Course Syllabus

JOUR 791-SIS
Travel and Adventure Filmmaking

Course Description

Students involved in study abroad programs like Forum-Nexus are passionate about traveling and discovering the magic of new cultures, different people, amazing cities, great art and architecture, breathtaking landscapes, quaint villages, and so much more. Many of these students desire to acquire the skills and creativity to capture these new experiences through film and video productions, which can then be shared through social media, or even published professionally. The purpose of this course is to provide the fundamentals of travel and adventure filmmaking, and to encourage students to view filmmaking as storytelling and develop their own style and identity as travel filmmakers.

This Supervised Independent Study (SIS) course will guide students through the basic principles of travel and adventure filmmaking, while providing the opportunity for an independent exploration of the subject.

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Understand how to use and operate their video gear
2. Learn how to capture the soul and essence of a visited city through film
3. Explore travel filmmaking as storytelling
4. Learn how to capture a variety of shots
5. Master the techniques for proper aperture and depth of field
6. Understand how to capture motion and action
7. Learn about image and sound composition
8. Explore framing shots and techniques for shooting at night
9. Become familiar with how to film different subjects and environments: Landscapes, wildlife, people, etc.
10. Understand the concept of continuity and cutting on action
11. Learn the complexities of post-production
12. Become familiar with the ways to produce and share travel films
Course Requirements

This course requires independent study, experimentation, organization, and academic discipline. Students are expected to complete the required and additional readings in pace with their assignments and the course outline. Students will meet with their SIS Coordinator regularly throughout the course for consultation and assistance. There will be an oral presentation, a midterm exam, a final exam, and four assignments.

Assignment #1 – About the Basics Essay (minimum length: 1,000 words)

- Summarize the following topics related to travel and adventure filmmaking:
  - Types of equipment
  - Accessories and how they are best used
  - Audio equipment and considerations
  - Differences between types of shots
  - Ways to capture motion or action

Assignments 2 – 4: Tell a Travel Story Through Film

For each of the following assignments, choose one of the following styles and create a travel video. You must make a video in each style, but you can choose which style you use for which city/country.

Interview Style – Featuring excerpts from various interviews with locals or others, mixed with b-roll footage from that destination, relevant to a story, theme, or experience that you are trying to portray.

Vlog Style – More informal approach, talking to camera and explaining your surroundings and/or experience in a particular place.

Cinematic Style – Dramatic shots of landscapes and moments, highlighted with music or voice-over audio. This can also be adventure-oriented.

Assignment #2 – Tell a Travel Story Through Film: Barcelona

- Identify a story in or related to Barcelona that you want to tell
- Capture footage throughout your time in Barcelona
  - Try to film a variety of shots, environments, frames, etc. related to the style that you have chosen
- Edit your footage into a 2-3 minute video. Try using a variety of cuts and transitions.
- Create a document including the following:
  - A link to your completed video either on YouTube, Vimeo, or another platform (can be an unlisted video)
  - A paragraph or two describing your video and the style that you chose and why
  - Annotate specific points in the video (include a time stamp of moments that you reference) and explain how you captured your footage, considerations you made in the filming and editing process, types of shots that you used and why, etc.
Assignment #3 – Tell a Travel Story Through Film: Paris

- Identify a story in or related to Paris that you want to tell
- Capture footage throughout your time in Paris
  - Try to film a variety of shots, environments, frames, etc. related to the style that you have chosen
- Edit your footage into a 2-3 minute video. Try using a variety of cuts and transitions.
- Create a document including the following:
  - A link to your completed video either on YouTube, Vimeo, or another platform (can be an unlisted video)
  - A paragraph or two describing your video and the style that you chose and why
  - Annotate specific points in the video (include a time stamp of moments that you reference) and explain how you captured your footage, considerations you made in the filming and editing process, types of shots that you used and why, etc.

Assignment #4 – Tell a Travel Story Through Film: Italy

- Identify a story in or related to Italy that you want to tell
- Capture footage throughout your time in Italy
  - Try to film a variety of shots, environments, frames, etc. related to the style that you have chosen
- Edit your footage into a 2-3 minute video. Try using a variety of cuts and transitions.
- Create a document including the following:
  - A link to your completed video either on YouTube, Vimeo, or another platform (can be an unlisted video)
  - A paragraph or two describing your video and the style that you chose and why
  - Annotate specific points in the video (include a time stamp of moments that you reference) and explain how you captured your footage, considerations you made in the filming and editing process, types of shots that you used and why, etc.

