Setting up & Shooting Video
2008

Students will learn basic videography and receive an introduction to the language of film. After completing this session, each student should know:

• The hardware components necessary to shoot quality digital video footage
• How to adjust camera settings
• When and why adjustment of camera settings is necessary
• Basic video shooting terminology – camera angles, depth of field, composition & framing, shooting rules (rule of thirds, 180 degree rule, eye-line match)
• Basic lighting techniques for desired exposure of film
• Some basic Language of film terminology: mise-en-scene, pacing, sound & color effects, dynamic composition, insert & cutaway shots, transitions.  In the original French, mise-en-scene (pronounced “meez-ahn-sen”) means “putting into the scene,” and it was first applied to the practice of directing plays. Film scholars, extending the term to film direction, use the term to signify the director’s control over what appears in the film frame. As you would expect from the term’s theatrical origins, mise-en-scene includes those aspects of film that overlap with the art of the theater: setting, lighting, costume, and the behavior of the figures. In controlling the mise-en-scene, the director stages the event for the camera. – from Bordwell & Thompson (2001) sixth ed p 156

I. Deconstruction discussion of 1 – 3 minute content based video clip as a class exercise in visual literacy and elements of dynamic composition.

II. Video Camera Basics

After a 10 min demo of shooting modes and how to locate and select menu items, participants will be broken up into groups, two – four people/group. Members of each group will be responsible for illustrating different components of the following while being checked off on their accomplishments by a professional staff member.

A. How To:

• On/Off
• Load/unload mini-DV tape
• Check Camera Mode
• Record/Start/Stop
• Zoom
• Check battery life
• Charge battery
• Adjust viewfinder
• Mount to a tripod
B. **Universal recommended camera menu settings:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Camera Setting</th>
<th>Panasonic A</th>
<th>Panasonic B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Shooting Mode</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Tape recording”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Digital Zoom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Record Mode (SP/LP/EP)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Image Stabilization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 16:9 Frame</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 12-bit/16-bit Audio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• White balance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wind Screen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Date Mode</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Auto focus/manual focus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Camera Special Effects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **What is Timecode?**
  - Playback of recorded footage
  - Locating the end of Timecode (End Search, Blank Search)

C. **Directed Q & A** – led by professional staff emphasizing why these camera settings are important, how they relate to best practices, and what outcomes are possible when deciding the settings to chose.
III. Shooting Basics

A. “Film Terms” movie and demo of Camera angles with class participation
   - Low and High angles
   - Panning, Tilt, & Pedestal
   - Rack focus
   - Long, medium, and close shots

B. Demo of the effects possible by manipulation of
   - depth of field
   - distance of camera, object distance to lens
   - auto/manual focus & rack focus
   - Zoom
   - Use a Tripod whenever possible!

Also see CyberCollege Internet Campus http://www.cybercollege.com/tvp011.htm

C. General Class Discussion of Dynamic Composition assisted by a series of images and/or clips illustrating the following:
   - Rule of thirds – imagine your frame as a tic-tac-toe, line up the focal element where four lines cross, angle the camera for effect.
   - wide, and extreme close-up and establishment shot etc.
   - leading lines in images
   - Insert shot (cu – significant focal point) and cutaway footage (related material).
   - Background & focal object blending (ex: dark hair & dark background)
   - Colors & light levels convey meaning

See CyberCollege Internet Campus http://www.cybercollege.com/tvp023.htm

D. Demo with Class participants of 3 point lighting and white balance
   - Shooting Awesome Video CD (On reserve at Burke Circulation)
   - See CyberCollege Internet Campus http://www.cybercollege.com/tvp031.htm

E. General Class Discussion of Pacing/Timing and Continuity Frame to Frame illustrated by supporting video clips.
• **30 Degree Rule** – subsequent camera to subject positions vary by 30 degrees from the previous camera angle.

• **180 Degree Rule** – do not cross the axis of action (ex: over the shoulder and gunfight, pp 263–264 in Film Art)

• **Eye line match** when intercutting close-ups

• Movement across frames – left to right, up, down, nose room/following/leading, match action (cut on action), & light to dark.

• **Sound and light in continuity** and shooting – use to establish similarity or to emphasize difference. Use of Diegetic vs. nondiegetic sound.

Each group will take 15 minutes to film something in our near the workshop. Then, we will all reassemble and view the footage from 3–4 groups with Q & A based on major concepts covered in this section.

**Camera Setup Checklist**

- Shooting script & shot breakdown from Storyboards
- Camera
- Charged batteries
- Mini–DV Tapes
- Tripod
- Lights
- Microphone?

**Resources**

Kristin Thompson and David Bordwell, *Film Art*

Shooting Awesome iMovies CD – checkout & view in MPC (1st floor of Library)

CyberCollege Internet Campus  [http://www.cybercollege.com/tvp023.htm](http://www.cybercollege.com/tvp023.htm)

CyberCollege Internet Campus  [http://www.cybercollege.com/tvp027.htm](http://www.cybercollege.com/tvp027.htm)

Hamilton’s Documentation Support Center  [http://www.hamilton.edu/college/its/documentation.html](http://www.hamilton.edu/college/its/documentation.html)

And real people! The MPC Lab Consultants (LC’s) and professional staff in the Multimedia Presentation Center (MPC).