Intro to Cinematography

SP25-AD490

Mondays & Wednesdays
10-11:20am
CAMP 263
Credits: 3
Contact Hours: 3 (1;0;8)

Instructor:
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School of Art + Design
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Office Hours:
Wednesdays 12:00-1pm
by appointment

Prerequisites:
DD 264 or ID 264 or INT 264 or
ARCH 363.

An image flickers on the screen, then many of them, 24 of them per second. Our brains stitch those images into one continuous flow because that's how our brains work. Cinema.
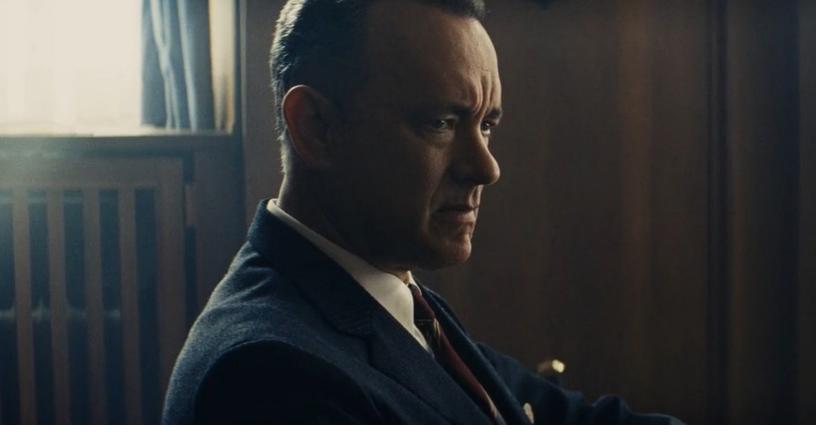
Cinematography is the art of creating that series of images – *shots* – the building blocks of any film.

This course will explore how those images are created and what can be done to make them look beautiful. Through a series of explorations of cameras and technique we will learn how to construct cinematic images, and how they work together to tell stories.

Students should come armed with basic understanding of cameras, a bunch of questions, and a hunger to figure out how to make stunning images. Consider this course the tip of a very large iceberg.

Restrictions:
For Digital Design, Industrial Design, and Interior Design majors only; other majors require department approval to register. As determined by individual section and topic. Group investigation of problems or topics of special interest in art and design including, but not limited to, fine arts, industrial design, interior design, and digital design.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

This course aims to teach students the rudiments of cinematography, including set procedures in the film industry, and basic familiarity with the tools and techniques of cinema image-making.

Students will be expected to film and present several projects that focus on various techniques highlighting their understanding of framing, lighting, filtration, lens choices, and camera work.

Film shoots, discussions, viewings, field trips, and reviews will give students ample opportunities to focus on the following objectives:

- capturing beautiful images that tell a story;
- understanding what elements contribute to the look of a particular image and ways to manipulate them;
- basic knowledge of the role of postproduction in the image chain;
- understanding the responsibility of the cinematographer within the greater landscape of a film set;
- to develop an awareness of the collaborative nature of a film crew and the structured roles within;
- to serve as crew members for the films of other classmates, as needed;
- learning set procedure and terminology related to cinematography and other adjacent departments;
- to develop an independent sense of experimentation while in discourse with known ratios, techniques, and procedures;
- and to develop effective presentation and communication skills that engage both the mind and the emotions.

source

01 **Intro:** 5%
Jan 29 (all projects due at start of class)
Show us your world in 30 seconds. Have some fun. Minimum 7 shots.

02 **Black-and-white study:** 5%
Feb 12
Create a film shot on campus using a tripod for every shot. Document
some aspect of campus life.
Minimum 30 seconds.

03 **Telephoto vs Wide:** 10%
Feb 26
Create a film using only the maximum and minimum focal lengths on
your camera. No zooms, no medium shots. Use a tripod.
Minimum 1 minute.

04 **Handheld Camerawork:** 10%
Mar 12
Create a vérité-style documentary or narrative film – no tripods.
Minimum 1-minute.

05 **Studio Lighting study:** 12.5%
Apr 2
Create a scene or interview using 3-point lighting techniques, focusing
on far-side key light.

06 **Motion study:** 12.5%
Apr 16
Create a 1-minute film that uses smooth motion: dolly, tracking,
Steadicam, gimbal, etc.

07 **Final Project Pitch:** 5%
Apr 28
Create a slideshow pitch deck for your final project.

08 **Narrative Final:** 25%
May 7
Pulling it all together. Create a short film, narrative or documentary,
minimum 2 minutes, that tells a story.

