

**Instructor:** Dr. Walus  
**Email:** smwalus@eiu.edu

**Office:** 1536 Buzzard Hall  
**Office Hours:** M 1-2:05 / T 3-4:28 / R 3-4:28

Always use Panthermail outside of class to contact (allow at least 24 hours for a response). Face to face communication works great and will get you in-depth answers quickly.

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### **Required Texts and Materials:**

- Creeber, G. (2015). *The television genre book (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.)*. British Film Institute.
- Access to a computer with Adobe CS or CC. This can be your own (preferred) or using a university computer with a reliable external drive.
- Access to a camera with manual settings, all necessary mounts, microphones, lights, and audio recorders. Again, these can be your own, or through the Production Lab checkout (reserve at <https://www.eiu.edu/tv/equipment.php>). Always plan ahead as multiple classes pull from the lab.

### **Course Description**

This production-centered course teaches the visual style and narrative / character conventions of popular television genres (ex: comedy, drama, action, and mockumentary). Students will map the symbolic conventions of each genre and then develop, write, produce, and refine an original scene in the style of that televisual or filmic genre.

### **Course Objectives**

After completing this course, students will be able to:

- Understand the visual and structural symbolic elements of a genre in each stage of the production process.
- Critique the tropes of various genres, subgenres, and hybrids.
- Implement the understanding of a genre's trajectory into the development and pitch of original content.
- Integrate the visual and aural aesthetics of a televisual or filmic genre into an original production in that style.
- Apply a genre's narrative structures and characterization strategies to original productions (in an original and creative manner).
- Critique and evaluate peer projects based on communication goals and symbolic practices.

### **How the Class Works:**

This is an applied course that focuses on the conventions of four foundational genres of television. It is a balance between mapping the conventions of the genre by viewing exceptional examples and then applying this symbolic recipe to your own work. For each genre, a week will be devoted to development/pre-production, filming/directing/cinematography/production, and post-production. While the goal is to successfully utilize these generic conventions and understand the spirit of the technique, creativity and taking chances are appreciated and very welcome as you hone your vision and voice as a producer and director.

The semester is centered around four scenes from four genres of television (multi-cam sitcom, issue/relational driven drama, action, and mockumentary). Each scene will be your original work where you will write, produce, film, and edit a 90 second scene (+/- 15 seconds) adhering to the conventions of the genre. Each assignment of the semester builds toward the completion of the scene.

### **Criteria for Evaluation and Grading Policy**

**Brings: 15 points (1 point per bring x 15 brings = 15 points).** Each microassignment is about mapping the foundational elements about the genre by viewing to prepare you to apply it to your own production. Each bring has a series of questions attached or a developmental element toward your scene. One point is given for all of the questions answered / all application elements applied and physically brought to class.

**Script: 8 points (2 points per scene x 4 scenes = 8 points).** A completed script in the structure of the genre taught in class, using the narrative structure and techniques taught in class, driven by character binaries, using equilibrium and disequilibrium, and printed in properly formatted pages. Full points are given for a completed script utilizing the conventions above. An attempt to complete it will be given one point.

**Filming and Production: 20 points (5 points per scene x 4 scenes = 20 points).** This is the actual production of the scene using the conventions of the genre including mise en scene (especially costuming, styling, and staging), lighting, direction of actors with notes that reflect character conventions, and most importantly complete coverage / cross / insert / exposition / hides done in the visual language of the genre. Full points are given for a scene that uses the symbolic conventions on screen and is shot at a proper film ratio (at least three full takes in coverage, three in X cross, and three in Y cross with the camera rolling for the entirety of the scene). If these nine total takes are not filmed using the cinematography of the genre, you cannot receive full points. An attempt to complete the scene will be given two points. You cannot receive full points until your script receives full points.

**Post-Production: 8 points (2 points per scene x 4 scenes = 8 points).** This is the editing of the scene using the conventions of the genre for a first cut. Specifically the introduction to the space, pacing, density/intensity, demonstration of scene ownership, usage of shot/reaction shot, and the hold/takeaway. To receive full points, this will be a first cut (no music / grade / graphics) of clear scene ownership in the conventions of the genre exported and viewable in class and all log sheets completed. An attempt to edit the scene all the way through will be given one point. You cannot receive full points until your Filming and Production receives full points.

**Fine Cuts: 4 points (1 point per scene x 4 scenes = 4 points).** For each scene this semester you will refine your first cut into a fine cut with a seamless dialogue edit and clear scene ownership (using reactions, L & J cuts), in addition to emphasizing any reversals and narrative points. Full points will be given to a scene with the these qualities, and no points to a scene that does not demonstrate fine cut qualities. You cannot receive full points until your Post-Production for the scene receives full points.

