

**FILM 404 Digital Video Production Project**

**Trimesters 1 + 2 2009**  
(Monday 2 March – Friday 16 October 2009)

**30 Points**  
CRN 10204



**STAFF**

**Teaching Staff**

**Course coordinator:**

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Office Hours: These will be posted

**AV Technician:**

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**Assistant AV Technician:**

Bernard Blackburn, Room 104/105, 85 Fairlie Terrace, 04 463 9498

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**CLASS TIMES AND ROOMS**

**Workshops**

Wednesday, 10-12.50, Film Room 205, 77FT

## COURSE CONTENT

### Course aims, content and objectives

In FILM 404 students will explore, shape and refine their own creative talents within a group dynamic in order to create compelling works of audiovisual screen art. Students will take turns at writing, directing and producing their own short film. They will also undertake the roles of director of photography/lighting person and editor/sound person on two other projects. Areas covered in the workshops will include scripting, camera and lighting, production management, directing, sound recording and mixing, and editing. Professional filmmakers will conduct several seminars and workshops.

Once you have successfully completed the course you will have:

- worked as director on your own original script
- worked through the process of creating a short film, from outline to final draft
- demonstrated creative ability in the field of audiovisual production
- extended the technical skills learnt in other courses
- learnt to schedule and production manage a short film
- enhanced your analytical skills and gained an understanding of filmmaking as a craft
- worked in small teams in at least five key production roles and been involved in the production of at least three short films

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To develop students' creativity
- To enhance students' technical skills in various aspects of film production
- To improve students' artistic abilities in film direction, scripting, cinematography, sound, editing and production
- To develop students' organizational skills
- To improve students' ability to work collaboratively
- To enhance students' oral communication skills

The assignments are designed to help fulfill the aims of the course by providing students with the opportunity to develop their creative and technical skills during the different sections of the course: scriptwriting, pre-production and technical training, and short film production. Students will fulfill several creative roles: writer, director, producer, camera and lighting person, editor and sound person. Each short film will give the students an opportunity to apply their technical knowledge of film production, project management, and interpersonal skills, and develop their creative "voice" in the audiovisual medium. The course also emphasises group work in the creation of a compelling screen art.

## COURSE DELIVERY

The course is divided into the following sections:

**Weeks 1-6:** Students will develop and write an original script for a short film (no more than ten pages). Students will be encouraged to cultivate their own individual directorial vision.

**Weeks 7-12:** Students will undertake a range of pre-production activities and training in areas.

**Weeks 13-24:** Students will make DV short films (maximum 10 minutes). This will occur in two six-week phases. In one phase, students will direct and produce a short film based on the script they have written in first trimester. In the other phase, students will work as camera/lighting person on another film, and as an editor/sound person on a second film.

## EXPECTED WORKLOAD

The university anticipates that you should be able to devote at least 10 hours per week to a two-trimester 30-point course at Honours level. You will be expected to spend seven hours outside of class time (on average) becoming familiar with equipment, organizing your productions and participating in workshops, scriptwriting, shooting and editing. Please note that this course is highly practical and demands on your time will grow heavier during production periods.

## GROUP WORK

Students will undertake a range of formal and informal group work activities during the course. They will direct and produce a DV short film with two other students in key creative roles. The collaborative nature of this project follows film industry practice. The members of each group will also work together to make an in class presentation or pitch for the purposes of Assignment Two. There will also be a number of pair and small group activities during workshops.

## READINGS

There is no required reading for FILM 404. However it is expected that you engage with, and research, your roles intellectually as well as technically. You need to read the books available on production and the filmmaking process in the library. This research and understanding should inform the way you work and be demonstrated in your pitch/presentation for Assignment Two.

## MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT (REMOVE IF NOT NEEDED)

Students are responsible for purchasing audio and video materials for their own production. Students will also be required to complete pre-production folders that may require artwork like storyboards and other visual materials. Advice on purchases will be given in class, and some items will be available from Bernard.

Video cameras, tripods, lights, digital recorders and audio equipment will be issued on loan. Sound recording/mixing and editing facilities will be made available on a reservation basis. School equipment must be treated with the utmost care, and any malfunction or damage reported immediately to the AV Technician on 04 463 6823 or 027 563 6823. **NOTE:** *Due to differences between DV tape and DVD disc formats only approved Mini Digital Video tapes and DVD-Rs may be used with School audio and video equipment.* Bookings must be strictly adhered to and equipment returned on time, or other students will be inconvenienced and possibly disadvantaged. You are required to read *The Fat Book*, Film and Theatre's protocol handbook. This will enable you to understand our rules and regulations as well as help you know what services and facilities are available within the department.

## ASSESSMENT

All assessment will be internal. There will be four assignments. Full details will be provided in classes.

### ASSIGNMENT 1: Short Film Script

**WEIGHT:** 20%

**LENGTH:** No more than 10 pages

**DUE DATE:** 8<sup>th</sup> May

Students will develop and write a short film script. This will become the basis for the film they will direct during the production phase. This assignment will develop students' creativity in general and their scriptwriting ability specifically.

