

Introduction to Visual Production

Course strength – Entry level

Course duration – 16 weeks, Fall/Winter 2026

Medium of instruction: Mandarin & English when needed

Class duration: 3 hrs + 1hr tutorial

Venue:

Course mode – Practice & Theory

Office hour: 16:00-18:00 Tue.@ R319

Instructor – Dr. CHANG, Shih-Chien (張時健), chang17tw@gmail.com

Course description and specifications

Course description

This course introduces the fundamental concepts and techniques of photography and videography through essential topics, practical materials, and exemplary works. Drawing on principles of visual analysis, students will develop an understanding of both still photography and moving-image production.

Through intensive practice, students will learn how to communicate a subject visually, including the emotions and circumstances of characters and the atmosphere of a scene. By the end of the course, students will have acquired foundational knowledge and practical skills in visual production, preparing them for advanced training and future professional work.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs):

After finishing this course, a student shall

- CILO 1: learn the fundamental concepts about photography and videography.
- CILO 2: be capable to create meaningful photos and videos.
- CILO 3: identify the skills behind the quality photo and video.
- CILO 4: be prepared for advanced training about photo and video production.

Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

- Lecture - 50%
 - Lecturer elaborates the related disciplines, concepts, rules, theories, cases, and operational procedures.
- Seminar - 50%
 - Students are divided into groups to study award-winning films under each subject. Each group will present their study outcome in-class in 30 mins for advanced learning and reflexive thinking.

Assessment

Attendance 10%

Participation: 10%

Midterm project - individual : 40%

Final project - group: 40%

- Attendance (10%)

- This item is based on the individual's roll call record. Roll call shall be done in the beginning of each session. A student will have 1 point if s/he enters classroom before the roll call finishes and 0.5 points after it. Sh/e has 0 due to absence. The sum of the points a student has in the semester is his/her attendance marks. The student's absence record can be written off when s/he delivers acceptable certificate for sick leave or compassionate leave.

- Participation (10%)

- The participation is based on the student's performance in and after class. The more a student delivers feedback to the teaching topics, including asking relevant questions and engaging in discussion, the more marks s/he gets.
- Students are welcomed to have discussions with the lecturer during the office hours when they need further clarification of concepts presented in class, or assistance about the homework assigned. An appointment beforehand via email is necessary for the discussion.
 - Assessment criteria
 - Frequency 70%
 - Relevance 30%

- Individual project - individual (40%)

- To follow the instructions every week to complete the project.

- Final project (group) (40%)

- To follow the instructions every week to complete the project.

Required and optional texts

- Required books

衣笠竜屯（張克柔譯）（2025）。《第1次拍電影就上手》。新北市：原點出版。

- Optional books

Freeman, M. (2012). *The Photographer's Story: The Art of Visual Narrative*. London: ILEX.

Szarkowski, J. (1966). *The Photographer's Eye*. New York: The Museum of Modern Art.

Mercado, G. (2010). *The Filmmaker's Eye: Learning (and Breaking) the Rules of Cinematic Composition*. New York: Focal Press.

Mercado, G. (2019). *The Filmmaker's Eye: The Language of the Lens: The Power of Lenses and the Expressive Cinematic Image*. New York: Routledge.

Dyer, G. (Ed.) (2013). *Understanding a Photograph John Berger*. London: Penguin.

Berger, J. (2008). *Ways of Seeing*. London: Penguin.

Foust, J. C., Fink, E. J., Beskid, P., Cardenas, J. A., Jr., R. G., & Lohrey, J. B. (2024). *Video Production: Disciplines and Techniques* (13th ed.). New York: Routledge.

Ledin, P., & Machin, D. (2018). *Doing Visual Analysis: From Theory to Practice*. London, UK.: Sage.

Freeman, M. (2013). *The Photographer's Eye: A Graphic Guide*. London: ILEX.

Mercado, G. (2019). *The Filmmaker's Eye: The Language of the Lens: The Power of Lenses and the Expressive Cinematic Image*. New York: Routledge.

- Anderson, B. (2015). *The DSLR Filmmaker's Handbook: Real-World Production Techniques* (2nd ed.). Indianapolis, IN: John Wiley & Sons.
- Dancyger, K. (2011). *The Technique of Film & Video Editing: History, Theory, and Practice* (5th ed.). Burlington, MA: Focal Press.
- Ascher, S., & Pincus, E. (2012). *The Filmmaker's Handbook: A Comprehensive Guide for the Digital Age*. New York: Penguin.
- 郭力昕 (2018)。《製造意義：現實主義攝影的話語、權力與文化政治》。台北：影言社有限公司。

Teaching schedule

1. Introduction: Topics and the learning requirements

1. Teaching method: Lecture & seminar
2. Key topics and concepts:
 1. The course's aims and proceedings, including the subjects, teaching methods, learning activities & materials, assessments, and disciplines.
3. Learning activities:
 1. Presentation (individual)
 1. Key question(s)
 1. Your experience about visual production.
 2. What is the difference between smart phone and camera?
 2. Grouping
 1. Two in one.
4. Learning materials
 1. Course syllabus.

