

# COMM498P: Producing Digital Media from Funding to Finish Summer 2016, May 31-July 8

*Department of Communication  
University of Maryland, College Park  
The Universities at Shady Grove Campus*

**Lecturer:** Adam W. Nixon, A.B.D., M.F.A.

**Course Dates:** May 31 – July 8, 2016

**Online Meetings:** 2-3pm EDT Tues during the first five weeks and by appointment

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**Course Description:** This course will explore the role of the producer as a content creator in visual communication. Students will learn to produce content from the pitch/proposal, fundraising through the final edit, online posting of a new media project. Lectures will be posted online weekly, there will be on-line discussions of the readings and a 'producer's book built. Finally we will live-tweet together at assigned times during the semester.

## **Course Objectives:**

1. Applying theoretical framing devices to digital media content and meaning.
2. Teaching the technique of creating and distributing content in digital media.
3. Fostering understanding of the role of the producer in message creation.
4. Applying storytelling technique and interviewing skills in visual media.

## **Student Learning Outcomes:**

1. **Visual Communication:** Students will explore current practice in digital visual communication
2. **Understanding Key Concepts:** Students will familiarize themselves with key concepts in identity, community, and diversity.
3. **Critical Thinking:** Students will be able to evaluate visual platforms and content.
4. **Communication - Skills:** Students will engage in social and political discourse using digital visual media through online discussions including the course website, You Tube and Twitter.
5. **Creativity and Innovation:** Students will be able to create new meanings and express ideas in visual media using production tools and software
6. **Professional Development:** Students will produce and direct content to address specific commercial, political and professional goals using digital media.
7. **Collaboration:** Students will gain collaboration skills while using visual media production processes and tools.
8. **Decision making:** Students, as producers, will guide digital media activities and output based on the skills acquired in their coursework.
9. **Research Methods - Skill:** Students will conduct research relevant to visual communication.

## **REQUIRED TEXTS/READINGS:**

*Producing and Directing the Short Film and Video, 5<sup>th</sup> Ed.*, Peter W. Rea and David K. Irving, Focal Pres, 2015. (Required Text)

*How Video Works: From Broadcast to the Cloud*, Diana Weynand, Taylor and Francis, 2015 (Recommended)

Articles for review:

- *The Narrative Paradigm*, Fisher (Fisher, W. R. (1985).The narrative paradigm: An elaboration. *Communication Monographs*, 52(4), 347-367. doi:10.1080) Posted to ELMS
- *Introduction, Visual Intelligence: Perception, Image, and Manipulation in Visual Communication*, Barry, Anne Marie Seward (State University of New York Press, July 1, 1997) Posted to ELMS
- *Discipline and Punish, Panopticism* (Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison, edited by Alan Sheridan, 195-228. New York: Vintage Books, 1977.e Birth of the Prison, Foucault, Michel) Posted to ELMS

## ASSIGNMENTS:

- **Reading Response postings:** You will be required to write a total of 4 on-line postings in response to the readings. In addition you will be required to respond to your classmate's posting at least three times per week. Postings are due at the end of the first-four weeks. Each response is worth up to 50 points and should be at least 125 words long. They are to be posted in Canvas the night before the class discussion about the assigned readings.
- **Project Proposal:** You will write a 6-page proposal or 'pitch' of your final project. The pitch/proposal is an important early element used to communicate a project's form and meaning. It should be clearly written, and include planned interviews, story technique, theoretical framing, visual elements including a storyboard, funding sources, and an outline of the narrative arc.
- **Go Fund Me Campaign:** Students will launch a Go Fund Me Campaign to fund their video and website. You are expected to build a strong campaign but will not be evaluated based on money raised.
- **New Media - Video Production:** You will produce – plan and execute – a 60-second ad for someone doing good things in environmental sustainability. As producer you are responsible for every aspect of the production including planning, financing, supervising the field shoot, and overseeing both post production and output to online sources.
- **Website:** Students should build a very basic website in support of their new media project. You can use any tool you prefer. Your film will need to be uploaded to the site.
- **Final Project:** You will create a producer's 'book'. Work will be evaluated based on a rubric that emphasizes new connections and meanings. A specific handout will detail this assignment further; it will also be posted to Canvas.
- **Online Participation:** Students are expected to participate every week online through the course website and via Twitter.

**GRADING**                      **POINTS (1000 possible):**

- Reading Response            200
- Project Proposal              100
- Go Fund Me Campaign      100
- Video Project                200
- Website                        100
- Final Project                 150
- Online Participation        150

See undergraduate catalogue for description of grades, e.g., A+, A, A-, etc.:

<http://www.umd.edu/catalog/index.cfm/show/content.section/c/27/ss/1584/s/1534>

**Course Procedures and Policies**

Students should be logged-into the course website Tues 2-3pm during the first five weeks of the Semester to participate in the course on-line discussion sessions. I'll provide discussion topics, students will post written responses prior to the discussion times. When we are not engaged in classroom discussion you should be working on your campaign.

**Attendance Policy:**

Attendance and absences: In order to receive the maximum benefit from this class you are required to be in attendance on line during class discussions. You are not just a student in this class. You are a communicator, a writer, a producer, a consumer, an audience member, and a peer evaluator. This means that you are expected to be here for every session ready, willing, and able to keep the creative process going between yourself, the instructor, and your peers.

