

Intro to Cinematography - FDMA 2520 - Section 501

Syllabus - REMOTE - Spring 2022

Instructor: André Callot

acallot66@unm.edu

Credit Hours

This is a 3 credit-hour course. Students are expected to work on their own and in groups to complete assignments using school-supplied resources within the timeframe outlined for each assignment. The course is remote and asynchronous, meaning that class work will be turned in through the Blackboard Learn website (learn.unm.edu) by midnight Mountain Time the night before the class in which the assignment is due.

Course Learning Objectives

The Director of Photography (or Cinematographer), in close collaboration with the Director and Production Designer, helps determine the look of a film. This course is designed to introduce students to the technical and aesthetic fundamentals of creating, developing and collaborating on the visual elements of storytelling, using camera framing, lensing and lighting fundamentals such as shadow, light and color. Course objectives include:

- Define and explain the fundamental concepts of cinematography, such as exposure, lighting solutions and color temperature.
- Understand how cinematography brings the director's vision to reality.
- Demonstrate proficiency in plotting and executing interior and exterior lighting solutions.

Grades

Grades are based on participation in class critiques and discussions, as well as weekly assignments and two final projects (group and solo). Projects that satisfy the stated requirements and which are turned in on time will receive full credit. Late projects will be docked a letter grade for each week they are late. This is a contract-based course, meaning that any assignment that is turned in that satisfies the assignment description will receive full points, and will not be graded based on "quality."

Video project assignments are to be uploaded directly to the Learn Blackboard Discussion Board to the appropriate assignment, using the Kaltura media management system. Letter grades correspond to point totals:

A: 90-100% B: 80-89% C: 70-79% D: 61-69%

Office Hours

Please email me (acallot66@unm.edu) before January 31, 2022 to schedule a one-hour consultation session to occur before February 7, 2022. We will discuss your interest in the course, your hopes for covering specific subject matter, and your access to library resources. Additional sessions are available for scheduling upon request.

I am available on Fridays between 1 PM and 4 PM for additional meetings. If you would like to meet with me but haven't scheduled a time, you can email me during this weekly period for an immediate meeting, if I am not already meeting with a student.

Class Participation

A portion of the student's final grade (defined above) will depend on the student's weekly participation in class discussions on the Blackboard Learn Discussion Board for this course. Failure to contribute significantly to the weekly forums created for each class will result in a lower final grade for the course. The student's final grade will be reduced by 1.25% for each week you fail to post responses to the prompts in the Discussion Board.

Production Assignments

The student will complete ten production assignments as described below, post to the course Discussion Board, and comment on other students' work in a timely manner.

Course Agreement

Please complete, sign and email to me a copy of the Course Agreement, available at the end of this syllabus, before the start of the second week of this course.

Course Access

This course will occur entirely on Blackboard Learn. A reliable internet connection and a computer capable of accessing the Blackboard Learn online platform are required for this course. For assigned readings provided as hyperlinks or PDF downloads, appropriate additional software for accessing class materials may also be required. Video conference appointments will be conducted on Zoom, using a webcam, a microphone and headphones. Film screenings will occur on Blackboard Learn, which may require minimum internet data speeds. Please test your internet speeds in the first week of class and report issues to me.

Privacy, Equal Access and Title IX

Please inform me of your needs regarding disability as soon as possible to ensure that your needs are met in a timely manner. In an effort to meet obligations under Title IX, UNM Faculty are considered responsible employees. This designation requires that any report made to a faculty member regarding sexual misconduct or gender discrimination must be reported to the Office of Equal Opportunity and the Title IX Coordinator. For information on accessibility at UNM-Valencia, Title IX and student privacy, please [click this link](#).

[UNM-Valencia's Equal Access Services](#)

Plagiarism

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.

Student Resources

For tutoring resources, information about the library, career counseling, financial aid and other student resources, please [click this link](#).

Assignment Summary:

Class Participation - Each week, 20% of final grade. Comment on discussion boards in all topics, including discussion of student work, discussion of example clips, and discussion of the week's lesson.

