

Field Video Production II COM 480

T Th 3:00-4:45 (4 credit hours)

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Office hours: by appointment and Mon. 1-3 Tue. 9-11 Wed. 3-5 Th. 9-11

Required text - Video Basics 4, Zettl; Final Cut Pro 5 Visual Quickpro Guide, Lisa Brenneis

Additional materials - mini-DV videotapes. Available at Circuit City, Target, Sam's, and on-line at www.taperesources.com and tapesonline.com

Course description and objectives Students participating in this course are expected to have a strong interest in video and/or film production. This is an advanced course intended for individuals with prior experience in video or film production and who have completed COM 280 and 380 or comparable courses at another university. Given that all participants have, at a minimum, intermediate video production experience, small groups will identify, plan, organize and produce a number of productions, predominantly for "outside" (non-class) clients.

By the end of the course students should:

1. Expand their general skills in all areas of video production
2. Gain particular exceptional skill in one or more areas of video production (e.g., editing, producing, camera operation)
3. Gain experience in producing video for an external client, festival submission or telecast outlet (e.g., cable channel)
4. Gain a thorough understanding of the organizational elements necessary for professional video production
5. Produce at least one substantial 'final product' worthy of distribution to clients or for air on UNCW-TV
6. Assemble a collection of productions worthy of inclusion on a resume tape

Seahawk Student Video Production Company. The class will function as a production company and will complete a number of substantial projects during the semester. All members of the class are expected to act professionally within the class, when using the equipment, and when interacting with clients or potential clients. Groups of two or three students will organize and plan projects and class members will be expected to act as crew for other groups' productions.

Students and professors may not profit from the work done as a part of this class. Any remuneration provided by clients will go to the UNCW Communication Studies Trust Fund. Production quality will be judged by the highest professional standards.

Productions will be publicly screened at the end of the semester.

Motivation and difficulty As you know already, video production is a difficult and time-consuming process. Be ready to work hard in this class. Successful completion of Field Video Production II requires the student to be self-motivated -- the goal is to get the job done to the highest possible level of quality.

Attendance Policy

1. *You are expected to attend all class meetings.*
2. You may miss two (2) classes without penalty.
3. Every two instances of arriving late or leaving early will count as one absence.
4. The third absence will result in the automatic deduction of a one half-letter grade in your final course grade (A to A-, A- to B+, etc.).
5. Each absence beyond three (i.e., 4+) will result in a full letter grade deduction in the student's overall course grade.
6. Thus, regardless of the number of points earned on exams and assignments: a student missing four (4) classes may earn no higher than a B- for the course. A student missing five (5) classes may earn no higher than a C-. A student missing six (6) classes may earn no higher than a D.
7. Students with five or more absences will not be eligible to enroll in other video production courses.
8. Exceptions to the attendance policy may be made for extreme circumstances if those circumstances are handled responsibly. Responsible handling of those situations will include, but is not limited to, communicating with me as soon as possible about the situation, communicating with your production team, making arrangements to make up work in a timely manner, and the like. Such efforts may not result in removal of that absence, but are essential if an exception is to be made.
9. If you have a major life or family crisis or illness that precludes your attendance for more than one class meeting, contact me *in person* (e.g., phone, email) as soon as can be reasonably expected. I recommend that you leave a message on my

office voice answering system or with the Communication Studies main office (962-3448). If you must leave campus for an extended period of time to deal with family issues, contact the Dean of Students office as soon as possible so that your professors may be notified (962-3119).

10. *You may call me at home up until 9:13 pm.*

Participation

1. Student participation is very important in this course. Each student is expected to be responsible to his or her group in all ways relevant to the course.
2. Students should be respectful of other students in the course under all circumstances, from equipment use to offering constructive criticism.
3. Students are encouraged to assist other groups with the production of their projects as a means of expanding their production capabilities and encouraging cooperative production efforts. Bonus points will be given to students assisting other groups.

General Equipment Use Guidelines and Responsibilities

1. Students are expected to follow the Department of Communication Studies equipment use policies (to be distributed in class).
2. The equipment is delicate and is to be treated with the utmost care.
3. Damage or malfunctions should be reported to Dr. Bolduc immediately.
4. Equipment is to be used for class productions or other officially approved productions only. **Any misuse or misrepresentation of the intended use of the equipment will result in immediate revocation of equipment use privileges.**
5. Equipment and edit suites must be reserved in advance using the UNCW Outlook web scheduling system.
6. Check equipment when it is picked up to make sure you have everything you need for your production.
7. Clean camera lenses before each use.
8. Charge batteries as necessary after use.
9. Do NOT leave batteries in the camera bag. Place charged batteries on the appropriate shelf in the storage room or place drained batteries on the appropriate charger.
10. Replace equipment in appropriate storage bins. Be sure cameras and tripods are stored in their proper slots on the storage shelves. Quick release plates remain with the cameras. Do NOT mix & match tripods and cameras. Tripods must be stored with the head toward the zipper pull when the bag is closed.
11. Verify reservations and equipment pick-up and return with Linda Peay, Communication Studies secretary.
12. Failure to appropriately reserve equipment, check-out and return equipment on-time, care for equipment in a professional manner and show consideration for class members in equipment use will result in a minimum of one-half letter grade deduction in your final grade.

