



South Portland, Maine 04106

## Communications & Media Studies

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**Title:** Video Preproduction

**Credit Hours:** 3

**Lecture (or Lab):** Lecture / Lab

**Office Hours – Location:** via Zoom

Tuesday - Thursday 8-9am

Or By Appointment

**Catalog Number:** CNMS-210

**Total Contact Hours:** 45

**Instructor:** Corey Norman

**Contact Information:**

**Phone:** 207.741-5770

**Email:** cnorman@smccme.edu

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## Course Syllabus

### Course Description

This advanced course concentrates on the development of a short film for inclusion in the Maine Mayhem Film Festival. Emphasis will be placed on current trends in the industry. The role of a project Producer/Director will be followed in depth, specifically as it relates to the development and “pre-production” stages. Students will write a script, develop a short project proposal, including a budget and production “break down,” and pitch to a panel of industry producers at the conclusion of the course.

### Course Objectives

*After successfully completing the course, the student will be able to:*

1. Identify and describe the stages of producing a professional level video program.
2. Develop an original program proposal, budget and production “break down”.
3. Communicate effectively in both written and oral forms.
4. Develop and present a production budget.
5. Recognize, interpret and analyze trends in the film/television marketplace.
6. Understand the history and current practice of trade unions within the film/television industry.

**Grades:**

Assignments	30%
Script	20%
Papers	20%
Final Notebook/Prospectus	10%
Attendance	10%
Class Participation / Discussions	10%

<b>Course Grade:</b>	A	93 - 100	A-	90 - 92.9	B+	87 - 89.9
	B	83 - 86.9	B-	80 - 82.9	C+	77 - 79.9
	C	73 - 76.9	C-	70 - 72.9	D+	67 - 69.9
	D	63 - 66.9	F	0 - 62.9		

**Grades of I (Incomplete)**

At my discretion, a temporary grade of “I” may be given when, *due to extraordinary circumstances*, you will be unable to complete all required course work by the end of the semester. This assumes you have made a consistent and persistent effort past the end of the withdrawal period and up to the point the when the “circumstances” occur. You must meet with me to prepare the “Agreement for Incomplete Grade” form, which is then signed by both of us and the CNMS Department Chair. The form will then be sent to enrollment services. Then, you must complete the remaining course work by the mid-point of the semester following receipt of the “I” grade. Any grade of “I” that is not resolved by the middle of the next term automatically becomes an “F.”

**Attendance:**

You are required, as stated in the college handbook, to attend all classes. Portions of your grade are determined by both your attendance and your active class participation. It is a professional, “real world” expectation that you show up, participate, contribute, and complete assigned tasks. For online, synchronous classes, “attendance” is defined as being physically present during an online meeting and participating in all discussions that occur during that time.

Attendance in class and labs is mandatory and required as stated in the College Catalog:

- More than 2 unexcused absences will result in an “F” for the class.
- 2 consecutive missed classes will result in an automatic AF.

- For every two instances of a late arrival or early departure, the student will receive an absence.

### **An Excused Absence**

An excused absence is a (documented) religious holiday or (documented) medical incident.

### **For Classes with any Face- to -Face Component**

While the syllabus represents current plans, there may be changes during the semester in response to the on-going Covid-19 pandemic. Depending on the progression of the virus, it is possible that the College may have to suspend face-to-face instruction for part of the semester. If we must stop face to face instruction anytime during the semester, your instructor will contact you via your SMCC email or the Brightspace course homepage to discuss next steps for the course.

### **Habits of Work Tier I, II, III**

This is an **Advanced 200 level** college course and will require a significant amount of time, work, and effort outside of the classroom each week. Classes are designed around 180 hours of committed time.

- 45 hours of classroom/online classroom contact-including but not limited to: lectures, demonstrations, tutorials, critiques, screenings
- 2-3 hours per credit each week on work and study that happens outside of class time-including but not limited to: tutorials, group projects, note taking

**TIER III:** For this 3 credit class, that equates to 8-10+ hours of additional work outside of class, each week. There is a combination of assigned projects and self proposed/self directed projects. You will have the opportunity to rework your assignments up until the end of the semester as long as progress deadlines are met throughout the semester.

