipment for the first time, particularly the department's cameras.

- Our media assistant, Chance Freytag, will be available in the equipment room (TUR 4303) during scheduled lab hours to conduct basic proficiency tests and provide demonstrations of production and postproduction equipment, in addition to assisting with any technical questions you may have. Chance will also be available to answer questions via phone, email, and text message. Please be aware that technical support is restricted to the department's onsite resources. Lab hours are listed at the top of the syllabus.

- In order to record, store, transfer and regularly back up your work you may need all or some of the following equipment:

- SD card for video recording (recommended: SanDisk 32-128 GB)
- SD card for audio recording (recommended: SanDisk 16-32 GB)
- External hard drive for project storage (recommended: 500GB-1TB)

- SD card reader *The department's Mac computers have SD slots.

Equipment and Lab Policies

- The department media lab is located in TUR 4303. The key code will be provided. Throughout the semester you will have 24/7 access to the lab and will be given a key to one of the editing suites. A \$50 replacement fee will be charged for lost keys. To sign out keys please consult with the technician during scheduled office hours in TUR 4303. Be sure to return your keys at the end of the semester.
- When checking out equipment, the technician will manage all equipment sign-ins and sign-outs, support all computer platforms and deal with any equipment problems, exchanges, repairs etc. He will provide a schedule and forms for requesting equipment for all projects and determine return dates in accordance with the syllabus and the course deadlines. You are fully responsible for all equipment that you have signed out, including any mishandling, damage or loss of gear.

Course Schedule

- * Course material is subject to change.
- * Complete the readings for the Tuesday class of each week.

- Week 1 (Aug. 24-25): Introduction

*No screening on Wednesday Aug. 24.

- Week 2 (Aug. 30-31, Sept. 1)

Reading:

- Steven D. Katz, "Chapter 3: Storyboards," in *Film Directing Shot by Shot: Visualizing from Concept to Screen* (Studio City, CA: Michael Wiese Productions in conjunction with Focal Press, 1991), pp. 23-84. *Access via Canvas. **Chapter consists mostly of images.
- Alexander Mackendrick, *On Film-making: An Introduction to the Craft of the Director*, pp. ix-xi, xxxv-21.

Film: *Lumière and Company* (various directors, concept by Phillippe Poullet, France, 88 minutes)

Short film: *The Wold Shadow* (Stan Brakhage, USA, 1972, 2.5 minutes)

Short film: *Not-I* (Samuel Beckett, performed by Billie Whitelaw, UK, 1972, 15 minutes)

Short film: *World of Glory* (Roy Andersson, Sweden, 1991, 14 minutes)

- Week 3 (Sept. 6 - 8)

Reading:

- Alexander Mackendrick, *On Film-making: An Introduction to the Craft of the Director*, pp. 22-43.
- Blain Brown, "Chapter 6: Cameras," in *Cinematography: Theory and Practice: Imagemaking for Cinematographers and Directors* (4th edition), pp. 95-118.

Short film: *My Childhood* (Bill Douglas, UK, 1972, 46 minutes)

Film: *The Long Day Closes* (Terrence Davies, UK, 1992, 85 minutes)

- Week 4 (Sept. 13 - 15)

Reading:

- Alexander Mackendrick, *On Film-making: An Introduction to the Craft of the Director*, pp. 44-75.
- Blain Brown, "Chapter 7: Measuring Digital," in *Cinematography: Theory and Practice: Imagemaking for Cinematographers and Directors* (4th edition), pp. 119-136.

Short film: *In the Street* (Helen Levitt, Janice Loeb, James Agee, USA, 1948, 14 minutes)

Film: *Face to Face* (John Brahm & Bretaigne Windust, USA, 1952, 89 minutes)

- Week 5 (Sept. 20 -22)

Reading:

- Alexander Mackendrick, *On Film-making: An Introduction to the Craft of the Director*, pp. 76-110.
- Blain Brown, "Chapter 8: Exposure," in *Cinematography: Theory and Practice: Imagemaking for Cinematographers and Directors* (4th edition), pp. 137-162.

