

Communication 1500: Television & Video Development
 Fall 2019. Section 001. 1 Credit Hour.
 Room: Coleman 1210
 M 1-150 p.m.

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

Office: 1536 Buzzard Hall
Office Hours: M 6-7 p.m. / T 4-6 p.m. / W 1-2 p.m.

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

Required Texts:

Texts will be readings provided via email. There is no learning management system. Bring a notebook and pen as well.

Course Description:

This course focuses on the development process of both the creation of television and video content as well as that of the individual producer. Students will learn about the industry, future careers, the resources and opportunities available at EIU, pre-production formats (scripts, storyboard, pitches), the narrative structure, logistics, and types of productions. This course prepares students for navigating productions, a major or minor in media, and their profession after graduation.

Course Objectives:

By the end of this course students will be able to:

1. Understand the various stages and roles required in the production of televisual, filmic, and video content.
2. Translate between communication ideas and pre-production forms.
3. Locate their interest in television, video, and film in relation to academic and professional opportunities.
4. Link the resources available at EIU with their television, video, & film productions.
5. Understand the importance of research and logistics within a production.

Criteria for Evaluation

Pre-production project (3 points)

This is a two-part project.

1. First, select any (minimum one-minute) scene from a professionally-produced scripted television program or film. You will convert the entirety of the scene into an industry-standard script (using Celtx, an open-sourced screenwriting program or other program of their choice).
2. Next, you will select an excellent television commercial of 60 seconds in length and draw out a complete storyboard of every single shot in the spot. Both the script and storyboard must be 100% complete with shots, actions, sounds, dialogue, setting, transitions, and everything else required in an industry standard script / storyboard.

Networking and scouting (4 points)

Networking and teamwork are critical skills in media production. In this three part project, you will get to know everyone in the class as well as a media organization on campus.

1. Generate three questions that you will ask everyone in the class. You will ask everyone the same three questions in order to get to know everyone (ex: What is their dream job in television/film/video? If they could have lunch with any three producers / directors (alive or dead), who would they be? What decade would they go back to to work in television/film? What would their television & video production nickname be? What role on set do they like/dislike the most? What genre of television/film would they use to tell the story of their lives?). Make a table with everyone in the classes' answers. Have them initial next to their name.
2. Pair up with another student whose interests you share in production and complete a location scouting mission for five locations around EIU's campus at which to shoot a scene. Take two pictures of each location (one with each of you in the shot). Be sure to include three different television / film scene ideas underneath each location. They can be interior or exterior, so go explore the campus.
3. You will pair up with a different person and attend a meeting of any Registered Student Organization or approved campus organization related to your interests around production (ex: WEIU-TV, HitMix, Alt TV, The Agency, Doudna Crew, Athletics, etc.). At the end of the meeting, take a picture with you and your partner at the meeting, write out three interesting things about the organization, and have the faculty advisor initial a sheet of paper that states that you attended the entire meeting.

Career path presentation and arc (8 points [7 for report, 1 for presentation])

In this report and presentation, you will find three actual positions in the production field (television, video, film, audio, or related screen medium) which would be an ideal position for you through various classified sites. After mapping out the necessary skills for the position, you will then demonstrate in a detailed report how you would use your time at EIU (through course work, RSOs, internships, and self-learning) to carve a path toward becoming the ideal candidate for those positions in the following structure:

- Section 1: Objectives - 2-3 sentences on who you want to become by the time you graduate. "When I graduate, I will be..."
- Section 2: Print and include three actual positions in the production field which would be an ideal position for you. Include the actual job descriptions.
- Section 3: Looking at the positions, list out all specific necessary skills and experiences required to apply for each of the positions.
- Section 4: Map out all specific EIU course work (semester by semester) you will take to get these jobs. Draw from all departments around the university (both skills and interests).
- Section 5: RSOs and organizations you will join (semester by semester),
- Section 6: Internships. (Be specific and map out when they will happen. Survey both campus opportunities as well as externships back home).
- Section 7: Self-learning (Specific things you will learn as classes do not always get at specialty skills). Map out each semester when they will happen.
- Section 8: Create your future resume based on this path (the theoretical resume you will have on your graduation day) that you will use to apply to those positions. You get one page here and it should be visual in nature. It will only include relevant coursework, experiences, organizational associations, etc. (that you wrote about in here).

Additionally, on Week 15 in class, you will have 60-90 seconds to present your career path and arc. Consider this the executive summary.