**Final Genres Reel : 2 Points.** This is your guided demo reel featuring your best work in any three areas (ex: cinematography, writing, set dressing, acting, styling, editing, audio, camera operation, etc.). It will feature clips from at minimum all four of your productions this semester, but may also include other productions from this class you have crewed on. It will be 59 seconds or less. Two points will be given if it meets the criteria stated previously and one point if it does not.

**Total points for the semester: 57 points**

A reminder on grades. In every course you take, you start at zero points and have to earn each point on your way up Point Mountain. In this course, there are only 57 points, and you have to earn them.

**General Grading Guidelines:**

Grades will be assigned as follows:

100-90% = A            89-80% = B            79-70% = C            69-60% = D            59- 0% = F

**Important Notice About Late Work / Due Dates / Extension Coupons :**

**Late Work:** I do not accept late work under any circumstances. It only complicates a semester. Please plan ahead for any and all contingencies. All assignments are due by 4:31 p.m. on the date specified. If you hand it in after this point, you will need to use an extension coupon.

**Extension Coupons:** Life does happen sometimes. With this in mind, you are allowed two extension coupons that can be used on any “bring” for any reason without any explanation needed. This coupon allows you an extension on your “bring” for the next class meeting, and you still receive full points if you accomplish the assignment satisfactorily. Here is how to use the coupon:

- You may only use two coupons per semester. This system is meant to be flexible and to simplify life for both of us in the event that you cannot complete an assignment on time. By using these coupons, you will not ask me to accept any other late work this semester regardless of your circumstance. If you ask me to accept late work after using your coupons, the previous coupons will be considered null and void and you will receive zeros on those projects.
- These coupons can be used at any point in the semester through Week 14. This means that coupons cannot be used in the final two weeks of the semester.
- In order to use the extension coupon, just inform me in class that you are electing to do so.

### **For Graduate-level credit:**

To receive graduate-level credit for the course, students must complete all assignments in addition to research-driven supplemental reports. Each genre will require a 3-4 page report that summarizes at least three academic journal articles on that genre as well as answering the “Guided Viewing” questions in written form. This will require deep semiotic and functional mapping of the genres along with the consideration of the sociopsychological needs sated by the genre (uses and gratifications). This style of source-informed mapping mirror the prospectus process for either an academic or creative thesis in the Communication Studies M.A. These added projects promote investment into the academic field of television, video, and film and will yield 12-16 pages of additional written content supported by multiple academic articles and external viewings.

### **Classroom Decorum:**

In order to facilitate an optimal learning experience, the classroom will have a level of formality befitting of a university. The goal is to promote a focus on the material. This decorum shall include three specific actions:

1. All conversations will remain on the topic of the course.
2. The use of chosen formal titles when addressing one another (i.e. Dr. /Ms. / Mr. / Mx).
3. Cell phone usage is strongly discouraged.

### **Academic integrity:**

Always do your own work. It is okay if your work is rough around the edges, but working through challenging concepts is just part of the journey. Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU’s Code of Conduct (<http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>). Violations must be reported to the Office of Student Standards and the consequences of academic dishonesty range from failing of the course to expulsion from the university. Do your own work and good things will always happen.

**Students with disabilities** - If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the Office of Accessibility & Accommodations (OAA). All accommodations must be approved through OAA. Please stop by McAfee Gym, Room 1272, or call 217-581-6583 to make an appointment.

**Academic Support Center** - Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Academic Support Center ([www.eiu.edu/success](http://www.eiu.edu/success)) for assistance with time management, test taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to McAfee Gym, Room 2230.

## **Tentative Course Schedule**

**Bring / Due:** As established earlier, these are mapping elements or a piece of your scene you will be turning in at 4:31 p.m. on Thursday. Each project (comedy / drama / action / mockumentary) will be 90 seconds (+/-15) in length and broken apart into the micro-assignments mentioned above.

### **Week 1 - Introducing Genres: Areas of meaning in each genre, conventions, & Uses and Gratifications**

#### **Tuesday: Introducing Genres**

#### **Thursday: Gratifying needs through genres**

Read: “Introduction: What is Genre?” (all sections, pp 1-15 – Genre Theory; Studying Genre; Television and Genre; The Uses and Limitations of Genre; Genre, Hybridity, and mutation; Genre and Format; Genre Study: Beyond the Text) and “Conclusion: Genre and Video on Demand” pp. 212-214.

Bring: For each of the genres that you will produce a scene of this semester (multi-cam sitcom, issue or relationally-driven drama, action [chase/battles/other exciting happenings], and mockumentary [in the mocksoap vein], make a list of the three shows that most inspire you to create in each genre and the three gratifications you receive from watching excellent work in this genre. Include a link to a scene from each show.

