

Syllabus
COM 443 Studio Production (3)
Spring, 2015

Instructor & Course Meeting Places:

Dr. Alan C. Hueth, office: C203, ext. 2358, alanhueth@pointloma.edu. Office hours: M-Th 9-10 a.m., and by appointment. Drop in at my office or send me an email for an appointment time. We will be meeting in RLC 108 and the television studio (see schedule for meeting places for each class session)

Textbooks:

For those who have not taken COM 443 Studio Production--you are **required** to purchase two (2) textbooks.

1. The Lean Forward Moment..., Norman Hollyn, (New Riders Press). For used: <http://finderscheapers.com/Search.aspx?kw=the+lean+forward+moment>
2. Producing and Directing the Short Film and Video, (3rd ed is okay) by Irving and Rea, (Focal Press). For used copy, see: <http://finderscheapers.com/product-price/Producing-and-Directing-the-Short-Film-and-Video-0240811747-9780240811741-24JAXIS0Y5F1>

I also suggest that you review relevant chapters in the Television Production Handbook, by Zetl (used in COM 243 and available on the edit B bookshelf). This will be helpful in reviewing the planning and production of multi-camera studio production.

Students who took 442 last year—you are not required to purchase these textbooks, but I suggest that you review the contents of these texts to stir your memory and enhance/reinforce your learning.

Introduction:

This course is an extension/representation/embodiment of the PLNU mission below, and will especially focus on the “teaching” and “shaping” parts of that mission:

The PLNU Mission: To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send
Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Course Description:

This course is one of two courses (442 and 443) in the media com major designed to create a place for learning and doing your best work in dramatic/comedic narrative through the creation of short films and studio-based projects that are festival worthy and/or outstanding enough to be showcased on your audition reel. It is also a place where younger, less-experienced students can work with (and be mentored by) more experienced students in our program.

This is an advanced course that will focus on the aesthetics and hands-on production techniques for both studio and field production for television and film. The emphases in this course will be on single-camera, film-style field production and editing, and multi-camera (live/live-to-tape) studio production. The knowledge and skills developed in this course are transferable to the production of a variety of other film and TV program forms, including: feature-length films, commercials, music videos, corporate videos, sitcoms, and other field and studio-based film and TV production projects.

The field production portion of this course will include the production of a short comedic or dramatic film. This will be a group project (3-4/group). The studio production portion of this course will involve the production of two (2) short, one-minute scenes (using the same script) that **MUST BE SHOT** in the studio using multiple cameras and live/live-to-tape switching (no post production allowed—except for music and sound FX). You will shoot the scenes in two different ways—with each scene conveying a different tone/meaning. The instructor will provide script-scenes for groups who do not want to write their own script. This will also be a group project (4 students/group).

The course will include textbook readings, classroom lecture and screening and discussion sessions, equipment workshops, and/or exercises that will prepare you to do the work of a producer, DP (camera & lighting), director, technical director, editor, and the other production roles included in producing films and multi-camera live/live-to-tape studio programs. There will be readings and discussions about all aspects of the video/film production process, including the tasks, tools, and techniques for pre-production, production, post-production, marketing, distribution, and exhibition of programming. This course will provide you with a broader and deeper understanding and appreciation for the various roles that each production team member has in this process.

Course Learning Outcomes:

As a result of this course, you will...

1. Display an understanding and skill in electronic film production, including single camera, film-style production for fictional (narrative);
2. Display an understanding and skill in HD multi-camera, live-to-tape studio production. This includes writing, producing, directing, art direction/production

design, camera operation, lighting, sound, editing, graphics, promotion, distribution, and/or exhibition.

You will be expected to perform at an advanced (400 level), as evidenced by your participation in a variety of activities.

Class Format & Activities

The format for the in-class meeting sessions will be interactive and diverse--including a variety of activities designed to help you to learn and apply course concepts. These include the following activities:

- Discussion of course concepts through the submission of “Big Idea Reports” on chapter readings in The Lean Forward Moment... and the Producing and Directing... textbooks (for those who have not taken COM 442 Field Production)
- Screening excerpts of feature-length films and award-winning student and professional short films and sit-coms. These include Oscar and Emmy-winning films and television programs, BEA Media Festival winners, and selected professionally-produced short films
- Camera/DP workshops--in order of quality—operational characteristics of the Panasonic AF 100 (1), the HPX 250 (2), and the AGAC 160 (2) HD cameras. Also, operation and techniques for using the steadicam-Merlin, review of the remote control studio cameras and jib camera, lighting, sound, and directing workshops
- “TA Show and Tell” workshops on equipment set up and operation, production techniques, and other areas (offered selected evenings during the semester—TBA)
- A “Program Pitch” where everyone (individually) presents an idea for their “Group Film Project”
- Production of a “Short Film Project” (7-10 minute film)
- Production of a “Studio Project: One Script-Two Scenes” (two short scenes based on the same script)
- Project planning sessions
- One test/final exam (based on the content of the two textbooks)

Assignments & Projects:

Below is a description of all assignments in this course:

Big Idea Reports on the The Lean Forward Moment... and Producing and Directing the Short Film textbooks (for those that **have not taken** COM 442 Field Production).