### **Critique Culture**

Grades and evaluation will reflect how effectively you contribute to a mature, collaborative critique environment; how you advocate for your own aesthetic and technical design choices; how you encourage others to think critically, strategize, and problem solve; and how you refine your work as a consequence of peer and professor feedback.

This class will challenge you to practice and demonstrate an **advanced** technical skill set. You'll be exploring the significant contribution of other filmmakers and related technical events that have influenced this particular area of study and reflecting on how your work fits in to the larger scope of practice.

### **Response Time (Regarding Emails)**

Throughout the semester, there will be times when you may have questions or need clarification. When issues arise, please do not hesitate to email me at:

[cnorman@smccme.edu](mailto:cnorman@smccme.edu)

Emails will generally be responded to within a 24-hour time period, with the exception of those received over the weekend. Any emails arriving after 5pm on weekdays will be answered the following morning. Any emails received over the weekend will be responded to Monday morning.

### **Personal Technology**

Cell phones and other technology not directly related to class content and/or approved during class use is not allowed. Students found violating this policy will receive an **unexcused absence** for the date of their transgression. Cell phones should be put away and left on vibrate in the event a campus wide alert is posted. If there is a serious need to leave your cell phone on, such as a family emergency, please put it on vibrate and let me know. If you must leave the classroom to take a call, I will understand why.

### **Add-Drop Policy:**

Students who drop a course during the one-week “add/drop” period in the fall and spring semesters and the first three days of summer sessions receive a 100% refund of the tuition and associated fees for that course. Please note any course that meets for less than the traditional semester length, i.e., 15 weeks, has a pro-rated add/drop period. There is no refund for non-attendance.

### **Withdrawal Policy:**

A student may withdraw from a course only during the semester in which s/he is registered for that course. The withdrawal period is the second through twelfth week of the fall and spring semesters and the second through ninth week of twelve-week summer courses. This period is pro-rated for shorter-length courses. To withdraw from a course, a student must complete and submit the appropriate course withdrawal form, available at the Enrollment Service Center (no phone calls, please). The designation “W” will appear on the transcript after a student has officially withdrawn. A course withdrawal is an uncompleted course and may adversely affect financial aid eligibility. Failure to attend or ceasing to attend class does not constitute withdrawal from the course. There is no refund associated with a withdrawal.

### **End-of-Course Evaluation:**

In order to gain access to final course grades, students must complete evaluations for each course attended at SMCC. Evaluations are submitted online and can be accessed through the student portal site. Students can access the course evaluation report beginning two weeks before the end of classes. The deadline for submission of evaluations occurs 24 hours after the last day of classes each semester. Instructors will announce when the online course evaluation is available.

### **ADA Statement**

Southern Maine Community College is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution and employer. For more information, please call (207) 741-5798. If you have a disabling condition and wish to request accommodations in order to have reasonable access to the programs and services offered by SMCC, you must register with the Disability Services Coordinator, Sandra Lynham, who can be reached at 741-5923. Further information about services for students with

disabilities and the accommodation process is available upon request at this number. Course policies about online testing are modified to suit each individual's accommodations.

### **The Learning Commons:**

The library, tutoring and writing centers, and reference/research assistance (typically located on the second floor of South Portland's Campus Center and in the Midcoast's LL Bean Learning Commons and Health Science Center) will be fully available online during the fall 2020 semester. Here you can find free academic support through individually scheduled and drop in, online tutoring. You can also find information literacy/research librarians, and professional academic strategy/planning mentoring online. While the physical space of the Learning Commons will not be available at this time, we can also work with you to set up zoom classrooms for small group study. Services are offered by appointment or as drop-in assistance.

To access services:

- Visit My Learning in My Maine Guide or
- Select the "tutoring needed" button if it appears inside your Brightspace course.

Whether On Site or Online, students have consistently reported that the Learning Commons is a friendly, risk-free, and helpful place to seek academic support. It has also been shown that those who make use of the Learning Commons do better in a course than those who do not. We strongly encourage you to take advantage of this valuable and enjoyable resource.