SEMESTER SCHEDULE   (note: may be subject to change)

Week	Day	Date	
1	Wed	22-Jan-25	**Introduction and Assignment 1**
2	Mo		Project Development
	Wed	29-Jan-25	**Assignment 1 due**
3	Mo		Project Development
	Wed		Project Development
4	Mo		Project Development
	Wed	12-Feb-25	**Assignment 2 due**
5	Mo		Project Development
	Wed		Project Development
6	Mo		Project Development
	Wed	26-Feb-25	**Assignment 3 due**
7	Mo		Project Development
	Wed		Project Development
8	Mo		Project Development
	Wed	12-Mar-25	**Assignment 4 due / Midterm Warning**
	Mo	17-Mar-25	**Spring Break**
	Wed		**Spring Break**
9	Mo		Project Development
	Wed	26-Mar-25	**Lighting Workshop**
10	Mo		Project Development
	Wed	2-Apr-25	**Assignment 5 Due**
11	Mo	7-Apr-25	**Last day to withdraw**
	Wed		Project Development
12	Mo		Project Development
	Wed	16-Apr-25	**Assignment 6 due**
13	Mo		Project Development
	Wed	23-Apr-25	**Final Project Pitch**
14	Mo		Project Development
	Wed		Project Development
15	Mo		Project Development
	Wed	7-May-25	**Assignment 7 due – Final Review**

EVALUATION:

Grades for each project are initially assessed within two days after that the project is submitted for review. Final grades will be determined at the end of the semester, with the complete submission of your work from the entire semester; it will also include an assessment of your individual participation in the course and group sessions. Grades are determined according to the instructor's judgment of how well the tools of cinematography are used to create images that tell a story. The value of each project assignment, as a percentage of your total evaluation for this course, is as follows:

Assignment 1	**5%**	GRADE SYSTEM:			
2	**5%**	A	(4.0)	Superior	
3	**10%**	B+	(3.5)	Excellent	
4	**10%**	B	(3.0)	Very Good	
5	**12.5%**	C+	(2.5)	Good	
6	**12.5%**	C	(2.0)	Acceptable	
7	**5%**	D	(1.0)	Minimum	
8	**25%**	F	(0.0)	Inadequate	
Class Participation	**10%**				
Project Documentation	**5%**				

BACKUP YOUR WORK:
Students are required to maintain and complete backups of all their computer-based work. It is the responsibility of each student or team to restore or recreate any work that is lost for any reason (including the failure of University-provided software and/or hardware). All backup files should be stored on two independent external locations (not on local or CoAD networked locations, as they are subject to reformatting without notice). For suggestions on backup processes, please contact the NJIT HelpDesk.

ATTENDANCE:
Attendance will be taken during each class and is an explicitly required component of all on- campus/location-based classes for all students in the College of Architecture and Design. After three absences students may be docked one-half grade for each subsequent unexcused absence. In other words, if the final grade would have been an "A", it results in a "B+". Similarly, a "B+" is reduced to a "B", and so on. There is a one-half grade penalty for each absence after the third. In the case of illness or other special circumstance, notification should be given to the instructor as soon as possible and before the date in question.

The instructor must be notified at the beginning of the semester if a student will miss a session (or more) due to religious observance. Student-athletes are required to attend all classes. A student-athlete may only miss class when representing NJIT in intercollegiate competition. No student-athlete may miss any regularly scheduled classes for any practice activities.

TARDINESS:
Students are expected to arrive to class on time. The time limit that constitutes an absence versus tardiness is 15 minutes.

DIGITAL DOCUMENTATION:
Digital documentation of the entire work of the semester will be required of **EACH** student. This documentation will provide the Department with a review of your study, and information contained in the digital files might be used in future electronic or printed media publications, either in whole or in part. This record will also enable interested students, faculty, and others to have access to your work in the future. You are encouraged to make a copy of the digital package for your own records.

LATE WORK:
Project assignments and digital documentation of your work are due at the beginning of class on the specified dates. Students should make every effort to avoid incomplete work and late submissions. Late submissions are not acceptable, except in the case of documented illness or special circumstances.

LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW:
Monday, April 7th, 2025 is the last day to withdraw from this course.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:
Students seeking accommodations due to disabilities are required to notify the instructor at the beginning of the semester.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:
Academic Integrity is the cornerstone of higher education and is central to the ideals of this course and the university. Cheating is strictly prohibited and devalues the degree that you are working on. As a member of the NJIT community, it is your responsibility to protect your educational investment by knowing and following the academic [code of integrity policy](#).

Please note that it is my professional obligation to report any academic misconduct to the Dean of Students Office. Any student found in violation of the code by cheating, plagiarizing, or using any online software inappropriately will result in disciplinary action. This may include a failing grade of F, and/or suspension or dismissal from the university. If you have any questions about the code of Academic Integrity, please contact the Dean of Students Office at dos@njit.edu

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE
AI tools have proliferated in a short time and have become alternate paths to generating ideas or imagery. Students interested in using AI within their assignments may do so only with the explicit permission of the instructor. Any student who uses AI in place of physical production will be subject to academic discipline.

CELL PHONE POLICY
The use of cell phones during class time is permitted for emergencies only.