

MFS 320: Advanced Film Production

Fall 2022

Wednesday 12:30-3:20pm

007 Berte Humanites and the studio

Dr. Nora Stone // nestone@bsc.edu // 127 Berte Humanities

Office Hours: T/Th 10:30am-1:30pm

Class Description:

MFS 320 is an advanced production course designed to build on filmmaking and storytelling skills introduced in MFS 220. Students will enhance their technical skills while engaging in diverse film exercises and assignments, including fiction and nonfiction. Upon completion, students should be prepared to think critically about the production of a senior-level capstone film project. Extensive filmmaking will occur on several weekends throughout the term.

Learning Objectives:

- Learn to operate digital video cameras, lighting fixtures and modifiers, sound recording equipment, and non-linear editing software
- Learn to generate original ideas, and develop, write, and revise short film screenplays
- Gain experience directing actors
- Learn to plan and execute complex video projects, including location scouting, previsualization, scheduling, and running a crew on set
- Produce films that are personal, distinctive, and technically polished
- Practice giving and receiving feedback on creative work

Required Materials

- *Voice and Vision: A Creative Approach to Narrative Filmmaking* (3rd Edition), Mick Hurbis-Cherrier
- External hard drive, Mac compatible (1Tb or more)
- SD memory card (16gb or more)
- Headphones (wired, not earbuds)
- Notebook
- Plan to gather the following for shoot days: props, wardrobe, set dressing, meals, beverages, snacks

Assignments

Scene Recreation (group): 20%

Recreate a scene from an actual film.

Screening report (individual): 10%

Screen films assigned by professor and reflect on them.

Screenplay (individual): 10%

Write and revise a short film screenplay.

Previz for final film (group):10%
Create pre-production documents for the final project.

Final Film (group): 30%
Shoot and edit a short film.

Reflection on the process (individual): 10%
Reflect on the filmmaking process, from pre-production to post-production.

Participation in discussion and critique: 10%
Thoughtful engagement in class.

*** Assignments are subject to change. In particular, I will institute reading quizzes if it appears students are not reading the textbook.

*** Assignments have firm due dates. If you submit an assignment late, your grade on the assignment will be reduced by one letter-grade each day late.

Attendance Policy

You are allowed two absences without penalty. I do not need to know why you are absent. No absences beyond two will be excused. After the two absences, each additional absence will result in a 5% deduction from your final overall grade.

Excessive tardiness will accumulate into absences. Three partial attendances (missing more than 5 minutes of class) will count as one absence.

Please get in touch if you must miss class for athletics, religious observances, or serious illness.

Other Course Policies

Plan to take notes by hand in class. You may bring laptops for screenwriting work and group collaboration, but keep them closed during lecture, discussion, and exercises.

Cellphone and smartwatch use in class is forbidden.

Safety is the number one priority on film sets. Never compromise your or your collaborators' safety for the sake of a shot. More details in lecture.

Schedule

Week 1: August 24 – Introduction

Week 2: August 31

Read: Chapter 3: The Visual Language and Aesthetics of Cinema
Chapter 4: Organizing Cinematic Time and Space
Chapter 5: From Screenplay to Visual Plan
Chapter 10: The Camera Lens
Chapter 12: Basics of Exposure

Week 3: September 7 – NO CLASS – DR. STONE ON FILM SHOOT

Meet with your group to prepare pre-viz documents for Scene Recreation.

