JOMC 221
Audio-Video Information Gathering
Spring 2014

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Class Hours: TuTh 2:00PM - 3:15PM
Office Hours: TuTh 3:15PM - 4:15PM
Classroom: Carroll Rm. 0132

Required Purchases:

Memory card for camera - SDHC card 8GB or larger (must be able to store <u>HD</u> video)

Suggested Supplies (strongly suggested):

External hard drive with 2 GB minimum, or equivalent flash drive

Suggested Supplemental Material:

Lynda.com online tutorial pack (≈ $36) for video and audio editing
(Digital Video Principles, Final Cut Pro 7 Essential Training, Final Cut Pro Essential Effects, Soundtrack Pro Essential Editing, Soundtrack Pro Audio Filters)

Ron Whittaker (2006). *Television Production: A Free, Interactive Course in Studio and Field Production*. Available for free through Cybercollege.com
(http://www.cybercollege.com/tvp_ind.htm)

Images, audio/video examples, and many of the points and techniques featured in the PowerPoint slides were gleaned from a multitude of textbooks and online sources. I invite you to peruse these sources firsthand, as well as access the many free online resources available to you.

Course Philosophy:

This course introduces students to the tools and skills needed to engage in quality storytelling with audio and video in broadcast and multimedia environments. Emphasis is in mastering technical and aesthetic aspects of digital video. This course is ultimately intended to give students the technical ability to engage in citizen or one-man-band journalism, in which the journalist acts as reporter, videographer, and editor.

Course Goals:

- Audio
  - Knowledge of the functions and limitations of the audio equipment
  - Gathering primary audio in a variety of locations
  - Gathering natural sound (ambient sound)
  - Balancing audio levels (volume) in non-linear editing
  - Layering audio in non-linear editing
  - Matching audio with video
- Video
  - Knowledge of the functions and limitations of the camera equipment
  - Use of Rule-of-Thirds
  - Camera framing angles
  - Framing the typical television news interview
  - Use of shot variety
  - Proper focusing technique
  - Ability to create a rack-focus (focus-pull)
  - Adjusting camera exposure
  - Three-point lighting
  - White-balancing
  - Non-linear editing (for continuity, for time)
  - Use of different video transition effects
  - Use of color correction effects
- Critical Thinking
  - Planning and executing productions of various lengths and styles
  - Ability to critique others' work according to the quality of pre-production, production, and post-production

MUY IMPORTANTE
Attendance Policy:

You are allotted two days of personal time off— in other words**, two absences**. There is no need to report the reason for these two absences. Each absence thereafter results in a 5-point reduction to the total number of points accumulated for the final course grade. If you find you must be absent multiple times during the semester, you should consult with me about withdrawing from the course.

Late Assignments:

- Assignments turned in within 24 hours after the date and time the assignments are due will receive 50% off.
- Assignments turned in between 24 and 48 hours after the date and time the assignments are due will receive 75% off.
- Assignments turned in over 48 hours after the due date and time will receive no credit.

There will be a 15-minute grace period for all assignments to allow for slower uploads. However, please plan accordingly. No additional grace period will be given.

Equipment Rental:

This course follows the Equipment Policy. Equipment is allocated for group or pair use in this course, as there is not enough equipment (cameras, mic cables, etc.) for individual rental. See this policy for return policies, consequences for late returns or lost/damaged equipment, and times for rental.

CARE OF EQUIPMENT:
Here's the school-wide policy about checking out equipment: Students are required to pay an appropriate fee for their section and sign a rental contract to checkout equipment. Students are expected to use equipment responsibly and report any issues they have immediately to the equipment manager. Students must turn equipment in on time or request an extension in writing to the equipment manager. Failure to use equipment responsibly may result in lending privileges being revoked, and failure to return equipment will result in an "incomplete" for the class. You will be allowed to check out gear for one week at a time. Returning gear late will affect your grade.
So, it's your responsibility to be very cautious regarding the field gear and editing equipment. When you check out or reserve gear, take a moment to look it over to see if anything is wrong and report it immediately. If anything happens to the equipment while it's checked out in your name, **YOU** will be responsible for the cost of repairs, and these cameras cost thousands of dollars. So, return every piece in the same condition it was in when you took it out and be careful. Never walk more than 2 feet away from a camera even if it's on tripod.

