ComS 185  Senior Practicum in Film/Video  
Prerequisite: ComS 127, Coms 128, or permission

Instructor: Jenny Stark

Mendocino 5027

Course Description and Objectives:
Assignments in various phases of video production including creative use of camera, sound and lighting, editing, production design, production planning/management, and directing.

Objectives
• The production of a Polished Film or Video that showcases skills learned throughout the program. This Project can be used as a portfolio piece for Application to Graduate Programs or for the students’ professional Reel.

• Familiarity with the writing of Clear and Professional Film/Video Proposals.

• Familiarity with the group dynamics, time commitment, and communication associated with collaborative film/video projects. The increased capacity for problem solving and communication within these groups.

• Competence in the creative areas of Film/video production including pre-production planning, lighting, art direction, audio recording, cinematography, Direction and editing.

Course can be repeated for Credit: Students in first semester function as crewmembers for productions. Students taking the class for the second time are invited to submit proposals for Film/Video projects.

Prerequisite: Chair/Professor approved substitutions are the only exceptions!  
This is not an instructional Course it is a consultation-based class, therefore you are expected to have skills in video production prior to enrolling.

Equipment: There is simply not enough equipment to go around! There are three production classes including 185, as well as multimedia demands for equipment. However, if we learn to cooperate with other professors, students, and the equipment room, we can make the situation much easier for everyone. See Rules at the end of the syllabus.

Grading:
Final Project:  50%  
Log of Work Hours and Group Evaluations: 25%  
Process Deadlines: 20%  
Perceived Enthusiasm of student 5%

Final Project: The project will be graded on its artistic/aesthetic merit, whether or not the project is completed on time, and the technical ability showcased by the students.

Log of work hours and Peer evaluations: Students are required to keep a log of their work throughout the semester. Write everything that you do for 185 down, describe briefly, and write down the date and time in Hours that you do any work for 185. Get the director or instructor to sign the log. Students should have well over 60 outside hours logged by the end of the semester.

Student Flake Out Penalty: If a student fails to show up for a meeting with the professor, a meeting with other students, for a production, or equipment pick up
That student will have 10 points taken off of their total grade. A student must call and cancel at least three hours in advance in any of these instances.

If a student untruthfully signs a production notebook for another student they will receive a penalty of 25 points off of the total grade.

1/29
Class Introduction
Discussion of Proposal requirements
Discussion of Log Assignments

1/31
Discussion of Proposals and Requirements
Continued Discussion of the Course

2/5
Individual Meetings to Discuss Proposals

2/7
Project Proposals due

2/12 Projects Announced
Group Selections

2/14
Individual Meetings with Directors

2/19
Camera Demo for Cinematographers and Assistant Camera Operators

2/21
Lighting Demo for Cinematographers, and Assistants.

2/26
Directors, Editors, Assistants Present for Storyboard Meeting.

2/28
Group Meeting (All Students Present) Storyboards Discussed

3/5
Production Meeting with Directors/Assistants
View Progress

3/7
Meetings as Needed

3/12
Meeting With Directors and Editors

3/14
Meetings as Needed

3/19
Meetings With Editors

3/21
Project Updates, All Students Present No Exceptions!

3/26-28
Spring Break
4/2
First Rough Cut Due

4/4
Continued Viewing of Rough Cuts

4/9
Open Meetings (Just come to my office if you need something)

4/11
Open Meetings (Just come to my office if you need something)

4/16
DVD burning Demo

4/18-4/30
Open Meetings (Just come to my office if you need something)

5/2
2nd Rough Cut Viewing

5/7-5/16
Open meetings

Videos due Finals Week

Course Guidelines

A detailed proposal will be submitted for all projects in order to be considered for production. The proposal will follow the professor's exact specifications, and will have little or no errors in grammar or spelling. If this is not the case the students' project will not be considered for production. The Instructor will choose the projects and will determine how many projects will be created per semester based on equipment and crew availability. This proposal will be due the second week of the semester and chosen projects will be announced during the following class.

A completed script or documentary project narrative will be completed no later than seven weeks into the semester. If at this point the script/project narrative is not complete the student will be asked to take 185 a second time to complete the project. If that is not possible, the group will be assigned to other projects, or take a reduction in grade.

Production will be completed by midterm.

If students are working with actors they must audition at least three actors for every character. The auditions must be videotaped and shown to the professor no later than 10 weeks into the semester.

Storyboards are required for narrative production and will be due when the videotaped auditions are shown.

