



Moving image editing: theory and practice

CAPA LONDON PROGRAM

Summer 2020

Faculty name	:	
E-mail	:	
Class times	:	TBD
Classroom location	:	TBD
Office Hours	:	TBD & by appointment

Course Description

Moving images are ubiquitous. As one of the most pervasive manifestations of the digital age, they broke out with the confines of the cinema theatre and show up on the multitude of screens around us. Just as we are surrounded by many forms of the audio-visual, we also encounter a multitude of editing practices. From blockbusters to YouTube videos we experience images that are carefully selected and artfully cut in a way that is entertaining, persuasive or simply moving.

The course is designed to introduce you to the theory, practice and art of editing. It intertwines historical accounts of editing practice with media analysis and hands-on exercises. Each of the first nine sessions is devoted to one of the key concepts that illuminate intersections between media and culture: conversation, gaze, action, persuasion, story, beat, humour, metaphor and voice. Each session is then divided into three distinctive parts. The first uses film excerpts to showcase editing devices employed in relation to the theme of the class. The second introduces a theoretical understanding of the pertinent editing procedures and instigates a discussion around them. In the last part of the session you will use a pre-selected set of clips to create your own edit.

The course is based on an innovative approach to editing techniques that sees them in a close dialogue with the underlying cultural phenomena that shape the current media landscape.

Course Aims

The primary goal of the course is to teach you a breath of editing techniques in a way that informs practice with a theoretical understanding of editing and within its historical context.

Requirements and Prerequisites

There are no specific prerequisites for this course.

Learning Outcomes

- A) Developing technical skills in moving image editing;
- B) Broadening knowledge of media history;
- C) Learning a selection of media theories;
- D) Enhancing skills in critical analysis of media;
- E) Producing a visual essay;
- F) Producing a portfolio showcasing editing skills.

Developmental Outcomes

Students should demonstrate: independence, creativity, critical thinking, goal orientation, self-confidence, resilience, appreciation of differences.

Class methodology

This course will meet twice per week. Each session will have a practical component and there will be a screening of film excerpts at the beginning of the class. There will also be some reading assignments and we will discuss readings in class.

Major Assignments and grade percentage:

Editing portfolio: during each class students will learn an editing technique and have an opportunity to create their own short edits. These will be assessed as students' individual portfolio at the end of the course. Grade: 20%; learning outcomes A, F.

Participation and attendance: students are expected to participate actively in class discussions. Grade: 10%; learning outcomes B-D.

Written assignment: students will write a short essay analysing editing devices employed in a film of their choice. Grade: 25%; learning outcomes B-D.

Audio-visual essay: at the end of the course, students will create an audio-visual essay about the selected concepts discussed in class. Grade: 45%; learning outcomes A-E.

Assessment/Grading Policy

DE-SCRIPTOR	ALPHA	NU-MERIC	GPA	REQUIREMENT/EXPECTATION
Outstanding (High Distinction)	A	93+	4.0	Maximum grade: In addition to description for grade "A-", the student shows detailed understanding of materials about which he or she can show independent analytical ability. This means the ability to question an issue from different perspectives and evaluate responses in an objective manner.
Excellent (Distinction)	A-	90 - 92	3.7	Student shows understanding of literature beyond course texts, and the work shows a high level of independent thought, presents informed and insightful discussion and demonstrates a well-developed capacity for evaluation.
Very good (High Credit)	B+	87 - 89	3.3	Shows evidence of a capacity to generalise from the taught content, or the material in literature, or from class lectures in an informed manner. Also, the work demonstrates a capacity to integrate personal reflection into the discussion and an appreciation of a range of different perspectives.
Good (Credit)	B	83 - 86	3.0	The work is well organised and contains coherent or logical argumentation and presentation.
Good (Credit)	B-	80 - 82	2.7	Student shows understanding of literature beyond the course texts, and, there is evidence of additional reading.
Average (Good Pass)	C+	77-79	2.3	The work demonstrates a capacity to integrate research into the discussion and a critical appreciation of a range of theoretical perspectives. Also, the work demonstrates a clear understanding of the question and its theoretical implications and demonstrates evidence of additional reading.
Adequate (Pass)	C	73 - 76	2.0	Shows clear understanding and some insight into the material course texts, but not beyond. A deficiency in understanding the material may be compensated by evidence of independent thought and effort related to the subject matter.

Below Average (Borderline Pass)	C-	70-72	1.7	Shows some understanding of the material in course texts. A deficiency in any of the above may be compensated by evidence of independent thought related to the subject matter.
Inadequate (Borderline Fail)	D+	67 - 69	1.3	Fails to show a clear understanding or much insight into the material in the textbook and notes
Poor (Fail)	D	60 - 66	0.7 - 1.0	Besides the above for D+, student has not shown interest or engagement in the class work or study.
Poor (Fail)	F	<60	0	Shows little or no understanding of any of the material
Incomplete	I			Please see CAPA policy in the Faculty Handbook.

