

FDMA 2610 - Directing 1

UNM-Valencia, Art Studio and Film & Digital Arts, Spring 2024

Face-to-Face Course

Professor: Jonathan Sims | Jsims01@unm.edu

Class time & location: ONLINE

Office Hours: TUE 11pm - 2pm on-campus*

*and by appointment

*see "How to Contact the Instructor" below for more info

Office: B&T Building Rm. 114

Zoom Office Hours Link: Inquire for link Meeting ID:

Cell [for text only, please]: 505.681.4009

Land Acknowledgment: UNM-Valencia is located on the traditional and ancestral Pueblo people and is unceded. This region holds great historical, spiritual, and personal significance for its original stewards, the Native nations and peoples of this area. I acknowledge their connection to this land, and give thanks for the opportunity to live, work, and learn on their traditional homeland.

A note: Since 2020, the U.S. has experienced both the emergence of a global pandemic and the painful consequences of long-endured violence against the BIPOC community. These events have caused, and continue to cause, fear, stress, and pain for many members of our community, and will continue to impact each of us in various ways for times to come. Under these circumstances, it is completely normal to feel overwhelmed or anxious, and to have difficulty concentrating. I have designed this course with these challenges in mind, and am committed to continuing to work with all of you to create a positive and supportive learning environment. If your health, well-being, or school work are being impacted, I offer support services and resources in this syllabus and will meet with you anytime to discuss it as well. If your needs are not being met in any way, contact me and I will help you find services that will meet your needs as best I can.

Credit-hours: This is a three credit-hour course delivered in-person for 16 weeks. Class meets for five hours of direct instruction per week for the semester. Please plan for a minimum of 4 hours of out-of-class work (or homework, study, open lab, projects, and class preparation) each week.

Course Description

Introduction to the creative process of a film director. Students will participate in hands-on workshops and develop stories for motion media, create screenplays and work with actors in short scenes using current technologies in film, television and web-based media production.

Objectives

This 16-week online course explores the artistic and technical craft of film directing. Students will delve into various aspects of directing, including script analysis, rehearsal techniques, blocking, storyboarding, shot list development, and collaboration with production crews. Special emphasis will be placed on the director's interaction with actors on set.

Student Responsibilities & Course Policies

- **Health and Awareness:** UNM-Valencia is a mask friendly community if you are not feeling well. If you are experiencing any illness symptoms, please do not come to campus. Even without a positive test for any illness (covid, flu, etc...), if you feel sick, please stay home, rest and **take care of yourself first**. If you do need to stay home, please communicate with me (see "How to Contact the Instructor" section); I can work with you to provide alternatives for course participation and completion. UNM-Valencia faculty and staff know that there is a complete life for you outside of your class and on-campus time. Please let us know that you need support so that we can connect you to the right resources.
- **Affirmed/Preferred First Name:** As part of its commitment to providing a safe, inclusive, and respectful learning, living, and working environment, the UNM-Valencia Campus recognizes that many people prefer to use a name other than their legal name to identify themselves. Here is a general website for it- <https://oeo.unm.edu/resources/preferred-name.html>.
- **AccessAbility Policy:** I can and want to make appropriate accommodations that will support you in this class by collaborating with you and the [Equal Access Services at UNM-Valencia](#), 505-925-8560 or [call/email any of the Advisors](#). It is important that you take the initiative to inform me of your accommodations needs, as I am not legally permitted to inquire. In accordance with University Policy 2310 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), academic accommodations may be made for any student who notifies the instructor and/or Equal Access of the need for an accommodation.
- **School/Life Conflict:** Many of you face obstacles to your education as a result of work or family obligations or unforeseen personal difficulties. If you are experiencing challenges throughout the semester that are impacting your ability to succeed in this course, or in your undergraduate career more broadly, please reach out to me immediately so that we can work together to form a plan for your academic success. Reach out to me at anytime to discuss this!
- **Caregiver Responsibilities Policy:** I have great respect for students who are balancing their pursuit of education with the responsibilities of caring for children or other friends/family members. If you run into challenges that require you to miss class or if your caregiving responsibilities are interfering with your ability to engage in this course, please contact me. I can be flexible and support your learning!
- **Citizenship and/or Immigration Status:** Everyone is welcome in this class regardless of citizenship, residency, or immigration status. I will respect your privacy if you choose to disclose your status. UNM-Valencia as an institution has made a core commitment to the success of all our students, including members of our undocumented community. The Administration's welcome is found on the UNM-ABQ campus website: <http://undocumented.unm.edu/>.
- **Course Conduct:** I am committed to creating a learning environment where diverse perspectives are recognized and valued as a source of strength. I request that all students work with me to create a class culture based on open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion. As a class we will approach all discussions with curiosity, respect and civility. Disagreements and debates in academic discourse are expected and welcome, but personal attacks are never OK and will not be tolerated. I strive to ensure an open and welcoming classroom for all students. If I ever miss the mark, please don't hesitate to reach out to me. We are all learning together.
- **UNM Email/CANVAS Access:** All UNM-Valencia students will be required to have a UNM Net ID which can be created by going to: <http://it.unm.edu/accounts/>. UNM Net ID will give you access to the computer labs on campus, Canvas and UNM Email.

