

SM3131: ART DIRECTION

Effective Term

Semester A 2026/27

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Art Direction

Subject Code

SM - School of Creative Media

Course Number

3131

Academic Unit

School of Creative Media (SM)

College/School

School of Creative Media (SM)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

Art Direction is an inseparable part of dramatic movie making, which sets a consistent visual tone of the entire movie through the creative control of color, texture, compositions, light source etc. With in-depth case studies, the aim of the

course is to equip students with the knowledge and understanding of the technique of art direction. Equal emphasis is placed on training students' creative visual treatment in translating senses, thoughts and feelings of a narrative into film set design and moving images. It also aims at stimulating and equipping students with the necessary methods to create their own unique visual expression and style through cinematic set creation and narrative interpretation with art direction. Students of the course are expected to apply such knowledge and skill in their own project.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Explore the professional world of art direction		x		
2	Experience the hand-on production process of executing artistic vision into well-structured moving images		x	x	
3	Acquire art direction techniques from pre-production to post-production stages and apply the aesthetic and technique of art direction in a narrative project			x	x
4	Create a visually rich video that demonstrate strong sense of artistic control and craftsmanship in art direction		x	x	x
5	Transform basic technical competence into a unique style or personal signature			x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs		Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lecture and Demonstration and Analysis report	In-depth analysis on the works of art direction in film and internet with demonstration of clips from internet and movie and class discussion	1	
2	Lecture and Demonstration and Practice	Perform a series of exercises in areas of art research, color consistency, color contrast, texture, composition etc..	2, 3	

3	Demonstration and Practice	The making of an art direction set and video	3, 4, 5	
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Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- " for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	In-class participation/ Attendance	1, 2, 3, 4	10	-	No
2	Group project (Set Building) work in visual styles and art direction	2, 3, 5	30	-	Yes
3	Group Video Production	1, 2, 3	20	-	No
4	Final individual project	4, 5	30	-	Yes
5	Final individual Presentation	2, 3	10	-	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Minimum Continuous Assessment Passing Requirement (%)

0

Minimum Examination Passing Requirement (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

2. Group project (Set Building)

Criterion

This assessment will grade on the construction of the set for filming. Students should show their co-operation to conduct a well-organized set with their own design and evidence from research and art direction. The threshold of 'discovery' lied in a student's self-initiatives to conduct additional research and to personalize theories for her/his personal daily experience into the designing of the final set.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

- Rich, informative content, excellent grasp of the material with in-depth and extensive knowledge of the subject matter (art direction/props)
- Rigorous organization, strong structure, and systematic exposition with a strong sense of narrative within the film set
- Superior visual presentation
- Exact time-management

Good (B+, B, B-)

- Adequate content with firm grasp of the material (art direction/props) that informs the audience on a subject matter
- Reasonable organization, balanced structure and composition with a good sense of narrative within the film set

- Good visual presentation
- Fair time-management

Fair (C+, C, C-)

- Adequate content with comprehensive grasp of the material (art direction/props) demonstrating basic knowledge of the subject matter
- Fair organization, weak structure and composition
- Fair time-management

Marginal (D)

- Weak content, loose grasp of the general ideas (art direction/props) with some knowledge of the subject matter
- Poor organization, structure and composition
- Poor time-management

Failure (F)

- Inadequate content, fail to identify the general ideas with knowledge of the subject matter (art direction/props)
- No organization, structure or/and composition
- Poor, minimal time-management

Assessment Task

3. Set Video Project

Criterion

Students should demonstrate ability to utilize primary and secondary sources, execute creative ideas and projects. The threshold of 'discovery' lies in a student's proactively turning theory into praxis, to transform course material into self-owned authorship.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

- Work has strong affective quality and the articulation of personal styles and signature
- Excellent appreciation, exploration and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the cinematic/art direction medium
- Work raises questions and instill insights about the process of conception, creative strategization and production
- Innovative exploration by combining knowledge from different disciplines (e.g. mathematics, psychology, physics, anthropology, etc.) to create an inter-disciplinary set video project
- Efficient adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available with constructive adjustment