You must submit a 2-3 page (typed, single-spaced, w/space between main points) report that reveals the top ten (10) informational/content points for each chapter. See the course schedule for the assigned readings and due dates for these reports.

Final Exam

All students who have not taken COM 442 are required to take the final exam. It is a comprehensive test—based on textbooks’ and lecture content. This will be an “open note” test...you may use your graded Big Idea Reports (only) as notes for your exam.

Short Film Project Pitch

All students must present a pitch for a Short Film Project. This assignment must be presented in two forms:

1. Pitch content info submitted typed, double-spaced, and script submitted in conventional screenplay format and presented to the instructor; and
2. Pitch content shown in class presentation using a PowerPoint OR Prezi software presentation. Do not include a script on the PowerPoint or Prezi presentation, but you may show your script on the document projector.

Additional guidelines will be provided for the content of this assignment and presentation. You will be given 9-10-minutes to summarize and present your concept. Your project will be “green lighted” by Rick and I—with selections based on scripts that have the most promise and potential for excellence. Four (4) or five (5) pitches will be greenlighted for development and production in this course this semester.

Production Presentations

The purpose of this assignment is for you to explore a specific area of filmmaking, and to reinforce your understanding and learning of content that you are especially interested in AND/OR will be involved in the production of your group’s short film. The content of your presentation will be based on specific content in the course textbooks—especially The Lean Forward Moment..., and should include:

1. A PowerPoint or Prezi presentation with text about your role(s) in your group project—especially focused on the main points of the chapter’s (or chapters’) techniques related to your role/crew position; and

2. Examples (textual description, short clips, etc.) of film techniques showcased and discussed in the book and which illustrate what you are talking about in your presentation.

The content of your presentation should be based on one of the following roles listed below:

Writer/Producer (including pitches and logline, scriptwriting, casting, budget, planning and organization, etc.)

Director (including visual style, aesthetic use of color, camera angles and movement, actor interpretation, actor staging and movement, etc.)

DP-director of photography (including cinematography techniques and lighting)

Production Design (including setting, props, costuming, make-up, etc.)

Sound & Music (including production and post-production recording techniques, use of sound FX, power of music, process of music production and scoring, and/or other aspects of these topics)

Editing (including visual editing techniques—continuity, montage, etc., and visual FX, sound FX, etc.)

Sign-ups for these presentation topics will be provided later. The presentations must be 9-10 minutes long—with no more than 3 minutes of video clips included in the presentation. So, **PRACTICE AND TIME YOUR PRESENTATION BEFORE PRESENTING IN CLASS!**

“Studio Project: One Script-Two Scenes”

Your task for this assignment is to produce two, short, multi-camera, live/live-to-tape and live-switched studio-produced scenes -- using the same script. Each scene will be based on the same script dialogue, but will convey a different tone and meaning. These differences will be based upon differences in the acting interpretation and performance, lighting, shot framing and/or composition, and/or camera direction. Both scenes **MUST** be shot in the studio during a regularly-scheduled class time—see general times on course schedule. You will be required to utilize the hot sets already set up for TV workshop projects that week, or in a naked set, or in a simple and easy-set-up setting that would fit the content of the scene. Your setting (for the most part) will depend upon what’s available in the studio on the day of your shoot. Each production team will have 1.5 hours to set up, shoot, and strike their set. Each team member will serve as writer-producer, director, TD, or talent—with the rest of class members assisting in other roles. More details on this project will be provided later.