Detailed project narratives will be required for documentary/industrial/reality projects and will be due 7 weeks into the semester.

There will be a primary and secondary editor for each project. Those students will be required to complete tutorials in Final Cut Pro during the first seven weeks of the semester.
Each project will have a separate director and a cameraperson. These individuals should not be the primary editors on the project. However, it is a good idea for the director/camera ops to be present during the log/capture process to learn more about their camera work.

During production video will be logged and captured on the students assigned computer. This will insure that there will be a back up of the video and allow the directors to see if re-shoots are necessary. It makes a lot of sense to log and capture while observing the “dailies.” It saves time and familiarizes the editor and the director with the footage. An editor should watch logged and captured footage at least three times before beginning the editing process. It helps to be familiar with the material.

A rough cut will be shown to the instructor 4 weeks before the final project is due.

If the students are working with a client and it is important that the client is involved in the editing process a clear editing strategy must be submitted by that client by midterm. It is up to the students to make sure that the client gets that information to them in a timely manner. If the students fail to get that information the entire group’s grade will be reduced. If the student needs help communicating with a client they need to notify the instructor as soon as a problem is recognized.

Editing: All clips should be placed in bins either for specific scenes or subject matter.

For longer projects it helps to edit each scene in a separate sequence combining all of the sequences as the project is completed.

Students need to name clips according to scene titles, numbers, or specific—easy to recognize subject matter.

Before taking on a specific project it is very important to understand where FCP is placing the students’ “Capture Scratch.” All editors are responsible for understanding file management before the editing takes place. If a project can’t be completed on time because of lost files due to simple management issues the entire group’s grade will suffer.

Do not erase any files that do not belong to you! Make sure that if you are throwing away files that they are your files even if you are throwing away footage from your own folder. If a student is caught deleting files that do not belong to them, they will lose access to the lab and receive a grade of F for the class.

Students who get caught tampering with computers or removing any wiring, hard drives, or computers from the lab will lose access to the lab and receive a grade of F for the class.

Students who get caught bringing food or drink into the Video Editing Lab will lose access to the lab and receive a grade of F for the class.

Rules for Checking Out Equipment:

1. Reserve equipment in advance if you expect to have it for your shoot.

2. Equipment is to be checked out for 24 hours on weekdays and through the weekend if checked out on Friday.
3. You may only reserve equipment designated for ComS185 in advance and not
equipment designated for other classes. If there is equipment designated for another class that has
not been checked out by students, you may (if approved by Dave Felipe) check that
equipment out. This rule doesn't apply to cameras specifically designated for another class.

4. Dave Felipe, under all circumstances, has the last word when it comes to checking out
equipment.

If he says no, he means no. He will not check out equipment to you that you are not
authorized to use.

5. As soon as you sign a checkout slip and leave with the equipment it becomes your
responsibility financially and otherwise.

6. Do not reserve and take out more equipment than you need. You, your fellow
students, and your crewmembers will all be happy if you keep your shoots as simple as possible.

7. If you are going to be late picking up equipment call Dave Felipe at 278-6328 and tell
him.

If you are more than 10 minutes late (without calling) he will check the equipment out to
someone else.

8. If you return equipment late without calling, your assignment will be dropped a
grade.

9. Any food or drink brought into the video editing lab (3005) will result in the student
losing access to that room.

10. Leaving the editing room (3005) propped open and unattended will also result in
the student losing access to that room.

Equipment List for 185:

- Mole Richardson Lighting Kit 4 Lights 1000 watt each light Huge case—may not fit into
  some cars
- Soft Light Kit 1500Watts
- MoleRichardsonsoft light (750 watt) on roll around stand
- 500 wattLowellkit
- 650 watt strand kit
- 300 watt strand

Buss’s stuff (can be checked out to you on a limited basis, but not reserved in advance)

- 2 1k kits
- 3 650 kits
- 1 1500 soft light kit
- 1 750 soft light on roll around stand

- 1 Portable LCD monitor
- 1 ugly portable monitor (needs to be plugged in)
Grip:
• 4 c-stands w arms
• sand bags 3
• multiple extention cords
• 3 flags
• 1 cookie
• 1 finger
• 1 single net
• 1 double net
• 2 silks
• 1 violet scrim

1 spectra meter
(1 restricted for Buss)

Sound:
• 3 Senheiser shotgun mic
• 3 Cardiod Mics
• 2 Lavilier Mics
• 1 boom pole