NEVER LEAVE EQUIPMENT UNATTENDED!!! BE AS PARANOID AS YOU HAVE TO BE, IT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY!!!!! DO NOT LEAVE EQUIPMENT IN YOUR CAR. IT SHOULD BE IN YOUR CAR ONLY LONG ENOUGH TO GET TO AND FROM WHERE YOU'RE GOING FOR THAT STORY/ASSIGNMENT.
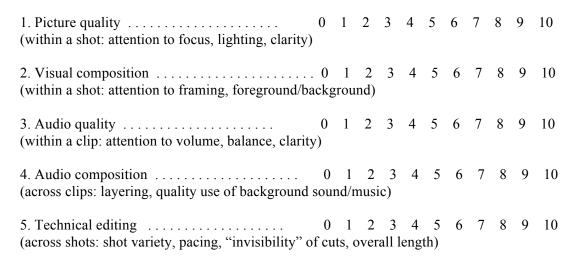
Grading:

You are graded according to the highest professional standards. The breakdown in percentages is listed below.

F = 59% or below	B- = 80-82%
D- = 60-62%	B = 83-86%
D= 63-66%	B+ = 87-89%
D+ = 67-69%	A- = 90-92%
C- = 70-72%	A = 93-96%
C = 73-76%	A+ = 97-100%
C+ = 77-79%	

Below is a series of descriptions for what each letter grade represents:

- D, D-, or F, needs to consider a different field
- D+, did not demonstrate understanding of the basics but tried
- C-, has glimpses of potential in a limited range
- C, acceptable work, follows instructions, understands basics, does the minimum to pass
- C+, good in one area of work, but consistent problems with another area
- B-, needs a bit more polish, pretty good handle on things, participates in class, does more than the minimum
- B, solid effort, would have no problem recommending this person
- B+, very good performance, consistently does more than required, a self-starter, would get an unqualified job recommendation
- A-, stands out, good attitude, work is impressive in quality, very few problems, works like career depends on it
- A, nearly perfect in execution, quality of work is exceptional
- A+, perfect

Unless otherwise noted (e.g., audio-only projects cannot be graded on video quality or video composition), projects will be scored on a combination of the following:

1. Picture quality 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
(within a shot: attention to focus, lighting, clarity)

2. Visual composition 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
(within a shot: attention to framing, foreground/background)

3. Audio quality 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
(within a clip: attention to volume, balance, clarity)

4. Audio composition 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
(across clips: layering, quality use of background sound/music)

5. Technical editing 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
(across shots: shot variety, pacing, "invisibility" of cuts, overall length)

6. Continuity editing   0   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
(across shots and clips: matching action/sound, story flow/plot holes)

Honor Code:

It is expected that each student in this class will conduct him/herself within the guidelines of the Honor System. All academic work should be done with the high level of honesty and integrity that this University demands.

It is considered an honor code violation to plagiarize work, which includes taking footage or sounds from other sources and not giving those sources credit. This also includes taking your own material from other courses or taking material from other students and using the work as an original creation for this course.

It is also considered an honor code violation to use class lecture or class demonstration time for personal use of cell phones, social media unrelated to the course assignments, etc. For example, checking a Facebook page while another student is presenting his/her work would be considered an honor code violation. However, you are free to use in-class lab time for any purpose.

Class Requirements -
(% is how much the exercise weighs in the final course grade)

Audio Scavenger Hunt (3%): January 28
This in-class exercise sends you on a mission to collect different sounds from different types of locations using the built-in camera microphone, as well as the wired handheld microphone. The purpose of this exercise is to familiarize yourself with the sound quality and audio capturing limitations of the equipment. Evaluation is based on completion.

Audio Interview with Natural Sound (10%): February 6
This exercise combines audio gathering skills with audio editing skills in a short news or documentary-style (your choice) production. You will choose an interview subject from the local food, local music, or local sports scene in Chapel Hill or Carrboro. Your task will be to gather good primary audio from this individual to create an edited interview piece of exactly 30 seconds in length. You will also gather theme-relevant natural sound to layer under the primary audio. Your own voice should not be heard during this piece. Evaluation is based on overall length, even audio levels, clarity of audio, blending of sound, layering, variety of natural sound, pacing, and adherence to the subject matter.

Video Scavenger Hunt (3%): February 11
This in-class exercise is a collection of camera shots that vary in terms of their framing, camera angle, and movement. The exercise is designed to help you practice your video composition skills, in addition to practicing use of the camera and tripod. You will simply record each specified shot one by one, according to the list that will be provided in class, and then upload your footage (via memory card) for review. Evaluation is based on completion.