Brings (7 points)

Each class period, students are required to "bring" a typed response to the prompt provided. This informal mapping of symbolic practices provides students with a personalized vantage point into their particular interest area, adds diversity and depth to course discussions, and demonstrates the link between theory and the messages of the industry. For full credit, the "bring" must be 1. On time (within the first five minutes

of class beginning, no exceptions) 2. Typed. 3. Addresses the prompt completely. 4. You must be present for the entire class period. There are 15 “brings” throughout the semester so the rate of “bring” to point is 2 to 1 (with the ability to miss one without penalty).

22 points total

General Grading Guidelines

Projects in the professional world do not receive partial credit. They are either of professional quality or not. However, projects of a professional quality seldom happen on a first draft. They nearly always require revisions that ultimately improve the project. The assessments in this class will mirror the professional world of television / video / film.

- All assignments are assigned orally. (There is always substantial time for clarification in class.)
- You must have your project in class during the class that it is due or else you cannot make revisions, and therefore receive a zero. There is a five minute grace period in the beginning of class, after these five minutes, it will be considered late and therefore a zero.
- All projects must be in hard copy form (absolutely no digital copies will be accepted) in print form. Additionally, they must be properly fastened together (ex: staple, paper clip, folder) or else they will not be accepted (no a folded corner does not count, and no, I do not have a stapler. This is college, buy a stapler).
- There is only the score of full points or zero. The score of full points will be awarded to complete and throughout projects that thoughtfully meet all assigned criteria.
- If you get a zero, you have two weeks to revise it into a quality project that thoughtfully fulfills all criteria. If it meets the quality required, you receive full credit. I encourage you to discuss the revisions with me during office hours to assure that you earn the 100%. Additionally, just because you make revisions, does not guarantee points. The project has to be right. This can take one draft or four.
- I am on your team and will do everything I can to help you get the project to a polished level of quality. We serve the product, not our egos!

There are several advantages to this grading process. First, it mirrors a professional environment, where your work is not complete until it is ready for the public. Secondly, it rewards good work with full credit. Remember, you start this (and every course) with zero points, and you must earn your way up Point Mountain. Third, it allows for revision, which is an invaluable skill and will motivate you to do quality work as you must stand by your work. The drafting process is an invaluable one. Unlike other classes “just getting it done” does not get you points; it must be right.

Note: The revision option does not apply to “brings.” These are all or nothing where full credit is awarded if you attend class that day (on time and for the full duration) and the “bring” contains all requested elements in a thoughtful manner.

General Grading Guidelines:

Grades will be assigned as follows:

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

Attendance, late work, and two extension coupons:

While there is no formal attendance policy in the course, you are required to be present on-time and for the duration of a class where an assignment is due or it will not be accepted. Let me reiterate, no late work is accepted in this course as it only leads to future problems. This includes “brings,” which made up 31.8% of this course's grade. We spend each class discussing and unpacking the television & video industry and the “bring” is meant to prime you for the discussion as well as to give you a tangible example from the industry. They cannot be separated from one another and there are no exceptions.

That being said, life does happen sometimes. With this in mind, this syllabus includes two extension coupons that can be used on any assignment for any reason without any explanation needed. This coupon allows you an extension on any assignment (bring or project) until the next class period, and you still receive full points if you accomplish the assignment satisfactorily. Here is how to use the coupon:

1. 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 miss class or 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.
2. 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.
3. Write your name on it and staple or paper clip it to your assignment. Folded over does not count and will not be accepted.

Cell Phones & Digital Devices:

Absolutely no cell phone / tablet / laptop / digital device usage is allowed in this class. Unless directly directed to use the device for in-class research or if you inform the professor about an urgent situation where someone will be contacting you, device usage is absolutely banned. This classroom is a space for complex thought and conversation. In order to have complex thought and conversation, you need to be present without disruption. This policy is supported by unequivocal data on the negative correlation between screens in the classroom and learning.

1. A Massachusetts Institute of Technology study demonstrated that it is impossible for the brain to multi-tasking and any attempt to do so “ruins productivity, causes mistakes, and impedes creative thought.” Disrupting a thought process by checking digital content is not good for learning or the generation of new ideas.
2. Multiple empirical studies have demonstrated that screens in the classroom diminish learning. A Princeton study demonstrated how taking notes on a laptop lowered comprehension of material and retention. Studies by Kaspersky found that the mere presence of a smart phone on a desk lowered test scores by 23%, causes “digital amnesia,” and makes employees 26% overall less productive at work.
3. Checking your phone also makes class time emotionally less enjoyable. The National Institute of Health found that a rise in anxiety and stress is directly related to problematic cell phone usage. If you believe you will have a difficult time abstaining from digital devices, you are not alone. A Baylor University study found that 60% of college students felt mentally and physically addicted to their cell phones.