Lens Project	- Due in Class 4 (February 7, 2022)	10% of final grade.
Lighting Project	- Due in Class 5 (February 14, 2022)	10% of final grade.
Color Project	- Due in Class 10 (March 28, 2022)	5% of final grade.
Shadow Project	- Due in Class 11 (April 4, 2022)	5% of final grade.
Space Project	- Due in Class 12 (April 11, 2022)	5% of final grade.
Movement Project	- Due in Class 13 (April 18, 2022)	10% of final grade.
Performance Project	- Due in Class 14 (April 25, 2022)	5% of final grade.
Action Project	- Due in Class 15 (May 2, 2022)	10% of final grade.
Solo Project	- Due in Class 16 (May 9, 2022)	10% of final grade.
Group Project	- Due in Class 16 (May 9, 2022)	10% of final grade.

School Production Resources

Production resources for use on course assignments will be available for check-out from the UNM Valencia library, based on availability. The student will reserve production equipment ahead of time and return the equipment to the UNM Valencia library according to the return deadlines set by the library. The student will return the equipment in the condition in which it was checked out, as determined by the UNM Valencia librarian. The student will remove batteries before returning equipment. The student will replace quick-release plates on tripods before returning equipment. The student will pack camera bags, light kits and other equipment in a responsible and professional way, preventing unnecessary damage to the equipment. The student will return any media (such as SD cards and/or hard drives) that are included in the camera kit, and will backup their footage before returning equipment. Failure to respect these instructions may result in suspension or revocation of privileges as determined by the UNM Valencia librarian.

Mental Health and Counseling Services

UNM-Valencia has one part-time mental health counselor, Arturo Fierro. His hours are Wednesdays, 3pm - 6pm and he is located in the SCC (Student Community Center) Room 206. (phone # and email will be shared via Learn). He is able to see patients in-person or in Zoom (this may change to virtual only as the pandemic continues to change). He may have more hours throughout the semester, but this is the current info. I will update this via Learn if/when it changes. Also, here is a list of services available in Valencia County and around the state: <https://valencia.unm.edu/students/student-resources/index.html>

Additional Contact Information

Program Chair	-	Alexa Wheeler	-	alexa08@unm.edu
Department Chair	-	Justin Bendell	-	jbendell@unm.edu



Week One: January 18, 2022 - Camera

Students will learn the operation and fundamental principles of digital video cameras, including DSLRs, interchangeable lens mirrorless video cameras, and professional camcorders. Subjects will include exposure, frame rate, shutter speed, ISO, aspect ratio and white balance. Students will receive specific instruction on the cameras available at the UNM Valencia library, as well as the checkout procedure for school equipment.

SCREENING: Medium Cool (1969)

Discussion - How does professional equipment change the way you create images?

Week Two: January 24, 2022 - Lenses

Students will learn how to choose, use and maintain lenses in the context of cinematography. Subjects will include focal length, prime vs. zoom, aperture, focus, crop factor, matte boxes, lens mounts, framing, anamorphic distortion and lens care.

ASSIGNMENT ONE - Students will shoot six shots (exactly ten seconds per shot) with each of the following focal lengths: 18mm, 24mm, 35mm, 50mm, 85mm, and a zoom shot of the student's design. Shots must include close-up, wide, human subject and interior/exterior establishing - 36 different shots in 6 minutes. Due no later than 12:01 AM on the morning of February 7, 2022, posted through Kaltura on the course Discussion Board.

SCREENING: Daughters of the Dust (1991)

Discussion - What is mise en scène, and how is it created through framing and lens choice?

Week Three: January 31, 2022 - Lights

Students will learn basic elements of lighting, including three-point lighting, lighting ratios, common light treatments such as diffusion and scrims, reflection, the inverse square principle, light focus, different lighting elements (LED vs. incandescent vs. practical).

ASSIGNMENT TWO - Students will shoot with a light kit, demonstrating three-point lighting and at least four distinct lighting ratios, each with soft and hard shadows, and in close-up, medium and wide (a total of 24 different shots, each ten seconds long, totalling 4 minutes). Due no later than 12:01 AM on the morning of February 14, 2022, posted through Kaltura on the course Discussion Board.