### **Week 2: Comedy: Development, narrative & character**

#### **Tuesday: Mapping the multi-cam sitcom.**

Read: “Comedy – pp. 89 -93; 96-105” (Studying Comedy; The Sketch Show; Situation Comedy (Part 1); Situation Comedy (Part 2); The “Gay” and “Queer” Sitcom) and “Adult Animation” – pp 184-188)

Bring: Watch a scene from three different exceptional multi-cam sitcoms (three scenes in total). Then, answer the following questions:

- Which three shows did you watch and what is the premise of each scene?
- What is the situation of the comedy (what relationships and space drive the show?)
- What is the conflict of the scene (and how is it specific to comedy)?
- How is each character in binary opposition to the other?
- List out the three major disruptions that moved the scene forward.
- How did the dialogue use set up / pay off / call-back to generate comedy?
- Describe one element of visual comedy from the scene.
- How do characters entering and leaving function to move the scene forward?
- What is the question asked at the beginning of the scene and what is the punctuation at the end of the scene?

#### **Thursday: Developing scene structures of multi-cam sitcom.**

Answer the following about your scene:

- From which three shows are you drawing inspiration?
- The premise of your show.
- What elements of comedy drive your show (Ex: playing with norms / saying the unsayable / promote harmony & consensus) and explain how it does so.
- What is the situation of the comedy (what relationships and space drive the show?)
- What is the conflict of the scene (and how is it specific to comedy)

- What idea does each character embody?
- How is each character in binary opposition to the other?
- What is each character's function in the narrative?
- What is your narrative structure (status quo → disruption → complication → complication → complication → clever and unexpected resolution set up at the beginning of the scene)?
- What is the question asked by your scene at the beginning?
- What are three instances of equilibrium / disequilibrium moving the scene forward?
- What are three potential moments of dialogue that can set up / pay off / call-back to generate comedy?
- Describe one element of visual comedy and why it will be funny.
- How will characters entering and leaving function to move the scene forward?
- How is the clever and unexpected solution set up at the beginning of the scene?
- What is the punctuation at the end of the scene?

After discussing your structures in class, you will have time to begin to write your script (which will be due next class).

### **Week 3: Comedy: Production, mise en scene, & cinematography**

#### **Tuesday: Producing, directing, blocking, rehearsing & script analysis.**

Due: Script – A completed script in the structure of the genre taught in class, using the narrative structure and techniques taught in class, driven by character binaries, using equilibrium and disequilibrium, and printed in properly formatted pages. Full points are given for a completed script utilizing the conventions above.

Additionally, you will bring enough physical copies for everyone in your group. We will be performing a script analysis to create a production audit, line directing, table reading, and blocking.

#### **Thursday: Filming practice**

Bring: Leading up to your filming, you should watch multiple scenes from your three inspirational sitcoms in multiple passes to understand the scene on a structural basis. Specifically, answer for each scene:

- What is the first shot of the scene?
- What is the narrative function of this shot?
- What is the first sound of the scene? What is the function of this sound?
- How is the question of the scene asked visually? (and what is the question?)
- How is the dialogue shot with regard to composition and motion (primary / secondary / tertiary)?
- What is the moment of disruption in the scene and how is it shot / paced?
- How does the director of photography use bunching to tell the story?
- How do characters enter and exit the scene? What narrative function does it serve?
- Re-watch the scene and reverse engineer the placement of the cameras and their responsibilities for the scene.
- Find the best pause, and the best reaction of the scene. What is the placement of each and how do they contribute to the scene?
- What is the average length of shot for the scene (hint: count the number of shots and divide this number by the time of the scene).
- How does visual punctuation work in the scene? Holds?

Additionally, you will be bringing the production equipment (cameras and mounts) that you plan to film your scene with as well as copies of your script as we will be practicing filming during class.

## **Week 4: Comedy: Post-production**

### **Tuesday: Editing**

**Due: Filming and Production:** This is the actual production of the scene using the conventions of the genre including mise en scene (especially costuming, styling, and staging), lighting, direction of actors with notes that reflect character conventions, and most importantly complete coverage / cross / insert / exposition / hides done in the visual language of the genre. Full points are given for a scene that uses the symbolic conventions on screen and is shot at a proper film ratio (at least three full takes in coverage, three in X cross, and three in Y cross with the camera rolling for the entirety of the scene). If these nine total takes are not filmed using the cinematography of the genre, you cannot receive full points.

Additionally, you will bring two physical copies of your script so that we may mark them up for the edit, your footage of the multi-cam sitcom on a drive / editing computer, and printed log sheets. We will view dailies and log in class.

### **Thursday: First Cuts**

**Due: Post-Production** - This is the editing of the scene using the conventions of the genre for a first cut. Specifically the introduction to the space, pacing, density/intensity, demonstration of scene ownership, usage of shot/reaction shot, and the hold/takeaway. To receive full points, this will be a first cut (no music / grade / graphics) of clear scene ownership in the conventions of the genre exported and viewable in class and all log sheets completed.

