

1-1-2000

IT 626 Advanced Video Production

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Recommended Citation

Penix, Douglas, "IT 626 Advanced Video Production" (2000). *Syllabi*. Book 554.
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Asbury Theological Seminary

Course Syllabus

IT 626

Advanced Video Production

This course presents principles of design and creation of video messages, with an emphasis on electronic field production and editing for use in the church. You will be expected to create video projects and written materials, which approach standards used in the professional world. You will, in the process, gain insight into the mechanics and processes of video production. If you and I do our jobs well, you will leave this class with a better understanding of how to create effective media messages, and a project of significance and quality.

Instructor:

Doug Penix

Video Production Coordinator - Information Technology

Office: BC 416

Phone: 858-2165(If I am not available you may access my voice mail at this number)

Email: doug_penix@asburyseminary.edu

Office Hours: by appointment

Prerequisites:

CE/YM 674 (IT 574)

Readings:

Shyles, Leonard. Video Production Handbook. Boston and New York: Houghton

Mifflin Company, 1998

Handouts

(approx. 600 pages)

Due to the quantity of projects and seminars during the class, the readings are limited to the

main textbook and handouts. Students will be required to have set lab times for editing and group work.

Course Objectives:

The student showing competence in this course will be able to:

- Understand video as communication, and how a television works.
- Identify the major steps of video production.
- Understand lighting equipment, the fundamentals of lighting design, and field lighting.
- Identify camera mounts, the electronic components of cameras, and the basic design elements of picture composition.
- Understand the nature of sound, the basic types and characteristics of microphones, and microphone selection.
- Discuss the technical principles for creating air quality graphics, set design, basic set elements, and production phases in a set design.
- Operate the video switcher/complex effects and transitions.
- Demonstrate competency in field production, electronic news gathering, electronic field production, and multicamera remote production.
- Understand editing aesthetics and editing techniques.
- Illustrate principles of video writing and basic script formats.
- Understand producing and directing.
- Discuss the aspects of television ministry.

Course Requirements:

Attendance

Attendance will be taken, and it is expected that each student attend class regularly. Many topics and "hands on" workshops will occur in class that are not included in the readings.

Exams

There will be a midterm and final exam during the semester covering readings and class instruction.

Paper

During the semester you are required to read 3 handouts based on theology and media. A paper is to be written evaluating the author's views, and compare and contrast your views with theirs.

Course Projects

At the beginning of the term, we will organize into groups of four. These groups will work together on most projects during the semester. All production projects must reach a basic professional level to be graded, including proper exposure, good audio levels, satisfactory lighting, clear labeling, cueing of tapes, and meeting stated project goals. Those projects that do not meet these requirements will have to be resubmitted before they will be graded.

Grading

Midterm 15%

Final Exam 20%

Exercise #4 5%

Exercise #5 5%

Exercise #6 10%

Paper 10%

Final Project 35%

Week 1

Intro to Course
Video as Communication
How Television Works

Week 2

Lighting Equipment and Design
Sound and Microphones
Audio Processing and Aesthetics

In class workshops

Week 3

Using a Camera
Field Production

EXERCISE #1(in class) and #2 Interviews (Group)

Week 4

Editing: Aesthetics and Techniques

Edit Exercise #1 and #2 in class

Week 5

Script Writing/Storyboards/Shot List

EXERCISE #3 Single Camera A or B (Group)

Week 6

Video Processing

EXERCISE #4 Montage (Individual)

Midterm

Studio Production

In class workshops

Week 7

Graphic and Set Design

In class workshops

EXERCISE #5(Group) Hi-Tech Sermon /Presentation

Week 8

Television Ministry

Week 9

Producing and directing

EXERCISE #6 Commercial

Week 10

Studio Day - Preparations of a 23-minute show about ATS

Week 11

Record class shows (live)

Week 12

Show Final Projects

Final Exam

Exercise 1&2

Interview Assignment (group project)

Because the interview is the most common form of production and an excellent introduction to the process of electronic field production, this will be our first assignment.

