ESM 441 Intro to Environmental Media Production

**Time:** Thursdays, 2:30 pm – 3:45pm  
**Location:** TBD

**Instructor of Record:** Steve Gaines  
*Bren School of Environmental Science & Management*

**Coordinator:** Michael Hanrahan  
Email: michael@LastExtinction.com  
Phone: 805-453-6912  
Office: TBD  
Office Hours: Thursdays, 12:30 – 2:30 pm

**Description:** This course is designed to give students the basic skills needed to conceptualize, capture, edit, and deliver short-form video content and web videos with an environmental theme. Basic aspects of cinematography, lighting, sound and editing are covered. Through lectures and practical demonstrations of production equipment and techniques, students will gain a basic understanding of digital video production.

**Course Text:** Reader

**Assignments and Grades:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pirate Story</td>
<td>Individual Assignment – 10 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Editing</td>
<td>Individual Assignment – 20 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Basic Camera Handling</td>
<td>Individual Assignment – 30 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview with a Scientist</td>
<td>Production Team – 40 points</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>100 points</td>
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There is no final exam in ESM 441.

**Production Teams:** Two-person teams for the final assignment. Team up with someone from the class by Week 5. Try to find someone with strengths that you may lack.

**Required Class Materials**
- Thumbnail drive (minimum of 1GB) for handing in video assignments.
- External hard drive with at least 100 GB storage. Must be Mac OS compatible.  
  *(Recommended: Lacie 301983 Rugged Triple External Hard Drive, 500 GB - $129 at Staples)*

**Required Presentation of Assignments**
- All assignments will be handed in on a thumbnail drive or an external hard drive. Use masking tape for putting your name on thumbnail drives.
- When handing in your hard drive with an assignment loaded, please be sure to label the folder and QuickTime file with the name of the assignment and your last name.

**EXAMPLE:**  
BCH_campbell.mov  
Interview_jacobsen.mov  
Editing_vincent_vangough.mov
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General Guidelines
• All submitted documents for review must be typed and professionally presented.
• All “air dates” (deadlines) are final. A missed deadline or incomplete work will result in the loss of one letter grade.

Attendance
This is a very intense program. If you miss any classes, you likely missed something important and it will be difficult to catch up.
If you do need to miss a class, please notify me ahead of time with your explanation. I do understand that life emergencies do come up. It is your responsibility to get the notes from that class and / or hand in assignments due on that day.

Syllabus

LECTURE 1
Introduction; course overview; calendar review
Lecture: “It starts with an idea and begins with a vision.”
Discussion: Final Project story ideas
Assignment: Reading “Filming Vocabulary & Technique”
Write “Pirate Story”

LECTURE 2
Camera Demo (SoundStage, behind the Pollock Theater)
Assignment: Basic Camera Handling
Due: “Pirate Story”

LECTURE 3
Adobe Premier Demo I (Digital Editing Lab, 2nd floor Kurr Hall)
Assignment: Editing

LECTURE 4
Adobe Premier Demo II (Digital Editing Lab, 2nd floor Kurr Hall)

LECTURE 5
Camera Workshop: movement and technique
Assignment: Interview with a Scientist
Due: Editing

LECTURE 6
Sound Demo (SoundStage, behind the Pollock Theater)

LECTURE 7
Art of the Interview
Due: Basic Camera Handling
LECTURE 8
Lighting (SoundStage)

LECTURE 9
Adobe Premier Demo III (Digital Editing Lab, 2nd floor Kurr Hall)

NO CLASS - Thursday, November 27th - THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

LECTURE 10
Great A Roll / B Roll mix

LECTURE 11
FINAL CLASS – Distribution; review and critique Final Projects
Due: Interview with a Scientist

ASSIGNMENTS

ASSIGNMENT ONE  Pirate Story
Using film language, provide a narrative of the pirate captain and his crew as he navigates the treacherous waters off the Channel Islands in the 1600’s.
Length: two typed, double spaced pages
Grade (0-100) will be based on your correct use of film vocabulary and your creative storytelling.