Portfolio Presentation

Deliver a 15-minute PowerPoint presentation summarizing the main findings of your independent study and presenting your travel and adventure filmmaking portfolio.

Required components include:
- Provide a summary of your goals and objectives
- Recap what you’ve learned about filmmaking
- Present each of your three travel videos
  - Explain the story that you are telling in each video, how you captured it, why you chose the style that you did, etc.
  - Share any technical considerations – how you chose to edit the videos, why you captured particular shots, etc.
- Reflection on what you’ve learned through the SIS course

Required Equipment

Students may choose any camera with enough memory capacity for each project. Most laptops have a built-in editing software, but students may download or purchase software.
Required Readings

Lonely Planet’s Best Ever Video Tips
by Lonely Planet
Publications Pty Ltd, 2015
(Kindle version recommended)

The Explorer’s Guide to Travel Photography and Destination Video
by Shutterstock, 2016
PDF available online: shutr.bz/2EfEBOd

Recommended Readings

Filmmaking in Action: Your Guide to the Skills and Craft
by Adam Leipzig, Barry Weiss, and Michael Goldman
Bedford/St. Martin’s, 1st Edition, 2016

by Steven Ascher and Edward Pincus
Penguin Group, 2013

Components of Final Grade

Midterm Exam 15%
Final Exam 15%
Assignment #1 10%
Assignment #2 15%
Assignment #3 15%
Assignment #4 15%
Presentation 15%

Grading Scale

93-100 % A
90-92.9 % A-
87-89.9 % B+
83-86.9 % B
80-82.9 % B-
77-79.9 % C+
73-76.9 % C
70-72.9% C-
67-69.9 % D+
63-66.9 % D
60-62.9 % D-
Below 60 % F
Course Outline

Module 1: Before You Go
- Cameras
- Accessories
- Planning ahead
- Power sources
- Keeping equipment safe
- Tripods
- Back up
- Audio
- Having a checklist
- Practice

Module 2: Technical Aspects Part 1
- The rule of thirds
- Exposure
- Depth of field
- The 180 degree rule
- Know your shots
- Tracking and panning
- Frame
- Zoom
- Landscapes
- Wildlife

Module 3: Technical Aspects Part 2
- Time-lapse sequences
- Action
- Adverse conditions
- Sunlight
- The dark
- Interviews
- Wild audio tracks
- Talking to camera
- Vlogging

Module 4: Creative Aspects
- Connect with your audience
- The power of suggestion
- The etiquette of filming
- Vlogging in public spaces
- Finding stories
- Avoid filming clichés
- Patience while filming
- Shooting the right amount of content

Module 5: Editing
- Editing software
- Tone
- Mix up your shots
- Pace
• Length
• Cuts and transitions
• Using music
• Organization

Module 6: Sharing
• Choose your platform
• YouTube
• Vimeo
• Sharing your videos

Schedule of Classes and Visits
The detailed schedule of classes, professional visits, and suggested cultural visits for each session is available online at www.forum-nexus.com/schedules.

Academic Integrity
Ramon Llull University, Franklin University Switzerland, and the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart place a high value on the integrity, good conduct, and academic honesty of all students. Students are expected to maintain high standards of academic integrity at all times. Any instance of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, will result in a grade of F for the course.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Module</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5/31 – 7/3</td>
<td>Pre-Program Preparation Become familiar with the syllabus, identify additional readings, begin readings and research</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/4</td>
<td>Barcelona</td>
<td>Assignment #1 Due</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/4 – 7/8</td>
<td>Barcelona</td>
<td>Complete Readings and Research</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/8</td>
<td>Barcelona</td>
<td>Meeting with SIS Coordinator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/9 – 7/13</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>Complete Readings and Research</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/10</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>Assignment #2 Due</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/13 – 7/18</td>
<td>Chamonix</td>
<td>Complete Readings and Research</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/16</td>
<td>Chamonix</td>
<td>Assignment #3 Due</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/17</td>
<td>Chamonix</td>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/19 – 7/22</td>
<td>Milan</td>
<td>Complete Readings and Research</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/23</td>
<td>Rome</td>
<td>Meeting with SIS Coordinator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/23 – 7/27</td>
<td>Rome</td>
<td>Complete Readings and Research</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/28 – 7/30</td>
<td>Rhodes</td>
<td>Complete Readings and Research</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/30</td>
<td>Rhodes</td>
<td>Assignment #4 Due</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/31</td>
<td>Rhodes</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/1</td>
<td>Rhodes</td>
<td>Final Presentation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>