### ASSIGNMENT 2: 3 x Pitching & Storyboard Presentations

**WEIGHT:** 10% as Director, 5% as Editor/Sound, and 5% as Cinematographer, total 20%

**LENGTH:** 10mins as director and 5mins in the key roles

**DUE DATES:** Phase One – 15<sup>th</sup> July

Phase Two – 9<sup>th</sup> Sept

In this assignment, students will work in small groups to research and pitch their creative roles in their forthcoming film production project to the class through an oral presentation. There will be three presentations in total. When students direct their film for Assignment 3, they will research the role of director and "lead" their group's presentation. In the phase of production where they play key roles on two other films, they will have to research and pitch those roles for their respective presentations. For these presentations students will be expected to formulate a coherent stylistic vision for their film, and will be required to provide storyboards of one sequence. This assignment will develop students' creativity. It will enhance their artistic ability in terms of their assigned creative role. It will improve their oral communication skills and capacity to work in teams.

**ASSIGNMENT 3A/3B: DV Short Films**

**WEIGHT:** 40%

**LENGTH:** Max 5-10mins

**DUE DATES:** 3A Phase One – 19<sup>th</sup> Aug  
3B Phase Two – 15<sup>th</sup> Oct

This assignment constitutes the major part of the course. It involves the creation of a number of short films. Each student will be expected to direct and produce a script based on their own script from assignment 1. (This work will be worth 25% of the total grade.) In the other production phase, students must perform two roles (camera/lighting person, sound/editor person) split between two films. The combined work in these two roles will be worth 25% of the final grade. Students are strongly encouraged to keep a journal record of their production activities.

You will present your film to a panel of Film academic staff members on these dates in a slot organized between the usual workshop hours. This is classed as an examination process so that only in exceptional circumstances (e.g. medical reasons with certificate, or technical calamity out of your groups control) may you miss your specified time slot. Presentation timeslots are final once dates have been confirmed.

This assignment will further develop the creativity of students. It will improve their artistic ability in the key creative roles of director, producer, editor, cameraperson and sound person. It will enhance their ability to work collaboratively. It will improve their communication and organizational skills.

**ASSIGNMENT 4: Reflective Interview**

**WEIGHT:** 20%

**LENGTH:** 20 mins

**DUE DATE:** TBA between 27<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> Oct

Students will reflect and discuss their experiences throughout the course. When preparing for the interview student should reconsider their scriptwriting, pre-production and production activities, as well as their learning experiences. This assignment will develop students' oral communication skills. It will also enhance their ability to reflect upon their artistic practice in a critical manner.

**NOTE:**

- Aegrotat provisions may apply if you are unable to be present or submit your final assignment. In such a case you should contact the course co-ordinator as soon as possible. There is a university policy on reasonable accommodation with respect to assessment procedures for students with disabilities.
- Film Honours students should note that assessment for particular courses is provisional pending consideration of the student's coursework as a whole and external moderation.

**ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEETS**

Assignment cover sheets and extension forms can be found on Blackboard or outside the Programme office. Remember to fill in your tutor's name.

**PENALTIES AND EXTENSIONS**

Work submitted late without an extension will be penalised two percent per working day. Except under exceptional circumstances, no work will be accepted more than two weeks after the due date unless specific prior arrangements have been made.

**Extensions**

If you require an extension, you must complete an extension request form (available on your course Blackboard site) prior to the assignment due date. This must be accompanied by relevant documentation (e.g. a doctor's certificate) where appropriate. Extension requests must be submitted to the Course Co-ordinator. Tutors cannot grant extensions.

## MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible to pass the course you must have a high standard of attendance (normally at least 75%) and complete all assignments and achieve a 'C' grade overall.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such MATERIAL.

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

## COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Any additional information, or changes to the course, will be announced in class and posted on the course notice board on Level 3, 77FT.

## GENERAL ADVICE

Safety in the premises occupied by the School of English, Film and Theatre at 77 and 85 Fairlie Terrace is the responsibility of everyone who uses the facilities. While we make every effort to ensure that our premises are safe and hazard free, we need the cooperation of all students and visitors and hence request the following:

1. Any student or visitor who discovers an actual or potential hazard should report it without delay to a member of staff. Where possible written reports are appreciated.
2. All university equipment must be handled in a careful and appropriate manner in accordance with the specifications and with due regard to safety. Any breakages must be reported as soon as possible.
3. It is the individual responsibility of all students to read the safety notices relating to fire, earthquake etc. and to carry out the provisions as indicated in the notices.

In addition there are certain ground rules regarding conduct within the premises at 77 Fairlie Terrace and 85 Fairlie Terrace.

- Smoking is not permitted.
- Alcoholic drinks are not to be brought onto the premises unless authorised.
- All students are expected to assist with security by making sure that doors are locked, windows closed and heaters switched off before the buildings are vacated.

More details are in The Fat Book. We greatly appreciate your help with these matters.