Good (B+, B, B-)

- Strong appreciation, exploration and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the cinematic/art direction medium
- Ability to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration
- Proper adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available and constructive feedback/ suggestions

Fair (C+, C, C-)

- Basic appreciation and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the cinematic/art direction medium
- Limited ability to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration
- Adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available

Marginal (D)

- Marginal appreciation of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the cinematic/art direction medium
- Marginal ability to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration
- Limited adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available

Failure (F)

- No appreciation of the aesthetics and expressive qualities of the cinematic/art direction medium
 - Fail to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration
 - Minimal adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available
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Assessment Task

4. Individual Project

Criterion

This assessment will grade on rationality, clarity and fluency of argument and comment. The threshold of ‘discovery’ lies in a student’s ability to negotiate a position that is informed, defensible, and standing on personal insight.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

- Rich content, excellent ability to interpret and integrate various resources
- Rigorous organization, coherent structure, systematic composition
- Precision in argument, well defined and reasoned points of view grounded in insightful interpretation of existing literature
- Discussion shed light on new dimensions of the issue

Good (B+, B, B-)

- Adequate content, sufficient ability to integrate various resources based on demand
- Reasonable organization with balanced structure and composition
- Clear elaboration of ideas that sticks to the point, with clearly differentiated issues, ability to interpret narrative independently

Fair (C+, C, C-)

- Adequate content, fair ability to integrate various resources based on demand
- Fair organization with adequate structure and composition
- Relevant points made to the subject matter in question

Marginal (D)

- Weak content, limited use of resources
- Poor organization, structure and composition
- Relevant points to the subject matter, marginal ability to interpret narrative

Failure (F)

- Inadequate content, no/ irrelevant use of resources
 - No organization, structure or/and composition
 - Irrelevant points to the subject matter, no ability to interpret narrative
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Assessment Task

5. Individual Presentation

Criterion

This assessment will grade on content and fluency of presentation. Students should show a well-organized presentation with their own argument and evidence from readings and notes. The threshold of ‘discovery’ lies in a student’s self-initiated to conduct additional research and to personalize theories for her/his personal daily experience.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

- Rich, informative content, excellent grasp of the material with in-depth and extensive knowledge of the subject matter
- Rigorous organization, coherent structure, and systematic exposition with a strong sense of narrative
- Superior presentation skills: distinct pronunciation, fluent expression and appropriate diction, exact time-management

-Critical analysis with insightful comments opening up new issues, or suggesting the ability to theorize

Good (B+, B, B-)

- Adequate content with firm grasp of the material that informs the audience on a subject matter
- Reasonable organization, balanced structure and composition
- Good verbal communication: comprehensible pronunciation, fluent expression and diction, fair time-management

Fair (C+, C, C-)

- Adequate content with comprehensive grasp of the material demonstrating basic knowledge of the subject matter
- Fair organization, weak structure and composition
- Fair presentation skills: acceptable pronunciation, expression and diction, fair time-management

Marginal (D)

- Weak content, loose grasp of the general ideas with some knowledge of the subject matter
- Poor organization, structure and composition
- Poor presentation skills: marginal pronunciation, expression and diction, poor time-management

Failure (F)

- Inadequate content, fail to identify the general ideas with knowledge of the subject matter
- No organization, structure or/and composition
- Poor presentation skills: marginal pronunciation, expression and diction, minimal time-management

Additional Information for AR

All A+/A/A- grade assignment should comply with the highest performance of Discovery-oriented learning.

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

- Role & Responsibilities of an Art Director
- Translating senses & feelings into visuals
- Color Movement, Rhythm in Color
- Art Direction in relation with Light, Camera Movement, Wardrobe, MakeUp
- Creating and maintaining a visual tone in a movie
- Establishing time and space with tonal changes
- Painting with Art Direction
- Neo Expressionism in Art Direction
- Video collage
- In-depth case studies

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	To be determined by instructor

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Nil