

FMP 201: FILM : THE CREATIVE PROCESS (11082)

SYLLABUS

SPRING 2020

INSTRUCTOR: Professor Chris LaMont
OFFICE HRS: Dixie Gammage Hall, #217
Tuesday 1:30 – 2:30
Friday 1 – 2:30
E-MAIL: clamont@asu.edu
(Always put FMP 201 in Subject Line)

WELCOME:

I'm sure you love movies. Or else you wouldn't be in this class. But are you prepared to peek behind the curtain and learn HOW films are really made? What a producer actually does? How does a director direct? Who works to make the pictures and the sound? How about all that editing stuff?

If you want to know how films are really made, then **this is the class FOR YOU!**

But fair warning, everyone who has taken this class has told me that they never look at movies the same way again. The magic of movies is COMPLETELY RUINED for you.

So if you prefer to enjoy movies for what they are – visual stories that emotionally and intellectually engage us, then you should withdraw from this class. Seriously. Once you start down this path, you can never go back.

So if you're still in for the class – keep reading!

COURSE FORMAT:

Class meets **Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10:45 – 12:00 pm in DSCVRY 250 (Discovery Hall)** on ASU Tempe Main Campus.

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REQUIRED TEXT AND ACCOUNTS

This course *doesn't* require the purchase of any textbooks. We'll save that for other classes you will take during your academic career.

But it does require you to enroll and set-up an account with the TOP HAT Class Management System for attendance, class participation, quizzes and in-class writing assignments. The cost is \$36 for 1 semester – Please have this in-place BEFORE the first class. If you have other classes that use Top Hat then this will be at a lower cost.

Top Hat course name: FMP 201 – Spring 2020

6-digit course code: 283008

Direct URL: <https://app.tophat.com/e/283008>

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

This course is designed to introduce students to the world of professional film and media production and examine all aspects of the process from a practical, real-world perspective.

Students will learn the importance of each phase of the creative process through the five stages of filmmaking: development, pre-production, production, post-production, and marketing & distribution.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Student will understand all aspects of the filmmaking process to provide a solid grounding in making films. The class will provide students with the knowledge to successfully execute film both as possible class projects and in the future.

Students will also gain a perspective of the various career opportunities that are available for those interested in going into the film and media industry in the future.

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CLASS CONTENT:

Through lecture, short and feature film screenings, and class discussions each class will focus on a specific area of the filmmaking process.

For example: in the DIRECTING class, we focus on the language and tools of a director, including shot design, storyboarding, working with crew and different equipment.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR:

To have a productive classroom, we all must adhere to some professionalism when it comes to our conduct during class time.

Arriving late or leaving early from class, using phones or personal computers for non-class related activity or talking excessively during lectures fall into the category of "disruptive behavior" and are grounds for administrative withdrawal. If you combine all of those – you are not an ideal student.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Because this class is a Required Class for many of you, attendance is extremely important. Attendance is worth **4 points for each class**, starting *Friday Jan 17* for a total of **180 points**. I know 4 points doesn't seem like a lot, but if you miss multiple classes – then yes.

Attendance is taken at the beginning of class. You'll have 10 minutes to enter your Attendance in the Top Hat system. After that, you will not get points for the class

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Excused absences include any absences involving religious observances/practices that are in accord with ACD 304-04 (ASU Academic Affairs Manual) "Accommodation for Religious Practices."

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Excused absences include University sanctioned/events activities that are in accord with ACD 304-02 "Missed Classes Due to University-Sanctioned Activities"

Excused absences include students who are members of the National Guard, the Reserves and spouses of these members who are legal guardians of minor children under SSM 201-18: "Accommodating Active Duty Military".

The instructor will also accept a verifiable medical excuse for an absence.

USING LAPTOPS AND HANDHELD DEVICES:

The use of personal computers is allowed only for Top Hat and notetaking, without any non-class related browser windows, unless specifically requested by the instructor. Watch out! We like to walk around and catch you.