- **Computer & Internet Policy:** Students will need to have access to a computer with **high-speed Internet** for this course. If you do not have access to a computer with high-speed internet at home, I want to help! UNM-Valencia and UNM-ABQ have implemented **laptop checkout options**.
 - If you are a **UNM-Valencia student** and you need access to a laptop, please contact the UNM-Valencia Library at :<http://valencia.unm.edu/library/index.html>
 - If you are a **UNM-ABQ student**, you will need to fill out this form: <https://at.unm.edu/coronavirus/summer-2023-laptop.pdf> and send it to avdept@unm.edu. For more information on computer checkout and wifi access for UNM-ABQ Campus, visit this website: <https://at.unm.edu/coronavirus/student-tech-access.html>.
 - **ALL students can request** access to a LoboVirtualDesktop. Here is the website: <https://lobovirtualdesktop.unm.edu>. Fill out the online form. This virtual desktop is a work-in-progress, and you would need a decent computer and internet connection to make this work. But, it would give you access to a variety of UNM owned software.
- Students should have basic computer and file management skills for all courses, especially online courses. If you are struggling with these, reach out to tutoring and support services (see support section on syllabus).
 - If you have any questions or concerns, reach out to me!
 - All students, whether online or in-person (or in-between) are able to access the computer labs on the UNM-Valencia Campus and the UNM-ABQ Campus regardless of where you are taking classes.
- **Access to internet:** The UNM-Valencia Campus has great wifi if you are on campus. [UNM-ABQ does too-see this login info. This is a great list of internet options for qualifying households. This is an ABQ listing and map of wifi hotspots.](#) If you still need access off-campus and do not have the resources, please reach out to me, Student Services, or any other faculty and staff.
- **Computer Lab Responsibility:** Please be advised that use of computer labs on UNM-Valencia and UNM-ABQ properties is governed by "Policy 2500: Acceptable Computer Use" which can be found at <http://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/2000/2500.html>. Anyone violating these policies is subject to possible suspension and loss of computer lab privileges.
- **Title IX:** Our classroom and our university should always be spaces of mutual respect, kindness, and support, without fear of discrimination, harassment, or violence. Should you ever need assistance or have concerns about incidents that violate this principle, please access the resources available to you on campus. Please note that, because UNM-Valencia faculty are considered "responsible employees" by the Department of Education, any disclosure of gender discrimination (including sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, and sexual violence) made to a faculty member must be reported by that faculty member to the university's Title IX coordinator. For more information on the campus policy regarding sexual misconduct, please see: <https://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/2000/2740.html>
- **Academic Integrity and Honesty:** Each student is expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity in academic and professional matters. The University reserves the right to take disciplinary action, including dismissal, against any student who is found responsible for academic dishonesty. Any student who has been judged to have engaged in academic dishonesty in coursework may receive a reduced or failing grade for the work in question and/or for the course. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, dishonesty in quizzes, tests or assignments; claiming credit for work not done or done by others; hindering the academic work of other students; and misrepresenting academic or professional qualifications within or outside the University. You are capable of meeting my expectations for this course! The arts are such a personal, unique experience for each person, and your story and how you choose to share it with the world are so important! If you are concerned about how well you are doing in this course, please reach out to me instead of considering academic misconduct.

Participation

Student participation is considered a necessary factor in the learning process. Course participation and attendance is key to mastering skills and successfully completing projects. You are adults and I expect you to be motivated to grow your knowledge and abilities by engaging in coursework. You are still held responsible for all academic work required regardless of weekly participation and attendance. Class participation influences your grade heavily. Participation includes:

- You should complete all projects on time (to your best ability), participate in scheduled critiques/class discussions, and maintain a safe, respectable, positive lab environment.
- You are required to attend class and be prepared for each day's work.
- If you do not attend the first week of class you may be dropped.
- You will need to work a few hours each week in addition to the scheduled class times. Open Studio hours will be announced.