## **Week 5: Drama: Development, narrative & character**

### **Tuesday: Mapping**

Read: "Drama" pp 16 – 31; 38-49; 52-56; (Studying Drama; The Crime Series; The Detective Series; The Police Procedural; Teen Drama; Hospital Drama; Costume Drama) and "Soap Opera" pp. 73 – 82; 86– 88 (Studying Soap Opera; Realism and Soap Opera; The Telenovela)

Bring: Watch a scene from three different exceptional issue and relational-driven dramas (three scenes in total). Then, answer the following questions:

- Which three shows did you watch and what is the premise of each scene?
- What is the issue or relationship that drives it.
- What is the conflict of the scene (and how is it specific to drama)?
- How is this conflict driven by the issue or relationship?
- What is the setting of the program and how does this contribute to the narrative?
- How is each character in binary opposition to the other?
- What question is asked at the beginning of the scene?
- For the scene, how do they balance action and introspection?
- The pleasure of the unexpected drives dramas. What is one unexpected moment or major reversal in the scene?
- List out the three major moments of equilibrium / disequilibrium that move the scene forward.
- How does discovery of new information move your scene forward?
- What is one moment of coherence, where set up leads to pay off?
- How do characters entering and leaving function to move the scene forward?
- What is the punctuation at the end of the scene that ultimately drives the narrative forward?

### **Thursday: Structural development**

Bring: Answer the following about your scene:

- From which three shows are you drawing inspiration?
- The premise of your show.
- What elements of drama drive your show (issue and relationships) and explain how it does so.
- What is the setting of the drama and how does it move the scene forward?
- What is the conflict of the scene (and how is it specific to drama)?
- What idea does each character embody?
- How is each character in binary opposition to the other?
- What is each character's function in the narrative?
- What is your narrative structure (status quo → disruption → complication → complication → complication → clever and unexpected resolution set up at the beginning of the scene / intriguing new status quo to keep the viewer watching)?
- What is the question asked by your scene at the beginning and how do you do so?
- What are three instances of equilibrium / disequilibrium moving the scene forward?
- What are three potential moments of coherence that can lead to powerful set ups / pay offs.
- What specifically makes this scene dramatic?
- How will characters entering and leaving function to move the scene forward?
- What is the punctuation at the end of the scene and what is the new status quo?

After discussing your structures in class, you will have time to begin to write your script (which will be due next class).

## **Week 6: Drama: Production, mise en scene, & cinematography**

### **Tuesday: Producing, directing, blocking, rehearsing & script analysis.**

Due: Script – A completed script in the structure of the genre taught in class, using the narrative structure and techniques taught in class, driven by character binaries, using equilibrium and disequilibrium, and printed in properly formatted pages. Full points are given for a completed script utilizing the conventions above.

Additionally, you will bring enough physical copies for everyone in your group. We will be performing a script analysis to create a production audit, line directing, table reading, and blocking.

### **Thursday: Filming practice**

Bring: Leading up to your filming, you should watch multiple scenes from your three inspirational dramas in multiple passes to understand the scene on a structural basis. Specifically, answer for each scene:

- What is the first shot of the scene?
- What is the narrative function of this shot?
- What is the first sound of the scene? What is the function of this sound?
- How is the question of the scene asked visually? (and what is the question?)
- How is the dialogue shot with regard to composition and motion (specifically primary / secondary)?
- What is the disruption / inciting moment of the scene and how is it shot?
- List three moments of blocking that are uniquely drama (as opposed to comedy).
- How did the Director of Photography shoot in and out of the scene?
- List three types of secondary motion unique to drama that you noticed.
- Detail a moment where the DP used foreground.
- Describe a moment of how lighting contributes to the narrative.
- List three uses of mise en scene that contributes to the narrative.

- How do characters enter and exit the scene? What narrative function does it serve?
- Re-watching the scene, articulate the placement of the camera for each take and their visual responsibilities in the scene. List each variant.
- Find three pauses or reactions and describe the narrative function of each
- What is the average length of shot?
- Describe the hold at the end of the scene. What is the length and what is its narrative function?

Additionally, you will be bringing the production equipment (cameras and mounts) that you plan to film your scene with as well as copies of your script as we will be practicing filming during class.

## **Week 7: Drama: Post-production**

### **Tuesday: Editing**

**Due: Filming and Production:** This is the actual production of the scene using the conventions of the genre including mise en scene (especially costuming, styling, and staging), lighting, direction of actors with notes that reflect character conventions, and most importantly complete coverage / cross / insert / exposition / hides done in the visual language of the genre. Full points are given for a scene that uses the symbolic conventions on screen and is shot at a proper film ratio (at least three full takes in coverage, three in X cross, and three in Y cross with the camera rolling for the entirety of the scene). If these nine total takes are not filmed using the cinematography of the genre, you cannot receive full points.