In order to encourage a singular focus, I will not accept whatever assignment is due that day from you and you will receive a zero on it if you look at your digital device during class. This is any glance at a cell phone, tablet, or lap top. Notes should be taken by hand (and then transcribed later if you wish). There are no warnings. If you continue to look at the device, you will lose a previous “bring” point for each infraction. To add some spice to the equation, if I miss the infraction, and your classmate informs on you, he/she gets the “bring” point taken from you.

I run a classroom that places a premium on showing up and engaging with a topic. Under this system, conversations are more intriguing, students report a deeper understanding of material, and every class period goes by faster. “Be here now,” as there is no advantage to thinking about somewhere else that you are not.

Academic integrity:

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 will be reported to the Office of Student Standards. Consequences of academic dishonesty range from failing of the course to expulsion from the university. There is a zero tolerance policy of plagiarism in this course.

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 Student Disability Services (OSDS). All accommodations must be approved through OSDS. Please stop by Ninth Street Hall, Room 2006, or call 217-581-6583 to make an appointment.

The Student Success Center:

Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center (www.eiu.edu/~success) for assistance with time management, text 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 9th Street Hall, Room 1302.

Tentative Course Schedule**Week 1 - Introduction of course – Why Television & Video matter.**

What makes television special?

The ubiquity of video.

The enduring cultural impact of broadcast.

Bring: Your self and a notebook

Week 2 – Development - Concept, Content, and as Producer

Development

TV/video as art, science & business

Concepts and objectives

Environment / genre / influence / vision

Why should we care about this show/film/video?

Introducing the major / minor

Approaching productions – Assignments and otherwise

The revision process

Assign: Networking & Scouting

Bring: Identify one of your favorite televisual series (note: This can be anything off digital, streaming, broadcast, or cable. The only requirement is that it is a legitimate platform that is not UGC.).

1. Find and print out an interview with the shows' creator(s) about their development and production of this television show.
2. Using this article (and supplementing it with other interviews if needed), create a timeline of the show's development from concept/pitch up to the moment of the first regular episode (some shows have pilots, others do not). Include every specific moment.

Week 3

No classes held at university – Labor Day

Week 4 – Area of Specialization: Narrative & Creative

Week one of overviewing the three major areas of television, video, & film

Narrative & Creative

Types of content, projects, careers, general approach and goals, channels and distribution mechanisms

Complementary minors

Relevant RSOs & on-campus experiences

Bring: View three scripted television shows in any genres of your choosing (ex: sitcom, drama, mockumentary, procedural, etc.). For each of the three scripted television programs:

1. In one sentence, tell me the premise of the show.
2. In one sentence, tell me what makes the show worth watching.
3. Track down the production company of the show and the location (ex: city) where they shot the show.
4. Go on Indeed.com and look up jobs in television, video, and film in each city. Print out and attach your three most intriguing classifieds.

Week 5 – Area of Specialization: Documentary & News (Actuality & Broadcast)

Week two of over-viewing the three major areas of television, video & film

Documentary & News / Actuality / Sports / Broadcasting

Typical content, projects, careers, general approach and goals, channels and distribution mechanisms

Complementary minors

Relevant RSOs & on-campus experiences

Bring: View three unscripted broadcast television shows in any genres of your choosing (ex: news, talk shows, sporting events, documentaries, music performances). For each program:

1. In one sentence, tell me the premise of the show.
2. In one sentence, tell me what makes the show worth watching.
3. Track down the production company of the show and the location (ex: city) where they shot the show.
4. Go on Indeed.com and look up jobs in television, video, and film in each city. Print out and attach your three most intriguing classifieds for news, sports, and broadcasting.

Week 6 - Area of Specialization: Commercial & Advertising

Week three of over-viewing the three major areas of television, video & film

Commercial, Advertising, and Promotional Media

Typical content, projects, careers, general approach and goals, channels and distribution mechanisms

Complementary minors

Relevant RSOs & on-campus experiences

Bring: First, view the television and video content from ad campaigns for three different spectacular brands of your choosing (ex: retail companies, food service, non-profits, celebrities, etc.). For each ad campaign:

1. In one sentence, tell me what is the overall message of the campaign (what does it do for brand?)
2. In one sentence, tell me what makes the ads worth watching.
3. Track down the production company who produced the campaign and the location (ex: city) of their offices.
4. Go on Indeed.com and look up jobs in commercial video, promotional media, and advertising in each city. Print out and attach your three most intriguing classifieds.