Class Activities and Evaluation guidelines.

Section I: General Production Review. The first section of this course will be a review of all essential production practices, and of the departmental equipment, including care, storage and reservation systems. All students are expected to understand and be able to operate all cameras, lighting and audio equipment. **If deemed necessary by the professor, written and/or practical exams may be given on production techniques and equipment operation.** When appropriate, small groups of students will conduct refresher workshops for peers on equipment in the department's field production equipment cache. Other activities: ropes course, lighting workshop, and group and project selection.

Section II: Focus on Editing. Review of editing technology and techniques. Coverage of editing aesthetics and story-telling techniques. Review of the use of Final Cut Pro and Macintosh computers including advanced techniques.

Section III: Production Planning. Students will select and plan their semester production projects: identify/select projects, feasibility analysis, research and script writing, contacting outside talent, crew, and interviewees, and detailed production planning. Groups and individuals will develop formal proposals for their projects and *pitch* those projects to the class. When appropriate, groups will work closely with university or external clients during the development phase.

Production Contracts: Working with the professor, each student will develop a contract outlining the projects s/he plans to produce during the semester. Any changes in the terms of the contracts must be negotiated with the professor well in advance of the project due date.

Section IV: Production and Editing of Projects

1. Video productions: Students are expected to complete at least one substantial production during the semester, depending

upon the student's interest and capabilities. Because of the nature of the projects and of production scheduling, projects and classroom topics may overlap. Scheduling of productions will be negotiated between the producers and the executive producer.

2. **It is highly recommended that students save a copy of their production projects on a portable jump drive every time they work on their project. Date the copy. For example: UNCW Doc Jan14 06**
3. Each student must demonstrate a significant and direct contribution to at least one substantial production during the semester. Production responsibilities will vary from student to student and will be determined within the first two weeks of the semester in conjunction with the professor.
4. Students will have differing expectations in terms of genre and quantity. For example, students interested in news may participate in the production of 5-6 news packages while students interested in documentary production may produce one major project.
5. Students are expected to keep detailed records of all activities concerning their projects from the first day of brainstorming through the final edit decision list. Documents from each project must be kept in a dedicated three-hole folder or binder. Keep all formal and informal notes, contact information (name, title, phone, email), memoranda, scripts, and correspondence in this project folder. Documents shared by students within a group (e.g., shot logs) may be photocopied for use in more than one folder.
6. **Students not completing projects before the end of the semester may receive a maximum grade of 'B' in the course unless an alternative is negotiated with the professor before the last official class meeting.**

Individual elements for each project:

- 1) **Proposal/script/outline** (10%)
 - **Proposal:** A formal professional proposal including background research on the nature, content and style of the production. The proposal must include a rough production plan including locations, personnel and resources necessary for the production.
 - **Script/outline:** Depending upon the type of production, a formal script and/or outline must be submitted along with the proposal. Given the nature of production the script and outline may be reworked during production but these elements should be as close to the planned production as possible.
- 2) **Production plan** (10%): A formal professional plan for the production including all necessary details - crew, production schedule, location scout reports, location set and light plots, story boards, and contact names and phone numbers.
- 3) **Production** (60%): DV recording of the final production. The projects will be evaluated according to generally accepted production practices for quality including: creativity, technical elements of image acquisition (e.g., white balance), composition, lighting, sound gathering and editing. Experimentation is encouraged but must be planned and intentional — that is, covering errors with unorthodox techniques is not considered “experimental.”
- 4) **Post production report** (20%): A formal post-production report is required from each student for all productions. This report should be a professional evaluation of the entire project from conception through editing. The first section should review the production process and execution. Section two should evaluate the effectiveness of the production team in meeting the goals outlined in the original proposal. Section three should analyze the production value of each element of the final product.

Other course activities

- **Ropes course:** Members of the class will attend a half-day ropes course.
- **Contribution to other groups:** Students may earn extra points for acting as crewmembers for other groups' productions. Students are expected to crew on a minimum of two other productions. Crew members are expected to attend all assigned productions, show up on time and contribute to the production to the best of their ability.
- **Resume tape bonus:** Completion of a quality demonstration reel/resume tape may contribute up to 15 additional points to a student's grade. Resume tape completion is a bonus activity and will not be considered in lieu of other class activities (e.g., crewing for other groups).