The use of smart phones for anything other than taking notes and working through Top Hat is not allowed. Last thing I need is for you to be mock my lectures on Facebook and Instagram while in the middle of class. Take it outside during the break and mock me then.

The use of phones for personal use, including phone calls, texting, checking email or any external communication are also considered disruptive behavior.

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR:

Repeatedly missing class, arriving late or leaving early from class without instructor permission, using phones or personal computers for non-class related activity, sleeping or talking excessively during lectures all fall into the category of *disruptive behavior* and are grounds for administrative withdrawal.

Disruptive behavior is graded on a tiered system. **Warning for the first occurrence. Second occurrence is a 25-point deduction. Third occurrence is Academic Withdrawal. You don't want that. That is bad.**

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ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

All necessary and appropriate sanctions will be issued to all parties involved with plagiarizing all course work.

Plagiarism and any other form of academic dishonesty that is in violation with the Student Code of Conduct will not be tolerated. For more information, please see the ASU Student Academic Integrity Policy: <http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity>

THREATENING BEHAVIOR:

ASU has a policy against threatening behavior, per the Student Services Manual, [SSM 104-02](#), “Handling Disruptive, Threatening, or Violent Individuals on Campus”, which includes such actions as requesting students to leave and calling ASU PD to the classroom.

POLICY ON SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION:

ASU has a policy against sexual discrimination, per ACD – 401, “Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation” in which ASU employees are mandated reporters and obligated to report instances of reported or suspected incidences of sexual harassment.

Also Title IX is a federal law that provides that no person be excluded on the basis of sex from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. Both Title IX and university policy make clear that sexual violence and harassment based on sex is prohibited.

An individual who believes they have been subjected to sexual violence or harassed on the basis of sex can seek support, including counseling and academic support, from the university. If you or someone you know has been harassed on the basis of sex or sexually assaulted, you can find information and resources at <http://sexualviolenceprevention.asu.edu/faqs/students>.

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SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS:

To request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact the ASU Disability Resource Center (<http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc/#> ; Phone: (480) 965-1234; TDD: (480) 965-9000). This is a very important step as accommodations may be difficult to make retroactively.

If you have a letter from their office indicating that you have a disability which requires academic accommodations, to assure that you receive your accommodations in a timely manner, please present this documentation to me no later than the end of the first week of the semester so that your needs can be addressed effectively.

COURSE WITHDRAWAL DEADLINE:

If you wish to withdraw from this course, it is your responsibility to do so. Course registration changes are processed through My ASU. These important university deadlines can be found through the academic calendar online.

ASU FILMING POLICIES:

Safety is of paramount importance. All film students must follow the safety and location policies of the ASU Film Program, including all guidelines presented in class.

The strength of our film program lies in its free collaboration. **Film students may not pay other students** for services, locations or equipment on any class project. This includes any company or organization which financially benefits current film students. In case of any questions on vendors or policy, consult your instructor prior to making any expenditure. Students violating this policy will subject to disciplinary action.

Films made by students in ASU Film classes belong to the students. The School of Film, Dance and Theatre reserves the right to use submitted class films for administrative and/or promotional purposes.

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MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS:

There are many assignments including:

- Buying your own Business Cards
 - You buy your own business cards (30 pts)
- Writing a Screenplay
 - You write a 2-3-page screenplay (40 pts)
- Writing a Shot List
 - You write a shot list (20 pts)
- Attending a Networking Event
 - You attend a student club during the semester and take a selfie before midnight that night and email it to prove you were there (50 pts)
- Writing a Script Breakdown
 - You write a script breakdown (40 pts)
- Write a Call Sheet
 - You write a Call Sheet (20 pts)
- Midterm Analysis Paper
 - You'll go to a movie in a theatre and write an analysis (40 pts)
- Final Project
 - Either make a movie or write a career paper (100 pts)

MAJOR ASSESSMENTS:

There are several assignments including all the major assignments that are graded upon content and accuracy. There are several other assessments in the class as well:

- Weekly Multiple-Choice Quizzes based on the Previous Weeks Material
- Weekly Reflection Papers on the Lecture and Films Screened in Class
- Attendance and Participation in Class

There are quizzes based on material presented in class. The heavily weighted assignments are based on participation in group and class projects.