Video Still Life (5%): February 20
This exercise is about shot variety and consists of recording no fewer than ten different shots of the same object. The exercise is intended to help you practice looking at an object in different ways. Shots should reflect different framing (wide, medium, close, extreme close-ups) and angles (high, at-eye-level, low). A few camera movements may also be used (zooms, pans, tilts, rack-focus). All shots should be executed on a tripod. Footage will be used in class to learn editing software. The final edited project of exactly 10 seconds should show exploration of video transitions and color effects. At least 5 shots should appear in the final edit. Evaluation is based on overall length, picture quality and focus, visual composition, pacing, and adherence to the directions of this exercise.

Matching Action (7%): March 6
This exercise combines the idea of shot variety with continuity. Your task is to gather a multitude of shots of the same simple action. A simple action is a single act that has a beginning, a middle, and an end, such as picking up a pen (looking at pen—reaching for pen—grasping pen—lifting pen) or swinging a golf club (looking at ball—preparing for swing—swinging up/back—swinging down—hitting ball—following through). Making a sandwich consists of multiple actions and would not be appropriate for this exercise. The action should take no more than 10 seconds to perform, as the final product must be

exactly 10 seconds in length. When editing, you will need to choose the best and most appropriate shots that, when edited together, show the action seamlessly and in its entirety. (This means you will likely record the action multiple times with different camera angles and framing.) Only cuts should be used in editing this piece. Evaluation will be based on overall length, picture quality and focus, visual composition, pacing, continuity across shots and continuity of action, avoidance of 180° rule and jump cut issues, overall shot variety, and adherence to the directions of this exercise.

Interview with thematic b-roll, on tripod (15%): March 20
This exercise features an interview with one person, along with accompanying footage and natural sound of some demonstration of the theme of the interview. Important - the footage cannot feature the person being interviewed (hands or feet of the individual are allowable). Subject matter must be about local sports, local music, local art, or local food. This exercise is designed to get you thinking about how to bring an interview to life using images and sounds that support the subject matter. The exercise is also designed to get you thinking about editing choices, such as choosing portions of an interview that make a compelling, yet comprehensible story, and choosing the best audio to layer under the speaker so as not to interfere with the speaker's voice. Most interviews of this nature feature the speaker first, then the b-roll (while the speaker is still heard), then the speaker again. Only cuts should be used in editing. The final product should be exactly 30 seconds in length.

Interview with matched action b-roll, handheld (15%): April 1
This exercise is similar to the previous interview exercise, except that the b-roll footage must contain the speaker. This introduces the challenge of avoiding the look of jump cuts from the interview footage to the b-roll footage (and visa-versa), as well as ensuring continuity within the b-roll. Natural sound accompanying the b-roll should <u>not</u> contain the speaker's voice, as this audio would fight with the primary audio of the speaker. As such, cuts and dissolves may be used in editing. This exercise is also to be done handheld to allow you to practice having a steady hand. Directions for subject matter and length (30 seconds) are the same for this exercise as for the previous interview. Evaluation will be based on overall length, picture quality and focus, visual composition, pacing, continuity, avoidance of 180° rule and jump cut issues, shot variety, clarity of audio, audio levels throughout, layering and balancing audio, and adherence to the directions of this exercise.

Video Critique (2%): April 22
This final exercise is meant to give you a chance to combine all that you've learned throughout the semester and apply your critical eye and knowledge to evaluating someone else's work. As you have been evaluated this semester, you will get to evaluate a short video based on picture quality, visual composition, audio quality, audio composition, technical editing, and continuity editing, as well as any other dimensions you identify. Evaluation is based on completion.

Final Project (40%): April 24
This last production exercise is actually a two-in-one production, in which the same story will be told in an online video format, as well as an audio-only format. The style of these products can be documentary-style or news-style. The style should remain consistent throughout the product. At least two interviews (or character narratives) must be featured in each product, intercut with other supporting video (b-roll) and natural sound. Music may be used, but only if it fits the production. Subject matter must be related to local food, local music, local art, or local sports. The online video must be exactly 60 seconds in length. The audio version must be exactly 45 seconds long. Evaluation will be based on overall length, picture quality and focus, visual composition, pacing, continuity, avoidance of 180° rule and jump cut issues, shot variety, clarity of audio, audio levels throughout, layering and balancing audio, and adherence to the directions of this exercise.

