

RTF 368S - PRODUCTION THESIS (UNDERGRADUATE)

• PROF RICHARD LEWIS

For filmmakers wishing to create a narrative or documentary film that demonstrates and showcases advanced filmmaking skills.

The class is for DIRECTORS and PRODUCERS (exceptions to this rule noted below), and students should apply in two person directing/producing teams that will work together to shepherd the project from beginning to end. From pre-production to sound mix, students will complete a short film or video project (under 12 minutes in length) with the most advanced equipment available to RTF undergraduates. Emphasis will be placed on storytelling, strong cinematic style, and production values. Teams should plan to enter the class with detailed outlines or scripts, and the directing/producing teams are responsible for assembling their own crews.

IMPORTANT: The class historically takes a max of 12 projects. With a max of two projects shooting simultaneously, six production weeks are required to get everyone shot out. With April reserved for post and backtracking six weeks from March 31, some projects will have to shoot in late February.

PREREQUISITES

Must be a currently-enrolled RTF major with a University GPA of at least 2.25 and have upper-division standing.

Narrative directors are required to have completed one of the following courses before applying:

- RTF 343 – Advanced Narrative Production
- RTF 367L – Narrative Filmmaking – 16mm

Documentary directors are required to have completed...

- RTF 343 – Advanced Documentary Production

Producers of either narratives or documentaries are required to have completed or be concurrently enrolled in...

- RTF 367k – Producing Film and Television

NOTE: If you are a director or a producer but do not yet have a collaborator, go ahead and apply, and Prof. Lewis will do his best to match you up. You will have the final say with regard to who your collaborator is (i.e., no forced collaborations), **but you must be in a director/producer team to be in the class.** Know that director/producer teams are like marriages – choose your partner very carefully.

EXCEPTIONS: I will consider exceptions to the “Directors and Producers only” rule for non-director/producers, but you must make a case as to how your work in this class will truly equal a semester’s worth of work. For example, DP’ing one film is not a semester’s worth of work. Previously granted exceptions fall into two categories:

1. **Multiple roles on one project.** One student, for instance, was part of a project team where he did locations in pre-production, DP’d during production, and edited in post. That’s definitely a semester’s worth of work.
2. **One role on multiple projects.** One student, for instance, did location sound on five different projects. That’s definitely a semester’s worth of work. Note that if this is the route you want to take,

you'll have to wait until after the consent period to see which projects get selected, then make your case to those directors and producers, then present your proposal to me for approval. I.e., you likely wouldn't be able to register until January. This is not a problem and you shouldn't worry about space not being available in the class.

Know that you CAN take undergrad thesis twice for credit as long as your role changes: i.e., once as a director and once as a producer.

ENROLLMENT CRITERIA AND HOW TO APPLY:

Enrollment in this class is by consent. Consent will be based on:

1. Your experience level and the quality of your previous work
2. The quality of your thesis project synopsis
3. The instructor's perception of your ability to complete the project (through final sound mix) by semester's end. Note that your prior instructors and TAs will be contacted about your timeliness, attendance, ability to meet deadlines, etc.
4. Whether you are in a producer/director team
5. Your flexibility on shoot dates
6. Your seniority (seniors are given preference over juniors)

There should be ONE e-mail consent application for each TEAM. When e-mailing, please make sure the words "RTF 368s consent" + your name(s) are in the subject line.

Please e-mail Professor Lewis (rmlewis@austin.utexas.edu) with the following information for each two-person team **no later than 5 pm on Thurs, November 1.**

For each of the director and the producer, please provide:

1. Name and position (producer or director)
2. UT EID
3. E-mail address
4. Telephone number(s)
5. Anticipated date of graduation (e.g. May '19)
6. Complete list of production/screenwriting classes you have taken and the names of the instructors for those classes (as well as the TAs if you remember them)
7. Describe your writing / directing / producing experience on previous projects.
8. **Provide a STORY SYNOPSIS of the film you intend to make in the class.** Two pages max, single-spaced, double-spaced between paragraphs. Also note whether the script is to be written by an outside screenwriter (i.e., not the director or producer). Note: this class has a strict 12-minute running time limit for fiction films.
9. URL(s) of previous work (and any passwords if required)
10. All shoots will have Wednesday checkouts and check-ins the following Tuesday. Please indicate which of the following periods (all in 2019) you can do. Know that a lack of flexibility here may impact whether or not your project is given consent for the class.

- 2/20 – 2/26
- 2/27 – 3/5
- 3/6 – 3/12
- 3/13 – 3/19
- 3/20 – 3/26
- 3/27 – 4/2

Again, please collect this info for both the director and the producer, and then submit via a single e-mail.

Consent decisions will be made by 5 pm on November 7 so that you can register by the 9th, the last day for early registration.

FIRST CLASS DAY POLICY

Students must attend the first class day or make prior arrangements with the instructor. Students who do not attend the first class meeting may be dropped from the class.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS...

Contact Professor Lewis via e-mail: rmlewis@austin.utexas.edu.