

# Session 1. Introduction to COM2301

30 August 2016

# COM2301 Basics

- This course is an **introduction to video production** for mass communication.
- It is a hands-on course, so expect to ‘get dirty’ and to **invest a lot of time** in learning how to use a camera and to edit audio/video.
- There are no prerequisites and all assignments will be based on what we learn in class.

# Course objectives

1. Learn what is involved during the **pre-production, production, and post-production** stages;
2. Be familiar with **shot styles, shot composition** and **video structure**;
3. Acquire basic skills in **video editing** and **video shooting**;
4. Produce **professional videos** for different mass media.

# Readings & Tutorials

- There is no textbook for this course, although you have some recommendations in the course outline.
- Each week there will a reading assignment and a set of tutorials to watch. **These are compulsory.** I will assume you have read/watch them before coming to class.
- I might quiz you on these at any point during the course.

# Evaluation

- There is no exam for this course. Your grade will be based on practical assignments and in-class participation.
- I will grade your work and you will grade the work of your peers.
  - Be respectful and fair.
  - Provide constructive criticism.
  - Be ready to listen to what ‘your audience’ has to say.

# Assignments

- Individual assignments [35%]
  - 24 hours in the life of... [For example](#)
  - Feature story for social media [For example](#)
- Group project [50%]
  - Long format commercial [Example I](#) or [Example II](#) or [Example III](#)
- In-class exercises [15%]
  - ‘How to use ... in 7 shots’
  - Music video
  - News report
  - Vlog entry...

# Assignments

- You will work in groups of 5 people (not less, not more) for the group project.
  - IMPORTANT: Decide the members of your team by **Week 3** and assign yourself to a group on Canvas.
- In-class exercises will be completed in groups of 2 (except for one group of 3). I have assigned these groups. You will find them on Canvas.

# Deadlines

**All assignments are due  
Tuesdays, 12pm. No exceptions.**

# Canvas + GApps

- All information related to the course is (or will be) on Canvas. Keep an eye on Canvas regularly not to miss important announcements.
- You will need to open a CityU Google Apps account by **Week 2**. Instructions on how to do that are on the Course Outline. You will post all video assignments on your GApps YouTube channel.

# Equipment

- In this course we will use **DSLR cameras** for video shooting. You can borrow Canon 600D from the Department or you can use your own (recommended!).
- For tutorials and in-class exercises we will be using **Adobe Premiere**, **Adobe Audition** and **Adobe After Effects**. You are free to use other software for your assignments.

# The 9 rules for success

1. Come to class every week, don't be late.
2. Meet the deadlines, no exceptions.
3. Allow time to learn how to shoot & edit.
4. Read and watch what is assigned.
5. Do not use your phone, unless I ask you to.
6. Ask questions, please.
7. Contribute to class discussions.
8. Embrace criticism, provide feedback.
9. Stay safe, do not break the law.

# Schedule

Week	Lecture	Hands-on
1	Pre-production I	Storyboarding 'How does ... work?'
2	Pre-production II	DSLR Camera basics
3	Production I: Shooting basics	Shoot 'How does ... work?'
4	Post-production I: Editing basics	Edit 'How does ... work?'
5	Production II: Audio basics	Editing a music video
6	Review of assignment #1	Shooting and editing
7	Post-production II: Effects	Review previous week's work
8	Video for PR and advertising	Pitching of group project ideas
9	Video for news reporting	Writing and editing a news report
10	Video for the Internet	Shooting and editing a vlog
11	Production III: Lighting	Lighting hands-on & time for editing
12	Review of assignment #2	Time for group editing
13	Group presentations	

# Schedule

Week	Assignment due	Type
1	***	
2	***	
3	Submit storyboard for '24 Hours in the life of...'	Individual
4	***	
5	Submit '24 Hours in the life of...' (Final Edit)	Individual
6	Peer review of '24 Hours in the life of...'	Individual
7	***	
8	Submit treatment, storyboard, shot list of feature story	Individual
9	Submit treatment of commercial	Group
10	Submit storyboard & shot list of commercial	Group
11	Submit feature story	Individual
12	Peer review of feature story	
13	Submit commercial (Rough Edit)	Group

# Questions



# Session 2. Video pre-production

30 August 2016

# What is video production?

- Let's consider the following three videos:
  - Sample 1
  - Sample 2
  - Sample 3
- The “digital revolution” has made video production much cheaper and easier, helping towards the convergence of platforms and formats.