“Short Film Project”

A short film (up to 3-4 person group project) and Production Notebook

- A seven (7) to ten (10) minute comedy, drama, or experimental film
- A :45 to one-minute film trailer for your film—see example here: *Into Rough Waters, 2012* <https://vimeo.com/63708511> due date: the 2nd Monday before the “PLNU TV and Film Festival” (on DVD)
- Students divide pre-production, production, and post-production roles
- Producer must submit the following on a DVD: the project and your poster artwork. The “Production Notebook” for the project must include the following items:
 1. A cover page with the film title, length, names and role(s) of each group team member, date of submission
 2. A copy of the script
 3. All script breakdown documents, timeline, budget, permissions and releases
 4. A list of all personnel (and their roles) involved in project
 5. A list of at least three (3) prospective film festivals and costs for submissions
 6. A “Press Packet,” which includes all promotional materials, including: a DVD copy of the film w/poster graphic attached to package, a synopsis of the story, your crew list, a miniature film poster (3” by 5”), and a larger film poster (11” by 17”) on heavy, glossy paper--as per assignment requirements and examples shown in class.
- The PLNU business office contact for obtaining insurance for your project is Jim Bergherm, ext. 2429, and you are on your own for acquiring shooting permits off campus.
- You have access to up to \$100 reimbursed for project expenses. You must submit original receipts, totaled, and a sheet of paper with your name and student ID number on it, and an address for where to mail the check—included in your production notebook. Also, you must use PLNU mileage reimbursement forms when applying for gas reimbursal:
<http://www.pointloma.edu/AccountingFinance/Forms.htm>.
- You also have access to funds for submission fees to student and professional film/TV festivals. Films deemed festival-worthy will be selected and reimbursed for festival fees. However, you must submit an invoice (or other documentation) to be reimbursed.

Course Policies

Attendance:

This is an extremely important production course and one that you need to take seriously in your program here at PLNU. It is where you prove your professionalism as a prospective filmmaker/TV producer. Therefore, it is critical that you attend all course sessions, along with all of your out-of-class team project sessions. Film/TV production is a collaborative enterprise that requires organization, focus, and team effort to succeed. This works best when the entire team is present at all class sessions, team project gatherings, etc. Always remember: others are depending on you to be present and to perform well.

Your attendance and participation grade will incur point reductions for absences from class or your project meetings. Normal allowances are made for your own severe illness and/or family deaths, etc. However, if you must be absent from a course session, a note and/or call or visit to the instructor is advised. If you must be late to a project planning or production session, communicating with your fellow student-teammates (well in advance) is advised.

IMPORTANT NOTE: if I get a report from a show producer that someone did not show up for a small-group project or class project shoot, that student will be **immediately de-enrolled from the course.**

From the Provost: Regular and punctual attendance at all classes in which a student is registered is considered essential for optimum academic achievement. Therefore, regular attendance and participation in each course are minimal requirements to be met. There are no allowed or excused absences except when absences are necessitated by certain university-sponsored activities and are approved in writing by the Provost.

Whenever the number of accumulated absences in a class, for any cause, exceeds ten percent (10%) of class sessions (this is **equivalent to one and one-half weeks or longer** in this course), the faculty member has the option of filing a written report to the Vice Provost for Academic Administration which may result in de-enrollment, pending any resolution of the excessive absences between the faculty member and the student. **In the case of this course, that's two missed class sessions.** If more than 20 percent (**that's three missed class sessions in this course**) is reported as missed, the faculty member may initiate the student's de-enrollment from the course without advance notice to the student. If the date of de-enrollment is past the last date to withdraw from a class, the student will be assigned a grade of "F" or "NC." There are no refunds for courses where a de-enrollment was processed.

Academic Dishonesty

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. As stated in the university catalog, "Academic

dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. Such acts include plagiarism, copying of class assignments, and copying or other fraudulent behavior on examinations. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for a) that particular assignment or examination, and/or b) the course." See [Academic Policies](#) in the undergrad student catalog for more information about this.

Academic Accommodations:

While all students are expected to meet the minimum academic standards for completion of this course as established by the instructor, students with disabilities may request academic accommodations. At Point Loma Nazarene University, students must request that academic accommodations by filing documentation with the [Disability Resource Center](#) (DRC), located in the Bond Academic Center. Once the student files documentation, the Disability Resource Center will contact the student's instructors and provide written recommendations for reasonable and appropriate accommodations to meet the individual needs of the student. See [Academic Policies](#) in the (undergrad/graduate as appropriate) academic catalog.

FERPA Policy:

In compliance with federal law, neither PLNU student ID nor social security number should be used in publicly posted grades or returned sets of assignments without student written permission. This class will meet the federal requirements by distributing all grades and papers individually; OR requesting and filing written student permission for distributing group grades; or assigning each student a unique class ID number not identifiable on the alphabetic roster.). Also in compliance with FERPA, you will be the only person given information about your progress in this class unless you have designated others to receive it in the "Information Release" section of the student portal. See [Policy Statements](#) in the (undergrad/ graduate as appropriate) academic catalog.

Final Exam Policy:

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination **on its scheduled day**. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Class Schedules](#) site.