Weekly Course Schedule

Week 1: Session 1

Required reading [excerpts]:

Ondaatje, Michael. *The Conversations. Walter Murch and the Art of Editing Film*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010.
Murch, Walter. *In the Blink of An Eye. A Perspective on Film Editing*, 2nd ed. Los Angeles: Silman-James Press, 2001.

Conversation

This session will start off by discussing research on naturally-occurring conversations that has been developed in sociology and linguistics (conversation analysis). This will be followed by a detail analysis of the shot-reverse-shot technique and the way editors use this basic cutting structure to modify or punctuate the content of a filmed conversation. The session will finish with a practical exercise in editing a dialogue sequence.

Week 1: Session 2

Required reading [excerpts]:

Grimshaw, Anna. 2008. *The Ethnographer's Eye: Ways of Seeing in Modern Anthropology*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.
Mulvey, Laura. 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema.' In *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*. Eds. Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen. New York: Oxford UP, 1999: 833-44.
Berger, John. 2008. *Ways of seeing: [based on the BBC television series]*. London: Penguin.

Gaze

Following a metaphor of the kino-eye this session will look at the embeddedness of the prosthetic apparatus of cinema in gender, race and class politics. The practical component of the session will focus on editing POV shots, working with the off-screen space and the question of editorial selection as a tool of semiotic emphasis.

Week 1: Session 3

Required reading:
Uri Hasson, Ohad Landesman, Barbara Knappmeyer, Ignacio Vallines, Nava Rubin and David J. Heeger, 'Neurocinematics: the Neuroscience of Film,' *Projections* 2, issue 1 (Summer 2008): 1-26.

Action

A theoretical part of the session will examine human movement and the neuroscientific explanation of our perception of action. Students will then learn techniques of cutting on action, maintaining the screen direction and editing dance scenes.

Week 2: Session 4

Required reading [excerpts]:

Aumont, Jacques. *Montage*. Montreal: caboose, 2014.

Keathley, Christian and Jason Mittell, ed. *The Videographic Essay: Criticism in Sound and Image*. Montreal: caboose, 2016.

Persuasion

This session looks at theories of montage and how one can construct arguments using a series of images. It will also examine the principles of rhetoric as a form of discourse and the methodology of videographic criticism.

Week 2: Session 5

Required reading [excerpts]:

Phelan, James. 1996. *Narrative as rhetoric: technique, audiences, ethics, ideology*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press.

Bricca, Jacob. *Documentary Editing. Principles & Practice*. New York: Routledge, 2018.

Story

The aim of this session is to draw connections between editing devices and the way audiences respond to narratives in terms of their intellectual and emotional engagement. The focus is on constructing continuities in the editing material and the ways of synchronizing their effects.

Week 2: Session 6

Required reading [excerpts]:

Pearlman, Karen. *Cutting Rhythms. Intuitive Film Editing*. New York: Focal Press, 2016.

Eisenstein, Sergei. 'Vertical Montage.' In S. M. Eisenstein. *Selected Works. Volume II, Towards a Theory of Montage*, 327 - 399. London: BFI Publishing, 1991.

Beat

This session explores the idea of a 'beat' as a notion that can be used to describe musical, narrative and graphic elements of the moving images. It will also seek to present editing as an art of orchestrating audio-visual components. The practical part of the session will have emphasis on editing sound and music.

Week 3: Session 7

Required reading [excerpts]:

Bergson, Henri Louis. 2016. *Laughter*. Read Books Ltd. <http://www.myilibrary.com?id=930589>.

Humour

When and why do we laugh? What is the social role of laughter? Examining these questions will be followed by a close analysis of comic scenes in a wide selection of works, which will help to elucidate how cutting produces or enhances comic effects.

Week 3: Session 8

Required reading [excerpts]:

Lakoff, George, and Mark Johnson. *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 2003.

Barthes, Roland. *Image, Music, Text*. London: Fontana Press, 1977.

Metaphor

Metaphor is more than a figure of speech. It is a way of structuring knowledge. This session will begin with a broad discussion of the ways in which our thinking is predicated on metaphoric constructs. We will also discuss practical implications of what Barthes called 'the third meaning.' In the last part of the session students will create their own cinematic metaphors.

Week 3: Session 9

Required reading [excerpts]:

Nora M. Alter, *Translating the Essay into Film and Installation*, *Journal of Visual Culture*, Vol 6, Issue 1, 2007.

Chion, Michel. *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.

Voice

In the first half of the session students will consider the various forms of the essayistic filmmaking. The second half of the session will focus on practical and creative aspects of editing voice.