*The number of points may vary depending upon the progress of the class and the quantity and the types of productions selected by students in the class. Point values for each project will be determined on a percentage basis of total work for the class (e.g., 1 major project = 100%, 5 smaller projects = 20% each). Total production point values = 400 points).

Semester Evaluation Points

Project Grade Guidelines		Semester Grades	
Proposal/script/outline	50	Projects	500
Production plan	50	Group Contribution	50
Production	300	Resume tape & other group assistance bonus	(15 each)
Post report	100		

Overarching Philosophies and Expectations

Evaluation Policies and Expectations.

1. Projects completed in this class will serve as resume tape material for those of you interested in entering the video or film production fields. As such, expect honest constructive criticism and learn to apply it to future projects.
2. Every project should be an example of the very best work that you can do. Since the productions of this class will be produced for outside clients or considered for telecast or submission to competitions, they are expected to be of extremely high quality and free of glitches or other such production errors. **Re-shoots may be necessary to maintain high production values.**
3. For productions for outside clients, students must work closely with the clients and strive to meet the client's production needs. Document all communication with outside clients.
4. Peer evaluations will be a tangible evaluation element for all group projects. Group members will rate themselves as well as fellow group members on their contribution to the production effort.
5. Any changes to the schedule or grade policy will be noted in class.
6. No make-up exams or quizzes will be given without explicit prior approval.
7. Students are responsible for all course content, including: lectures, email articles, discussions, videotapes, guest speakers, field trips, laboratory work.
8. All written assignments must be typed and on time. It is also recommended that assignments be completed on a word processor - save a copy of all of your reports on your own disk. Written assignments are expected to be of the highest quality in all areas including writing quality, organization, layout, professionalism, and neatness.
9. Late assignments receive an automatic letter grade deduction with an additional letter grade deduction per day.
10. If offered, extra credit may benefit a student no more than one-half of a letter grade.
11. **Grade scale.** Final grades will be determined on a ten-point scale based on a percentage of total possible points (e.g., A range =90-100%, B range = 80-89%, C range = 70-79%, D range = 60-69%). A plus/minus grade system will be used with the top one-percent (e.g., 89-89.9%) of each grade category earning a "plus" grade for that range and the bottom one-percent (e.g., 80-80.9%) earning a "minus" grade.

Evaluation Philosophy. At best, grades are imperfect and rough indicators of performance on a given set of evaluative elements. In our educational system, however, grades are an essential part of the overarching educational equation. Each evaluative element provides a snapshot of student knowledge or ability at a given point of the semester regarding a specific content area or skill set. This class attempts to offer a variety of elements through which students may demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills. Exams, written projects, attendance and participation are all important and combine to provide a snapshot of student understanding and/or ability over the course of the semester.

Grade interpretations. Assigned grades indicate performance quality as follows: A = overall excellence with performance substantially above one's peers. B = good to very good performance in most areas covered in the course with room for improvement. C = average performance on most course elements relative to peers. D = performance below that of peers with some grasp of some elements covered in the course. F = failure to adequately demonstrate knowledge of the topic.

Time expectations. While hard work, effort and time spent completing projects are certainly valued in this class and in our society, it is the quality of the final product, as a means of communicative expression (i.e., exam, paper, production), and not the process by which it was created which must carry the majority of evaluative weight. This is especially important to understand in the field of video production as projects are strictly judged on their merit of the value of their quality upon completion, not the amount of work that went into producing them. This is mentioned particularly because, at its core, video production is a time-consuming and complex process and projects are not measured by time spent working on them, but on the quality of the final product. For hard work and creativity to be justly recognized and rewarded, the final product, regardless of its format (i.e., video production, proposal, paper, script) must demonstrate excellence in its totality, not just in isolated elements.

Professor responsibilities. To assure that students have the greatest possibility to succeed, I will endeavor to provide students

with: 1) clear, unambiguous instructions and evaluation criteria, 2) a reasonable amount of time to complete and/or prepare for evaluation elements (pop quizzes excepted), 3) preparative materials when appropriate (e.g., test review sessions), 4) detailed and constructive feedback toward the goal of improving future efforts, and 5) advice and guidance during the preparation of long-term projects. I endeavor to make myself available to students outside of class. You are encouraged to contact me with questions or concerns.

Student responsibilities. Students are, in turn, expected to: 1) attend all class meetings, workshops and productions, 2) be prepared to participate by having read the assigned text prior to the corresponding class period, 3) participate in class discussions and offer constructive criticism of peer work when appropriate, 4) respect fellow class members at all times, and 5) be assertive and empowered in their learning experiences – ask questions, seek clarification, identify unique learning opportunities, meet with the professor to discuss general class issues and specific assignment problems and concerns.