2. How to visualise a topic: the analytic way

1. Teaching method: Seminar
 2. Key topics and concepts:
 1. The meanings of an image
 2. Visual expression
 3. Learning activities:
 1. Seminar
 1. Topic
 1. How the shot 'express' the movie theme.
 4. Learning materials
- Ledin, P., & Machin, D. (2018). *Doing Visual Analysis: From Theory to Practice*. London, UK.: Sage. Ch. 2 & 3.
- Mercado, G. (2019). *The Filmmaker's Eye: The Language of the Lens: The Power of Lenses and the Expressive Cinematic Image*. New York: Routledge. pp.1-19.

3. Camera, lens, and basic techniques

1. Teaching method: Lecture & seminar
2. Key topics and concepts:
 1. Camera (body and lens) functions
 2. Camera (body and lens) operations
 1. Exposure settings (shutter speed, aperture, ISO)

2. Focus (depth of field)
3. How different gears determine the photography
3. Learning activities:
 1. In-class practice: Portrait
 1. To remake the given photo (portrait).
 2. Seminar
 1. The technique issues of your photo.
4. Learning materials

Anderson, B. (2015). *The DSLR Filmmaker's Handbook: Real-World Production Techniques* (2nd ed.). Indianapolis, IN: John Wiley & Sons., ch.1.

Mercado, G. (2019). *The Filmmaker's Eye: The Language of the Lens: The Power of Lenses and the Expressive Cinematic Image*. New York: Routledge. pp. 20-53

Doucet, E. (2018). In history, the future: Determinism in the early history of photography in France. *Communication +1*, 7(1). Retrieved from <https://scholarworks.umass.edu/cpo/vol7/iss1/4>

4. Framing and composition

1. Teaching method: Lecture & seminar
2. Key topics and concepts:
 1. How to frame a topic
 2. Be aware of things, items, curves, symbols in a frame
3. Learning activities
 1. In-class practice: To include/exclude things in a frame
 1. Via framing techniques, take three photos of your partner whose situation is
 1. Relaxed,
 2. Confined, and
 3. Inclining to leave.
 2. Seminar
 1. Present reasons of your arrangement.
4. Learning materials

Freeman, M. (2013). *The Photographer's Eye: A Graphic Guide*. London: ILEX., ch. 1, 2, 3, 4.

5. Viewpoint and optics

1. Teaching method: Lecture & seminar
2. Key topics and concepts:
 1. Choose right viewpoints to present a topic.
 2. Use the optics to highlight your subject.
3. Learning activities
 1. In-class practice: Have five pictures of your partner with
 1. High, low and horizontal angles.
 2. The near and far relations between viewer and your partner.
 2. Seminar
 1. Present reasons of your arrangement.
4. Learning materials

Freeman, M. (2013). *The Photographer's Eye: A Graphic Guide*. London: ILEX., ch. 5, 6.

6. Motion, colour, and lighting

1. Teaching method: Lecture & seminar
2. Key topics and concepts:
 1. Present the motions and colors in photo.
 2. Use the optics to highlight your subject.
 3. Light and darkness.
 4. The color of light.
3. Learning materials

Freeman, M. (2013). The Photographer's Eye: A Graphic Guide. London: ILEX., ch. 7, 8.

7. Symbols, icons, and Juxtaposing

1. Teaching method: Lecture & seminar
2. Key topics and concepts:
 1. Symbolise, iconise the subjects in frame.
 2. Juxtapose the meaningful symbols and icons.
3. Home assignment
 1. Reproduction the chosen screenshot - Take a shot
 2. Follow the instruction to finalize the assignment.
4. Learning materials

Freeman, M. (2013). The Photographer's Eye: A Graphic Guide. London: ILEX., ch. 9.