Additionally, you will bring two physical copies of your script so that we may mark them up for the edit, your footage of the multi-cam sitcom on a drive / editing computer, and printed log sheets. We will view dailies and log in class.

### **Thursday: First Cuts**

**Due: Post-Production** - This is the editing of the scene using the conventions of the genre for a first cut. Specifically the introduction to the space, pacing, density/intensity, demonstration of scene ownership, usage of shot/reaction shot, and the hold/takeaway. To receive full points, this will be a first cut (no music / grade / graphics) of clear scene ownership in the conventions of the genre exported and viewable in class and all log sheets completed.

## **Week 8: Comedy & Drama – Fine cut post-production strategies**

### **Tuesday: Fine cut analysis**

Note: If you did not receive full points on any of the components of either the multi-cam sitcom or the issue or relational-driven drama, this is the final day where these can be revised.

Bring: Watch two scenes from multi-cam sitcoms, and two scenes from issue/relational dramas and answer for each scene:

- Whose scene is it?
- How do their reactions guide the scene and when are they used
- Describe one J cut (hear before we see – after an amazing reaction shot)
- Describe one L cut (we see before we hear – generally a moment of emphasis or impending reversal for this character.
- What is the setting and what are the visual techniques that introduce the viewer to it?
- What is the function of coverage in the scene? Specifically:
  - How does it demonstrate proximity?

- How does it provide a reset?
- When is it used for a reversal?
- When is it used to emphasize interactions?
- How do they use inserts / visual exposition / hides?
- Give an example of taking a shot in motion.
- Give an example of how the editor used mixed secondary motion.
- Give an example of how the editor selected different frames on cross for the same subject.
- How does distance in cross communicate a moment?
- How did they emphasize entrances or exits in a scene?
- In what order do we hear: Ambience, dialogue, music
- What sounds do you hear in the soundscape of the location?
- How does the scene use foley to emphasize moments? Critically listen and describe the sounds of the sounds.
- Listening to the holistic audio track, describe the dialogue edit / overall aural balance of the scene.
- How long do they stay on the hold at the end of the scene and what is the takeaway?

Additionally, bring your multi-cam sitcom and drama scenes in timeline form either on an external drive or an editing computer as you will have time to work on your fine cuts in class.

### **Thursday: Viewing Fine Cuts**

**Due: Fine Cuts for both multi-cam sitcom and drama scene.** For two of your scenes (you will refine your first cut into a fine cut with a seamless dialogue edit and clear scene ownership (using reactions, L & J cuts), in addition to emphasizing any reversals and narrative points. Full points will be given to a scene with the these qualities. We will be viewing these during class so please have them rendered and exported.

### **Week 9: Action: Development, narrative & character**

#### **Tuesday: Mapping**

Read: "Drama" pp. 31-38; 56-67 (The Action Series; The Western; Telefantasy; Science Fiction)

Bring: Watch a scene from three different exceptional action shows (three scenes in total). Then, answer the following questions:

- Which three shows did you watch and what is the premise of each scene?
- What is the cat and mouse relationship that drives the program?
- What is the conflict of the scene (and how is it specific to action)?
- What idea does each character embody?
- How is each character in binary opposition to the other?
- How do the two characters in the scene have oppositional skillsets?
- What is each character's function in the narrative?
- What is the setting of the program and how does this contribute to the narrative?
- How does an item that is introduced earlier in the scene pay off later?
- How does an element of the location play a role in the scene?
- How does a revelation / discovery set the scene into motion?
- How does a third party / stranger cause either equilibrium or disequilibrium?
- For the scene, how is it a balance of tension and catharsis?
- List out five actions and reactions to the actions.
- How does resolution occur in an unexpected manner and how is it set up earlier in the scene?
- How does the action provide clarity?

- What is the punctuation at the end of the scene that ultimately drives the narrative forward?

### **Thursday: Structural development**

Bring: Drawing from inspirational sources of action shows, develop your own scene by answering the following questions:

- From what three shows are you drawing inspiration?
- What is the premise of your scene?
- What is the cat and mouse relationship that drives your program?
- What is the conflict of the scene (and how is it specific to action)?
- What idea does each character embody?
- How is each character in binary opposition to the other?
- How do your two characters in the scene have oppositional skillsets?
- What is each character's function in the narrative?
- What is your narrative structure (status quo → disruption → complication → complication → complication → clever and unexpected resolution set up at the beginning of the scene)?
- What is the setting of the program and how does this contribute to the narrative?
- How does an item that is introduced earlier in the scene pay off later?
- How does an element of the location play a role in the scene?
- How does a revelation / discovery set the scene into motion?
- How does a third party / stranger cause either equilibrium or disequilibrium?
- For the scene, how is it a balance of tension and catharsis?
- List out five actions and reactions to the actions that will happen in your scene?
- How does resolution occur in an unexpected manner and how is it set up earlier in the scene?
- How does the action provide clarity?
- What is the punctuation at the end of the scene that ultimately drives the narrative forward?