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COURSE GRADING:

There are points allocated for attendance, class participation, and several **ASSIGNMENTS** during the Semester, assigned at random times based on the timeline of the phases of film production.

Each **ASSIGNMENT** is worth anywhere up to 50 points each for a total of **200 POINTS**. There is also a Mid-Term Project and Weekly Quizzes based on the material presented in last week's class

GRADING SYSTEM:

This course is graded on the current ASU scale system.

<i>POINTS AVAILABLE</i>		<i>GRADE SCALE</i>	
500	- 490	=	A+
489	- 460	=	A
459	- 450	=	A-
449	- 440	=	B+
439	- 411	=	B
410	- 400	=	B-
399	- 390	=	C+
389	- 350	=	C
349	- 300	=	D
299	- below	=	E
Did not Finish Work		=	I
Academic Dishonesty		=	XE
Never Withdrew		=	EU
Stopped Participating		=	EN

NETWORKING EVENT:

One of the most important things that professionals in the film industry must do is meet as many like-minded people as they possibly can. These relationships can help with making projects come to life, project production and completion, the opportunities to find work, and establishing friendships.

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To begin establishing relationships here at the ASU Film Program, you will need to attend a student production organization meeting. Either at ASU FILMMAKERS ASSOCIATION, MAROON & GOLD ENTERTAINMENT or a BUSINESS ENTERTAINMENT ASSOCIATION meeting.

You must have your BUSINESS CARD in hand to get credit for the meeting.

You'll take a selfie or have someone take your picture **HOLDING YOUR BUSINESS CARD** and **UPLOAD IT TO CANVAS** before **Midnight of the night of the event**. Any later and you will not get any points. **Attending a meeting is worth 50 points.**

MIDTERM PROJECT:

If you want to make films, then you need to watch films and see how other people make them. To that end, you'll need to go see a movie in the theatre and write a **2 – 3 - page analysis of the film**, breaking films down based on the following creative processes –

Screenwriting, Directing, Acting, Cinematography and Production Design, using terminology and understanding from the first half of class.

This isn't a movie review, but an analysis of the way the film was made. For example, you can discuss directorial elements of shot composition, since it is studied in the Directing Lecture class.

Also, watching movies is not something you do in front of the computer or on your phone or on your tablet. That's not how films are meant to be seen. So, you will need to turn in your ticket stub from a movie theatre, attached via staple to the paper.

You will **lose 10 points (20%)** if the ticket is not attached as well as any additional points due to content or tardiness. The Midterm paper is worth **40 points**.

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FINAL PROJECT:

Worth **up to 100 points** - for your final project, you have **two choices**:

A) You can write:

A three-to-five-page personal essay of one the professional career aspects that you are interested in pursuing moving forward in your filmmaking career. Why does this career choice interest you? How do you get started? What do you need to do to become successful? Software you need to learn, hardware you need to learn?

Anchor this by highlighting ONE professional working in this career choice, their filmography and techniques that they employ and explain why you would like to emulate their career.

B) You can work on a movie:

As part of the class, you are writing a script. Maybe some of you more-enterprising students want to turn that script into a film. There is a basic production package available to you for these final projects – but you probably have your own gear anyway. I'll explain how to check out said gear after the mid-term.

You would need to build a team with **a minimum of 6 people FROM THE CLASS**. Team members from the class should act in the Key Department Head Roles as Producer, Director, Cinematographer, Production Designer / Art Director, and First Assistant Director.

You can **add more to your crew** for various other roles from within or outside the class. (Sound, Art Assistants, Grips/Electric, and Production Assistants).

You can ONLY RECEIVE CREDIT for working on One Project.

You will be graded by your peers for your contribution to the project. Yes, you can work on multiple films, but you're only getting points for one. (Also, this is a great way to start building up your Digital Portfolio and resume!)