### **SMCC Pay-for-Print Policy**

Each semester students receive a \$20 printing credit. The balance resets at the end of the semester and any remaining credits are removed. The College's pay-for-print system monitors printing on all printers (including those in general access labs, library printers, Tutoring Services, Campus Center Lounge and technology labs). Be sure to log OUT of the system when you've finished your printing, to prevent unauthorized access to your account. Students can check the number of pages they have printed by using the Printing Balance tool available on SMCC computers (located in the lower right corner of the screen, near the clock). Departments with work study students who need to print documents for the department should contact the Help Desk at 741-5696 to have a special account set up. To find ways to reduce your printing charges, please go to the IT Help tab on My SMCC. If you have questions about the pay-for-printing policy or your printing charges, please contact the Help Desk at 741-5696 or send an e-mail to [helpdesk@smccme.edu](mailto:helpdesk@smccme.edu).

### **Refunds**

Print jobs are eligible for a refund in the event of mechanical or electronic error on the part of the printer, print server, or software used to submit the job. Jobs are not eligible for a refund in cases

where the job was not set up correctly, was submitted multiple times, or the student is not satisfied with the result. To request a refund, please bring the offending print to the IT Department in the basement of the Ross Technology Center. Refunds will be granted in the form of a credit to the student's account.

### **Add-Drop Policy**

Students who drop a course during the one-week "add/drop" period in the fall and spring semesters and the first three days of summer sessions receive a 100% refund of the tuition and associated fees for that course. Please note any course that meets for less than the traditional semester length, i.e., 15 weeks, has a pro-rated add/drop period. There is no refund for non-attendance.

### **Withdrawal Policy**

A student may withdraw from a course only during the semester in which s/he is registered for that course. The withdrawal period is the second through twelfth week of the Fall and Spring semesters and the second through ninth week of twelve-week Summer courses. This period is pro-rated for shorter-length courses, usually 75 percent of course meeting times; please check with the Registration Office. To withdraw from a course, a student must complete and submit the appropriate course withdrawal form, available at the Registration Office. This process must be completed either in person or by using SMCC e-mail accounts.

### **Plagiarism Statement**

If an instructor suspects that a student has knowingly committed a violation defined in the Maine Community College System Policy on Student Grade Appeals and Academic Misconduct, the instructor has the authority to review the alleged misconduct and determine the grade that the student should receive for the assignment and the course. The instructor may assign a failing grade for the assignment or course and may require the student to complete additional work for the course. The instructor may consult with the department chair and/or the College's chief academic officer prior to making such decisions. If a student seeks to challenge an instructor's determination, the student should submit a grade appeal. Grade appeal forms are available in the Advising Office on the South Portland Campus or in the administrative offices in the Learning Commons on the Midcoast Campus. An instructor may also refer the matter to the College's disciplinary officer for review under the procedures of the MCCC Student Code of Conduct.

**\*\*Subject to Change\*\***

**Week 1 - Module 1 (9/3/2020)**

- **Zoom Lecture** (Introduction)
- Reading: Preparing for Take Off Ch. 1 (*Notes due by the start of next class*)
- Discussion #1 (*Discussion Posts are due the by the start of the following class*)

**Week 2 - Module 1 (9/10/2020)**

- **Zoom Lecture** (Life Cycle of a Film / What a Producer Does)
- Reading: Save the Cat Ch. 1 (*Notes due by the start of next class*)
- Discussion #2 (*Discussion Posts are due the by the start of the following class*)
- Assignment #1 Due: 60 Second Pitch

**Week 3 - Module 1 (9/17/2020)**

- **Zoom Lecture** (Intro to Celtx / Screen Writing Structure)
- Reading: Save the Cat Ch. 2 (*Notes due by the start of next class*)
- Reading: Save the Cat Ch. 3 (*Notes due by the start of next class*)
- Discussion #3 (*Discussion Posts are due the by the start of the following class*)
- Assignment #2 Due: Movie Synopsis / Pitch

**Week 4 - Module 2 (9/24/2020)**

- **Zoom Lecture** (Understanding Your Characters)
- Reading: Preparing for Take Off Ch. 3 (*Notes due by the start of next class*)
- Discussion #4 (*Discussion Posts are due the by the start of the following class*)
- Assignment #3 Due: Character Profile #1

- Paper #1 Due: What Does a Producer Do?