Equipment & Facilities:

Camcorders, microphones, lighting kits, and other equipment are available for check-out at the PLNU studio. Check-out policies and times are provided on the bulletin board by the TV studio. You can check equipment out for only the time period you will be using the equipment, and you must return it promptly to the studio. Unfortunately, we do not have enough equipment for everyone to use simultaneously. Students who do not abide by this policy will be penalized. Penalties will include late fee charges and, in the case of

multiple infractions, loss of equipment check-out privileges. Also, the party that checks out the equipment is responsible for its safe return. Damage or theft will incur repair or replacement charges.

Our equipment and facilities are not only academic labs, but are also occasional professional production facilities for on and off-campus constituents. The success and improvement of the academic program in media communication at PLNU is dependent upon the condition, quality, and success of this facility.

Eating and drinking is especially forbidden in the control room, the edit bays, and the studio. You will be required to clean-up, strike, and return all equipment and other items to their proper places after labs and project sessions. Also, please take everything out of the facility that you bring into the facility. If I, other faculty, or department TA's consistently find papers, books, scripts or other items traceable to a student, that student's participation grade will be affected. The studio and edit bays are work areas that need to be kept as neat and clean as possible.

A final thought about equipment: please treat equipment as if it is **your own**, and that you **depend upon it for your own livelihood**, and you have **no money to fix or replace it**.

Evaluation & Grading

Assignments/projects will be evaluated on the following basis:

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1. Your grade will be based on your performance in your assigned production role(s). The criteria for evaluation will be established by readings, in-class examples and student and instructor screenings, discussions, and analysis and critique of outstanding student and professional TV/film work;
 2. How well your work meets the grading criteria provided for each project, and how your work compares to peer's (present and past) in this course over the past 33 years.

Your work will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

D or F grade:

- Project does not meet the assignment's guidelines
- Production values are unacceptable for college-level work. There are obvious technical errors, such as poor audio and shaky camera shots, poor editing, lighting, staging, directing, and/or white balancing of cameras
- Problems with participation in the project (i.e. late/left early, poor attitude, etc.)

C grade:

- No participation problems
- A few technical problems, based on principles and techniques taught in class
- Production values and conventions are average and acceptable for college-level production
- Program is moderately engaging and entertaining

B grade:

- Criteria for C-level work are met
- Some display of creative/unique camera, sound, directing, graphic, and/or editing techniques
- Maximum of two (2) to no (0) technical problems evident in your work
- Program is engaging, above-average quality, and communicates with some flair and creativity

A grade:

- Criteria for B-level work are met
- Several displays of creative/unique camera, sound, directing, editing, and/or graphic techniques
- No (0) obvious technical errors
- All production techniques effectively tied to the theme and stylistic approach
- Program is truly outstanding, engaging, entertaining, and communicates with substantial flair and creativity for undergraduate, college-level production

Assignments and Points (for those who **have not taken 442**)-you must do big idea reports and take the exam

Top Five Chapter Big Ideas Reports (32 @ 5 points each)	160
Project Pitch & Proposal	100
Production Presentation	100
Studio Project: One Script—Two Scenes	150
Short Film Project & Production Notebook	250
Test	150
Attendance & Participation	<u>90</u>
Total points:	1000

Your final course grade will be based on the following point scale:

920-1000 = A
900-919 = A-
880-899 = B+
Etc.

Assignments and Points: for those who **have taken 442** and will not be submitting big idea reports or taking the final exam:

Project Pitch & Proposal	100
Production Presentation	100
Studio Project: <i>One Script—Two Scenes</i>	150
Short Film Project & Production Notebook	250
Attendance & Participation	<u>100</u>
Total points:	700

Your final course grade will be based on the following point scale:

645-700 = A
630-644 = A-
615-629 = B+
575-614=B
560-574=B-
545-559=C+
505-544=C
490-504=C-
Etc.

Copyright Release:

The PLNU Department of Communication and Theatre owns the copyright to all student video and film projects made at the school using school equipment in regular production courses and independent or practicum courses. The department has the right to make copies of student video and film projects, and display them on the following places: *Point TV* (the campus closed-circuit cable channel); on various campus TV and film screens; on the department website and Vimeo site; on a DVD for university/department promotional purposes; at conferences and conventions for educational and program promotion purposes. The student cannot sell the project, produce it as a contract project and be paid for production, put it on the Internet, or distribute it in any way without university permission. Only PLNU, as the owner of the copyright, can do these things. The department will work with students to find the widest audience possible for their projects, and will provide assistance (guidance and funds, as available) for submitting their work to student and professional video and film festivals.

