

AS.455 (FILM AND MEDIA)

AS.455.610. Foundations of Immersive Storytelling: Theory & Practice. 3 Credits.

This introductory course will provide students with the tools and the mind set for making compelling VR/AR experiences. While the industry is nascent, the technological and storytelling innovations move forward at breakneck speed. Students will also, each class, dissect to understand the approaches to the current catalog of immersive experiences, ranging from 360 film, to animation and room scale installation experiences, often with creators who made them to understand challenges and lessons learned. Subsequently, after this overview, students will have the option to build their own prototypes and, also, to support a VR/AR project housed within the program with a leading artist.

AS.455.611. Screenwriting Workshop 1-The Step Outline. 3 Credits.

The focus of the class will be the structure of the feature screenplay as a function of thematic coherence. We will analyze films by act, sequence, and scene to understand dramatic action as a tension between different possible outcomes. There will be five weekend intensive workshop sessions, divided between Friday evening and Saturday that will include some lecture components, some viewing and discussion of films, and, more and more as the semesters develop, reading and discussion of student work. Between the weekend workshops there will be weekly writing assignments and individual internet or telephone conferences. By the end of the first semester, each student will be required to have completed an outline for a feature film, organized by act, sequence, and scene, and including character, setting, and aesthetic details.

AS.455.612. Screenwriting Workshop 2 - The Draft. 3 Credits.

Students will write the first draft of their feature-length script in the first few weeks. Aided by class discussion and targeted screenings of films related to their specific challenges, students will go through two full revisions of their script.

AS.455.613. Immersive Storytelling for Social Impact. 3 Credits.

This course will enable students to study and design projects that affect the way we see the world. Covering the topics of immersion and narration in the new immersive media landscape, it will also discuss questions of flow, art history, and the goal of social impact. Each session will include case studies, and presentation by experts followed by in-class discussions.

AS.455.614. Acting for Screenwriters. 3 Credits.

This course taught by a professional actor and director introduces students to the craft of screen acting, using the student's own scenes and screenplays as text. The first part of the course focuses on the basics of screen acting, using scenes from produced films and episodic series. Students will learn how to analyze a scene, find the truth of the moment and prepare for a scene as actors, as they act the scenes themselves. Essential actions, super objectives, dramatic beats and physical actions are some of the subjects covered. The second part of the course finds the students analyzing, preparing for and acting in scenes from their own screenplays. As the group acts, films and discusses each scene, students will revise the scenes and screenplays, informed by the insights gleaned from the dynamic.

AS.455.615. Episodic Writing Workshop 1 – The Pilot. 3 Credits.

This course will expose students to the mechanics and realities of writing an original pilot for a television series, from concept through beat sheet to draft. Each student will finish the semester with a mini-series bible, a detailed outline and the first half the draft of the pilot. Dramatic goals, character arcs, operational themes will be a few of the many subjects covered.

AS.455.616. Episodic Writing Workshop 2 – Comedy. 3 Credits.

This workshop teaches you how to write a television script for your favorite half-hour comedy. In this class students will learn the basics of script writing, from premise lines and beat sheet, to writing pages, punching up dialogue and polishing the draft. The focus here will be on a writing a 'spec' script for a current television half-hour comedy, critiquing and workshopping the script as one would in a professional writers' room. Though in this class we will not be developing and writing pilots, we will discuss the process and students will learn the basics of pitching an idea to networks. This course is designed to prepare students for the professional world.

AS.455.617. Episodic Writing Workshop III – The Limited Series. 3 Credits.

In this innovative learning experience, students will have an opportunity to engage with Oscar-nominated film and television screenwriter Jeremy Pikser (Bulworth) and veteran executive producer Erica Motley (FX's Taboo) as they develop a "limited series" concept and outline for six one-hour dramas about writer James Baldwin's "exile" from the US in Paris between 1948 and 1964. The students will operate as a research and discussion collective in what would essentially be an apprentice, or intern relationship with the faculty members (similar to law students working on a case or art students working on a large installation with a senior professor). Through their direct involvement with the writer and producer, students will gain invaluable firsthand experience of the creative and practical process of developing a historically-based limited (or "mini") series for television.

AS.455.618. Episodic Writing Workshop II - The Writers' Room. 3 Credits.