SCREENING: In the Mood for Love (2000)

Discussion - How much control of light does a DP really have?

Week Four: February 7, 2022 - Recording Technology

Students will learn the technology of video image recording. Subjects will include photodiodes, sensor size, debayering, motion compression, chroma subsampling, video codecs, bitrate, resolution, rolling vs. global shutter, native ISO and LUTs. Students will discuss work submitted for Assignment One.

SCREENING: Inland Empire (2006)

Discussion - How does image technology determine the aesthetic bounds of an image?

Week Five: February 14, 2022 - Role of the Cinematographer

Students will learn the traditional role of the cinematographer on the set of a motion picture. Subjects will include the structure of the camera department, the gaffer, the best boy, electricians, camera operators, camera assistants, grips and DITs.

FINAL GROUP PROJECT - Students will work in groups of three to conceive, script, schedule, budget, shoot and edit a six-minute short film, with each student acting as cinematographer for a continuous two-minute section of the film. All three students are to act as crew on the entire project. PROPOSALS for this final project are due no later than 12:01 AM on the morning of February 28, 2022, posted as a PDF on the course Discussion Board. The final project itself is due no later than 12:01 AM on the morning of May 9, 2022, uploaded via Kaltura to the course Discussion Board.

SCREENING: Boogie Nights (1997)

Discussion - How can non-authoritarian power systems be established on a film set?

Week Six: February 21, 2022 - Cinematography vs. Art vs. Photography

Students will learn the historical influences of contemporary art practices, the commodified photographic image and theatrical legacies on cinematography as it has evolved.

FINAL SOLO PROJECT - Students will work on their own to conceive, script, schedule, budget, shoot and edit a three-minute short film. Due no later than 12:01 AM on the morning of May 9, 2022, uploaded via Kaltura to the course Discussion Board.

SCREENING: Barry Lyndon (1975)

Discussion - What do film images owe to animation, painting, photography or theater?

Week Seven: February 28, 2022 - Color and Contrast

Students will learn principles of color and contrast, and how they can be applied practically to cinematography, both on the set and in post-production. Subjects will include theatrical gels, color timing software, color theory, skin tone, and low vs. high contrast images.

ASSIGNMENT THREE - Students will produce a two-minute video demonstrating a color relationship. Due no later than 12:01 AM on the morning of March 28, 2022.

SCREENING: Nowhere (1997)

Discussion - What does Godard mean when he says, "It's not blood; it's red"?

Week Eight: March 7, 2022 - Shadow and Dynamic Range

Students will learn to deploy shadow deliberately within their compositions.

ASSIGNMENT FOUR - Students will produce a two-minute black-and-white video on the subject of shadows. Due no later than 12:01 AM on the morning of April 4, 2022.

SCREENING: The Conformist (1970)

Discussion - What is the emotional relationship between light and darkness?

Week Nine: March 21, 2022 (Week of March 14 is Spring Break) - Composition and Space

Students will learn principles of composition and spatial relationships, and how blocking, distance, continuity editing and line-of-action contribute to a coherent sense of space.

ASSIGNMENT FIVE: Students will produce a two-minute video with a variety of shots demonstrating various spatial relationships and frame compositions. Due no later than 12:01 AM on the morning of April 11, 2022.

SCREENING: Lola Montes (1955)

Discussion - What is the relationship between the film frame and physical space?

Week Ten: March 28, 2022 - Movement and Change

Students will learn principles of camera movement. Subjects will include dolly, pan, zoom, truck, gib, tilt, dutch tilt, handheld vs. steadicam vs. tracking. Students will learn to materialize the relationship between lenses, space and movement.

ASSIGNMENT SIX: Students will produce a two-minute video in which the camera is constantly in motion. All six axes of movement are to be included, as well as a zoom shot. Students will also demonstrate both handheld camera movement and a tracking shot. Due no later than 12:01 AM on the morning of April 18, 2022.

SCREENING: Ordet (1955)

Discussion - Why would you move the camera rather than cut to a new shot?

