

FILM 310 Short Film Production

Trimester 2 2015

13 July to 15 November 2015

30 Points



And The Ship Sailed On (1983) Directed by Federico Fellini

IMPORTANT DATES

Teaching dates:	13 July to 16 October 2015
Mid-trimester break:	24 August to 6 September 2015
Last assessment item due:	26 October 2015

WITHDRAWAL DATES

Refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds. If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination, refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats.

CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Wednesday	10.00am-1.00pm	77 Fairlie Tce, Room 205
Friday	10am-1.00pm	83 Fairlie Tce, Room 102

NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Course Co-Ordinator: Costa Botes Lonepinefilms@gmail.com Phone: 04 973 3769 or 021 1352 176

Technical Officer: Bernard Blackburn bernard.blackburn@vuw.ac.nz 463 9760 Room 106 85

Fairlie Terrace Office hours: Mon – Fri 9.30 – 11.30am.

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information on changes will be conveyed to students, for example via class notices, Blackboard, and email.

PRESCRIPTION

This course involves a practical study of the creative and technical aspects of film production. Students will make a short dramatic film in small groups. This will develop their skills at scripting, photography, mise-en-scene, performance, editing, sound recording and mixing.

COURSE CONTENT

The aim of FILM 310 is to develop students' knowledge of the creative and technical aspects of film production. There will be a particular emphasis on encouraging students to develop a robust creative process based on understanding and respecting the fundamentals of dramatic narrative storytelling.

Students will be given tools and strategies for developing their ideas, and ways to effectively present them. The course emphasises 'hands on' learning, with basic introduction being given on the use of cameras and audio recording. Students will learn basic techniques for working with actors and crew. All students will be given a practical introduction to non-linear editing equipment and editing techniques.

Students passing the course will have demonstrated creative ability at an introductory level in the field of audio visual production, and a basic mastery of relevant technical skills. They should also have enhanced their analytical skills and gained a greater understanding of filmmaking as a craft and industrial process.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES (CLOS)

Our emphasis will be on involving students in goal oriented production activities that stimulate creativity and build craft skills. Students who pass this course should be able to demonstrate the following:

- 1 Demonstrate enhanced understanding of dramatic storytelling principles
- 2 Demonstrate enhanced understanding of human behaviour
- 3 Demonstrate enhanced knowledge of film production techniques and processes

- 4 Demonstrate enhanced critical and communication skills
- 5 Demonstrate enhanced ability to work collaboratively

TEACHING FORMAT

The course will be delivered primarily via lectures and interactive practical sessions in class time. There will be no set texts, but much suggested reading or viewing material. Additional notes will be made available on Blackboard. Outside class time, students will be expected to put the necessary amount of time into completing personal and collaborative assignments.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to achieving an overall pass mark of 50%, students must:

- Submit the written work specified for this course, on or by the specified dates (subject to such provisions as are stated for late submission of work)
- Attend at least 11 lectures and 11 studio/practical sessions, except where unable by reason of ill health, accident, or unavoidable ill fortune. (who do they need to tell?)

WORKLOAD

The expected workload for a 30-point course is 300 hours over the trimester or 20 hours per teaching week.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment items and workload per item		%	CLO(s)	Due date
1	Dramatic Outline from Real Life (1000 words)	10%	1, 2, 4	July 24
2	Story Pitch (Class Presentation; 10 minutes; students will be assessed individually)	10%	1, 2, 4, 5	July 29
3	Draft Outline & Character Notes (500 words)	10%	1, 2, 4	August 7
4	Short Screenplay maximum length 10 pages or 8 minutes	20%	1, 2, 4	August 21
5	Group Work on Short Film (6-8 minutes in length; students will be assessed individually)	40%	1, 2, 3, 4,5	October 16
6	Production Diary (1000 words)	10%	3,4,5	October 26

Assignment One:

DRAMATIC OUTLINE FROM REAL LIFE Due July 24 (10%)

Students will write a brief dramatic story outline *based on real life* – that is, derived from actual experience, or research (magazine, newspaper, or TV stories, historical events etc. The outline should be *suitable for a short film* and should consider the key dramatic questions – Who? What? And Why? (1000 words).

Marking criteria:

1. Evidence of ability to recognise a viable dramatic story
2. Demonstrate your understanding of 3 act story structure principles
3. Emotional Impact
4. Creative expression, evidence of ability to render real life into meaningful dramatic metaphor.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES: 1, 2, 3

Assignment Two:

PITCH TO CLASS Due July 29 (10%)

Each student will be required to formulate and deliver a short pitch, duration 2-3 minutes (10 minutes including questions), to the class for an original or adapted story. Pitching has become increasingly vital as a means of rapidly winning the confidence of potential backers. This assignment will introduce students to the highs and lows of the process.