COM 443 SCHEDULE
(schedule is subject to change)

WEEK 1: 1/13/15 *READING: NONE ASSIGNED*

- A. Syllabus, activities, assignments, policies, deadlines, grading, course schedule, etc.
- B. Narrative film production process—based on course schedule
- C. Present project ideas
- D. Screen short films: focus on writing

WEEK 2: 1/19/15--NO CLASS (M.L.K. JR. DAY)

WEEK 3—1/26/15 *READING REPORTS DUE: Producing...Ch. 1-3, AND Lean Forward...1-3, 11 & 12*

Production Presentations: Writing & Producing

- A. Discussion: financing, scripts, and breakdowns (see article on things to think about when breaking down a script: http://www.scriptmag.com/features/from-the-lens-breaking-down-a-script-as-director-of-photography?et_mid=639118&rid=240203797)
- A. Writing and Producing Presentations (writer/producers)
- B. Screen short film(s)
- C. Hand out and discuss Project Pitch Assignment

WEEK 4—2/2/15 *READING REPORTS DUE: Producing...Ch's 4-7*

- A. Discussion: scheduling, budget, crewing, casting
- B. Team Project Pitches
- C. Film screening, analysis, and discussion

WEEK 5: 2/9/15 *READING REPORTS DUE: Producing...Ch's 10, 14, 15; Lean Forward... Ch. 5*

Production Presentations: Directing

- A. Film screening, analysis, and discussion: directing techniques (continued)
- B. Directing Presentations (all directors)

WEEK 6: 2/16/15 *READING REPORTS DUE: Producing...Ch's 8, 11, 13;*

- A. Discussion: camera, art, set procedures, production design & cinematography
- B. Film screening, analysis, and discussion: production design & cinematography
- C. Hand out and discuss *One Script—Two Scenes* Production Project assignment

WEEK 7: 2/23/15 *READING REPORTS DUE: Lean Forward...Ch's 4 & 6*

Production Presentations: Cinematography and Art Direction-Production Design

- A. Cinematography Presentations
- B. Art Direction-Production Design Presentations
- C. Discuss Studio Project: *One Script-Two Scenes* assignment, and begin planning and organization

WEEK 8: 3/2/15 *READING REPORTS DUE: Producing...Ch's 16, 17, 18; Lean Forward...Ch's 7-10*

- A. Discussion: Post production, editing, effects, music, and sound
- B. Film screening, analysis, and discussion: editing, effects, music, and sound

WEEK 9: NO CLASSES (SPRING BREAK)

WEEK 10: 3/16/15 *READING REPORTS DUE: Producing...19; Lean Forward...Ch's 11 & 13*

Production Presentations: Editing Techniques—Picture, Sound FX, and Music

- A. Editing Presentations
- B. Screen sit-coms or TV drama
- C. Studio Project: *One Script-Two Scenes* Planning and Shooting a Multi-Camera Studio Scene – Demonstration: script read through, interpretation, and working with actors

WEEK 11: 3/23/15 *READING REPORTS DUE: none*

- A. Screen sit-coms or TV drama
- B. Studio Project: *One Script-Two Scenes* Planning and Shooting a Multi-Camera Studio Scene – Demonstration: actor staging and walk-through with actors

WEEK 12: 3/30/15 *READING REPORTS & TEST Q'S DUE: none*

FIRST CUT—SHORT FILM PROJECTS (OPTIONAL) OR “Edit Day” @ studio

- A. Screen 1st cut major team projects
- B. Rehearsal: *One Script-Two Scenes...* Demonstration: camera staging and walk-through rehearsal

WEEK 13: 4/6/15 NO CLASS—NAB-BEA FIELD TRIP

WEEK 14: 4/13/15—meet at classroom then move to studio

READING REPORTS & TEST Q'S DUE: none

FIRST CUT—MAJOR TEAM PROJECTS (OPTIONAL) OR “Edit Day” @ studio

- A. Production teams shoot *One Script—Two Scenes* studio projects (two teams)

WEEK 15: 4/20/15—meet at studio

- A. Production teams shoot *One Script—Two Scenes* studio projects (two teams)

WEEK 16: 4/27/15

SHORT FILM & ONE SCRIPT—TWO SCENES PROJECTS DUE

- A. Screen short films and *One Script—Two Scenes* projects

Thursday, April 30, 2015, 6:30-8 p.m.—“PLNU’s 2014 TV & Film Festival & Awards Ceremony,” Solomon Theatre, sponsored by *Point TV-Channel 23*.

Final Exam: WEDNESDAY, MAY 6/2015, 1:30-4 p.m.

