

## **Filmmaking and cinema studies 1AB**

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Conference Period 1

**Course description:** This new filmmaking course features state of the art equipment with the most innovative curriculum available to high school students and has received complete UC accreditation. The class will be challenging; it is a course appropriate for students who are motivated to learn about cinema as an important medium for self-expression and as an art form. This course will be demanding, time-consuming, very structured but immensely rewarding. Filmmaking is a time sensitive activity and requires that each student work in a cooperative environment and show leadership skills in managing various personalities.

**Course Objective:** The course is designed to introduce you to the process and tools associated with filmmaking. The course is divided into two parts: cinema studies, which emphasize film language, analysis, iconography, and genre. The other part is production, which involves: producing, screenplay writing, cinematography, directing, art direction, sound and editing. Through the class you will learn: pre-production skills, film production structure and aesthetics, camera operation and sound recording procedures, basic studio lighting and the fundamentals of editing.

**California Visual Arts Content Standards for Media Arts** are utilized throughout the course. Several standards will be addressed in depth:

**Language Arts 2.1** Write fictional, autobiographical, or biographical narratives:

**a.** Narrate a sequence of events and communicate their significance to the audience.

**b.** Locate scenes and incidents in specific places.

**c.** Describe with concrete sensory details the sights, sounds, and smells of a scene and the specific actions, movements, gestures, and feelings of the characters; use interior monologue to depict the characters' feelings.

**d.** Pace the presentation of actions to accommodate temporal, spatial, and dramatic mood changes.

**e.** Make effective use of descriptions of appearance, images, shifting perspectives, and sensory details.

• **1.2** Compare and contrast digital media with previous forms of media.

• **2.1** Create original media art works that demonstrate clarity of intent in conveying an idea, story, or emotion.

• **2.3** Use innovative digital processes to produce increasingly complex media art works.

• **2.5** Integrate pre-production, production, and post-production processes in media art works.

• **4.2** Demonstrate purpose in applying media arts principles in media art works.

**Equipment:** The equipment is new, limited, and expensive and must be kept in excellent working conditions. Please follow all directions and treat the equipment responsibly and correctly so that you may keep the privilege to use school equipment. Losing such privilege will severely impact your grade in this class and can be grounds for dismissal.

**Shooting video:** videotaping will be done in school grounds and around any common school area. Taping inside the hallways and in the classroom without teacher's written permission is **strictly prohibited !!!**. All videotaping must be pre approved by the teacher. When you are videotaping outside the classroom you are to act maturely and responsibly. Your actions reflect directly on the instructor and the course. Failure to act appropriately may be grounds for losing your videotaping privileges, getting an F in the class, and maybe dismissed from the class.

**You may not videotape:** violence, sex, drugs, guns, gangs, vulgarity, racism, or socially inappropriate material.

**Project Guidelines:** Guidelines apply to **ALL** video projects in the class. Before a camera can be checked out, you or your group must have an approved screenplay or outline, a storyboard, the assignment of every member in the group and a completed proposal. The entire group must approve of the project, if you have a problem vote, if you have a problem solve it, your lack of planning will hurt your grade as a group!

All projects must include 5 seconds of black before and after the video. Titles and credits must be on the slate, and your tape must be labeled correctly. Depending on your assignment your project should include: a variety of camera shots, a steady camera, please use the **tripod!** Very little zooming, appropriate lighting, clear and clean focused shots, panning and tilting, clear and crisp audio tracks, school appropriate shots, and of course creativity.

### Syllabus

Units average approximately 2 weeks in length and may overlap. The timeline below reflects general content of each segment.

<b>Filmmaking 1A curriculum spring 2007</b>		
<b>Week</b>	<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Materials needed</b>
1-2	Analyze filmmaking as an art form; discuss genres, styles, and movements. Discuss <b>world cinema</b> . Analyze films for themes, concepts, plots, characters, and <i>mise en scene</i> . Discuss mayor directors (directors handout) including women in films. Discuss the various roles and positions within a film crew. Create production folders. Review syllabus, discuss ethical and safety issues. Hand out Lausd media disclaimers. Cover genres such as: drama, comedy, romantic comedy, sci-fi, horror, documentaries, ect...	<b>Film- <i>the piano</i></b> (intro), <b><i>lost in translation</i></b> (female directors), <b><i>el Norte</i></b> (Latino cinema) <b><i>Los Olvidados</i></b> , <b><i>Turtles can fly, super size me</i></b> , (documentaries.)
3-4	<b>Screen writing</b> , structure and styles. Read screenplays. Work on synopsis and treatment. Discuss adaptations and original screenplays. Write synopsis, treatment and short 10-minute screenplay.	<b>Film- <i>E.T.</i></b> (original screenplay) sections of: <b><i>Breakfast Club</i></b> , <b><i>Eternal Sunshine of the spotless mind</i></b> ,
5	<b>Directing-</b> What is directing, what makes a good director, the director's job. Working with actors. <b>Directors Report-</b> <b>Assignment 1:</b> Directing two actors in a two-minute scene. Editing to music, titles. Introduction to Imovie/ IDVD	<b>The good, the bad, and the ugly</b> , <b>North by North West</b>
6-7	<b>Story boards 101-</b> facial features, sketching the body, perspective, and value. <b>Vocabulary handout.</b> <b>Cinematography and photography.</b> Camera quiz, Video terms, Shot list, continuity, angling the camera, point of view, camera techniques, lighting, framing the shot, the elements of composition, video camera basics, set up groups of 8 for <b>assignment 2 Music video</b>	<b>Film- <i>citizen cane</i></b> , <b><i>Schindler's list</i></b> , <b><i>The natural</i></b> Book-Lighting as storytelling <b><i>Visions of light: the art of cinematography. DVD</i></b>
8	<b>Editing-</b> introduction to Imovie, FCP and the advanced concepts of editing.	