Short film: *Meshe of the Afternoon* (Maya Deren, USA, 1943, 14 minutes)

Film: *Enemy* (Denis Villeneuve, 2013, Canada/Spain/France, 90 minutes)

TRANSITION

- Week 6 (Sept. 27 - 29)

Reading:

- Raul Ruiz, "Central Conflict Theory," in *Poetics of Cinema*, trans. Brian Holmes (Paris: Dis Voir, 2005), pp. 9-24. *Access via Canvas
- Blain Brown, "Chapter 9: Linear, Gamma, Log," in *Cinematography: Theory and Practice: Imagemaking for Cinematographers and Directors* (4th edition), pp. 163-188.

Excerpt: Opening section of *The Master* (Paul Thomas Anderson, USA, 2012, approximately 20 minutes)

Film: *Ghost World* (Terry Zwigoff, USA/UK/Germany, 2001, 112 minutes)

- Week 7 (Oct. 4 - 6)

Reading:

- Stan Brakhage, "Selections from *Metaphors on Vision*," in *Essential Brakhage* (New York: Documentext, 2001), pp. 11-71. *Access via Canvas
- Blain Brown, "Chapter 10: Color," in *Cinematography: Theory and Practice: Imagemaking for Cinematographers and Directors* (4th edition), pp. 189-218.

Short films:

- *Sirius Remembered* (Stan Brakhage, USA, 1959, 10 minutes)
- *Prelude: Dog Star Man* (Stan Brakhage, USA, 1962, 25 minutes)
- *Commingle Containers* (Stan Brakhage, USA, 1997, 3 minutes)
- *The Very Eye of Night* (Maya Deren, USA, 1958, 15 minutes)
- *WVLNT: Wavelength For Those Who Don't Have The Time* (Michael Snow, Canada, 2003, 15 minutes)
- *The Petrified Dog* (Sydney Peterson, USA, 1948, 18 minutes)

TRANSITION

- Week 8 (Oct. 11 - 13)

Reading:

- Alexander Mackendrick, *On Film-making: An Introduction to the Craft of the Director*, pp. 111-159.
- Blain Brown, "Chapter 11: Image Control," in *Cinematography: Theory and Practice: Imagemaking for Cinematographers and Directors* (4th edition), pp. 219-242.

Short film: *Eh Joe* (Samuel Beckett, performed by Jack MacGowran, UK, 1966, 18 minutes)

Film: *The Sweet Smell of Success* (Alexander Mackendrick, USA, 1957, 96 minutes)

- Week 9 (Oct. 18 -20)

Reading:

- Alexander Mackendrick, *On Film-making: An Introduction to the Craft of the Director*, pp. 160-194.
- Blain Brown, "Chapter 12: Lighting Sources," in *Cinematography: Theory and Practice: Imagemaking for Cinematographers and Directors* (4th edition), pp. 243-262.

Short film: *Quad* (Samuel Beckett, UK/Germany, 1981) *10 minute excerpt

Film: *The Ladykillers* (Alexander Mackendrick, UK, 1955, 91 minutes)

- Week 10 (Oct. 25 - 27)

Reading:

- Alexander Mackendrick, *On Film-making: An Introduction to the Craft of the Director*, pp. 195-217.
- Blain Brown, "Chapter 13: Lighting" and "Chapter 14: Controlling Light," in *Cinematography: Theory and Practice: Imagemaking for Cinematographers and Directors* (4th edition), pp. 263-318.

Short film: *Film* (Samuel Beckett and Alan Schneider, performed by Buster Keaton, USA, 1965, 24 minutes)

Film: *Rosetta* (Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne, Belgium/France, 1999, 93 minutes)

Short film: *Prologue* (Béla Tarr, Hungary, 2004, 5 minutes, from *Visions of Europe*)

TRANSITION

- Week 11 (Nov. 1 - 3)

Reading:

- Carl Dreyer, "A Little on Film Style," in *Dreyer in Double Reflection*, trans. Donald Skoller (New York: Dutton, 1973), pp. 122-142. *Access via Canvas
- Andrei Tarkovsky, "Time, Rhythm and Editing," in *Sculpting in Time*, trans. Kitty Hunter-Blair (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000), pp. 113-124. *Access via Canvas
- Blain Brown, "Chapter 15: Gripology," in *Cinematography: Theory and Practice: Imagemaking for Cinematographers and Directors* (4th edition), pp. 319-342.