Questions about the course. If, at any time during the semester, you have **any questions** about the course or your performance, you are encouraged to contact me outside of class. You may visit my office during posted office hours, call my office, send an email message, or leave a note in my mailbox in Leutze. When attempting to contact me outside of class, I encourage you to leave a message so that I will know what you would like to discuss and that you have tried to contact me. I will be more than happy to discuss any aspect of the course with you.

Academic Honor Code. “The University of North Carolina at Wilmington is committed to the proposition that the pursuit of truth requires the presence of honesty among all involved. It is therefore this institution’s stated policy that no form of dishonesty among its faculty or students will be tolerated.” (See page 76 of Student Handbook and Code of Student Life for the entire policy, details, and punishment.)

You are expected to represent yourself and your work honestly. Failure to do so will result in the student receiving a failing grade for the course and revocation of video production privileges.

Email. All students must maintain an active, working email account. Check the account 3 to 4 times per week for important production information. The email system will be crucial in enabling us to keep in touch with each other outside of class. Use email as a means of communicating with the instructor (help with and feedback on assignments, scheduling information, equipment reservations) and with each other (project planning and scheduling, problem solving).

The Web. Dr. Bolduc will use his university web page as means of updating groups on projects and providing important information and documents, please check it regularly. Currently a talent release form is available for your use. The idea of creating ‘conference pages’ for each group is being researched at present. <http://uncw.edu/people/bolducw>

Housekeeping policy. Absolutely no food or drink may be brought into the computer lab, edit suite or video control room at any time. The potential for damage to equipment is too great. Classrooms should be kept clean and free of trash, drink containers, chewing gum and food waste at all times. Eating and drinking in a classroom is a conditional privilege that requires individual responsibility. Each of us is expected to clean up after him or herself. Failure to do so by any one person may negate the rights for each of us to bring food and drinks into this classroom.

Notes for current or future Communication Studies majors:

Portfolio Artifacts. One of the culminating experiences of a communication studies degree is the completion of COM 490 *Discipline Capstone*, a course that may include the preparation of a personal portfolio to organize and showcase your abilities. I encourage you to retain items from this class, whether produced independently or in groups, for inclusion as portfolio artifacts. Beyond the *Capstone* class, your portfolio may prove a valuable tool as you seek entry into a graduate program or employment in your areas of specialization.

Course Completion and Gateway Requirements Classes typically coded “COM Majors ONLY” may occasionally be opened to PCOM majors or all students. This may most commonly occur during summer terms. Please be aware, however, that to become a full-status COM major, you **MUST** complete the gateway courses (COM 105 and COM 200) **SUCCESSFULLY**, i.e., with a grade of “B” or higher in each. If you do **NOT** successfully complete those two courses, you cannot earn full COM major status, even if you complete one or more COM classes apart from the gateway courses.

COM 480 Student Production Contract Outline
Semester: Spring 2006

On a separate sheet of paper, supply the information requested below. Document must be typed, double-spaced and professionally presented. (Include all headings below in boldface print.) Submit two (2) copies.

Page Heading: **COM 480 Student Production Contract, Semester: Spring 2006**

Student Name: _____ **SID** _____

Major: _____ **Hours this semester:** _____

Statement of interest. Compose a concise statement of interest in video/film production and related career aspirations. Briefly describe the **type(s)** of production you are most interested in working on for this class and in a professional capacity after graduation. Include in your statement a discussion of your current strengths in video production as well as areas in which you would like to improve.

Project descriptions. Concisely describe the project(s) you wish to complete and your role(s) in the project. Discuss all pertinent aspects of the projects including, but not limited to: the genre, the client or organization for whom the project is being produced including the name and title of the primary contacts, the purpose, background information on the topics, the type of program and production style of the project, estimated length and names of crew members.

Include the following items at the end of your contract:

Student signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Professor approval: _____ **Date:** _____

Contract notes:

- Save the draft version of the contract on a disk in case of revisions.
 - Submit the typed *draft* version of the contract to Dr. Bolduc on January 19.
- Discuss your project ideas prior to committing your ideas to paper in this contract. Some possible production ideas: independent documentary, instructional promotional video for a campus or community organization, news packages. Some specific project ideas follow...
- Documentary on topic of interest.
 - 5-6 News/sports packages – a variety of story types must be completed.
 - Public Service Announcements – series for local non-profit such as the Boys & Girls clubs of Wilmington.
 - Promotional/informational DVD for the Department of Communication Studies.
 - Production and editing for Wilmington Area Music Awards (WAMMIES)
 - Production for Web-CT SCUBA class