**The many paths from production to distribution**

# What is video production?

- There are five skills that you need to be a good video producer
  1. You need to know how to handle the equipment.
  2. You need to know how changes in the equipment affect your image/audio.
  3. You need to know how to effectively capture (audio and video) what you want.
  4. You need to know how to express ideas and use video and audio to do that.
  5. You need to know how to organise your time and resources.

# Stages in video production

- There are generally speaking three video production phases:
  1. **Preproduction**, which involves designing, planning and coordinating all production details;
  2. **Production**, which refers to encoding a script or a well developed idea into a series of video segments;
  3. **Postproduction**, consisting of selecting and sequencing the best video segments for a coherent video program.

Zettl, 2013 (p. 5)

# Pre-production

- Coming up with an idea.
- Turning this idea into a treatment, drafting a storyboard and preparing a shot list.
- **Scouting a location** for shooting.
- Asking all required permits and authorizations from relevant parties.
- It is the **most important stage** in video production. The more thorough the planning, the smoother the production.

# Production

- Translating your idea (treatment, storyboard and shot list) into a series of moving images.
- Operating the recording material, both audio and sound.
- For larger productions, coordinating a team of specialists in the different areas.
- For fiction and advertising, directing the work of actors and models—**the talent**.

# Post-production

- Selecting the best parts of your recorded material.
- Assembling the parts into a coherent narrative—a story.
- Enhancing the picture and sound with digital software when needed.
- Correcting some of the minor glitches that occurred during the production stage.
- It is usually the longest of all stages.

# Approaches in video production

- The empirical approach

It is guided by **instinct** and **opportunity**. You start with an idea, you go and shoot possible material and then create a piece from what you gathered.

- The planned approach

It is guided by **research** and **planning**. You start with an idea, then you organize and carefully think each stage out based on an objective.

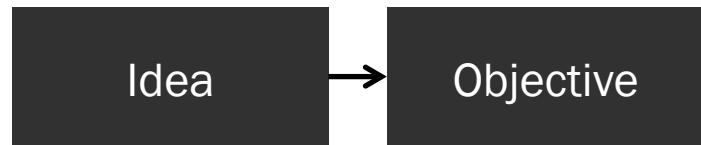
# From idea to script

Idea

# Idea

- Although you always start with a vague idea, you must always strive to make it as concrete as possible.
- The best ideas come from group thinking, through processes such as **brainstorming** or **clustering**.

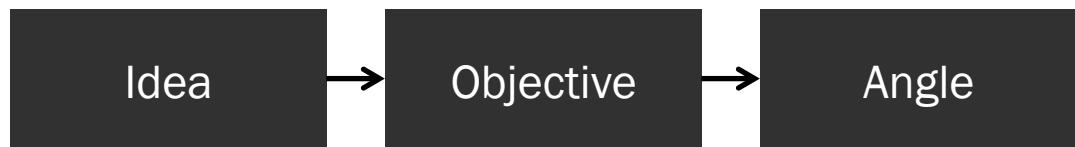
# From idea to script



# (Program/video) Objective

- The objective of your video is the **measurable goal** that you are trying to achieve with your piece.
  - Persuade costumers to buy a new product.
  - Inform people about an event.
  - Entertain an audience.
  - Inform the population about an emergency...

