



## Suggestions for Developing a Video Course

This guide is designed to help those interested in teaching a course whose primary mode of storytelling is video production.

### Timeline

#### Developing a Digital Maine (DM) project proposal

1. Contact DM Steering Committee well in advance of the course's delivery (for example, Fall 2016 for a course to be taught in academic year 2016-17). See the *Digital Maine Project Guide*.
2. Contact Tim Stonesifer in Academic ITS. He will be able to assist with developing your idea for a video project. He will guide you through the equipment and the production process.
3. Submit a project proposal to the DM Steering Committee by February 1 of the academic year before the course is taught.

#### Preparing a DM course syllabus

1. If you haven't already, develop a basic understanding of your technical toolbox. For DM video courses, we suggest Final Cut X for editing and Canon XA10, tripods, and wireless mics for the equipment.
2. Revise your project proposal, considering how your perspective of the final goals might have changed as you have become more familiar with your toolbox.
3. Work with Tim to decide how you want the students to publish their final videos. Are you going to create a YouTube page for the class? Do you want Academic ITS to handle the video uploads? Do you want students to create a website that showcases the videos?
4. Revisit how projects will be developed and assessed. For example, are these individual projects, team projects, or a mixture of the two? Will you define the project research questions and parameters? Will students define their own projects? Will they collectively define group projects? Will you design the grading rubrics, or will they be collaboratively defined by the class as a whole? Tim can help with guiding you towards rubrics for grading video projects.
5. Write a project charter, using the DM project management guide.
6. Write and revise your syllabus. Here's a rough outline of how you might structure a video course:

#### Weeks 1 -3

- Review project charter with class, ensuring that students have a clear sense of the course and project objectives.
- Introduce and discuss Digital Humanities as a field (see suggested readings).
- Begin developing subject competence.

#### Weeks 4 - 6

- Connect to Academic ITS, so that students identify technologists as project collaborators and resources from the outset.
- Begin developing technical competence through a series of exercises (e.g. in-class editing workshops, camera training, brief technical assignments).
- Possible short video assignment to get the students experienced as using cameras before the

final project.

#### Weeks 7 – 9

- Provide guidelines on working as a team (e.g. project management, team writing and editing), journaling and self-assessment, and writing horizontal and upward feedback.
- Read/discuss producing a video for an audience.
- Get students to build a gallery of video best practices, identifying models for possible projects.
- Continue developing subject competence.
- Continue developing technical competence through exercises.
- Students turn in project outline/proposal
- Students contact their subjects to schedule interviews
- Students begin shooting their projects

#### Weeks 10 - 13

- Students finish shooting
- Editing workshop refresher
- Rough Cuts due (a fully assembled video which tells the story from beginning to end, but still needs to be refined)
- Fine Cuts due (building from the rough cut, but will have well-timed edits and a polished sound track. Can focus on the minor details that will make it a stronger video)
- Final Cuts due
- Students upload their projects, metadata to Digital Maine

#### Other logistical concerns

1. Contact possible collaborators — both inside and outside the college — well in advance of the semester (e.g. for a fall course, contact collaborators early in the summer). Schedule class visits, materials acquisition and hosting, field visits, etc.
2. Early in the semester, schedule a project launch/exhibition (e.g. event in Special Collections). Note: it violates college rules to schedule events during reading days. Organize publicity for the event and the project (the Center for the Arts and Humanities might sponsor posters or food).

#### Suggestions

- Build in a fake final deadline. This gives you flexibility if the shooting schedule changes or students have problems with interview subjects or getting b-roll footage.
- Two rounds of cuts before the final project are usually a good idea. One rough cut and one fine cut. Can discuss this with Tim when you work on the rubric.
- Give yourself a break when it comes to evaluation. You won't be able to individualize assessment as tidily in a collaborative class like this. Have students self-assess, as well as provide horizontal feedback on team members. You might also build in upward feedback, in which students assess your role as an overall project manager.