General Course Outline

1. Introduction to Digital Storytelling
2. Audio Composition
3. *Vimeo, files, sending to gmail account*
   a. Introduction to editing software
   b. Importing files from computer for editing
4. *In class* - Audio Scavenger Hunt *
   a. Introduction to camera operation
   b. External microphone usage
5. *Assigned* - Audio Interview with Natural Sound*
   a. Transferring files from camera to computer
   b. Uploading files for class review
6. Video Composition
7. *In class* - Video Scavenger Hunt
   a. Review of camera basics
   b. Additional camera techniques
8. *Assigned* - Video Still Life*
9. News video critiques (will be ongoing)
10. *Assigned* - Matching Action*
11. Lighting techniques
12. *Assigned* - Interview with thematic b-roll (tripod)*
13. *Assigned* - Interview with matched action b-roll (handheld)*
14. *Assigned* - Final multiplatform project*
15. *Assigned* - Video critique

* At least one in-class lab day will be provided.

Tentative Course Schedule (subject to change):

Day 1   Overview and Introduction to Storytelling
Jan 9

Day 2   Audio Composition
Jan 14   Camera Basics (automatic) Built in Mic
                  Audio Scavenger Hunt assigned

Day 3   *Understanding Final Cut Part 1*
Jan 16   Introduction to the software
                  Importing and exporting audio for audio scavenger hunt

Day 4   *Understanding Final Cut Part 2*
Jan 21

Day 5   Introduction to **camera** operation
Jan 23   External microphone usage
                  Work on Audio Walk-through if time permits

Day 6   <mark>Audio Scavenger Hunt due</mark>
Jan 28   Audio Packages
              Review of editing software
              Transferring files from camera to computer for editing
              Assigned - Audio Interview with Natural Sound

Day 7   In-class lab time
Jan 30   Work on Audio Interview with Natural Sound Video

Day 8   Composition
Feb 4   Framing, aesthetics, quality

Day 9   <mark>*Audio Interview with Natural Sound due at beginning of class*</mark>
Feb 6   <mark>*In-class -*</mark> Video Scavenger Hunt
                  Review of camera operation
                  Additional camera techniques and operation
                  Work on Audio Interview with Natural Sound if time permits

Day 10   *Video Scavenger Hunt footage due at beginning of class for review*
Feb 11   Listen to Audio Interview with Natural Sound projects
          Review Video Scavenger Hunt footage as a class
          Assigned - Video Still

Day 11   LifeVideo example and critique
Feb 13   Review and extension of editing software
          In-class lab time
               Work on Video Still Life

Day 12   Video example and critique
Feb 18   In-class lab time
               Work on Video Still Life

Day 13   *Video Still Life due at beginning of class*
Feb 20   *Assigned* - Matching Action
               Shooting to edit, continuity

Day 14   In-class lab time
Feb 25   Work on Matching Action

Day 15   Lighting and Exposure
Feb 27   Work on Matching Action if time permits

Day 16   2nd Camera workshop "Hands-on"
Mar 4   Lighting Techniques
               Lighting a news interview indoors and outdoors

Day 17   *Matching Action due at beginning of class*
Mar 6

Spring Break

Day 18
and 19
March
11-13

Day 20   In-class lab time
March   Work on Interview with thematic b-roll (tripod)
18

Day 21   In-class lab time
March   Work on Interview with thematic b-roll <mark style="background-color: red">(tripod)*Interview with thematic b-roll due at beginning of class*</mark>
20

Day 22   Watch Interview with thematic b-roll projects in class
March   *Assigned* - Interview with matched action b-roll (handheld)
25   Watch examples and critique

Day 23   Handheld techniques and practiceIn-class lab time
March   Work on Interview with matched action b-roll (handheld)In-
27   class lab time

Day 24   Work on Interview with matched action b-roll <mark style="background-color: red">(handheld)*Interview with matched action b-roll due at beginning of class*</mark>
Apr 1

Day 25   Thinking multiplatform
Apr 3   Examples of online audio/video styles
            Assigned - Final Project (online audio-only and audio/video story)

Day 26   In-class lab time
Apr 8   Work on Final Project In-class lab time

Day 27   Work on Final Project In-class lab time
Apr 10

Day 28   Work on Final Project In-class lab time
Apr 15

Day 29   Work on Final Project In-class lab time
Apr 17

Day 30   *In-class* - Video Critique
Apr 22   Grade and comment on a video as if you were a video judge
                    Groups of 2 (video from Vimeo)
             Work on Final Project if time permits

Day 31   Watch Final Projects in class
Apr 24   *Final Projects due at beginning of class*