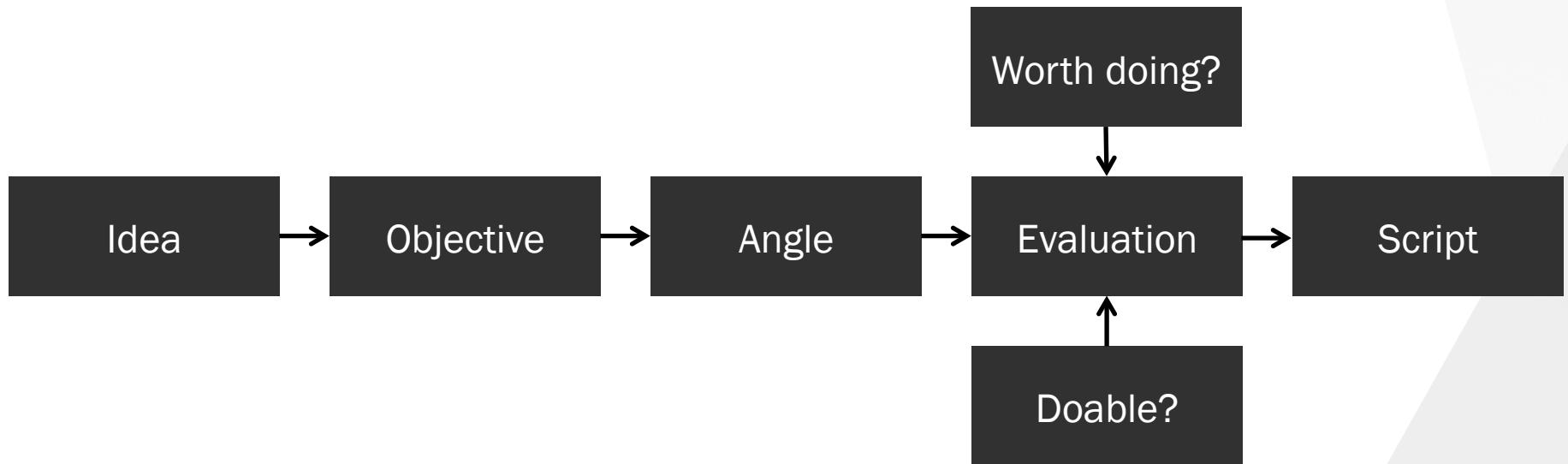
# From idea to script



# Angle

- The angle is the way you plan to tell your story for it to effectively achieve your objective.

# From idea to script



# Script and other documents

- Script
- [Proposal]
- Treatment
- Storyboard
- Shot list

# Script

- A script is the written text of your video production (commercial, film, TV program, public service announcement...). It includes instructions for the talent and the technical crew, as well as the actual text for actors and narrators.
- Some small-scale video productions will not have a script, but some other forms of narrative detailing the contents of the video.

# Script

- There are many styles of scripts and each media/format has its own rules. We will see some of them later in the course.
- Generally speaking two types of scripts can be identified:
  - Single column format, derive from cinema.
  - Dual column format, derived from TV



HANS  
Your Majesty, if I may ease your--  
ELSA  
(flustered)  
No, you may not. And I-I think you  
should go.

Elsa walks away. As she passes the Royal Handler--

ELSA (CONT'D)  
The party is over. Close the gates.

ANNA  
What? Elsa, no. No, wait!

Anna grabs Elsa's hand. She pulls off Elsa's glove. Elsa  
gasps, spins around and reaches for the glove in panic.

ELSA  
Give me my glove!

Anna holds the glove away from Elsa.

ANNA  
(desperate)  
Elsa, please. Please. I can't live  
like this anymore.

Elsa fights tears.

ELSA  
(weak)  
...Then leave.

Elsa sees Anna's hurt face. It's too much. She can't hold it  
in. She turns and rushes away.

ANNA  
(heartbroken)  
...What did I ever do to you?!

The party goes silent as everyone watches the sisters.

ELSA  
Enough, Anna.

ANNA  
No. Why? Why do you shut me out?!  
Why do you shut the world out?!  
What are you so afraid of?!

ELSA  
I said, enough!

Property of the Walt Disney Animation Studios

Single column format  
Script for “Frozen” by Jennifer Lee

A03 A03

TAKE: VT-SOT: SHOW OPEN

TAKE: CAMERA BUMP

{\*\*\*JON\*\*\*}

(CAM)  
WELCOME TO "THE DAILY SHOW."  
I'M JON STEWART.

COMING UP ON TODAY'S SHOW...  
RALPH REED WILL BE JOINING US.



A04 A04

{\*\*\*JON\*\*\*}

///  
WE BEGIN TONIGHT WITH SOME LONG-AWAITED PROSECUTIONS IN THE WAR ON TERROR.