After discussing your structures in class, you will have time to begin to write your script (which will be due next class).

### **Week 10: Action: Production, mise en scene, & cinematography**

#### **Tuesday: Producing, directing, blocking, rehearsing & script analysis.**

Due: Script – A completed script in the structure of the genre taught in class, using the narrative structure and techniques taught in class, driven by character binaries, using equilibrium and disequilibrium, and printed in properly formatted pages. Full points are given for a completed script utilizing the conventions above.

Additionally, you will bring enough physical copies for everyone in your group. We will be performing a script analysis to create a production audit, line directing, table reading, and blocking.

#### **Thursday: Filming practice**

Bring: Leading up to your filming, you should watch multiple scenes from your three inspirational action shows in multiple passes to understand the scene on a structural basis. Specifically, answer for each scene:

- What is the first shot of the scene?
- What is the narrative function of this shot?
- What is the first sound of the scene? What is the function of this sound?
- How is the question of the scene asked visually? (and what is the question?)
- How is the dialogue shot with regard to composition and motion (specifically primary / secondary)?

- What is the disruption / inciting moment of the scene and how is it shot?
- In the action sequence, list the three major moments of equilibrium / disequilibrium.
- In the action sequence, list each use of mise en scene that contributes to the action.
- In the action sequence, break apart one stunt. (How did they have actor do the action? How many takes / shots / approaches did it take?)
- In the action sequence, what is the average length of shot?
- In the action sequence, break apart three actions and reactions to the action and the reaction to the reaction that causes the next action.
- In the action sequence, list three intriguing ways that the DP used foreground or background.
- In the action sequence, list three uses of secondary motion unique to the action genre.
- Provide three specific examples about how they maintained continuity (ex: shots in motion, motion in the same direction, good use of tertiary motion. Provide specific examples from the scene).
- At the reversal near the end of the scene, how does it occur and how is it shot with regard to composition?
- How did the Director of Photography shoot in and out of the scene?
- Re-watching the scene, articulate the placement of the camera for each take and their visual responsibilities in the scene. List each variant.
- What is the punctuation/ hold at the end of the scene and how is it shot?

Additionally, you will be bringing the production equipment (cameras and mounts) that you plan to film your scene with as well as copies of your script as we will be practicing filming during class.

## **Week 11: Action: Post-production**

### **Tuesday: Editing**

**Due: Filming and Production:** This is the actual production of the scene using the conventions of the genre including mise en scene (especially costuming, styling, and staging), lighting, direction of actors with notes that reflect character conventions, and most importantly complete coverage / cross / insert / exposition / hides done in the visual language of the genre. Full points are given for a scene that uses the symbolic conventions on screen and is shot at a proper film ratio (at least three full takes in coverage, three in X cross, and three in Y cross with the camera rolling for the entirety of the scene). If these nine total takes are not filmed using the cinematography of the genre, you cannot receive full points.

Additionally, you will bring two physical copies of your script so that we may mark them up for the edit, your footage of the multi-cam sitcom on a drive / editing computer, and printed log sheets. We will view dailies and log in class.

### **Thursday: First Cuts**

**Due: Post-Production** - This is the editing of the scene using the conventions of the genre for a first cut. Specifically the introduction to the space, pacing, density/intensity, demonstration of scene ownership, usage of shot/reaction shot, and the hold/takeaway. To receive full points, this will be a first cut (no music / grade / graphics) of clear scene ownership in the conventions of the genre exported and viewable in class and all log sheets completed.

## **Week 12: Mockumentary: Development, narrative & character**

### **Tuesday: Mapping**

Read: “Comedy” pp. 106-109 (Contemporary Sitcom: 'Comedy Verite'), “Reality TV” pp. 158-161; 163-175 (Introduction; Docusoaps; Reality Talent Shows; Constructed Reality Shows; Makeover Shows), and “Documentary” pp. 148-152 (Documentary Realism; Observational ('Fly-on-the-wall') Documentary)

Bring: Watch a scene from three different exceptional mockumentary shows (three scenes in total). Then, answer the following questions:

- What three mockumentaries did you watch and what were the premises?
- How does the “everyday” provide the situation for the mockumentary and how does it drive the narrative?
- What elements of comedy drove the show (Ex: playing with norms / saying the unsayable / promote harmony & consensus) and explain how it does so.
- What are the three main issues or relationships that drive the show?
- What is the conflict of the scene (and how is it specific to mockumentary)?
- How does contradiction lead to comedy? (what was the set up and pay off?)
- What is the role of the production crew in the narrative? What impact does their presence have on characters?
- What idea does each character embody?
- How is each character in binary opposition to the other?
- What is each character's function in the narrative?
- What is the narrative function of your confessionals?
  - Give an example of “show and say” where the character provides insights on a moment.
  - Give an example of “say and show” where the production uses footage over the confessional.
- What is the question asked by the scene at the beginning?
- What are three instances of equilibrium / disequilibrium moving the scene forward?
- What are three potential moments of dialogue that can set up / pay off / call-back to generate comedy?
- Describe one element of visual comedy and why it resulted in humor.
- How does it promote taking delight in a character's demise?
- How do characters entering and leaving function to move the scene forward?
- How does the ensemble cast add to the complications?
- What is the punctuation at the end of the scene?

### **Thursday: Structural development**

Bring: Drawing from inspirational sources of mockumentary shows, develop your own scene by answering the following questions:

- From what three mockumentaries shows are you drawing inspiration?
- What is the premise of your scene?
- How does the “everyday” provide the situation for your mockumentary and how does it drive the narrative?
- What elements of comedy drive your scene (Ex: playing with norms / saying the unsayable / promote harmony & consensus) and explain how it does so.
- What is the main two issues or relationships that drive your scene?
- What is the conflict of the scene (and how is it specific to mockumentary)?
- What is your narrative structure (status quo → disruption → complication → complication → complication → clever and unexpected resolution set up at the beginning of the scene)?
- How does contradiction lead to comedy? (what is the set up and pay off?)
- What is the role of the production crew in the narrative? Why are they there? What impact does their presence have on characters?
- What idea does each character embody?

- How is each character in binary opposition to the other?
- What is each character's function in the narrative?
- How will you be using confessionals. Specifically:
  - List at least three “show and say” confessionals where the character provides insights on a moment we have just watched on screen.
  - Give one “vox pop” where multiple cast members all comment on one prompt.
  - Give an example of “say and show” where the production uses footage over the confessional.
- What is the question asked by the scene at the beginning?
- What are three instances of equilibrium / disequilibrium moving the scene forward?
- What are three moments of dialogue that can set up / pay off / call-back to generate comedy?
- Describe one element of visual comedy and why it will be funny.
- How do characters entering and leaving function to move the scene forward?
- How does the ensemble cast add to the complications?
- What is the punctuation at the end of the scene?

After discussing your structures in class, you will have time to begin to write your script (which will be due next class).

### **Week 13: Mockumentary production, mise en scene, & cinematography**

#### **Tuesday: Producing, directing, blocking, rehearsing & script analysis.**

Due: Script – A completed script in the structure of the genre taught in class, using the narrative structure and techniques taught in class, driven by character binaries, using equilibrium and disequilibrium, and printed in properly formatted pages. Full points are given for a completed script utilizing the conventions above.

Additionally, you will bring enough physical copies for everyone in your group. We will be performing a script analysis to create a production audit, line directing, table reading, and blocking.

#### **Thursday: Filming practice**

Bring: Leading up to your filming, you should watch multiple scenes from your three inspirational mockumentary shows in multiple passes to understand the scene on a structural basis. Specifically, answer for each scene:

- What is the first shot of the scene?
- What is the narrative function of this shot?
- How is the location established?
- How is the question asked about the scene?
- Mockumentaries are based on “show and say” style storytelling. Break apart in list form:
  - The actions of the “show” (the action we see on screen)
  - The “say” (insights and logistics that the characters provide about the actions during the confessionals).
    - Be sure to do so in list form in the order that they occur in the sequence.
- In the “show” portion, how are the three grounds (fore/mid/back) used in shot composition?
- In the “show,” how many cameras appear to be used? (coverage, X, Y, tight center, etc.)
- For the above, how did they direct each camera operator to shoot the scene? (movements, cues, etc.)
- In the “show,” how is secondary motion used?
- In the “show” portion, what is the average length of shot?
- List out three camera moves exclusive to the mockumentary genre that you noticed in the scene. For each, what was their narrative function?

- List out three reaction shots from the scene. Who/what was it, and how did it contribute to the interaction?
- For the “say,” what settings did they use for confessionals?
- For the “say” what was the composition?
- What are the narrative functions of the “say” scenes?
- For both, how do they visually provide exposition of the setting?
- How did they visual emphasize contradiction?
- How does location and mise en scene contribute to the scene?
- How does the show visually emphasize disruptive moments or reversals?
- What is the role of the camera / production crew in the scene? How do the characters interact with it?
- In the scene, what are the three major moments of equilibrium / disequilibrium.
- What is the punctuation/ hold at the end of the scene and how is it shot?