Imagine your one hour dramatic pilot script has just been picked up to series, congratulations. Find out what really happens in the writers room to turn one pilot into many episodes. Learn how to add depth to your original characters, create new ones and develop future storylines. Having already completed or substantially completed a one hour dramatic pilot script is a plus, but not required. Taught by Tammy Ader Green, a writers room veteran and the creator/showrunner of the long-running Sony series "Strong Medicine."

AS.455.619. Business of Non Fiction Film & TV. 3 Credits.

In an era of record-setting festival acquisitions and a thriving demand for nonfiction content from television, theatrical and streaming platforms, it is evident why our cultural moment has been described as a modern "golden age" of documentary filmmaking. But for an aspiring filmmaker, what is the best way to break through and navigate this terrain from the business perspective? Covering avenues related to storytelling approach (feature-length, series, short form etc.), producing and exhibiting work (pitching, budgeting, fundraising, proposal-writing, festival strategy, distribution, etc), and the organizations and outlets on the forefront of documentary decision-making, this course aims to situate students in the contemporary market of nonfiction filmmaking. Over the course of the semester, students will develop an idea for a nonfiction film or series into a refined pitch and proposal, applying the strategic knowledge gained from a series of lectures, screenings, case studies, and conversations with established industry professionals and filmmakers.

AS.455.620. Fundamentals of Business I. 3 Credits.

This comprehensive business seminar is centered on presentations and interactive sessions with experts in the field, the study of relevant case studies and the creation of sample plans and strategies by the students. During the first semester we cover such subjects as entertainment law, film finance, production, marketing, public relations and distribution. Emphasis is placed on analyzing and recreating actual and relevant case studies and business situations. Other subjects include sales estimates, comps, tax credits, festivals, release strategies and the art of the pitch.

AS.455.621. Entertainment Law for Independent Filmmakers. 3 Credits.

Using real-life case studies as basis for discussion, students in this course will explore the legal and business affairs aspect of filmmaking. We will explore option agreements, distribution agreements, tax credit/rebate laws, international co-production agreements and challenges and labor law, among other topics.

AS.455.623. Fundamentals of Business II. 3 Credits.

This comprehensive business seminar will be centered on presentations and interactive sessions with experts in the field, the study of relevant case studies and the creation of sample plans and strategies by the students. During the second semester we will cover such subjects as alternative financing, crowdfunding, branded content, episodic content, straight to series and international co-productions. Emphasis will be placed on analyzing and recreating actual and relevant case studies and business situations. Other subjects will include micro budgets and over the top content.

AS.455.624. Social Impact Documentary Filmmaking. 3 Credits.

In this hands on course, students will learn the basics of documentary filmmaking from development through post production and social impact. Through a series of screenings, discussions and real-time filmmaking exercises, students will engage in a process of exploration and discovery focused on honing each filmmaker's personal voice. There will be a strong focus on telling stories with a clear and provocative point of view. Students will leave the course with a strong bio and personal statement, and having completed 3-5 minute documentary on the subject of their choosing.

AS.455.625. Creative Producing & Line Producing. 3 Credits.

Through in-class projects, interactions with working producers, line producers and AD's and on-going independent productions, students will be exposed to the myriad responsibilities of producers, from the creative and on-the-field perspectives. We will explore the many elements that make up the creation of films and television shows, with a focus on a producer's creative input from development to post production to a producer's understanding of the nuts and bolts fundamentals of how to budget and schedule.

AS.455.626. Mixing Sound for Picture. 3 Credits.

This course is a practical exploration of all aspects of mixing audio for film and tv. The students will prepare to mix during the first half of the semester, topics will include dialog editing, automated dialog replacement (ADR, or "looping"), Foley, music editing and sound effects spotting as well as basic sound design. Recording of ADR and Foley will take place in the studio at the JHU-MICA Film Centre using condenser and dynamic microphones. The class will shift its focus in the second half of the semester to re-recording mixing, exploring both the technical and creative aspects of mixing. Students will learn to mix in the Film Centre's control room using Avid Pro Tools HD software for Apple macOS with proprietary and third-party software plug-ins. Upon completion of the course, students will know how to provide final mix files as well as stems, i.e. mix minus, M&E, dialog, sound effects, and music. Projects will include spotting, prepping, building and mixing a short film or series of scenes. Class will occur during a three-hour weekday evening throughout the semester in the sound studio of The JHU-MICA Film Centre, where students will work as a class to record and edit group projects and, schedule permitting, individual projects.

