

**SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY  
COMM 3308 VIDEO WORKSHOP  
FICTION FILM PRODUCTION**

Summer I 2024  
Monday through Thursday  
6pm – 7:50pm  
Motion Capture Lab

Bret Scott, Asst. Professor  
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Office Hours: by appointment

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

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This class is a production workshop in the art of Fiction Filmmaking. Fiction films are distinguished from other types of film production through use of scripted material and/or improvised performances.

In this class, students will learn the key crew positions – “department heads” – on a fiction production crew and how to perform the duties of each position. The class will culminate in a five-day location shoot, where students will demonstrate mastery of these skills by functioning as department heads during the production.

The process of post-production – editing –will happen in Summer II. Post, as you’ll see, is where the results of the factory-like nature of fiction filmmaking become the raw materials for the art of editing.

My expectation of your participation in this class is that you will take notes and ask questions. You will attend EVERY class – as this is a hands-on, practical class, there is no way to pass this class without attending.

### **COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT Program Learning Outcomes**

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This course is designed to meet one or more of the program learning outcomes applied to all Communication majors.

At the end of this course:

- 1: Students will be able to analyze communication content for argument, including identification of major elements, such as claim, warrants, and data.
- 2: Students will be able to effectively construct messages appropriate to audience, purpose, and context; including electronic media technologies.
- 3: Students will be able to apply Communication theories, perspectives, principles, and concepts to the analysis of communication situations.

### **PREREQUISITES**

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COMM 2306 – Basic Video Production (formerly called Basic TV).

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

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By the end of this class, students will:

- Develop a working definition of the fiction form
- Gain familiarity with the elements involved in planning a fiction film
- Demonstrate a working understanding of the various crew roles in fiction production
- Cultivate intermediate-level experience with the technology, equipment, and techniques used in professional filmmaking

## **COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:**

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- 1) Terminology / Definitions Quiz
- 2) Written Production Plan, including calendar, shot list, equipment list, and budget
- 3) One (1) short paper on the crew department of your choice.
- 4) Final Exam – Practical demonstration of skills
- 5) Full participation in class discussion / critique

## **Required Textbooks for this class:**

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*You will be distributed a copy of the shooting script for this summer's production.*

## **Materials Required:**

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*GLOVES. HEAVY LEATHER WORK GLOVES. These are NOT optional.  
Closed-toed shoes are mandatory on-set.*

## **CLASS DATES: Assignments and Deadlines**

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*Note that these dates and the details of each class are subject to change at the instructor's discretion*

Week	Date	Topics and Assignments
1	May 29	Introduction. Review Syllabus, Assignments, and Deadlines. Expected outcomes. Discussion: How does the script get to the screen?
	May 30	Individual Scenes
2	June 3 – 7	Camera Department – camera care, lens protocol, camera function, jobs within the department, measuring light, filters, flares, follow focus, video village, logging and post, DIT work
3	June 10 - 14	Sound Department – boom operation, location recordist, cable management, sound issues, logging and post

4	June 17 - 21	Gaff and Grip Departments – lighting instruments, stands, C-stands, bounce, scrim, nets, silks, gels, 8x8s, tall stands, stingers, sandbags, dolly and track
5	June 24 – 28	Practical Crew Operations – call sheets, crew ops, shooting protocol, hot sets, how to AD.
6	July 5	FINAL EXAM: Practical Skills Test

## **GRADING**

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Assignments are valued as follows:

1) Terminology / Definitions Quiz	15%
2) Paper	30%
3) Final Exam – Practical Skills Test	35%
4) Full participation in class discussion / critique	20%

### **Grading Criteria:**

A = Exceptional. Demonstrates mastery of material beyond expectation. Professional quality of work. Highest level of scholarship.

B = Above average. Demonstrates mastery of material. Work is of better-than-expected quality, but not quite professional. High level of scholarship.

C = Average. Demonstrates proficiency with material. Work is of amateur quality. Ordinary level of scholarship.

D = Below Average. Less than proficient with material. Work shows errors, careless mistakes, or is just plain wrong. Poor scholarship.

F – Failure. Material incomplete. Work grossly negligent or incomplete. No evidence of scholarship present.

## **TARDINESS / ABSENCE POLICY**

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Attendance is 10% of your grade. That’s the difference between an “A” and a “B”...or an “F” and a “D.”

### **TARDINESS**

Class **BEGINS EXACTLY AT THE APPOINTED TIME**. It is your responsibility to be prepared to begin **BEFORE** the class starts.

Three instances of tardiness is equivalent to one absence. See below for the class absence policy.

**THE INSTRUCTOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO DENY ENTRY TO STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT PRESENT AT THE START OF CLASS\* – ON THE HOUR. PLAN ACCORDINGLY. ON-TIME is EARLY!**

\*Exceptions will be made only for those with classes located in RAS whose end time makes on-time arrival impossible.

Punctuality is essential in this business. Tardiness will not be tolerated.

Absence Policy, from the Sul Ross State University 2012-2014 Course Catalogue:

### **CLASS ATTENDANCE**

Regular class attendance is important to the attainment of the educational objectives of the University. Each instructor will keep class attendance records, and the instructor's policy on class attendance will be explained at the beginning of the semester or term.

The instructors will drop a student from a course when the student has a total of nine absences. A student will be dropped for excessive absences in remedial courses after nine absences.

An absence is defined as non-attendance in fifty minutes of class; for example, non-attendance in a one and one-half hour class will constitute one and one-half absences and non-attendance in a three-hour class will constitute three absences. An absence because of participation in an official University activity is considered to be an authorized absence.

### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

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The University is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Accessibility Services Coordinator assists students with disabilities in providing academic programming accommodations. If you need accommodations, please see the instructor for a referral to the Accessibility Services Coordinator.