Week 4: Session 10 (Final project)

Tutorials

In this session students will have an opportunity to develop their ideas for the final project, an audio-visual essay.

Week 4: Session 11 (Final project)

Colour grading/Sound mixing/Tutorials

The first half of the session will be devoted to the final stages of post-production: mixing sound and colour grading. In the second half students will get feedback on the rough cuts of their final projects.

Week 4: Session 12

Presentation to the whole cohort

Course Materials

Required and recommended readings:

Aumont, Jacques. *Montage*. Montreal: caboose, 2014.

Barthes, Roland. *Image, Music, Text*. London: Fontana Press, 1977.

Bergson, Henri Louis. 2016. *Laughter*. Read Books Ltd. <http://www.myilibrary.com?id=930589>.

Bricca, Jacob. *Documentary Editing. Principles & Practice*. New York: Routledge, 2018.

Chion, Michel. *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.

Eisenstein, Sergei. 'Vertical Montage.' In S. M. Eisenstein. *Selected Works. Volume II, Towards a Theory of Montage*, 327–399. London: BFI Publishing, 1991.

Fairservice, Don. *Film Editing: History, Theory and Practice*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001.

Grimshaw, Anna. 2008. *The Ethnographer's Eye: Ways of Seeing in Modern Anthropology*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.

Lakoff, George, and Mark Johnson. *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 2003.

Keathley, Christian and Jason Mittell, ed. *The Videographic Essay: Criticism in Sound and Image*. Montreal: caboose, 2016

Murch, Walter. *In the Blink of An Eye. A Perspective on Film Editing*, 2nd ed. Los Angeles: Silman-James Press, 2001.

Ondaatje, Michael. *The Conversations. Walter Murch and the Art of Editing Film*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010.

Pearlman, Karen. *Cutting Rhythms. Intuitive Film Editing*. New York: Focal Press, 2016.

Weekly Course Schedule

We will finalise our weekly reading schedule based on student sign-ups on the first week.

Attendance, Participation & Student Responsibilities

Attendance: CAPA has a mandatory attendance policy. Attendance is taken at the beginning of every class. Unauthorized absence from class will result in a reduction of the final grade and potentially a failure for the course.

Missing classes for medical reasons: If you need to miss a class for medical reasons or for a family emergency, you must send an e-mail to let the Director of Academic Affairs (DAA) know at least one hour in advance of your class or meeting at the following e-mail: _____. Note that calling the CAPA Center (_____) is acceptable only if you do not temporarily have access to the internet. An e-mail is still required as quickly as you can get access to the internet again. You will need to provide evidence of the reason for your absence. Unexcused absences will result in a grade reduction. In the event of a missed class or field trip, it is your responsibility to contact your instructor and make up any missed assignments.

Class Participation: Students are expected to participate actively and critically in class discussions, and the participation portion of the class will be graded accordingly. Students must read assignments BEFORE the class, and come in on time. Participation is a vital part of your grade: students are expected to participate orally in seminars and in online forums and discussions in a critical and evaluative manner; to interact with the faculty and fellow students with respect and tolerance; and to actively engage in discussion. Derogatory or inflammatory comments about the cultures, perspectives or attitudes of others in the class will not be tolerated.

Academic Integrity: A high level of responsibility and academic honesty is expected. Because the value of an academic course depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student, it is imperative that a student demonstrates a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work and class behavior. Plagiarism and cheating will result in dismissal from the program. See the Handbook of CAPA Academic Policies for more information and resources on plagiarism.

Use of electronic equipment in class: All devices such as laptops, I-pods, I-pads, netbooks, notebooks and tablets, smartphones, cell phones, etc. are **NOT** allowed unless you have express permission from the faculty or you have been instructed to do so. If you require an accommodation to use any type of electronic equipment, inform the Director of Academic Affairs at the beginning of Term.

Use of Electronic Translators: In Language courses students are NOT allowed to use electronic translators for writing texts in the target language: those submitting compositions and texts of whatever kind translated in such a fashion will receive a final F grade for the course.

Late Submission: Late submission of papers, projects, journal entries, pieces of homework and portfolios is only permitted with prior approval. A request must be made to the relevant Faculty member no later than two days prior to the due date. Late submission without prior approval will result in a full alpha grade penalty. In either case, work cannot be submitted after feedback has been provided to the rest of the class on the relevant assessment or one week after the due date whichever comes first, after which point a grade of F will be given for the assessment.

Behavior during Examinations: During examinations, you must do your own work. Unless specifically instructed by the lecturer or instructor, talking during an exam is not permitted, nor may you compare papers, copy from others, or collaborate in any way. Any failure to abide by examination rules will result in failure of the exam, and may lead to failure of the course and disciplinary action.