AS.455.627. Film and Media Internship. 3 Credits.

Summer internship course with an established and pre-approved film and television distribution company in Los Angeles. During the internship, student will analyze and provide coverage of scripts, research potential new projects and acquisitions and track submissions, while growing her professional network.

AS.455.628. Digital Narratives. 3 Credits.

The Digital Narratives course will prepare students to launch a short form series from conception through distribution for the Mobile First Generation. During the past few years, Mobile First consumption has changed fictional formats and the viewing habits of Generation Z are set to revolutionize the industry. As younger audiences move away from the TV set in favor of smart phones, tablets, and computers, we are witnessing the rise of mobile-first content. Their shift to viewing on smart phones is influencing the sort of dramas that get made. These trends are changing content by giving rise to new formats, casting different types of talent and using data to boost ratings (data is driving development and casting) Students will develop a 10 minute x 10 episode digital narrative, produce the pilot episode and pitch the series to a panel of industry veterans.

AS.455.629. Key Business and Legal Considerations for Creators. 3 Credits.

It is an exciting time to be a creator, but with constant and vast changes in the media industry including the ongoing emergence of new technologies and evolution of distribution platforms, threshold business and legal considerations have never been more complicated, or important. This class is structured around a single production project, from conception to exploitation. Students will learn to form a Limited Liability Company, understand and negotiate key agreements, strategically engage cast and crew members, negotiate licensing deals, obtain production insurance, participate in festivals/live events and distribute their project.

AS.455.630. Recording Sound for Film. 3 Credits.

This course serves as an orientation to the recording studio and the craft of capturing sound with microphones. Topics will include sound behavior (i.e., basic acoustics), human perception of sound (i.e., basic psychoacoustics), microphone theory and techniques, signal flow and processing, basic digital audio theory, and the digital audio workstation (Pro Tools and Logic Pro). Projects will include in-studio and location recordings. By the end of the semester students will be able to effectively navigate the studio at the Ten East North facility and capture sound on location for use in subsequent classes. Should be taken prior to or concurrently with AS.445.631 Designing Sound for Film.

AS.455.631. Sound Fundamentals II: The Studio as a Compositional Tool. 3 Credits.

This course explores the use of software and hardware in the music studio as a means by which composers and sound designers create sound for use in soundtracks. Topics will include exploration of software instruments using synthesis and sampling, as well as instrumentation and orchestration of acoustic instruments. The art of Foley will be explored whereby students create sound effects and background ambience using a variety of objects. Projects will incorporate the creation of soundscapes and musical compositions with both software and 'real' acoustic instruments. Should be taken concurrently with Recording Sound for Film.

AS.455.632. Sound on Film I. 3 Credits.

This course builds on the training from Recording Sound for Film and Designing Sound for Film by utilizing the knowledge and skills acquired in the operation of the recording studio and use of software and hardware instruments. Students will study finished works and analyze the use of sound by filmmakers in different genres, and apply those techniques to short film projects created by filmmakers also in the MA program. The ProTools digital audio workstation will be the primary tool used during the course but students are welcome and encouraged to integrate their knowledge of other audio systems into their work. Grading will be based on the quality of work, use of the tools and techniques discussed in class and classroom participation. Prerequisites: Recording Sound for Film, Designing Sound for Film.

AS.455.634. Designing Sound for Film and Media. 3 Credits.

Explore the use of software and hardware as a means to create, capture, and edit music and sound for picture. Examine the role of music and sound in media and develop the skills to operate software instruments and Digital Audio Workstations. Gain an appreciation for the craft of composing music for picture - including fundamentals of music, 'spotting' a scene, and creating simple music 'cues'. Additionally, learn about editing and recording sound effects and dialogue to create complete soundtracks that incorporate soundscapes and musical compositions.

AS.455.635. Sales, Acquisitions and Marketing. 3 Credits.

This class will explore the ways films reach an audience. We will examine festival strategy and traditional theatrical distribution as well as changing ancillary and online markets. Case studies of successful marketing campaigns across genres and platforms will be used as evidence. Testimonies by guest lecturers who work in the field of distribution will supplement the core syllabus.