8. Mid-term presentation: imitation & critiques - II

1. Teaching method: Seminar
2. Key topics and concepts:
 1. The techniques of visualising a text-based theme
 2. To develop critiques of a picture
3. Learning activities
 1. Seminar
 1. Individual presentation
 1. The texts of a scene from your story
 2. One picture
 2. Photo competition
 1. Expression (50%)
 2. Technical quality (50%)
4. Home assignment
 1. Provide short description about each clips in text, including the character's lines.
 2. Paste the descriptions on Ecourse2 column.
5. Learning materials
 1. N/A

9. Videography: Divisions & planning

1. Teaching method: Lecture & group tutorial & seminar
2. Key topics and concepts:
 1. The basic steps and goals of editing
 2. How to plan the video production
3. Learning activities
 1. In-class practice: Have three (at least) different pictures regarding to your partner, and make them continuously presented with editing in a video which is less than 10 seconds.

2. Seminar
 1. Present reasons of your arrangement.
4. Home assignment
 1. Based on the screenshots you retrieved from three movies for midterm project, make three 60-second long clips from each and upload them to Youtube (not for public view).
 1. A reminder: The clips should share same / similar theme and scene.
 2. Paste the links of your clips on Ecourse assignment column.
5. Learning materials

Dancyger, K. (2011). *The Technique of Film & Video Editing: History, Theory, and Practice* (5th ed.). Burlington, MA: Focal Press. ch. 28.

郭力昕 (2018)。《製造意義：現實主義攝影的話語、權力與文化政治》。台北：影言社有限公司。

10. Videography: Camera movement

1. Teaching method: Lecture & seminar
2. Key topics and concepts:
 1. The types and meanings of movement
 2. The gears for movement.
3. Learning activities
 1. In-class practice:
 1. To cut the given motion pictures into six (or so) photos.
 2. Present these photos sequentially.
 2. Seminar
 1. Present reasons of your arrangement.
4. Home assignment
 1. Prepare the reproduction of the chosen scene.
5. Learning materials

Anderson, B. (2015). *The DSLR Filmmaker's Handbook: Real-World Production Techniques* (2nd ed.). Indianapolis, IN: John Wiley & Sons. ch.5.

11. Videography: Lighting

1. Teaching method: Lecture
2. Key topics and concepts:
 1. The basic lighting techniques.
 2. The meanings of lighting types.
3. Learning activities
 1. Practice (individual)
 1. Applying the principles to take photos.
 2. Discussion: The best three in each group.
 3. Seminar
 1. Choose the best ones for exhibition.
4. Home assignment
 1. Prepare the reproduction of the chosen scene.
5. Learning materials

Anderson, B. (2015). *The DSLR Filmmaker's Handbook: Real-World Production Techniques* (2nd ed.). Indianapolis, IN: John Wiley & Sons. ch.6.

Dancyger, K. (2011). *The Technique of Film & Video Editing: History, Theory, and Practice* (5th ed.). Burlington, MA: Focal Press. ch. 28.

12. Videography: Sound

1. Teaching method: Lecture & seminar
2. Key topics and concepts:
 1. Recording and organizing the sounds
 2. Gears for recording.
3. Learning activities
 1. Practice (individual)
 1. Mixing the sound clips into final production.
 2. Discussion: The best three in each group.
 3. Seminar
 1. Choose the best ones for exhibition.
4. Home assignment
 1. Complete the reproduction of the chosen scene and upload your video.
 2. Follow the instruction to finalize the assignment.
5. Learning materials

Anderson, B. (2015). *The DSLR Filmmaker's Handbook: Real-World Production Techniques* (2nd ed.). Indianapolis, IN: John Wiley & Sons. ch.7.

13. Videography: Editing

1. Teaching method: Lecture & seminar
2. Key topics and concepts:
 1. The principles for editing
3. Learning activities
 1. Seminar
 1. Choose the best ones for exhibition.
4. Home assignment
 1. Complete the reproduction of the chosen scene and upload your video.
 2. Follow the instruction to finalize the assignment.
5. Learning materials

Anderson, B. (2015). *The DSLR Filmmaker's Handbook: Real-World Production Techniques* (2nd ed.). Indianapolis, IN: John Wiley & Sons. ch.7.

14. Videography: Editing-II

1. Teaching method: Lecture & seminar
2. Key topics and concepts:
 1. The principles for editing
3. Learning activities
 1. Seminar
 1. Choose the best ones for exhibition.
4. Home assignment
 1. Complete the reproduction of the chosen scene and upload your video.
 2. Follow the instruction to finalize the assignment.
5. Learning materials

Anderson, B. (2015). *The DSLR Filmmaker's Handbook: Real-World Production Techniques* (2nd ed.). Indianapolis, IN: John Wiley & Sons. *ch.7.Pending*

15. Workshop: Video production practice

16. Seminar: Final project presentation