Additionally, you will be bringing the production equipment (cameras and mounts) that you plan to film your scene with as well as copies of your script as we will be practicing filming during class.

## **Week 14: Mockumentary: Post-production**

### **Tuesday: Editing**

**Due: Filming and Production:** This is the actual production of the scene using the conventions of the genre including mise en scene (especially costuming, styling, and staging), lighting, direction of actors with notes that reflect character conventions, and most importantly complete coverage / cross / insert / exposition / hides done in the visual language of the genre. Full points are given for a scene that uses the symbolic conventions on screen and is shot at a proper film ratio (at least three full takes in coverage, three in X cross, and three in Y cross with the camera rolling for the entirety of the scene). If these nine total takes are not filmed using the cinematography of the genre, you cannot receive full points.

Additionally, you will bring two physical copies of your script so that we may mark them up for the edit, your footage of the multi-cam sitcom on a drive / editing computer, and printed log sheets. We will view dailies and log in class.

### **Thursday: First Cuts**

**Due: Post-Production** - This is the editing of the scene using the conventions of the genre for a first cut. Specifically the introduction to the space, pacing, density/intensity, demonstration of scene ownership, usage of shot/reaction shot, and the hold/takeaway. To receive full points, this will be a first cut (no music / grade / graphics) of clear scene ownership in the conventions of the genre exported and viewable in class and all log sheets completed.

## **Week 15 – Action and Mockumentary Fine and Final Cuts**

### **Tuesday: Fine cut analysis**

Note: If you did not receive full points on any of the components of either the action scene or the mockumentary, this is the final day where these can be revised.

Bring: Watch two scenes from action shows, and two scenes from mockumentaries and answer for each scene:

- Whose scene is it?
- How do their reactions guide the scene and when are they used
- Describe one J cut (hear before we see – after an amazing reaction shot)

- Describe one L cut (we see before we hear – generally a moment of emphasis or impending reversal for this character).
- What is the setting and what are the visual techniques that introduce the viewer to it?
- What is the function of coverage in the scene? Specifically:
  - How does it demonstrate proximity?
  - How does it provide a reset?
  - When is it used for a reversal?
  - When is it used to emphasize interactions?
- How do they use inserts / visual exposition / hides?
- Give an example of taking a shot in motion.
- Give an example of how the editor used mixed secondary motion.
- Give an example of how the editor selected different frames on cross for the same subject.
- How does distance in cross communicate a moment?
- How did they emphasize entrances or exits in a scene?
- In what order do we hear: Ambience, dialogue, music
- What sounds do you hear in the soundscape of the location?
- How does the scene use foley to emphasize moments? Critically listen and describe the sounds of the sounds.
- Listening to the holistic audio track, describe the dialogue edit / overall aural balance of the scene.
- How long do they stay on the hold at the end of the scene and what is the takeaway?

Additionally, bring your action and mockumentary scenes in timeline form either on an external drive or an editing computer as you will have time to work on your fine cuts in class.

### **Thursday: Viewing Fine Cuts**

**Due: Fine Cuts for both action and mockumentary scene.** For your action and mockumentary scenes you will refine your first cut into a fine cut with a seamless dialogue edit and clear scene ownership (using reactions, L & J cuts), in addition to emphasizing any reversals and narrative points. Full points will be given to a scene with these qualities. We will be viewing these during class so please have them rendered and exported.

### **Week 16 – Final Genres Reel on Final exam period**

Held of 4/30 (Tuesday) from 5:15-7:15 as scheduled by the university.

**Due: Final Genres Reel :** This is your guided demo reel featuring your best work in any three areas (ex: cinematography, writing, set dressing, acting, styling, editing, audio, camera operation, etc.). It will feature clips from at minimum all four of your productions this semester, but may also include other productions from this class you have crewed on. It will be 59 seconds or less. Two points will be given if it meets the criteria stated previously and one point if it does not.

**This coupon entitles \_\_\_\_\_ to turn in any one assignment the next class period of CMN \_\_\_\_\_ for literally any reason. This includes all excused or unexcused reasons including, but certainly not limited to: illness, alarm clock malfunction, oversleeping, leaving for vacation, printer malfunction, funerals, weddings, "just totally spacing on it," work issues, computer explosions, not understanding an assignment, exhaustion, vehicle malfunction, or literally any reason. This coupon provides you with an extension to do the assignment (from "brings" to major projects) without question or judgment. This coupon must be attached to the late assignment.**

### **EXTENSION COUPON**

**Usage Notes: There is an absolute limit of two extensions per semester.**

**Additional requests result in the voiding of all coupons. If you choose to use this coupon on a typically unexcused reason and then you have a family emergency / illness / some other typically excused reason, you are out of luck. Use these wisely.**

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