**Week 5 - Module 2** (10/1/2020)

- **Zoom Lecture** (Why Form a Business / Script Writing Workshop)
- Discussion #5 (*Discussion Posts are due the by the start of the following class*)
- Assignment #4 Due: Character Profile #2
- Assignment #5 Due: Script Outline

**Week 6 - Module 2** (10/8/2020)

- **Zoom Lecture** You Have a Script, What Next?)
- Reading:Preparing for Take Off Ch. 2 (*Notes due by the start of next class*)
- Discussion #6 (*Discussion Posts are due the by the start of the following class*)
- Rough Draft of Script Due (20 Pages)

**Week 7 - Module 3** (10/15/2020)

- **Zoom One-on-One Meetings** with Instructor
- Reading:Preparing for Take Off Ch. 4 (*Notes due by the start of next class*)
- Discussion #7 (*Discussion Posts are due the by the start of the following class*)

**Week 8 - Module 3** (10/22/2020)

- **No Zoom Meeting**
- Reading:Preparing for Take Off Ch. 9 (*Notes due by the start of next class*)
- Discussion #8 (*Discussion Posts are due the by the start of the following class*)
- Final Scripts Due (15-20 Pages)

**Week 9 - Module 4 (10/29/2020)**

- **Zoom Lecture** (Location Scouting)
- Reading:Preparing for Take Off Ch. 10 (*Notes due by the start of next class*)
- Discussion #9 (*Discussion Posts are due the by the start of the following class*)

**Week 10 - Module 5 (11/5/2020)**

- **Zoom Lecture** (The Schedule)
- Reading:Preparing for Take Off Ch. 11 (*Notes due by the start of next class*)
- Reading:Preparing for Take Off Ch. 12 (*Notes due by the start of next class*)
- Discussion #10 (*Discussion Posts are due the by the start of the following class*)
- Assignment #6 Due: Location Scout

**Week 11 - Module 6 (11/12/2020)**

- **Zoom Lecture** (Budget 101)
- Discussion #11 (*Discussion Posts are due the by the start of the following class*)
- Assignment #7 Due: The Schedule

**Week 12 - Module 7 (11/19/2020)**

- **Zoom Lecture** (Casting)
- Reading:Preparing for Take Off Ch. 14 (*Notes due by the start of next class*)
- Discussion #12 (*Discussion Posts are due the by the start of the following class*)
- Assignment #8 Due: The Budget
- Paper #2 Due: 3 Camera Comparison

**Week 13 - THANKSGIVING BREAK (11/26/2020)**

- Reading:Preparing for Take Off Ch. 13 (*Notes due by the start of next class*)
- Discussion #13 (*Discussion Posts are due the by the start of the following class*)
- Assignment #9 Due: The Casting Call
- Assignment #10 Due: Develop 2 Sets of Character Sides

**Week 14 – Module 8 (12/3/2020)**

- **Zoom Lecture** (Funding)
- Reading:Preparing for Take Off Ch. 5 (*Notes due by the start of next class*)
- Discussion #14 (*Discussion Posts are due the by the start of the following class*)
- Assignment #11A Due: 1st Cut of Kickstarter Teaser

**Week 15 - Module 9 (12/10/2020)**

- **Zoom Lecture** (What is a Prospectus)
- Reading:Preparing for Take Off Ch. 16 (*Notes due by the start of next class*)
- Discussion #15 (*Discussion Posts are due the by the start of the following class*)
- Assignment #11B Due: 2nd Cut of Kickstarter Teaser

**Week 16 - Module 9 (12/17/2020)**

- **Zoom Producer's Panel**
- Prospectus Packet Due