Exercise #1

You are to shoot and edit a 3-5 minute interview with the persons in your group. This interview should be shot outdoors or in a room using available light, and is intended to introduce you to the equipment and procedures we will use in this class. Each member of each group is to shoot at least part of the footage you use in the edited piece, but decisions about camera placement and position of talent are to be made by the group. We will critique these interviews in class as preparation for the first graded exercise.

Exercise #2

The second interview is a fully produced interview with some person of interest to the community. Contact this person well in advance of the interview date, confirm the shoot the day before, and show up on time and prepared. Dress appropriately and have crew assignments decided in advance. Know what you want to get from the interviewee in terms of content and direction of conversation so you can be efficient in your questioning and in your editing which is to follow.

SOME TIPS AND REQUIREMENTS

1. Don't shoot across the axis.
2. Balance image size.
3. Use the tripod.
4. Subject and host face each other, or at least "cheat" toward each other.
5. Cross shoot.
6. Use WS to establish OTS to emphasize relationship, MCU for most comments, CU for intense moments.

7. Consider the background. Throw it out of focus if necessary.
8. Make a list of all questions as they are asked. This is used to shoot the reverse angle questions. (Careful of lighting)
9. Shoot reaction shots. They will be very valuable in the editing room to cover jump cuts.
10. Get the microphone as close as possible. Proximity is the key to good sound quality.
11. Brief the guest as to your needs:
 - Wait to answer till the question is finished.
 - Speak clearly and slowly.
 - Explain what will happen (if interviewee is not experienced in television interviews) to put them at ease.
 - Tell them what you will ask, usually in general terms.
12. Let the crew do set up. Producer puts subject at ease.
13. Make eye contact with the subject. Don't stare at notes.
14. Make notes from preliminary interviews or research. Be prepared.
15. Make a list of questions.
16. LISTEN to the answers and react to them
17. Don't talk over the subject unless you must to cut them off.
18. Re-ask the questions if the answer is not right, but use tact.
19. Ask clear questions. Re-phrase the questions if not understood.
20. Be wary of appearing to be a "know it all". Be interested, competent, and above all, remember that YOU are the one who needs the help of the interviewee. The person you are talking with has valuable information that you need somehow to draw out in a graceful and unthreatening way.
21. If you hem and haw a bit, it puts the interviewee at ease, especially if they have never been on television before. Be aware of the threatening nature of the interview, and be sensitive to the person you are talking with.
22. Cutaways, cutaways, cutaways.

Exercise #3

Single Camera (Group Project)

Option A

Walks into shot with a classroom VIS monitor on

THIS IS THE VIDEO INFORMATION SYSTEM HERE AT ASBURY SEMINARY.

SIGNALS COME INTO THIS CLASSROOM FROM A CENTRALIZED LOCATION ON CAMPUS. LET'S CHECK OUT WHERE THESE SIGNALS COME FROM.

walks out of shot and into Information Technology

THE TECHNOLOGY NERVE CENTER OF THE SEMINARY IS LOCATED ON THE FOURTH FLOOR OF THE BEESON CENTER. ALL OF THE EQUIPMENT HERE IS EXCLUSIVELY HERE FOR FACULTY TO ASSIST WITH CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION. WE ARE GOING NOW TO MEET ONE OF HI-TECH INSTRUCTORS.

walks out of shot

+++++

Single Camera

Option B

Walks into shot with river/stream in background

BENEATH THE SURFACE OF THIS RIVER/STREAM, SOME OF THE MOST DEADLY TOXINS KNOWN TO MAN LIE UNDETECTED.

Walks out of shot and into tighter shot with plant. Picks up plant.

YOU'D NEVER THINK THAT SOMETHING THIS LOVELY COULD GROW IN A PLACE WHERE DEADLY POISONS POLLUTE THE GROUND AND WATER, BUT YEARS OF INATTENTION HAVE HIDDEN THE TRUTH ABOUT THIS

PLACE BEHIND AND BELOW A SURFACE BEAUTY THAT JUST DOESN'T TELL THE WHOLE STORY.

Exercise 4

MONTAGE(Group Project)

You are to produce a 3-4 minute video montage. The piece should include some voice over introduction and should be cut together to appropriate music, sound effects, and/or narration.

