

SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY
COMM 5304.002 – Video Workshop – Video Editing

Fall 2026
Tues/Thurs
2pm – 4:15pm
MOCAP LAB

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Regular Office Hours:
M thru Th 1:00-1:50p on walk-in basis
@ Mocap soundstage
All others by appointment – EMAIL ME.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Video Editing is the process by which moving images and sounds are placed together in a specific order for the purpose of telling a story. The form doesn't really matter: recapping the action of a *Call Of Duty*-style first-person shooter is the same job as building a 30-second advertising trailer, editing an episode of television, or cutting a fiction feature or documentary. The raw materials remain the same: moving images and sounds.

In this class, we will explore the basic elements of video editing, types of edits, effective editing patterns, and the artistic and philosophic underpinnings of same. We'll use Apple's Final Cut Pro X as our learning platform...or possibly Adobe Premiere, depending on OIT's mood. The dirty secret – one of them; there are many – of professional editing is that the platform (Avid, Final Cut, Adobe Premiere, Etc.) is merely a tool. The art and skill of editing is in the hands and mind of the editor, and the software merely brings about what's in the imagination of the artist. Everything else is just marketing.

This is an introductory course. Advanced topics, such as compressed output, motion graphics, and compositing, are beyond the scope of this class. Individual study of these topics is encouraged, but cannot be supported in-class, given the goals of the course.

Editing is a time-intensive activity. This class, particularly the later projects, will require hours in front of the computer well beyond class time. For this reason, the readings end at mid-semester. Lab time will be available outside of class. Plan your schedule accordingly. Lab time will be available outside of class.

COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT **Student Learning Outcomes**

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.

Communication Program Marketable Skills

1. Informative and Persuasive Speaking
2. Audience-centered Writing
3. Critical Analysis
4. Research
5. Effective Message Construction Using Technology

PREREQUISITES

None.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this class, students will:

- Demonstrate a working vocabulary of editing and filmmaking terminology
- Identify and justify significant variations in editing style and strategy – explain “why” a particular edit works.
- Demonstrate beginner-level mastery of Apple’s Final Cut Pro X
- Articulate the functions of editing as a storytelling tool.
- Evaluate and critique merit and functionality of editing patterns of various kinds of visual storytelling on a case-by-case basis.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:

- 1) Terminology / Definitions Quiz
- 2) Mid-Term Paper – “The Murch Paper”
- 3) Trailer Editing Project
- 4) Freeform Editing Project
- 5) Full participation in class discussion / critique

Required Textbooks for this class:

In the Blink of an Eye
Murch, Walter; Silman-James Press 2001

Materials Required:

None

CLASS DATES: Assignments and Deadlines

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	8/25	Review Syllabus. Intro to course.
	8/27	Screen <i>The Cutting Edge: The Magic of Movie Editing</i> (Dir. Wendy Apple, 2004).
2	9/1	Screen Examples and Definition of working terms. Examples – documentary, fiction, trailer. Read Murch 1-16.
	9/3	SHOOT WORKING FOOTAGE Reading 1; Murch 17-28
3	9/8	Introduction to Premiere Interface
	9/10	DEMO: IMPORTING / ORGANIZING FOOTAGE HOMEWORK: TBD. Reading 2; Murch 29-51
4	9/15	Sync / Organize <i>South Fence</i>
	9/17	DEMO: ASSEMBLY CUT HOMEWORK: Reading 3; Murch 52-72
5	9/22	Assemble <i>South Fence</i> . Review Mid-Term Murch Paper Assignment
	9/24	Assemble <i>South Fence</i> .
6	9/29	DEMO: TRIMMING, MOVING, STACKING, L-CUTTING, J-CUTTING - EXPAND/DETACH AUDIO, LEVELS, RUBBER BANDING
	10/1	First Cut <i>South Fence</i>
7	10/6	Second Cut <i>South Fence</i>
	10/8	DEMO: AUDIO: LEVELS, KEYFRAMES, FADES, ETC.
8	10/13	PICTURE LOCKED CUT <i>South Fence</i>
	10/15	DEMO: OUTPUTS of ALL KINDS MID-TERM PAPER DUE AT START OF CLASS.
9	10/20	AUDIO
	10/22	DEMO: KEYFRAMING, the brainbuster.
10	10/27	COLOR CORRECTION
	10/29	MOVIE ANALYSIS: TBD

11	11/3	Introduce trailer assignment. Screen examples
	11/5	In-class cutting – Trailer assignment
12	11/10	In-class cutting – Trailer assignment
	11/12	Rough Screening / Notes – Trailer Assignment
13	11/17	Trailer Assignment cuts due at start of class. Screen Trailer Assignment. Introduce freeform assignment
	11/19	In-class cutting – Freeform assignment.
14	11/24	In-class cutting – Freeform assignment
15	12/1	Rough Screening / Notes – Freeform Assignment

DEC FINAL EXAM – TIME AND DATE TBD
 Freeform cuts due at XX:XX pm.
 We will screen as a class at exam.

GRADING

Assignments are valued as follows:

1) Quizzes	10%
2) Mid-term paper	25%
3) Trailer Assignment	30%
4) Freeform Assignment	25%
5) Class participation/Attendance	10%

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.

LATE PAPERS

Deadlines are an inescapable part of responsible, professional, adult life. Late papers will lose a letter grade for each day that the paper is late.

If you discover, *a week or more in advance*, that you have multiple deadlines converging on the same day, you may request a change in deadline> Such a change may be granted at the instructor's discretion. Once the deadline has passed, it's too late to ask for exceptions. Manage your time and deadlines wisely.

TARDINESS / ABSENCE POLICY

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.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT STATEMENT

Sul Ross State University is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1973. Any student who because of a disability, may require special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make necessary

arrangements. If an accommodation is needed, students must present their accommodation letter, obtained from Accessibility Services, as soon as possible. Please note that instructors are not permitted to provide classroom accommodations to a student until the appropriate verification has been received. Accessibility Services is in Ferguson Hall room 112. You can make an appointment by calling Mary Schwartze Grisham at 432 837-8203.