

Documentary Film Laboratory
Annenberg School of Communications

Objectives

The Documentary Film Laboratory is designed to give the student an opportunity to become acquainted with the basic concepts and crafts involved in the making of a film. This course is considered a laboratory for the study of specific communications phenomena; enabling the student to learn something of the problems inherent in this mode of communication and offering him an opportunity to learn some of the conceptual and mechanical tools required for solutions to these problems.

Every student completing this course will be required to make a film (alone or with an associate) from conception to final print.

It is not the purpose of the Documentary Film Laboratory to train professional cinematographers, editors, script writers or laboratory technicians.

The course is based upon the notion that anyone entering the broad field of communications as a professional in research, scholarship, or production may find it necessary to deal with the filmic image. It is hoped that a year in the Laboratory will make it a little easier for him to handle this image with taste, insight, critical judgement, and creative understanding.

C O N T E N T

Although this course is designed as a laboratory where the student can learn to use the professional tools of moviemaking, these tools are recognized as both mechanical and conceptual, and therefore heavy emphasis is placed on theory. While the laboratory is a place where the student can amass a large variety of factual and technical information, an effort is made to provide the student with the beginnings of a theoretical framework to help him select the most appropriate tools for the solution of his particular film communication problems.

A student completing this course will become acquainted with, and learn to use a script, motion picture cameras -- both silent and synchronous sound, editing and editing procedures, film laboratories for processing and special effects, and basic sound recording, scripting, and mixing. He will be introduced to the requirements of musical and sound scoring as well as to the basic scientific disciplines associated with the making of a film -- optics, densitometry, and emulsion chemistry. He will learn to use the basic film reference books and journals.

In order to simulate actual professional conditions for both conceiving and producing a film, so as to teach cost and budget methods all students will be assigned budgets. Students will work with professional laboratories for processing film^s and sound recording, and will be required to complete films for deadline showings, at budget.