Students are expected to inform the instructor in advance of medically necessary absences, and present a self-signed note documenting the date of the missed class(es) and testifying to the need for the absence. This note must include an acknowledgement that (a) the information provided is true and correct, and (b) that the student understands that providing false information to University officials is a violation of Part 9(h) of the Code of Student Conduct. The university's policies on medical and other absences can be found at:

<http://www.umd.edu/catalog/index.cfm/show/content.section/c/27/ss/1584/s/1540>

Prolonged absence or illness preventing attendance from class requires written documentation from the Health Center and/or health care provider verifying dates of treatment when student was unable to meet academic responsibilities.

**Absence due to religious observance will not be penalized;** however, it is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor within the first 3 weeks of class regarding any religious observance absence(s) for the entire semester. The calendar of religious holidays can be found at: [http://faculty.umd.edu/teach/attend\\_student.html#religious](http://faculty.umd.edu/teach/attend_student.html#religious)

**Academic integrity:** The student-administered Honor Code and Honor Pledge prohibit students from cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses

without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents and forging signatures. On every examination, paper or other academic exercise not specifically exempted by the instructor, students must write by hand and sign the following pledge:

I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination (or assignment). Allegations of academic dishonesty will be reported directly to the Student Honor Council: <http://www.shc.umd.edu>

**Students with disabilities:** The University of Maryland is committed to providing appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities. Students with a documented disability should inform the instructors within the add-drop period if academic accommodations are needed. To obtain an Accommodation Letter prepared by Disability Support Service (DSS), a division of the University Counseling Center, please call 301-314-7682, e-mail [dissup@umd.edu](mailto:dissup@umd.edu), or visit the Shoemaker Building for more information. If a student needs special accommodations please contact me by email.

**Copyright notice:** Class lectures and other materials are copyrighted and they may not be reproduced for anything other than personal use without written permission from the instructor.

Emergency protocol: Please check the UMD.edu website in the event of snow emergency or class cancellations. All assignments will be made up in the event of a cancellation.

This syllabus is subject to change. Students will be notified in advance of important changes that could affect grading, assignments, etc.

**Course evaluations** are a part of the process by which the University of Maryland seeks to improve teaching and learning. Your participation in this official system is critical to the success of the process, and all information submitted to CourseEvalUM is confidential. (Instructors can only view group summaries of evaluations and cannot identify which submissions belong to which students.)

**Diversity:** The University of Maryland values the diversity of its student body. Along with the University, I am committed to providing a classroom atmosphere that encourages the equitable participation of all students regardless of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, national origin, race, religion, or sexual orientation. Potential devaluation of students in the classroom that can occur by reference to demeaning stereotypes of any group and/or overlooking the contributions of a particular group to the topic under discussion is inappropriate. (See Statement on Classroom Climate, <http://www.umd.edu/catalog/index.cfm/show/content.section/c/27/ss/1584/s/1541>).

## READING CALENDAR

<p><b>Week One</b></p>	<p><b>ON LINE:</b> 2-3PM online meeting through course ELMS website</p> <p><b>Lecture:</b> The Producer vs. The Director</p> <p><b>Application:</b> Shaping the American Media: A Brief Overview.</p> <p><b>Project:</b> Use of digital media to create visual content.</p>	<p><b>ASSIGNMENTS</b></p> <p><b>Reading:</b> <i>Producing and Directing the Short Film and Video</i>, Ch. 1-3 (post 125 word response)</p> <p><b>New Media Project Proposal due</b></p> <p>RECOMENDED How Video Works: From Broadcast to the Cloud (at your own pace)</p>
<p><b>Week 2</b></p>	<p><b>ONLINE:</b> 2-3PM online meeting through course ELMS website</p> <p><b>Lecture:</b> Pt. 1 Basic guideline for short films // Pt. 2 Adaption for digital media</p> <p><b>Lecture:</b> Pt. 1 The Camera as Storyteller // Pt. 2 Postproduction management</p> <p><b>Application:</b> Framing in political discourse</p> <p><b>In class activity:</b> Social construction in news. Handout with instructions will be posted.</p>	<p><b>Reading:</b> <i>Producing and Directing the Short Film and Video</i>, Ch. 4-6 (post 125 word response)</p> <p><b>Go Fund Me Project Due</b></p>

<p><b>Week 3</b></p>	<p><b>ONLINE:</b> 2-3PM online meeting through course ELMS website</p> <p><b>Lecture:</b> Pt.1 Film Financing // Pt.2 Supervising a field crew</p> <p><b>Lecture:</b> Pt.1 Location Scouting // Pt.2 Sound on set</p> <p><b>Application:</b> Dramatic Irony</p>	<p><b>Reading:</b> <i>Producing and Directing the Short Film and Video</i>, Ch. 7-9 (post 125 word response)</p> <p><b>Video Project Due</b></p>
<p><b>Week 4</b></p>	<p><b>ONLINE:</b> 2-3PM online meeting through course ELMS website</p> <p><b>Lecture:</b> Pt.1 Breaking down a script // Pt.2 Budgeting your project</p>	<p><b>Reading:</b> <i>Producing and Directing the Short Film and Video</i>, Ch. 10-12 (post 125 word response)</p> <p><b>Website Due</b></p>
<p><b>Week 5</b></p>	<p><b>ONLINE:</b> 2-3PM online meeting through course ELMS website</p> <p><b>Lecture:</b> Pt. 1 Key crew members // Pt. 2 Working with actors</p> <p>2-3PM online meeting through course website</p>	<p><b>Reading:</b> <i>Producing and Directing the Short Film and Video</i>, Ch. 13-End</p> <p><b>Press Release Due</b></p>
<p><b>Week 6</b></p>		<p><b>Producers 'Book' Due (see separate handout for guidance)</b></p>