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2023

### MCA 20500 - Editing (Fall 2023)

Zachary Finkelstein  
*CUNY City College*

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## **MCA 20500** **Editing**

Thursdays 9:30am – 12:15pm

Instructor: Zachary Finkelstein

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**Classroom:** (refer to the syllabus for a detailed schedule of meeting dates and locations)

**Office Hours:**

My office hours are by appointment so please email me to schedule a time to meet online.

**Course Description:**

In this course students are introduced to both the aesthetic process and the practical tools of picture editing for moving picture media. Through readings, discussion and screenings of selected media, students examine the historical development of cinematic conventions and editing language. At the same time, they also pursue a practical study of the mechanics of editing in a non-linear software environment using Adobe Premiere Pro, and apply the principles explored in their theoretical studies to their own creative work through picture and sound editing based assignments.

**Learning Objectives:**

- Evaluate, compare and contrast the historical breakthroughs in editing theory and apply concepts in creative productions.
- Import, edit and export picture and sound for film and media productions, using professional postproduction equipment and technologies.
- Identify and apply postproduction time management skills for film and media productions.
- Analyze and solve editorial problems, using editorial theory and techniques as tools to guide creative choices.
- Communicate ideas using the most suitable editorial choices for the message, audience and purpose.
- Demonstrate critical thinking through constructive feedback and evaluation of self, peers, and film screenings.
- Develop networking skills necessary for professional success through positive collaboration with peers.

**Course materials:**

To complete the learning objectives outlined in this course syllabus you will be required to complete assigned readings as well as purchase some materials to support your learning in the course.

- Adobe Premiere Pro (Creative Cloud account)

This course uses OER / ZTC materials whenever possible.

Readings: Excerpts will be posted online on our course Drive.

Millar, G. & Reisz, K. *The Technique of Film Editing*

New York, Focal Press, 2010

Murch, W. *In the Blink of an Eye : A Perspective On Film Editing.*

2nd ed. Los Angeles, Silman-James Press, 2001

Film and Media Screenings: TBD

- Access to Kanopy (free through the CCNY library) is helpful for film screenings
- Links to online videos will be posted on our course page/drive

\*Additional Materials\*:

- External Harddrive (~1 TB)
- Headphones
- Pad of paper and pens (optional, but you will need something to take notes with)

**Grading:**

**10% - Attendance** – Students are expected to be on Zoom when class begins with picture on.

Three unexcused absences are grounds for failure. Shoots or work are not considered a reason not to be in class. Lateness of more than 15 minutes will be considered an absence.

**25% - Class Contribution** – It is expected that you will do the readings/screenings and contribute to the class discourse by expressing your thoughts about the films and ideas we are

exploring in class. It is also expected that you will give critical comments and constructive criticism to projects and ideas presented by your peers.

**Developing the art of critique and being able to give and receive constructive criticism and feedback is essential.**

**20% Editing Assignment #1** – Group Presentation (Editing analysis)

**20% Editing Assignment #2** – The Hold-Up (Action scene edit)

**25% Editing Assignment #3** – Found Footage/Experimental Editing

**Codes of Conduct / GPA / Attendance**

In this course students are expected to challenge themselves and take creative risks. In order to create a classroom experience where all students feel they can express their ideas and tell their stories to their fullest abilities, this class supports a learning environment that is anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-homophobic, anti-transphobic, anti-colonial, anti-ableist and anti-classist. Students and faculty are expected to observe these ideals in the work that they create in the course and in group discussions and workshops.

Students are expected to keep a 3.0 average in their BFA major classes. Falling below is grounds for dismissal from the program.

Students are expected to be in class on time (virtual or in-person). Three unexcused absences are grounds for failure of the course so please communicate any absences or lateness to me by email BEFORE class. Film production projects and recording exercises are not considered a valid reason to miss class.