Short film: *Lifeline* (Victor Erice, Spain, 2002, 11 minutes)

Film: *Day of Wrath* (Carl Dreyer, Denmark, 1943, 100 minutes)

- Week 12 (Nov. 8 - 10)

Reading:

- Robert Bresson, *Notes on the Cinematograph*, trans. Jonathan Griffin (New York: New York Review of Books, 2016).
- Blain Brown, "Chapter 17: Optics and Focus," in *Cinematography: Theory and Practice: Imagemaking for Cinematographers and Directors* (4th edition), pp. 365-380.

Short film: *Street of Crocodiles* (Quay Brothers, UK, 1986, 21 minutes)

Film: *Pickpocket* (Robert Bresson, France, 1959, 75 minutes)

- Week 13 (Nov. 15 - 17)

Reading:

- Screenplay for *The Swimmer*, by Eleanor Perry. *Access via Canvas
- Blain Brown, "Chapter 18: Set Operations," in *Cinematography: Theory and Practice: Imagemaking for Cinematographers and Directors* (4th edition), pp. 381-418.

Short film: *Study of a River* (Peter Hutton, USA, 1997, 16 minutes)

Film: *The Swimmer* (Frank Perry, USA, 1968, 95 minutes)

TRANSITION

- Week 14 (Nov. 22 - 24) *No class on Nov. 23-24 — Thanksgiving

Reading:

- Alexander Mackendrick, *On Film-making: An Introduction to the Craft of the Director*, pp. 218-250.
- Blain Brown, "Chapter 19: DIT and Workflow," in *Cinematography: Theory and Practice: Imagemaking for Cinematographers and Directors* (4th edition), pp. 419-432.

Film: *The Tenant* (Roman Polanski, France, 1976, 126 minutes) *Watch during the break; viewing instructions will be provided.

- Week 15 (Nov. 29 – Dec. 1)

Reading:

- Alexander Mackendrick, *On Film-making: An Introduction to the Craft of the Director*, pp. 251-271.
- Blain Brown, "Chapter 20: Power and Distro," in *Cinematography: Theory and Practice: Imagemaking for Cinematographers and Directors* (4th edition), pp. 433-454.

Films:

- *München-Berlin Wanderung/Walking from Munich to Berlin* (Oskar Fischinger, Germany, 1927, 3 minutes)
- *Very Nice, Very Nice* (Arthur Lipsett, Canada, 1961, 7 minutes)
- *City of Gold* (Colin Low and Wolf Koenig, Canada, 1957, 21 minutes)
- *Guernica* (Alain Resnais and Robert Hessens, France, 1950, 13 minutes)

- *nostalgia* (Hollis Frampton, USA, 1971, 38 minutes)
- *La Jetée* (Chris Marker, France, 1962, 28 minutes)

- Week 16 (Dec. 6 - 7)

Reading:

- Alexander Mackendrick, *On Film-making: An Introduction to the Craft of the Director*, pp. 272-291.
- Blain Brown, "Chapter 21: Technical Issues," in *Cinematography: Theory and Practice: Imagemaking for Cinematographers and Directors* (4th edition), pp. 455-482.

Film: *World to Come* (Daniel Eskin and Trevor Mowchun, Canada, 2015, 102 minutes)

Coursework

- * Submission of written work: I prefer hardcopies, submitted in class and on time. Use 1.5 or double spacing; single-space for screenplays.
- * Submission of films: Use a free file sharing service called WeTransfer to send your films directly to me. On WeTransfer you can upload files upwards of 2GB, which should be more than sufficient. If your files exceed the maximum size you can either compress them slightly or use another service such as MyAirBridge. Create a link and send your file(s) to my email address: tmowchun@ufl.edu. Always ensure your files are labelled with your name and project title.