Grading Policy

- Grading is based on completion of course work and projects, the quality of your individual technical and critical development, and a personal commitment to your work. Personal commitment involves regular participation, consistent effort, completion of work, participation in critiques and class discussions and the general willingness to try. Make each project meaningful to yourself!
- Each assignment will culminate in a critique, which will consist of pinning up your work. Being prepared for these critiques, both with your completed work and your readiness to participate in the discussion surrounding your and your peers' artwork is a meaningful part of the process of creating art. Attending the critique, even if your project is incomplete/late, is extremely important.
- If you are submitting work past the posted deadline, it is super important that you communicate your circumstances with me so that we can work out a plan for you to grow and succeed in this art class!
- Incompletes are rarely issued. If 75% of the semester's work/deliverables and participation have been completed with a satisfactory grade, and incomplete may be issued.

Grading Breakdown

Semester Requirements:

- Projects (3) 30 points 20 points each
- Quizzes. 10 points for attendance & participation
- Final Project 40 points

Extra Credit: 05 points

A+	101+
A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	88-89
B	84-87
B-	80-83
C+	78-79
C	74-77
C-	70-73
D+	68-69
D	64-67
D-	60-63
F	50-59

Extra Credit will be offered throughout the semester for various points at

a maximum of 10 points for the entire semester. Points will be added up and a letter grade will be issued according to this scale to the right:

How to Contact the Instructor

Zoom Link: Zoom link will be provided

During office hours, I will attempt to have my Zoom open and available for us to connect. But, I might be working with a student in a studio or otherwise not in front of a computer. If you are trying to Zoom in and I am not responding, please text me and let me know!

Email:

Email can be sent through UNM email (jsims01@unm.edu). PLEASE: in the subject line, write the class number, for example - "ARTS 1210". I will check email regularly and plan to respond to emails/messages within 48 hours/2 business days. At some points in the term, my inbox gets quite full, but I do want to hear from you! If you email me and don't hear back from me within two business days, please send a follow-up email. I will appreciate the gentle reminder.

Phone:

I am not available via phone call for this course. But, you can text me (no calls please) to my personal cell phone if needed at anytime: 505-681-4009. This and Remind are probably the best way to contact me for fastest response.

Office Hours:

Mondays 12pm -2 virtual* & Wednesdays 11pm - 1pm on-campus, and by appointment

Support Information, Resources, & Tutorials

UNM-Valencia Campus provides extensive academic supports for students, and these supports are there to support you to achieve the academic success you are truly capable of. Most students access them at some point in pursuit of their degree. **There is no shame in seeking help!** I have provided a list of the academic support offices offered by UNM-Valencia below.

Open Studio Time:

- Located in B106 Studio/Classroom: Times and hours TBD.

Support for UNM Canvas:

- <https://canvasinfo.unm.edu/support/index.html>

UNM-Valencia Tutoring Services:

- Custom tutoring services are available through [The Learning Commons](#). Even online tutoring is available!

Instructor Support:

- Please see "How to Contact the Instructor" for methods of contacting the instructor for help.

AccessAbility & Equal Access:

- [UNM-Valencia's accessibility/ADA compliance](#)
- [UNM-Valencia's Equal Access Services](#)

Mental Health and Counseling Services: All of us need a support system, and many students benefit from the use of counseling services. I know I do! UNM-Valencia has mental health counseling as part of the [PASOS Recourse Center](#). Also, here is a [list of services available in Valencia County and around the state: https://valencia.unm.edu/students/student-resources/index.html](#). UNM ABQ Students have access to mental health counseling via the [Student Health and Counseling \(SHAC\) Center](#).

<h2>Supplies</h2>

Most items are available at the UNM-Valencia Bookstore.

Required:

- Jump Drive

Optional:

- External Hard Drive
- Camera

Dates	Schedule		
<u>Week 1</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 1-2: Introduction to Film Directing • Course overview and expectations. • Historical overview of film directing. • Analysis of famous directorial styles. • Assignment: Research and present a brief on a renowned film director. • 		
<u>Week 2</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • week 1-2: Introduction to Film Directing • Course overview and expectations. • Historical overview of film directing. • Analysis of famous directorial styles. • Assignment: Research and present a brief on a renowned film director. • 		