Marking Criteria:

1. Emotional impact of the pitch – are we excited? Did we laugh or cry?
2. Clarity of the idea - what is the essential idea? Is it clearly evoked, or buried in extraneous detail? A good pitch should deliver a clear payload of meaning.
3. Marketability (i.e how relevant to its target audience?)
4. Effectiveness of personal delivery.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES: 1, 2, 3

Assignment Three:

DRAFT OUTLINE & CHARACTER NOTES Due August 7 (10%)

Students will develop ideas based on their pitches into an outline treatment and character notes, for a short dramatic script. Feedback and notes from the tutor will assist students focus their ideas prior to writing a full draft (500 words).

Marking Criteria

1. Evidence of ability to recognise a viable dramatic story (marketability/appropriateness to the goal of creating a short film)
2. Demonstrate your understanding of 3 act story structure principles (the idea either powerfully uses, or effectively contradicts orthodox story structure)
3. Emotional Impact (funny/sad/angry) of content that moves the reader
4. Creative expression of an event or idea, evidence of ability to render real life into dramatic metaphor (the ability to use art to communicate meaning).

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Assignment Four:

SHORT FILM SCRIPT Due August 21 (20%)

Students will write a short dramatic screenplay – maximum length 10 pages or 8 minutes.

This assignment will test both creative and formal discipline in a vital aspect of film-making. Four scripts will be selected by the tutor for production.

Marking Criteria:

1. Emotional impact – does it move the reader?
2. Narrative craft – is the story involving and satisfying?
3. Marketability – is the script suitable/practical for a Film 332 production? Is the idea appropriate for a typical short film audience?
4. Use of correct screenplay formatting (guides will be provided).

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Assignment Five:

GROUP WORK ON SHORT FILM Due October 16 (40%)

Completion of a **short dramatic film (6-8 mins)**, from the preliminaries of location selection, casting, art direction and wardrobe, through shooting, recording and on through final editing and post-production. In this group assignment you will be given an individual mark that reflects the overall accomplishment of the group and your own achievement in your assigned production role. There will be four production groups (one-quarter of the class in each). Delivery of finished films will be as a file on the server drop box (details will be provided).

Marking Criteria:

1. Fulfilling the set task within the production group in a direct, relevant and complete manner.
2. Clear evidence that you understand and have researched your key creative role.
3. Clear evidence that you have engaged with the production process in a creative way that expresses your own original ideas as well as complementing the script. If you are not the director you should also complement the directorial vision.
4. Evidence of preparation and research for the filming.
5. Quality, fluency and coherency of expression in your assigned production role.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Assignment 6:

PRODUCTION DIARY Due October 26 (10%)

Provision of a regular log, or record of work done on the group short film. From the first notification of the group project, students are to make simple notes recording their creative and practical work efforts towards the completion of the short film. The diary should contain clear expressions of intent regarding plans, and focused, concise reflections on outcomes (1000 words).

Marking Criteria:

1. Clarity
2. Honesty
3. Evidence of Learning
4. Evidence of Collaborative ability

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES: 3, 4, 5,

SUBMISSION AND RETURN OF WORK

All assignments are to be submitted as an MS Word or PDF file by emailing the Course Coordinator. File name should include the student's name, course code and the assignment number.

The Course Coordinator will make all best efforts to mark and provide feedback for assignments within 2 weeks of the submission date.

EXTENSIONS AND PENALTIES

Extensions

Work submitted after the deadline will be penalised by a 2.5 percent deduction from your total mark per work day. Late work also receives only minimal comments from your marker.

In exceptional and unforeseen circumstances an extension may be granted. 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. Tutors cannot grant extensions.

MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT AND/OR ADDITIONAL EXPENSES

Most of the equipment, media and resources required for this course can be loaned from the Film Programme through Bernard Blackburn during the loaning and receiving hours of Monday – Friday, 9.30 – 11.30am. There will be some costs involved in the production of films as students are expected to supply their own consumable materials such as gaffer tape, lighting gels, transportation costs etc. Depending on the nature of the individual film projects, other costs such as location charges, wardrobe rental or construction, transportation rental and so on may also be encountered.

However, every effort will be made in selection of projects to keep course work affordable and pragmatic.

Video cameras, support equipment, lighting, and audio equipment are issued on loan from SEFTMS.

Facilities for sound recording, mixing, and editing will be made available by reservation. **School equipment must be treated with the utmost care and respect.** The student is in exactly the same relationship to the SEFTMS as he or she will be in the outside world renting equipment from a supplier. Learning to bring the gear back on time, and better than you received it, is an important and valuable lesson.

It will be a prerequisite to checking out equipment that the student has gone through the safety, operation, and troubleshooting workshop for that piece of equipment. These sessions will be held early in the course, so that all students will be able to work with the gear for the maximum time.