Concept, Scenario, Visualization (4 conceptualizations/scenarios for film sketches, 1/2 page - 1 page each): 8%, Due Sept. 20 (in class)

- Begin exploring the creative possibilities of cinema through a series of short moving image "sketches" or "micro films" of approximately 1-2 minutes each.
- Write 4 conceptualizations/scenarios for these sketches (1/2 page - 1 page each). Be sure to include details about the main idea, setting, story (for narratives), structure (for experimental), characters (if applicable), style, techniques, etc.

Cinematic Sketchbook: 30%, Due Oct. 21

- Using your written ideas above, create 3 film sketches (approximately 1-2 minutes each). This means one of your four ideas will be cut.
- Keep it simple so you can maintain your focus on the ideas and artistic execution.
- Arrange your sketches into a single timeline. Be sure to provide titles for the sketches and begin each one with at least 5 seconds of black.

Sound Exercise: 7%, Due Oct. 21

- Shift your attention from picture to sound and record pieces of audio totaling approximately 1-2 minutes. Think of this as a "sound film."
- Record the sound using one of our H4N audio recorders.
- Select a still image (a photograph or painting) to accompany the sound—an image that could be enhanced, expanded, or animated by the sound. You could also start the sound film process by selecting a still image first to see what sorts of sounds it stirs in your imagination.
- Be sure to combine the still image and sounds into one file and include this film (with a title) in your sketchbook (see above).

Short Film (with Source Material, Script, and Research Notes): 35%, Written Material Due Nov. 8 (in class), Film Due Dec. 9

- This film must be an adaptation of either a piece of micro-fiction from Lydia Davis' collection *Can't and Won't*, or a poem from Arthur Rimbaud's *Illuminations*. Your choice of source material will likely depend on your interest in narrative or experimental forms.
- Research the subject matter and aesthetics of your film. Include notes on relevant readings, films, artworks, and other sources of inspiration/instruction.
- Write the script for the film. Be sure to indicate which text you are adapting. A shot list and/or storyboard is recommended but not required.
- Create a short film approximately 5 minutes long. Be sure to give your film a title and include credits.

Class Film: 25%, rolling due dates throughout the semester

Simultaneous with your own individual film work, we will be collaborating on a class film throughout the semester. The film will be made during and outside of class. Everyone must contribute at least one scene/sequence to the film. This work can be done in groups. Further details will be discussed in class.

Grade Scale:

<i>Percent</i>	<i>Grade</i>	<i>Grade Points</i>
90.0 - 100.0	A	4.00
87.0 - 89.9	A-	3.67
84.0 - 86.9	B+	3.33
81.0 - 83.9	B	3.00
78.0 - 80.9	B-	2.67
75.0 - 79.9	C+	2.33
72.0 - 74.9	C	2.00
69.0 - 71.9	C-	1.67
66.0 - 68.9	D+	1.33
63.0 - 65.9	D	1.00
60.0 - 62.9	D-	0.67
0 - 59.9	E	0.00

Policies and Services

- Please no late submissions unless you discuss with me first.
- I will respond to emails from Monday to Friday, usually within a day or two, though please be patient when waiting for a response. While email communication may seem indispensable nowadays, you may prefer to meet with me during office hours or via Zoom to discuss the course material.
- Regular attendance is essential. If I see that you are consistently absent then your grade will be adversely affected. Communication with the instructor is crucial to avoid misunderstandings related to absences. These policies are consistent with the UF's attendance policies. For more information on these policies, please visit:
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>
- I respectfully ask students to refrain from using cell phones and internet browsing during class.
- I respectfully ask students not to record class lectures unless they have permission from me.
- Academic Honesty and Definition of Plagiarism. Plagiarism violates the Student Honor Code and requires reporting to the Dean of Students. All students must abide by the Student Honor Code:

<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>

- Students with disabilities who are requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://drc.dso.ufl.edu/>).

- For information on UF Grading policies:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

- For counseling or urgent help you may call the on-campus Counseling and Wellness Center at 352-392-1575, or contact them online: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/services/individual/>

- UF's policy on Harassment: UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty:

<https://hr.ufl.edu/forms-policies/policies-managers/sexual-harassment/>