UNIT	TOPIC(S)	ASSESSMENTS	RESOURCES
Week 1 08/26  Online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Course outline and class expectations: introductions, semester breakdown, grading, managing workload, participation etc.</li> </ul>	Assignment 1: Editing Analysis Group Presentation (DUE weeks 6,7,8,9)	Readings for week 2: Reisz, Karel, Millar, Gavin, The Technique of Film Editing, pp. 2-7 (hereafter Reisz/Millar)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to the art of editing; what is editing, creative expression, role of editing in the process of filmmaking</li> <li>• Introduction to non-linear editing; destructive vs. non-destructive editing, media file management; hard drives, connections, lab log-in and storage procedures</li> </ul>		
Week 2 09/02  Online	<p>Early filmmakers: Lumières: documenting events, staging action, evolution from the stage; Méliès: staging and camera techniques, serialized tableaux; Porter: location changes, incomplete action, parallel cutting</p> <p>Premiere Pro:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Importing basics</li> <li>2. Viewing footage in the source window</li> <li>3. The timeline</li> <li>4. Creating bins, sequences, stringing out clips, basic insert/overwrite editing</li> <li>5. Project, bin, sequence, clip, media file.</li> <li>6. Backing up/outputting</li> </ol>	ASSIGNMENT 2: Editing The Hold-Up Scene	<p>Screenings:</p> <p>The Lumière Brothers: various shorts (1895-1902)</p> <p>G.A. Smith; The Sick Kitten (1901)</p> <p>Georges Méliès: A Trip to the Moon (1902)</p> <p>Edwin S. Porter: Life of an American Fireman (1903), The Great Train Robbery (1903)</p>
Week 3 09/09  Online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuity Editing - cutting for drama, character perspectives, controlling the viewers' sight, flashbacks, parallel action, manipulation of time, foreshadowing, epic wide shots</li> </ul>		<p>Screenings:</p> <p>G.A. Smith; Mary Jane's Mishap (1903)</p>
Week 4 09/23  Online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Editing practices, three stages of editing process, project management</li> </ul> <p>Premiere Pro:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Project setup, Media Management</li> <li>2. Anatomy of the PP interface, the main windows: Media Browser, bins</li> <li>3. Basic editing</li> <li>4. C, V, JKL</li> <li>5. In and Out points, Lift/Overwrite</li> </ol>	<b>Assignment #2: The Hold Up</b> ( <i>students need to download footage</i> )	<p>Reading for week 5: Reisz/Millar pp 179-193</p> <p>Murch Excerpt #1</p>
Week 5 09/30  Online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• visual continuity, screen direction classic coverage</li> <li>• shot sizes</li> </ul>	<i>Check in: Groups for presentations</i>	

	Premiere Pro: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ripple Delete</li> <li>2. Creating Text, Slates,</li> <li>3. timecode generator</li> </ol>		
Week 6 10/07  SH 290	Screen student rough cuts  Peer feedback and critique	<b>Hold up rough cuts DUE!</b>	
Week 7 10/14  Online	View Fine cuts of Hold Up Scene  Peer feedback	<b>DUE: Assignment 2</b>	Reading for week 8: Reisz/Millar pp 12-23
Week 8 10/21  Online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soviet Montage – editing to reinforce ideas and associations; intellectual vs. emotional objectives; plot as secondary to implied commentary; the political voice</li> <li>• Pudovkin and Eisenstein, methods of montage</li> </ul> Assignment 2: Group 1 presentation		Screenings: Lev Kuleshov; The Kuleshov Effect  Eisenstein; October (excerpt)
Week 9 10/28  Online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soviet Montage (cont.) – Esfir Shub Found Footage filmmaking</li> <li>• Supercuts, memes, mashups and remix culture</li> </ul> Assignment 2: Group 2 presentation	Assignment 3: Found Footage / Experimental Editing	
Week 10 11/04  Online	Premiere Pro: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Editing picture and sound</li> <li>• Working with audio tracks</li> <li>• L and J cuts</li> <li>• Sound as a transitional tool</li> <li>• Essential Sound Panel</li> </ul> Assignment 2: Group 3 presentation		
Week 11 11/11  SH 290	In-class analysis/critique screening and feedback of Assignment #3 (in progress)		

<p>Week 12 11/18</p> <p>Online</p>	<p>Premiere Pro:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intro to color correction and color grading</li> <li>• Lumetri Color Panel</li> <li>• Reading video scopes</li> </ul> <p>Assignment 2: Group 4 presentation</p>	<p><i>Students will need access to COLOR footage to work with in this workshop.</i></p>	
<p>Week 13 12/02</p> <p>Online</p>	<p>Work in progress screenings and feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual meetings to discuss final assignments</li> <li>• Schedule as needed</li> </ul> <p>Assignment 2: Group 5 presentation</p>		
<p>Week 14 12/09</p> <p>SH 290</p>	<p>FINAL CLASS</p> <p>Assignment 3 Fine Cuts: View and Critique</p>	<p><b>DUE:</b> <b>Assignment 3 Fine Cuts</b></p>	

**Please note: this course schedule may change as resources and circumstances require.**