## GENERAL UNIVERSITY STATUTES AND POLICIES

A copy of the General University Statutes and Policies can be found on Blackboard.

**COURSE PROGRAMME**

**WEDNESDAY 10am-12.50pm WORKSHOPS**

**TRIMESTER ONE**

Phase	Week	Date	WORKSHOPS	Assignment/Task/Notes
SCRIPT DEV	1	4 <sup>th</sup> MAR	WHAT TO EXPECT	Set Ass. (1) Short Film Script Due 8 <sup>th</sup> May Set Ass. (4) Reflective Interview Due 23 <sup>rd</sup> Oct Set Task: Handycam Bio pic for 18 <sup>th</sup> March
	2	11 <sup>th</sup>	SHAPING YOUR IDEA INTO A STORY	
	3	18 <sup>th</sup>	THINKING VISUALLY SCREENING: Bio pics	
	4	25 <sup>th</sup>	SCRIPT TO SCREEN I GUEST: Producer Catherine Fitzgerald	Note: Book in for script meetings – draft scripts need to be into Lee-Jane 2 days prior to meeting
	5	1 <sup>st</sup> APR	SCRIPT TO SCREEN II GUEST: Producer Catherine Fitzgerald	
	6	8 <sup>th</sup>	CINEMATOGRAPHY I GUEST: DoP Aline Tran	Set Ass. (2) Pitching & Storyboard Presentation Phase One Due 15th July Phase Two Due 9th Sept

-----MID TRIMESTER BREAK-----  
 (10<sup>th</sup> April – 24<sup>th</sup> April)

Phase	Week	Date	WORKSHOPS	Assignment
PRE-PROD AND	7	29th APR	DIRECTING YOUR VISION	Set Ass. (3) DV Short Film Due 19 <sup>th</sup> Aug & 11 <sup>th</sup> Oct
TECHNICAL TRAINING	8	6 <sup>th</sup> MAY	CAMERA TRAINING Paul Wolfram	
	9	13 <sup>th</sup>	LIGHTING TRAINING Paul Wolfram	
	10	20 <sup>th</sup>	LOCATION SOUND RECORDING Bernard Blackburn	

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	11	27 <sup>th</sup>	<b>CINEMATOGRAPHY II</b> GUEST: DoP Aline Tran	
	12	3 <sup>rd</sup> <b>JUN</b>	<b>PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT</b> (GUEST: hoping to get a 1st AD) Including GUEST: Delia Shanly, FILM Wellington	<b>TASK:</b> Book in for equipment practice during in the break

-----**MID YEAR BREAK**-----  
 (8<sup>th</sup> June – 10<sup>th</sup> July)

**TRIMESTER TWO**

Phase	Week	Date	WORKSHOPS	Assignment
<b>SHOOTING PHASE ONE</b>	1	15 <sup>th</sup> <b>JUL</b>	<b>Ass (2) Phase One Projects –</b> Pitching & Storyboard Presentation	<b>NOTE:</b> Directors book in to see Lee-Jane for individual consultation
	2	22 <sup>nd</sup>	<b>EDITING I – FINAL CUT PRO</b> Setting up projects and digitizing	
	3	29 <sup>th</sup>	<b>EDITING II</b> Cutting	
<b>POST PROD PHASE ONE</b>	4	5 <sup>th</sup> <b>AUG</b>	<b>INTRO TO SOUND STUDIO</b> Bernard Blackburn	<b>Reminder Ass (2)</b> <i>Pitching &amp; Storyboard Pres</i> <b>Due 7<sup>th</sup> Sept</b>
	5	12 <sup>th</sup>	<b>ROUGH CUTS SCREENING</b>	
	6	19 <sup>th</sup>	<b>SCREENING: DV SHORT FILM PANEL</b> Times to be arranged between 10am-12.50pm	<b>TASK:</b> Book in for camera and light, sound equipment refreshers during in the break

-----**MID TRIMESTER BREAK**-----  
 (24<sup>th</sup> August – 4<sup>th</sup> September)

Phase	Week	Date	WORKSHOPS	Assignment
SHOOTING PHASE TWO	7	9 <sup>th</sup> SEP	Ass (2) Phase Two Projects – Pitching & Storyboard Presentation	Reminder Ass. (3) DV Short Film Due 11 <sup>th</sup> Oct <b>NOTE:</b> Directors book in to see Lee- Jane for individual consultation.
	8	16 <sup>th</sup>	<b>EDIT AND SOUND REFESHERS</b> As needed with Paul and Bernard	
	9	23 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>EDIT AND SOUND REFESHERS</b> As needed with Paul and Bernard	
POST PROD PHASE TWO	10	30 <sup>th</sup>	<b>FUTURE PROSPECTS</b> Guest: TBA	
	11	7 <sup>th</sup> OCT	<b>ROUGH CUTS SCREENING</b>	
	12	14 <sup>th</sup>	<b>SCREENING: DV SHORT FILM PANEL</b> Times to be arranged between 10am- 12.50pm	