Equipment bookings must be made with the proper lead time, must be strictly adhered to, and returns must be made on time; otherwise fellow students will be inconvenienced and their shooting schedules

disrupted. Any gear damage, malfunction, or failure must be reported at once to the Technical Officer, Bernard Blackburn at 4739640 or 0272949640.

You are required to read *The Fat Book*, which is Film and Theatre's protocol handbook. This will help you understand the ground rules, and help you know what services, equipment, and facilities are available within the School. Printed copies of *The Fat Book* will be distributed during the first class.

SET TEXTS

There are no set texts. Helpful written material will be provided via class handout or Blackboard.

RECOMMENDED READING

Notes will be provided via Blackboard and email on all topics covered in class. In addition the course coordinator may suggest further reading on points of interest as required. The following books can provide helpful context but are not mandatory reading.

Recommended Reading:

Story by Robert McKee

Save the Cat by Zack Snyder

Adventures in the Screen Trade by William Goldman

Final Cut by Steven Bachman

The Devil's Candy by Julie Saloman

The Film Festival Survival Guide by Chris Gore

Recommended Viewing:

Jaws by Steven Spielberg

Chinatown by Roman Polanski

Aliens by James Cameron

Proof by Jocelyn Moorhouse

Gross Point Blanke by George Armitage

Little Miss Sunshine by Jonathon Dayton & Valerie Faris

The Station Agent by Thomas McCarthy

CLASS REPRESENTATIVE

The class representative provides a useful way to communicate feedback to the teaching staff during the course. A class representative will be selected at the first lecture of the course. Students may like to write the Class Rep's name and details in this box:

Class Rep name and contact details:

STUDENT FEEDBACK

Student feedback on University courses may be found at

www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php.

In week six or seven of the trimester your class representative will be invited to a meeting with the Programme staff. In week five your class representative will ask the class for any feedback on this course to discuss at this meeting.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The information above is specific to this course. There is other important information that students must familiarise themselves with, including:

- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism
- Aegrotats: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats
- Academic Progress: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin
- Grades: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades
- Resolving academic issues: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Special passes: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute:
www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy
- Student support: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support
- Students with disabilities: www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability
- Student Charter: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter
- Student Contract: www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library-v2/find-your-subject-librarian>
- Turnitin: www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin

- University structure: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure
- Victoria graduate profile: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile
- VUWSA: www.vuwsa.org.nz
- School website: www.victoria.ac.nz/seftms

COURSE PROGRAMME

Week 1	July 15	Welcome & Administrative Info Intro to Dramatic Fundamentals and Filmic Storytelling Assignment 1: Students to source a story from real life (news, 3 rd party anecdote or personal experience) and write a brief outline for a dramatic short film that considers the key dramatic questions – Who? What? And Why? Due Date: July 25
	July 17	Camera 1: Intro to Cameras, Care and Assembly of equipment Students to email list of 3 preferred production roles to tutor <u>by July 25th</u>
Week 2	July 22	Idea Development: Creative Brainstorming & Pitching Handout: Character/Dialogue & Screenplay format guide Assignment 2: Prepare a 3 minute verbal pitch, presenting a viable creative idea for a dramatic short film. To be delivered in class: <u>July 29</u>
	<u>July 24</u>	Camera 2: Composition, Use of lenses <u>Deadline for Assignment 1</u>
Week 3	July 29	3 minute Story Pitches delivered in class <u>Assignment 3: Prepare an outline with key concept, thematic, and character notes towards an original dramatic short film Due Date: August 7</u> <u>Assignment 4: Short Dramatic screenplay due: August 21</u>
	July 31	Field Sound Recording <u>Students to hand in list of three preferred roles</u>

Week 4 Aug 5 **Directing – Intro to onset work flow and blocking scenes with actors**

Aug 7 **Directing 2 – Blocking Practice**

Week 5 Aug 12 **Shooting/Sound Recording Practice**

Aug 14 **Intro to Lighting Equipment**

Production Roles to be assigned

Week 6 Aug 19 **Split Class:**

Scheduling/Production Management - Producer/Director/Camera

Audio Post Production/ Editing Management - Sound/Editor

Aug 21 **Lighting 2: Lighting & Shooting Exercises**

Deadline for Final Draft Screenplays

Final selection of 4 scripts for production will be notified during Break.

Mid Trimester Break: Monday 24 August to Sunday 6 September 2015

Week 7 Sept 9 **Pre-Production**

Sept 11 **Pre-Production**

Week 8 Sept 16 **Production**

 Sept 18 **Production**

Week 9 Sept 23 **Production**

 Sept 25 **Production**

Week 10 Sept 30 **Editing**

 Oct 2 **Editing**

Rough Cut Screenings in Class / Critique/Feedback

Week 11 Oct 7 **Continue Editing**

 Oct 9 **Audio Post Production**

Week 12 Oct 14 **Audio Post/Grading/Final Post Production**

 Oct 16 **Final films submitted by 5pm**

 Oct 31 **Production Diary Due**