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SCORING FOR THE COLLABORATIVE FILM PROJECT

Scoring is based on such items as collaboration, effort, and professionalism. Technical skill is not a scoring factor. Did you show up on time? Work hard? Not upset your teammates who will eviscerate you in their evaluations? Then you are well on your way to a good grade. If you don't, then you will lose points.

The project must be completed for all class members to receive credit – with all their names **in the closing credits**. If the film is not completed for the last day of class, then students can go with **Option A**, the writing paper opportunity turning it in on the last day of class.

There is a limited amount of class production equipment available to your group that can be reserved for your projects. More on that after the mid-term.

Note about live film production, if you have any safety concerns that the SOFDT has deemed necessary for a faculty meeting, you must go through the process of a *Safety Review*.

If you fail to do a *Safety Review* or follow the *On-Campus Location Request Protocol*, everyone on the film project will be **assessed 0 points** (out of 100 that is devastating) and will **lose an additional 100 points** – as this is considered a **MAJOR** Disruptive Behavior violation. You may want to personally see the paperwork to assure yourself that the protocols have been observed.

IMPORTANT:

You must have a screener of your film as an Mp4 on a USB flash drive or portable hard drive to receive credit on the film screening due date.

All students in the class who worked on a film must be there for the Final Exam screening. You will be deducted 30 points if you are not present.

Furthermore, if your film is unable to screen, you will receive 0 points for the Final Exam and it cannot be made up. So, make sure it works!

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NOTE: The only excuse for missing the Final Exam will be a medical excuse from a licensed physician or medical facility that can be verified or one of the other “excused absences” (see excused absences as part of the Attendance Policy).

If you miss the Final Exam Day, then you will receive ZERO POINTS for your Final Project.

ADDITIONAL INFO:

As an instructor, Professor LaMont has been known to be candid about the film industry, and occasionally use harsh and explicit language in his discussions. He also can be critical of student work and can offend sensitive students with his constructive criticism.

Further, some of the materials shown in class may include questionable content, including language, sex, drugs, violence and debauchery. These materials may be considered offensive. If you have concerns about any of these factors, you should withdraw from the class immediately.

GRADE SYSTEM AND POINT BREAKDOWN:

(This course is graded on the traditional ASU scale system.)

Attendance (12 pts/week for 14 wks.)	=	180
In-Class Participation – various	=	100
Quizzes (35 @ 5 pts/quiz)	=	170
Reflection Assignments (21 @ 10 pts)	=	210

Mid-term Writing Assignment	=	40
Business Card Assignment	=	30
Screenplay Assignment	=	40
Breakdown Assignment	=	40
Shot List Assignment	=	20
Call Sheet	=	20
Networking Assignment	=	50
Final Project	=	100

TOTAL = 1000

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MAJOR POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND:

1. It is each student's responsibility to keep in mind deadlines and dates for assignments.
2. SINCE NETWORKING IS A HUGE PART OF BEING SUCCESSFUL IN THE INDUSTRY – you should meet a friend and get assignments if you forget or miss class due to an excused or unexcused absence.
3. For every day that an assignment is late – **you will lose 20% for turning in anything within 2 days late** in addition to any points for content and detail. **Assignments may not be turned in more than 2 days late.**
4. After this semester, you will NEVER look at a film the same way again. Ask questions. Don't be afraid of the instructor.

ACADEMIC CALENDAR (instructor may change at discretion):

Jan 13 – 17	Syllabus & Introduction & Screenings
Jan 20	MLK DAY – No Class
Jan 22 - 29	Screenwriting – Guest Speaker
Jan 31 – Feb 3	Producing
Feb 5 – Feb 12	Directing
Feb 14 & 17	Cinematography
Feb 21	Grip & Electric
Feb 24 - 28	Art Department
March 2	Sound Recording

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March 4 - 18	Pre-Production
March 20 - 25	Production
March 27 – 30 – April 1	Post-Production & Picture Editing
April 3 – 8	Sound Editing
April 10 - 13	Music
April 15	CGI & VFX
April 17 - 20	Film Festivals
April 22	Marketing
April 24	Distribution
April 27 – May 3	Future of Film and Final Exam Prep