Week 7 – Pre-pre production: Research, mapping & objectives

Pre-pre production techniques

Research: Channels, audiences, and markets
 Program objective
 Resource audit
 Location scouting
 Casting / securing interviews
 Funding / bartering

Due: Networking & Scouting

Assign: Pre-production

Bring: Three ideas (in total) for a television series / short film / web series you could shoot while at EIU. For each of the the three ideas, make a two-column checklist. In one column, put the the technical items, symbolic (costuming, settings, set dressing, etc), and personnel you would need to complete each project. In the column next to everything that you would need, creatively list out what you can gain access to to in order to complete the project.

Week 8 - Narratives & Characters

Narrative structures in television and video
 Tracing an arc
 Symbolic traits of characters, on-air talent, and actualities
 Loglines, treatments, character sketches, and pitches

Bring:

1. Watch the first 3 episodes of any narrative-based television series that you have never seen before.
 - A. Trace out the main arc of the main character with a one-sentence summary of each episode's narrative.
 - B. Based on the choices made by the character on screen, list five traits that tell us who they are (with an on-screen action by the character in parentheses).
 - C. List three reasons why you personally invested in this character.
2. Watch an episode of any actuality-based show with a host that has multiple segments.
 - A. Explain the linkage of each section to the other and how it kept you watching.
 - B. List five traits that tell us who the host is (with an on-screen action from the host in parentheses).
 - C. List three reasons why you were personally drawn to this on-screen talent.

Week 9 – Scripting – Screenplays, two column, and run sheets

The anatomy of a script
 Live television vs. film-style productions
 Communicating with a cast and crew

Bring: An example of the three main types of scripts for television and video about a similar subject. This includes properly formatted:

1. A two-column script (audio in one column, video in the other).
2. A film-style, single-column screenplay.
3. A run sheet from live television.
4. Additionally, compile a list of the three pieces of scripting / formatting software you will consider using and a one sentence explanation of why it is good. Pro tip: “open source” is Internet speak for free.

Week 10 – Storyboards and thinking visually

Visual storytelling

Communicating with a crew

Breaking it down to the shot / sound level

Thinking aurally

Assign: Career path and arc

Bring:

1. Two examples of well-done storyboards. One should be from a spot / piece of branded entertainment, and one should be from a scripted creative / narrative piece of television / film.
2. Compile a list of three pieces of storyboarding software you would consider using and a one sentence explanation of why it is good.

Week 11 - Production Logistics and Roles

Common roles on set / location

What does each role play in creative process?

Setiquette

Bring: Go line by line through the credits of 1. a scripted television show, 2. a feature-length film, 3. a reality television show, 4. an actuality-based broadcast show and 5. a piece of branded entertainment. For each of the five types of televisual/video/filmic content:

A. List out three positions and explain in plain language what that position's role is in making the show/film/video.

B. List at least one position not found in the other types of productions and explain why this position is unique to this type of production.

Due: Pre-production project

Week 12 -Internships, resources, & production opportunities

Producing television & video at EIU

Practical experiences

Internships

Fit & contribution – Preparing for applying

Resources on campus for production & education

Bring: Revise your Week 7 “bring” proposals about the three concepts for television programs you would be interested in producing. For each program, you will now add two new rows:

1. The specific knowledge you need to complete the production.
2. The practical experiences you need to have to complete the production.

In the column next to these rows, explain the way in which you could attain the specific knowledge / practical experience you need (through specific courses, media organizations, internships, independent learning, etc.).

Week 13 – Communication Strategies and Tactics in Production

Behind the scenes communication roles

- Leadership
- Communicating with cast, crew
- Using notes in pre / floor / post
- Logistics

Bring: Make a list of your favorite director, producer, and showrunner. For each:

1. Find and print out an article of her/him talking about her/his communication with both the cast and crew.
2. After reading each article, tell me about the three communication strategies and tactics nearly all of these individuals utilize.

Week 14 – Media Law (a practical approach)

Media law

- Copyright
- Releases (General, talent, location, material)
- Laws and regulations (Both in actual production & in content)
- Creative commons
- FCC broadcast considerations vs. web (technical and content)
- Distributing / screening / monetizing

Bring:

1. A comprehensive bullet list of everything that can have a copyright attached to it (ex: a likeness).
2. A list of legal considerations you would need to vet and rights you would need to secure before your favorite project from Week 12 could achieve clearance (in that you own the intellectual property and could sell it).
3. A list of three specific ways you would monetize your finished production?

Due: All revisions

Week 15 – Presentation of career trajectory

Bring: A polished draft of career arc assignment in addition to your formal presentation.

Finals week

Tuesday – 12/10 – 12:30-2:30 p.m. as scheduled by university

Due: Career presentation and arc

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.

Restrictions: Non-transferrable. Not valid after Week 14. Individual use only.

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