9-10	<b>Art direction/production</b> the visual language of film. Discuss films with strong art direction. Discuss props and symbolism. Work on color, design, and sets. Make up and special effects.  <b>Assignment 3-</b> a 3-minute Sci-Fi with makeup and costumes. A mystery with special effects (green screen)	<b>Film- <i>flying dagger, Edward scissor hands, big fish, city of lost children</i></b>
11-12	The <b>origins of sound</b> - discuss sound and levels. Boom microphones and original music.  <b>Create a 2 minute silent film and then add Folly sound to it and an original score</b>  <b>Introduction to garage band</b>	<b>Film- <i>little tramp, the jazz singer, jaws</i></b> Silent film, the little tramp (silent film, Charlie Chaplain)
13-14	<b>Documentaries-</b> The concept of documentary filmmaking and the strength of the genre.  <b>Assignment 4 Outline, write, produce, edit and score a 3-5 minute documentary with still photos, narration, and interviews</b>	<b>Film- <i>the kid stays in the picture, born into brothels, An inconvenient truth, Maya Lin: A strong clear vision</i></b>
15-18	Outline, storyboard, produce, edit and score a <b>5 minute short project</b> with a specific theme.	

\*The pace of this schedule may change according to the instructional needs of each class and each student.

**Text Book- Teaching Analysis of Film Language**, David Wharton and Jeremy Grant (in class text book only)

**Films-** Attached is a list of films that will be **partially shown** and analyzed for film language, genre, style, content, writing and iconography. They will be used to create dialogue about directors, personal vision and mise-en- scene. The following film list encompasses all genres and is a compilation of great American, world cinema, and independent films worth analyzing. Other films will be included as needed for further viewing.

**Note-** Some films are rated R but will be edited to fit academic instruction.

**Methods of instruction:** Lectures, audio-visuals, essays, articles, posters, experimentation with various film media, techniques and processes, field trips and individual and group written and oral reports will develop understanding of cinema as it relates to World culture and history. Books, periodicals, including instructor's personal collection add depth to the course content.

**Slide presentation and class notes-** Students will write notes and vocabulary covered in lectures. Students will **create a production binder** with class notes and projects throughout the semester.

**Homework-** to reinforce content covered in class or to do research for an upcoming project.

**Group Projects-** Students learn to work collaboratively to analyze and share their research with the class. Filmmaking is one of the most collaborative art forms and it requires that all students learn to work in a cooperative learning environment. Groups will be established and once your group is set up, that is the group you will work with. If you have a problem in your group you must resolve it. Please inform me if there are problems in your group. **Note: You will not be moved to another group once the groups have been set up. You are now a member of a group and will share the work, the failures, and the success.**

**Research Papers-** Students will research topics and present several research papers in oral and written form.

**Weekly Quizzes-** Students will take weekly quizzes covering the material discussed that week. Most material will come from the book readings and class notes.

**Cooperation-** Students are to cooperate in various assignments and will be given a grade for cooperation. Filmmaking is a 12 grade elective because of the high level of maturity and discipline needed to complete the course.

**Extra Movie Theater Visit-** Students are encouraged to visit a local movie theater and to write a one-page summary of the film watched. (Please bring the entrance ticket)

**Grading policy:** Students' grades are determined by the following factors: Points received from teacher observation of student's participation in class activities, points accrued from assignments, projects, research papers, quizzes, tests, and homework. Letter grade is derived from the addition of points:  
90% or better= A, 80% or better= B, 70% or better= C, 60% or better= D, less than 60%= F

**Classroom behavior policies are in accordance with SGHS and LAUSD policies**

- A. No cell phones, CD players, cassette players, 8-track players, food, or chewing gum are allowed in the room.
- B. Students must maintain the working environment by cleaning up appropriately on a daily basis.
- C. Students must respect the rights and property of others. (computers, cameras, and all other equipment)
- D. Students are responsible for making up work if absent.
- E. Students behavior should not hinder the teacher or the learning process of other students in class. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students will be sent to the Dean's office immediately.
- F. Plagiarism is unethical. Copying another artist's work violates copyright laws.

**Attendance /Tardy policy -** It is the student's responsibility to obtain work missed before school, after school, or lunchtime. A student with an excused absence has 1 week after returning to class to hand in makeup work.

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I, \_\_\_\_\_ and my parent/s \_\_\_\_\_ have read  
(student's signature) (parent's name)

the syllabus and understand all portions of it.

Parent signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_