TAKE: ROLL 110  
TAKE: VT: MOHAMMED  
PHOTO/MUGSHOT

TAKE: OTS/VZ1: MOHAMMED  
MUGSHOT

TAKE: ROLL 112  
TAKE: VT: GUANTANAMO BAY

TAKE: OTS/VZ1: GUANTANAMO BAY

{VO}  
TERRORIST MASTER-SLOB KHALID SHEIKH MOHAMMED AND FOUR OTHERS ARE ON TRIAL FOR THEIR SUSPECTED INVOLVEMENT IN THE 9-11 ATTACKS.

(CAM)

IT'S GOING TO BE A DIFFICULT TRIAL, AS ALL FIVE SUSPECTS HAVE ADMITTED THEY DID IT AND WOULD LIKE TO BE PUT TO DEATH.  
REALLY, AN OPEN-AND-SHUT CASE, IF IT WERE BEING HELD IN AMERICA.  
BUT IT'S NOT.

{VO}  
IT'S BEING HELD IN THE INFAMOUS GUANTANAMO BAY DETENTION FACILITY IN CUBA, WHERE LIMBO IS BOTH THE REGIONAL DANCE... "AND" THE LEGAL STATUS OF ITS INHABITANTS.

(CAM)

BY THE WAY, GUANTANAMO, ALSO KNOWN AS GITMO, WHICH HAPPENS TO BE THE NAME OF THE LEAST-POPULAR

## Double column format Script for Comedy Central's "Daily Show" (

# Treatment

- A treatment is a narrative description of a video production.
  - It is intended to **convince** a company, a TV station, a client... that your idea is great.
  - It should **inform** the reader about how you plan to develop it into video.
  - It should **explain** what angle you are going to use to present your story compellingly.

# Treatment

- The first paragraph [sometimes called an ‘elevator pitch’] will include information about the title, length, format and objective.
  - Briefly summarize your idea.
- It should be followed by a description of what the audience would see when watching your production.
  - Be specific, but not technical.
- Finally, include an overview of your angle and why you think your idea is good.

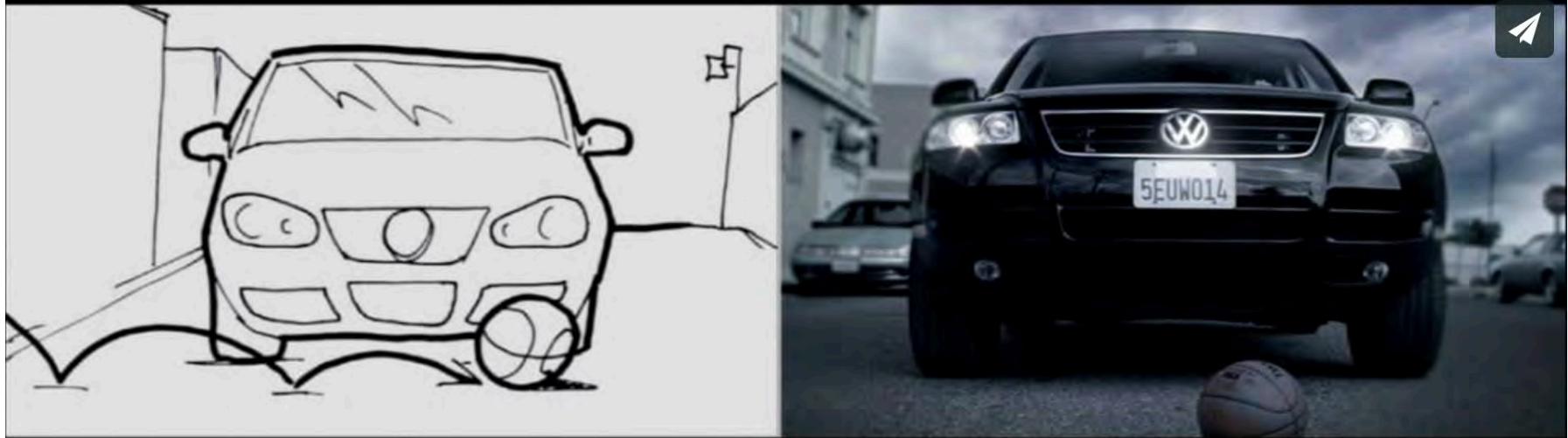
# Storyboard

- A storyboard is a series of **rough sketches** that illustrate and organize camera treatment. You can think of it as a visual map of a script.
- A storyboard usually includes
  - Main subjects in any given shot;
  - A rough idea of the location/setting;
  - Camera movements;