<p><u>Week 3</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 3-4: Script Analysis and Interpretation • Techniques for script analysis. • Understanding character motivations and development. • Identifying themes and subtext in scripts. • Assignment: Analyze and present a scene from a provided screenplay. 		
<p><u>Week 4</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 3-4: Script Analysis and Interpretation • Techniques for script analysis. • Understanding character motivations and development. • Identifying themes and subtext in scripts. • Assignment: Analyze and present a scene from a provided screenplay. 		
<p><u>Week 5</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 5-6: Rehearsal Techniques • Importance of rehearsals in film directing. • Practical exercises in actor-director collaboration. • Exploring different rehearsal methods. • Assignment: Conduct and record a short rehearsal session. 		
<p><u>Week 6</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 5-6: Rehearsal Techniques • Importance of rehearsals in film directing. • Practical exercises in actor-director collaboration. • Exploring different rehearsal methods. • Assignment: Conduct and record a short rehearsal session. 		
<p><u>Week 7</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 7-8: Blocking and Staging Scenes • Fundamentals of blocking and staging. • Creating dynamic and visually appealing scenes. • Collaboration with cinematographers for effective blocking. • Assignment: Plan and execute a scene with detailed blocking instructions. 		
<p><u>Week 8</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 7-8: Blocking and Staging Scenes • Fundamentals of blocking and staging. • Creating dynamic and visually appealing scenes. • Collaboration with cinematographers for effective blocking. • Assignment: Plan and execute a scene with detailed blocking instructions. 		
<p><u>Week 9</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 9-10: Storyboarding and Shot List Development • The role of storyboards in film directing. • Creating shot lists to enhance storytelling. • Practical exercises in visual storytelling. • Assignment: Develop storyboards and shot lists for a provided scene. 		

<u>Week 10</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 9-10: Storyboarding and Shot List Development • The role of storyboards in film directing. • Creating shot lists to enhance storytelling. • Practical exercises in visual storytelling. • Assignment: Develop storyboards and shot lists for a provided scene. 		
<u>Week 11</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 11-12: Director's Collaboration with Production Crew • Understanding the collaborative nature of filmmaking. • Working with various production departments. • Case studies of successful director-crew collaborations. • Assignment: Collaborate with virtual production crew members on a simulated film project. 		
<u>Week 12</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 11-12: Director's Collaboration with Production Crew • Understanding the collaborative nature of filmmaking. • Working with various production departments. • Case studies of successful director-crew collaborations. • Assignment: Collaborate with virtual production crew members on a simulated film project. 		
<u>Week 13</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 13-14: Working with Actors on Set • Real-time on-set scenarios and problem-solving. • Balancing directorial vision with actor input. • Addressing challenges during filming. • Assignment: Direct a short scene with live actors (virtual or recorded). 		
<u>Week 14</u>	<p>Week 13-14: Working with Actors on Set Real-time on-set scenarios and problem-solving. Balancing directorial vision with actor input. Addressing challenges during filming. Assignment: Direct a short scene with live actors (virtual or recorded).</p>		
<u>Week 15</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 15-16: Final Project and Wrap-Up • Integration of learned skills into a final project. • Peer review and feedback session. • Course reflection and future goals in film directing. • Final Assignment: Produce and present a short film scene showcasing the skills acquired during the course. • 		
<u>Week 16</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Exam 		

Project 1: Audio Project

Objective:

Audio is paramount to good media, before there was picture there was sound. We will learn to create a short soundscape and story using only sound. The project will be edited using FCPX as an introduction to the software. Students will turn in a 1-3min Audio story about "A day in their life".

Consider: what objects in your life you would use to describe part of your identity and how you interact with them. What sounds consume your life? Who do you talk to during your day? Listen to the world around you. Use the examples to help you conceive how to approach your audio story.

Process:

Record natural sound. This sound can be anything. Interviews are also allowed but must be accompanied by other sounds.

Audio will be cut using FCPX and exported at a AIFF or WAV file.

Project 2: Video Composition - Camera shootout

Objective:

Learning the language of shot competition is key to production. In this project we will explore the various shots and composition techniques and reproduce them using out phones. Footage will then be edited down to music of your choice .

Consider: Taking shot composition seriously. Making sure you follow you shot list. Natural light as a major factor in your shooting.

Process:

In class we will learn the various shot types. Then it is up to the student and a fellow student or friend as a subject to recreate the shots explained on the shot list that will be handout in class. Students will shoot this with their phone and will edit the footage with FCPX to a track of music to your liking. Videos must be 1-3min in length.

Project 3: Green screen

Objective:

Familiarize the student with the green screen process.

Consider: Nearly every motion picture you see today uses this element. There is a trick to producing a clean "key"

Process:

Create imagery via greenscreen. Edit imagery in FCPx library project you setup up previously. Export Keyed footage.

Final Project: Promotional Video

Objective:

Using the skills learned in class, students will produce a 30sec promo video for a on campus organization. Students will meet with the client, location scout and prepare preproduction elements for a shoot.

Consider: What is the message we are attempting to convey, our talent limitations, location, sound and graphics.

Process:

With the guidance of your instructor, new ill shoot on location video that will then be edited by each individual student as a promo video for the organization.