AS.455.637. Comedy Writing - TV Spec Script. 3 Credits.

This course will expose students to the mechanics and realities of writing a spec script or pilot script for episodic comedy, from concept through beat sheet to draft. We will study, analyze and break down a specific television show then proceed to sketch out a spec episode based on that show. Each student will finish the semester with a detailed outline and the first pages of the draft. Genre, act structure, dramatic dialogue and cold-opens will be a few of the many subjects covered. In this course, students will be working on a half-hour comedy series.

AS.455.638. Technology and the Future of Humanity. 3 Credits.

Humanity at once refers both to all human beings, in their different forms and manifestations, and to standards of humaneness – including love, benevolence, care, and dignity. This course will examine questions of how are we to be in this world (individually and collectively) with technology; how are we now; and how should we be. It will do so by engaging in a wide-ranging survey – delving into questions of ethics (of information, of privacy, of environment) and complexifying what forms of knowledge we ascribe value to (drawing on indigeneity and indigenous forms of knowledge, for example). The course will then examine specific instances of humane applications of new technology in the fields of peacemaking and peacebuilding, psychiatry and intergroup relations, and storytelling by those on the margins (indigenous communities, victims of climate change, conflict and violence, and the socioeconomically disempowered). From that point, using a speculative design and thinking framework, the course will challenge students to reflect on desirable and undesirable futures, and likely futures. With a backcasting approach, the course will ask students to consider what systems, milestones, decisions, activities, policies and strategies need to be in place to effect desirable futures.

AS.455.640. Graduate Filmmaking Studio I. 3 Credits.

This two-semester course is the centerpiece of the graduate experience. The studio meets for four hours weekly and is co-taught with the MICA MFA Program. This hands-on studio is where good, smart and compelling movies are born. Students will work in groups, particularly during their first semester. While writing and editing are often solitary activities, production is not. Great films are collaborations and students will be expected to work in teams. Group discussions and critiques are balanced with individual meetings with faculty and visits with guest filmmakers. Class meetings will often include a screening in conjunction with the Maryland Film Festival. Special emphasis will be placed on ways that filmmakers can build and reach an audience. Students will explore the diverse ways filmmakers are sustaining careers while creating high impact films.

AS.455.641. Graduate Filmmaking Studio II. 3 Credits.

This two-semester course is the centerpiece of the graduate experience. The studio meets for four hours weekly and is co-taught with the MICA MFA Program. This hands-on studio is where good, smart and compelling movies are born. While writing and editing are often solitary activities, production is not. Students will work on their own project, teaming up with fellow students and other filmmakers. Group discussions and critiques are balanced with individual meetings with faculty and visits with guest filmmakers. Class meetings will often include a screening in conjunction with the Maryland Film Festival. Special emphasis will be placed on ways that filmmakers can build and reach an audience. Students will explore the diverse ways filmmakers are sustaining careers while creating high impact films. Pre-Requisite: Graduate Filmmaking Studio I.

AS.455.642. Advanced Cinematography Workshop. 3 Credits.

The Director of Photography has instrumental role in crafting the final look of a film. In the course, the four creative roles of the cinematography department – Camera Operator, Gaffer, Key Grip, and Dolly Grip are examined in-depth. Through a series of screenings, discussions and workshops, the students learn many of the dynamics between these roles. In class, students will mount detailed and intricately lighted shots. Students will work with the Arri Amira, a professional motion picture camera. Camera topics include camera settings & trouble shooting, on-set data management, ALEXA color science, working with LogC, look management, and dailies creation. Prerequisites: AS.455.640 (Graduate Studio I) or a demonstrated basic camera proficiency

AS.455.643. The Future of Cinematic Gaming. 3 Credits.

An introductory course that provides students with an overview of the process to create innovative and meaningful cinematic stories in the evolving field of interactive games. From concept to completion, the class will explore the creative architecture, production process and technical considerations necessary for developing for the new wave of interactive entertainment across platforms. Drawing from theoretical and production frameworks in game design, narrative and documentary filmmaking, art, immersive theatre, and motion capture—critical attention will be given to intuitive and engaging design. The hands on portion of the class will culminate with students developing a prototype for their own original interactive cinematic project.