カット	画 面	内 容	秒
562			
563			1.5
			2.5
258			
259			
259			6.0

## Storyboard for *My Neighbor Totoro*, Miyazaki Hayao (from Studio Ghibli Storyboard Collection, Volume 3, 2010)

# STORYBOARD TO FINAL COMMERCIAL COMPARISON



JOHNNY DERANGO

CINEMATOGRAPHER | LOS ANGELES | CHICAGO | NEW YORK

HD



Comparison between Storyboard and final edit by Johnny Derango, Director of Photography. From <https://vimeo.com/10298650>

# Practice

- Let's consider this video again...



# Storyboard

- You do not need to be a great artist to create a storyboard. Even simple shapes are enough as long as you can convey visually what you want to achieve in each shot.
- A good storyboard will save time during shooting and will avoid rushed decisions and provides a much needed overview for complex productions.

# Shot List

- A shot list is, literally, a long list with every single shot that you need in your production.
- Usually a shot list contains at least 5/6 columns:
  - Shot number (sometimes scene too)
  - Shot Type
  - Duration (sometimes location too)
  - Description

<b>Month to Month</b>		
Dir: Wes Hopper		
DP: Gus Sacks		
September, 2009	<b>Note: In script order</b>	
<b>Shot List</b>	HH: Hand held; ST: Sticks; FG: foreground; BG: background; RV: Roving; LL: Long Lens; Three: Three Shot, Two: Two Shot CU: Close up; MCU: Medium Close up; MS: Medium Shot; MWS: Medium Wide; WS: Wide Shot	
<b>Scene</b>		
<b>Shot</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Notes</b>
1		EXT. BROOKLYN AVENUE - DAY
1	WS	Tracking left-right, HH, with them down street
2	WS	Similar along another street
3	MS	Punch-in on sequence, tracking HH
4	WS	At a corner, they walk into it, across street - LL WS
5	TWO	Two shot, LL Punch-In of 1.4
2		EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DUSK
1	MS	Nate paces towards/away from frame, slightly low-angle
2	MWS	Seth on stoop, slightly off-center frontal
3		INT. APARTMENT BUILDING STAIRWELL - DAY
1	MS	Angle on doorway, slightly frontal/more off-angle
4		INT. APARTMENT - DAY
1	MS	HH follow, from ext. apartment, track in through hallway, they move within frame in/out
5		INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM - DAY
1	MS	Emile in doorway, S/N slightly dirty till they go to window
2	MWS	To window of Seth and Nate
3	MS	Punch-in on window, slightly off-angle
6/7		INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY/KITCHEN - DAY
1	MS - THREE	Follow Seth HH down hallway - end up in kitchen in three shot stacked with Nate in bg - S and Emile in fg
8		INT. APARTMENT - SECOND BEDROOM - DAY
1	THREE	Mostly frontal three shot, squeezed into space
9		INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - DAY
1	MS	Static HH, down hallway, LL two shot of S and N on opposite sides of hall
2	MCU	<i>Single on Seth - off-angle dirty</i>
3	MCU	<i>Single on Nate - off-angle dirty</i>
10		EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY
1	MCU	Insert on handle, tilt up to CU of Nate
11		INT. APARTMENT BUILDING STAIRWELL - DAY

## Shot list

From the movie “Month to Month” by Wes Hopper

# Keyword

- Pre-production
- Production
- Post-production
- Script
- Treatment
- Storyboard
- Shot list
- Talent
- Objective
- Angle

# Session 3. Storyboarding

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# Assignment - “How to use ... ”

- Use less than 12 camera shots to explain to an alien how to use one of the following: a traffic light, an elevator or a photocopying machine.
- Work with your partner to brainstorm what is the best way to visually (no audio or textual aid) illustrate how to use one of the above and **draw a storyboard**.

# Assignment - “How to use ... ”

- Basic rules for this assignment:
  - You can only have a maximum of 12 shots.
  - There can be no narration, just natural sound.
  - No camera movements, just static shots.
  - You will work in pairs.
- When you finish your storyboard (today, in class), take a photograph and upload it to Canvas.