ASSIGNMENT TWO  Editing 101
Your assignment is to edit together a minimum of 6 shots from the stock video material available in the Digital Editing Lab (DEL). You will need to apply graphic titles and a music soundtrack of your choice to the edited sequence.
Grade (0-100) will be based upon successful execution of:
- log & capture
- cuts only editing
- importing and editing music files
- the creation of graphic titles
- exporting final edit

Access stock video media from the SCRATCH disc on the computers in the DEL.
Your finished assignment will be no more than 2 minutes.

You will need:
Stock video
Adobe Premier Pro software
Music (CD, MP3, etc.)
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Special Instructions:
The music should fade in and out at the same time as the images start and fade out. Music / Audio levels should be at correct volume (-12dB) and not “clipping” (too hot) or too low.
Picture must fade to black at the end of your piece.
Do not use any transitions other than straight cuts on this assignment.

ASSIGNMENT THREE Basic Camera Handling (BCH)
This assignment introduces you to the techniques and camera movements that you will utilize in all future assignments. It is key to master these core moves as they are the basis for all good films.

Special Instructions:
Proper exposure and white balance.
Shot on location using available ambient light.
Presented in the order found here with the correct shot # and the title of the shot at the start of each move.

You will need:
   Camera
   Tripod
   Flash media card
   Adobe Premier Pro software
   Music

Editing:
   Include a music soundtrack of your choice
   Label each shot clearly with Shot # and description

Grade (0-100) will be based upon successful execution of the following 10 shots:

   Shot #1: Rack Focus
   Focus on an object in the foreground and then smoothly change the focus to bring something in the background into focus. Do not shake the camera or zoom.
   Camera must be on a tripod.

   Shot #2: Pan the camera
   Pan a wide angle scene with the horizon line completely straight throughout the move. Hold three (3) seconds at the beginning and end of the pan. Make the move as smooth as possible.
   Camera must be on a tripod.
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*Shot #4: Tilt*
Using the tripod handle, tilt the camera up or down on a subject with something of interest at the “top” and “bottom” of the move. Camera must be on a tripod.

*Shot #5: Zoom*
Using the camera’s zoom “rocker”, zoom into a subject with a three (3) second hold on each end of the move. Only either ZOOM IN or ZOOM OUT. Limit the zoom move to 5 seconds. Camera must be on a tripod.

*Shot #6: Hand Held*
Follow a living subject (person, dog, cat, etc.) with camera at eye level of the subject, moving as steady and smoothly as possible. Limit shake of camera—bend knees. Tripod NOT required or recommended.

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**CONTINUITY SEQUENCE** (hold each shot for 4 seconds)

*Shot #7: Establisher or Wide Shot*
A very wide angle shot that will be used as your “establishing shot” in a movie. Sets the scene. Camera must be on a tripod.

*Shot #8: Long shot*
Long shot is “tighter” than a Wide Shot or Establisher, but still includes the complete subject and key elements of the scene. Camera must be on a tripod.

*Shot #9: Medium Shot*
Medium shot is “tighter” than a Long Shot and usually includes the upper torso (from the waistline up) of a human subject. Camera must be on a tripod.

*Shot #10: Close Up*
Close up is very tight on a subject, typically framing the face. Camera must be on a tripod.

**EXTRA CREDIT: “Interview shot... RULE OF THIRDS**
Shoot a medium shot placing a human subject in the 1/3, avoiding the center of the frame. Camera must be on a tripod.
ASSIGNMENT FOUR       Interview with a Scientist
This assignment encourages you to refine your technique for capturing an excellent interview. In this assignment, you will be utilizing all of your production skills: camera handling; sound recording; lighting; and editing.

• Light an interior space (office, lab, etc.) with lighting kit; proper exposure on subject.
  OR
• Set up exterior interview location using bounce cards / reflectors / silks
• Interviewee’s face should have one of the following lighting patterns:
  Rembrandt
  Loop
  Split
  Paramount
• Music soundtrack

What You Will Need:
  Camera
  Tripod
  Light Kit / Reflectors
  Microphone
  Flash media card
  Adobe Premier Pro software
  Music

EDITING
• “A Roll / B Roll” mix
• Include a music soundtrack of your choice

Grade (0-100) will be based upon successful execution of a successful video interview of a scientist and appropriate B roll that compliments the interview.