FROM ABSTRACT TO CONCRETE

You must be able to express the essence of your montage in a single sentence. For example: Color, movement, and shifting patterns.

TIPS--

Always keep the essence statement in mind as you shoot. It should inform your thinking about your subject, and serve as a guide for visual interpretation and decision making. It should also guide you as you edit, giving you a basis for sequencing, pacing, and rhythm.

--Try to shoot in early or late light.....it's softer.

--Most of the piece should be outside shots, but you can move inside if appropriate to the particular place you choose.

--Try to incorporate movement in the piece. Camera in a moving car is effective, or just handheld moving shots.

--Zooms can be effective in this style of video, but be sure to leave 10 sec. at the beginning and end of the zoom..... then you have 3 potential shots instead of one zoom. It is also helpful to shoot more than one speed of zoom.

--Pans and tilts are interesting additions as well.

--Visualize ahead of time so you don't waste time shooting things you won't use.

--Try to get a shot from well away.....take the time to look your subject over from a variety of angles, even from above if possible.

--You may want to but are not required to include some voice over description of the subject, its significance, its use by students, its uniqueness or special qualities. Try to write for the ear, not for the page

--Remember that sometimes wild sound can be as effective as music in communicating the right message

--I will expect to see log sheets and edit assembly sheets from each of you, in addition to a script for any voice over or standup narration.

--You will be graded on quality of video, composition, editing, and appropriateness of video with audio. I will also consider how well your montage reflects your essence statement.

--THINK about your portrait before you shoot it.....a field survey at which you take notes and analyze the subject is in order for this piece. Don't just play with the camera at your site.....know what you want ahead of time and get it.

--Remember the basics of editing to music.....take your cues for edit points and pacing from the music. Also remember that the music should be appropriate to the subject and that it is possible to use more than one piece of music if transitions are carefully thought out (shock transitions or cross fades can be effective).

Exercise 5

Hi-Tech Sermon/Teaching Video (Group Project)

Complete a High Tech Sermon/Presentation technologically enhanced with text, video, props, and illustrations. This project may include the following:

Set design

Pre-produced video clips

Graphic production

Use of a document camera

This presentation will be given in the studio and of course be recorded.

METHOD

- Outline the project.

- Attempt, by using evocative language or images or sounds to make the audience see or hear the project, even if only in their mind's eye.

- Communicate to the audience the essence of your project, which should be expressible in a single sentence. Make them understand what the audience will see, feel, or learn from the program, and then convince them that this message is important and worth creating.

Tips

- Work from an outline. Place the outline on cards

- Use a desk or table as a "center" of your presentation

- Stand while presenting. Movement is positive if not too dramatic.

- Prepare and cue any props, tapes etc ahead of time

- Dress appropriately

- Speak clearly and at an adequate volume. Avoid um's ok's, you know's, and other slang.

- Credibility is important....how can you demonstrate it ?

- Know your subject (terms, history, spelling, etc.).

- Tailor presentation to audience.

- Anticipate questions or problems

Exercise 6

Commercial (Group Project)

Commercials involve much more than just shooting a video of someone telling the viewing audience how great a product is. The video must show the audience the product in its best light. It must make that product as desirable as possible. The product can be a church.

Procedure

This unit and set of procedures is designed to guide you in making a video commercial. It is important to remember that making a video is just like everything else that is made in technology education. The first step must always be to plan and design.

1. Select one commercial style you would like to use. It does not need to be for the same product, but just look at the overall way the product is presented.
2. Design your commercial. This is a good time for a brainstorming session with your production crew. When brainstorming, write down all ideas, no matter how silly. Here are a few things to discuss:

What are you going to make an ad for?

What is unique about it?

What could you say or do to make people want to buy it?

Who will be watching the ad?

Who would be buying the product?

Where could it be bought?

3. Develop a storyboard. This is a series of rough sketches that give an idea of what the advertisement will look like. While some members of the crew work on the storyboard, the others should be working out a script so that the two go together. Here are a few suggestions:

Keep it simple. It is easy to get carried away with fancy ideas.