AS.455.644. Podcasting Fundamentals. 3 Credits.

In this introductory course, students will ultimately create their own short podcasts around stories that are meaningful to them and their intended audiences. Students will enact principles of listener-centered design, they'll work to find stories worth telling, and they'll learn to tell those stories powerfully. This course will build competency in recording and editing techniques, interviewing skills, creating story structure, and understanding the potential social impact of documentary work. Students will also study current monetization strategies in the booming podcast market and learn how to find, keep, and grow an audience.

AS.455.645. Production for Creative Technology. 3 Credits.

This intermediate course takes you through the workflows of producing compelling narratives with emerging technologies like VR, AR and AI. Students will get an opportunity to work collectively on a project with the deadlines, pressures and challenges that come with delivering a quality product for a world class client. Students will also prototype existing ideas and proposals developed in other ISET courses, or new ideas generated from class, to create something that can be showcased in their portfolio, or be utilized long term as a capstone project. Prerequisite: Students must have taken at least one ISET course though some exceptions will be granted on a case by case basis.

AS.455.646. TV Series Development: Pitching, Process, Pilot. 3 Credits.

Do you have an idea for what you believe would make a great TV show? Find out what really happens in the television development process. Over the course of the semester, you will develop and pitch up to three ideas as well as write a series bible and select script scenes for one. Taught by television writer/creator/showrunner and pitching veteran Tammy Ader Green, this course will teach you what it takes to go from dreaming to streaming.

AS.455.648. Directing Workshop. 3 Credits.

Students develop and workshop short narrative scripts that they write. The course covers working with actors and understanding the filmmaking process from the actor's point of view. Students visualize their scripts so they are prepared to work with a Producer, Director of Photography and additional crew. The course also explores techniques of blocking and staging action for the camera, with emphasis on the practical problems and aesthetic questions that arise.

AS.455.650. Script to Screen. 3 Credits.

This course de-mystifies the film development process and teaches students the key tools necessary for a successful career as a film executive or producer. This course will chart the key stages of finding and preparing a good project for production. These steps include how to find, evaluate, obtain rights and shape material from the producer's perspective. The course will examine strategies employed by filmmakers who adapt existing IP and literary works to the screen. Detailed comparisons between cinematic adaptations and the novels, plays, and short stories on which they are based. Case studies of literary works that pose a variety of challenges to filmmakers.

AS.455.651. Film Financing. 3 Credits.

Successful producing involves the bridging of the creative with the commercial. Effective producers need the skills to structure and manage fundraising efforts on behalf of their productions and establish a comfort level in defining and promoting their projects as commercial ventures. At its conclusion, students should have a working command of both the theory and the practice of raising money for film, television and new media productions and the skill-base to embark confidently on their own fundraising efforts. Students will learn of the various mindsets of attorneys, financiers, and other professionals and master the vocabulary of content as investment. Finally, students will understand how to mix- match financing strategies and approaches as is appropriate for each particular project.

AS.455.652. Digital Media: Storytelling & Strategy. 3 Credits.

We live in a world where content is queen and more money is being poured into original content than ever before, but what does this deluge of money and distributors mean for creators? In this course we'll take a dual-pronged approach to the digital media landscape—looking at business strategy and creative process in tandem to understand how to take a holistic approach to selling content in a shifting marketplace with an ever-increasing number of buyers. How is digital distribution of video changing the traditional media business models? How does a content developer create a scalable business in this environment? This course will feature a practical element in which all students will pitch, develop and produce digital content, melding business strategy with creativity to create saleable IP with potential for multiple distribution partners and revenue streams. The course will feature industry executives and independent creators as guest lecturers.

AS.455.800. Capstone for Film & Media. 3 Credits.

Guided by meetings with the instructor and other guest speakers from the industry, students research, develop and deliver a final project that demonstrates skill in one or both of their concentrations. Ideally, this project will be completed in collaboration with a student or students from the JHU MA or MICA MFA program who are completing their own capstone projects.

AS.455.801. Independent Study. 3 Credits.**AS.455.802. Independent Study. 3 Credits.**

AS.455.803. Capstone Continuation for Film and Media (non-credit).

Capstone Continuation is required for those students who have taken the Capstone Course but not yet finished the required and approved work.