Week Eleven: April 4, 2022 - Approaches to Cinematography

Students will learn different comprehensive theoretical strategies for composition and movement of the camera frame. Subjects will include cognitivism, theatrical unity, Deleuze. Students will determine for themselves how to make decisions about shot choice, lens choice, duration, tempo, and dynamics as they play out within a frame and across time.

SCREENING: The Sacrifice (1986)

Discussion - What is your personal aesthetic philosophy and art practice?

Week Twelve: April 11, 2022 - Performance and Narrative

Students will learn how to capture a performance on camera, and how to obtain necessary coverage for editing a narrative sequence with spatial and temporal continuity. Students will learn how to work with actors within the context of a film shoot.

ASSIGNMENT SEVEN: Students will shoot a ten-minute dialog between two performers in a single space. No shot will be longer than ten seconds and no framing will be repeated within the edit. Due no later than 12:01 AM on the morning of April 25, 2022.

SCREENING: The Gold Diggers (1983)

Discussion - How does the film image capture and represent the experience of acting?

Week Thirteen: April 18, 2022 - Action and Documentary

Students will learn to capture action, either in narrative action sequences or in documentary video production. Students will learn the tricks of guerilla filmmaking, such as hidden cameras, run-and-gun deployment, use of inconspicuous gear, and cell phone cameras. Students will also learn how to shoot a live performance.

ASSIGNMENT EIGHT: Students will shoot a five-minute video of a live public event, with no shot longer than three seconds. Students will capture action and movement, as well as candid human emotions. Due no later than 12:01 AM on the morning of May 2, 2022.

SCREENING: Harlan County, USA (1976)

Discussion - Can the cinema camera capture and re-present the truth?

Week Fourteen: April 25, 2022 - Interiors and Studio Production

Students will learn techniques for shooting interiors on a soundstage, as well as principles of green screen video production, multi-camera production, teleprompter operation and artificial action.

SCREENING: The Damned (1969)

Discussion - How does cinematography work in the context of computer-generated images?

Week Fifteen: May 2, 2022 - Exteriors and Location Shooting

Students will learn techniques for shooting exterior, as well as interior, locations. Subjects will include mixed lighting environments, practical tools for the limitations of a location, managing natural light, shooting landscapes and location permits.

SCREENING: Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives (2010)

Discussion - How can the film camera capture the beauty of nature?

Week Sixteen: May 9, 2022

Final group and solo projects will be screened and discussed, in addition to any late work.



COURSE AGREEMENT

I, the undersigned, commit to fulfill the expectations of this course as laid out in this syllabus, specifically regarding these requirements:

1. I will participate each week in the course Discussion Board in Blackboard Learn, providing constructive criticism of my fellow students' completed assignments. I will interact in a meaningful way with my fellow students while demonstrating respect and courtesy. I will demonstrate my understanding of each week's lesson by commenting meaningfully on the week's film discussion, in a timely manner.
2. I will complete each week's production assignment on time, with an eye toward the week's lesson and a progression over the semester toward refinement of my personal understanding of digital media production as a discipline. I will post on the Discussion Board with any relevant thoughts or questions that arise through my completion of the week's assignment.
3. I will complete my final project and group project and turn them in before the deadline, having acknowledged here that I am aware before the course begins that these assignments constitute a combined 20% of my grade and have a deadline of May 9, 2022. My final projects will reflect the skills and concepts I learn as I progress through this course.
4. I will meet one-on-one with the course instructor before February 7, 2022 to discuss my goals for the course, my potential concepts for my final project, and my ability to use school resources to successfully fulfill my obligations outlined in the points above.
5. I will note at the bottom of this agreement the name of the cinematographer of the film from week twelve's screening, along with one additional film that she shot (my choice), which I will watch and describe in the course Discussion Board in the context of one of our weekly lessons.

If at any point during this semester I become aware of conditions in my life that make any of these requirements difficult or impossible to fulfill, I pledge to contact my instructor through email (acallot66@unm.edu) to discuss what mitigations may be enacted to provide for my continued success in my education at the University of New Mexico.

Full Name

UNM ID

DATE