Read: Chapter 1: From Idea to Cinematic Story

Chapter 2: The Screenplay

Due: Pre-viz documents for Scene Recreation due Friday, September 9

Week 4: September 14 – Screenwriting

Week 5: September 21 – In-Class Critique of Scene Recreation

Due: Scene Recreation, submit by 9am

Due: Meet with me to discuss your film plan this week

Week 6: September 28 – Lighting

Read: Chapter 13: Basics of Light and Lighting

Week 7: October 5

Due: Screenplay/Film Plan

Week 8: October 12 – Pre-Production, On-Set Operations

Due: Film Report

Read: Chapter 6: Preparing for Production

Chapter 7: The Cast and Crew

Week 9: October 19

Due: Final Film Pre-Viz Documents

Week 10: October 26 – Editing

Read: Chapter 20: Digital Editing Fundamentals

Chapter 21: The Art and Technique of Editing

Week 11: November 2

Due: Complete filming of final film

Week 12: November 9 – Organizing, syncing, screening footage

Week 13: November 16 – Editing

THANKSGIVING

Week 14: November 30

Due: Final Film

Due: Student Reflection due Tuesday, December 6

Title IX

Birmingham-Southern College is committed to the creation and maintenance of a safe and healthy learning environment for students and the campus community. The College forbids any type of sexual or gender-based misconduct among its students, faculty, and staff. The College encourages all members of the academic community to report suspected sexual and gender-based misconduct to the appropriate authorities so that it can be investigated, remedied, and eliminated. BSC forbids retaliation against any person who has opposed, reported, or participated in an investigation concerning sexual or gender-based misconduct. See the BSC Title IX website (www.bsc.edu/titleix) for more information, including a link to file an online report form and information about how and to whom to report in person. If you or a peer have experienced such misconduct, the Title IX webpage also includes information about the numerous resources available on campus and in the local community with whom the College encourages you to seek support. Confidential resources include counseling and health care providers, our Chaplain, and numerous faculty and staff members who are trained in assisting students by answering questions and helping them navigate their choices in seeking further support and the reporting process.

Accessibility Statement

Students with a disability that qualify under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and require accommodations should be registered with BSC's Accessibility Office. If you are registered for academic accommodation, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss any accommodation that may be necessary. During this discussion you are not expected to disclose any details concerning your disability though you may do so at your discretion. If you have a disability but have not yet registered, please contact Dr. Sandra Foster, Assistant Director of Accessibility Services and Resources, at 205-226-7909 (x1909) or smfoster@bsc.edu, or visit Norton 228. Keep in mind that no accommodation will be made unless and until the instructor receives official notification from the College.

Honor Code

Much of the work in this class will be collaborative in nature so it is expected that you will discuss assignments with your classmates. However, when you turn in work as your own, you need to be sure that what you have written is your understanding of the concept and not simply copied from another source. You must properly cite and reference all sources. If you are unsure how to do this properly, please reach out to me. If you are found in violation of the Honor Code by the Honor Council, you will receive no credit for the assignment, test, or quiz in question.

BSC Resources for Writers and Readers

Located in Humanities 102, the Writing Center offers in-person and virtual peer-to-peer tutoring and a quiet, supportive lab space to work on writing assignments. The Writing Center's tutors are students from a wide variety of majors on campus and have the range to address student writing needs with discipline specificity. Supervised and assisted by Writing Center directors, our tutors provide one-on-one consultations for any student at any point in the writing process. During these consultations, tutors do not "edit" papers; instead, they assist students in addressing any potential writing issues, including content development, grammar usage, and citation formatting. Each tutorial is about 30 minutes long, free of charge, and available on a drop-in basis. There is

no limit to how many tutorials a student may attend. Once logged in, a director will take your information and pair you with a tutor for your 30-minute tutorial.

The Writing Center is open Sunday-Thursday, 2pm-8pm. To ensure a full 30-minute tutorial time slot, students are encouraged to be mindful of assignment-heavy weeks, keep track of due dates, and visit the Writing Center at their earliest availability during open hours. Please contact Dr. Anna Williams or Laura Tolbert (writingcenter@bsc.edu) with any questions or requests for virtual appointments.

Statement of Inclusion & Equity

MFS 100 supports an inclusive learning environment where diverse perspectives are recognized and respected. As outlined in the Birmingham-Southern mission, the College challenges students to engage in their community and the greater world, to examine diverse perspectives, and to live with integrity. Assignments outlined in the course syllabus will address diversity consideration for communities, why those communities exist, who they serve, and how their practices reflect their values.