Keep in mind the kinds of material and space you have to work with

Are you going to add music? If so, be thinking about what you want to use, as well as how you will sequence and match it to the video images.

Remember: The pre-planning phase is where most of the creative work is done!

Show the story board and preliminary script to your instructor for approval.

4. Develop the final script. Include the following:

Description of the set

list of props needed

location of props

Camera placement

Light angles

Location of the actors

Script for the actors to read

Blocking (directions for the actors movement)

Movement of the camera (zoom in, zoom out, etc.)

Titles to be used.

5. Have your instructor OK the final script.

6. Assign jobs. You should have the following:

Director- makes sure everyone is in the right place, tells the cameras when to roll and when to stop (cut).

Cameramen- one for each camera to make sure the cameras are in position and to move the cameras during shooting.

Actors

If you are going to use cue cards, make sure they are ready to go and in order.

It is a good idea to number them to make sure they are in the right sequence.

7. Do a dress rehearsal. That is, go through the entire commercial without the cameras rolling, to make sure everyone knows their parts, locations, and that the props work properly. Spend some time discussing with your actors and crew what could have been done to make the commercial go more smoothly. Write down your ideas, so

you can use them when you start shooting.

8. Shooting the video: This is where all the pre-planning comes together.

Make sure you have the following ready before shooting:

All props

Lights set up and ready to go

Cameras on tripods in position

Actors know their lines, if they are not reading from cue cards

If you only are using one camera, you should shoot several takes of the same commercial, using different camera angles each time. That way, you can use the best shots from each take. Even if some mistakes are made in the commercial, go ahead and keep shooting and finish up the commercial. There may be parts that you can use. Later,

when you edit the commercial, you will put it all together.

9. When you have at least three takes of the commercial, strike the set.

Final Project

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Produce a video, which is between 6 and 10 minutes in duration. The topic is at your discretion, but you are required to present a proposal to the instructor prior to beginning production. There must be some element of demonstration of a product, procedure, craft, or profession in the program, and explanation of the process must be mostly by the person demonstrating it.

You may use VO narration for explanation or introduction, but most narration should be used only for bridging gaps in interview gathered information.

This piece should be about the craft, process, procedure etc., but it also is about the person you choose.....in a sense it is a profile of that person. Therefore, choose a person or persons who are interesting and able to be reasonably articulate.

PRODUCTION REQUIREMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

You are required to use interview, field lighting, cut ins and cutaways, and consider pictorial continuity. Your piece should have a slate and countdown, title sequence, and lower third id's for persons appearing on camera. Credits are not required.

Remember the importance of the close up in television.....when someone is doing something interesting show it to us as closely as possible. When someone talks to us, give us the opportunity to know them intimately.....this is what television does best.

Also remember the concept of "letting the piece breathe" by weaving actualities with description and avoiding wall to wall speech.

CLASS PRESENTATION AND PRE-PRODUCTION REQUIREMENTS

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

- logs
- assembly sheet
- time log for pre-production, shooting, and editing
- narration script (if any)

Television Program

CLASS PROJECT

Produce a Television show that would be suitable for broadcast on local cable. The program will be 23 minutes in length. The topic should be something about ATS, or possibly about a particular topic that effects the church or pastor today.

This program will recorded as if it was a live event complete with graphics, video segments, video roll-ins, and live guests. The class will need to choose two hosts that will do both the introductions, body of the program, and live interviews. The interviews produced earlier in the semester can be used for this program.

PRODUCTION REQUIREMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

You are required to use interview, field lighting, cut ins and cutaways, and consider pictorial continuity. Your piece should have a slate and countdown, title sequence, and lower third id's for persons appearing on camera.

Remember the importance of the close up in television.....when someone is doing something interesting show it to us as closely as possible. When someone talks to us, give us the opportunity to know them intimately.....this is what television does best.

CLASS PRESENTATION AND PRE-PRODUCTION REQUIREMENTS

Due at the time of your presentation is a treatment which explains the program in outline form (see attached treatment guidelines and sample). Try, in both treatment and presentation to make the program come alive for the listener / viewer.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

- logs
- assembly sheet
- time log for pre-production, shooting, and editing
- narration script (if any)

Bibliography

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