

MRTS 4740 | Editing I

INSTRUCTOR

Jacqueline Davis

EMAIL

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OFFICE HOURS

180R (Grad Lab)

8AM-11AM Mo-Th

(Online Appt. Available)

(If you cannot find me in the editing lab, check the main office and equipment room)

OBJECTIVES

This course will introduce students to the history, theory, creative, technical techniques, and general workflow used in film and television editing using industry standard digital editing software. The primary aim by the end of the course is to allow those enrolled to:

- Develop critical evaluation skills to determine narrative intent and narrative clarity.
- Develop the skills needed to map out postproduction needs before starting an edit.
- Develop artistic skills needed to make storytelling decisions a priority in all phases of production.
- Learn the technical and critical decision-making skills needed for efficient project completion.
- Learn how the basic principles and theory of editing applies to various formats and genres.
- Learn how editing technique, aesthetics, & theory are the guiding forces behind editing decisions.
- Learn how to communicate with other departments on a project.
- Attain professional-level competence using industry standard tools, and optionally a certification to prove it to potential future employers.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Headphones

External hard drive (*see recommended hardware page on Canvas*)

Media Composer Fundamentals ALC 101 | **Provided**

Media Composer Fundamentals ALC 110 | **Provided**

The Art of the Cut: Conversations with TV & Film Editors by Steve Hullfish | **Recommended**

[Available via UNT Willis Library](#)

Note: All footage and programs used in class will be provided to students.

CLASS COMMUNICATION

As per FERPA, all class communication will be done via student and professor UNT emails or the Canvas Messaging system. If you prefer to use a non-UNT email service, I recommend setting up a forwarder via EagleConnect. See the Class Canvas for helpful links. That said, **I will not discuss private matters such as grades or attendance digitally with anything other than our unt.edu emails.**

I encourage students to reach out to me and schedule meetings either in person or via zoom. My office hours are scheduled between classes that I already have and I would hate to rush you through something, so scheduling is a better way to ensure you get what you need. I cannot guarantee that I will always be immediately available, but I have been known to zoom with students as they are experiencing issues in the lab. **I can't help you if I don't know something is wrong!**

All information regarding individual project requirements, in class PowerPoints, class announcements, and various other helpful links and tips will be posted on canvas.

Students can also find scheduled events such as exams and project due dates via the class calendar on Canvas. I try my best to keep it as up to date as possible. It will also include potential extra credit opportunities there as well (*see grading policy*).

GRADING POLICY

This course will consist of three projects, four lesson exams, an **optional** final project, book exercises & discussions, and one comprehensive final. The heavier grade weight will go to the projects. Exams are open book & online. The final exam is in person and open book. Students should not anticipate in-class work time for their projects. That said, I am in the habit of sticking around after class for students who would like some additional help—if they ask for it—and sometimes end class early.

Projects, Exams, Exercises, & Discussions are due by midnight on the Friday of that week unless explicitly stated otherwise in writing. That said, keep in mind that the Edit Lab closes early on Fridays. Assignments will be submitted via Canvas unless otherwise stated. Late assignments will receive a 2% deduction for every day it is late. **I don't like failing people. Please give me an excuse to pass you.**

Throughout the semester, there will be several extra credit opportunities via the Media Arts Series (MAS). Students can find upcoming events in the [department calendar](#). Furthermore, there will be posters up around the building advertising upcoming MAS events as well as social media posts. **Each event attended is an extra point on the final exam.**

Students who show up to class and submit their projects on time will not find this to be a difficult class to pass. It is not an easy class to get an A in, though. Don't expect a GPA booster.

GRADING PERCENTAGES:

Project One	16.33%	Storytelling in Documentary
Project Two	16.33%	Finding Rhythm in Action
Project Three	16.33%	Matching Tone in Dialogue
Final Project (Optional)	regrade of previous project	Fine Cut
Participation	20%	Attendance, Discussions, & Exercises
Lesson Quizzes	5%	End of Chapter Quizzes in the eBook
Chapter Exam Average	15% (3.75% per exam)	Open book, online
Final Exam	10%	Comprehensive, open book, in person
Extra Credit		Media Arts Series Events
Total:	100%+	

Note: percentages are subject to change in the event of circumstances including but not limited to weather days, health emergencies, etc.

TARDINESS AND ABSENCE POLICY

This is a very participatory course. Attendance is required. That said, I understand that unexpected life events happen. I try to be as flexible as possible with the people who communicate with me. Furthermore, **I do provide two “freebee” unexcused absences.** After that, **every unexcused absence will result in a dock to the student's roll call grade** (students can see this via canvas). Students should note that withdrawing from a class, officially or unofficially, can have an effect on financial aide at the end of the semester. (see: [Withdrawing | financialaid.unt.edu](#).)

Students arriving late to class will also receive a tardiness deduction. I take attendance at the beginning of class.

Students who arrive after attendance is taken are responsible for making sure they are not marked absent at the end of class. Failure to do so **in person** will result in an absence for that day.

Students who leave early without prior notice are subject to tardiness deductions as well.

Students who wish to have an absence or tardy excused must provide proof, including but not limited to:

- Doctor's note (the campus clinic is free or low cost to students)
- Dated documents for whatever event you had to attend (i.e. funeral, wedding, etc.)

NOTE: avoid sending me sensitive information such as home address, license number, SSN, etc. Don't put me in that weird legal situation, please.

DROP POLICY

As this is a Media Arts course, students without the correct prerequisites (both non-majors and pre-majors) are subject to being dropped from the course automatically with or without notice. Students absent on the first day of class who do not immediately contact the instructor with a legitimate excuse may be dropped immediately and without notice.

CERTIFICATION

Additionally, students in this course will be able to take the official Avid Media Composer certification exam. **These exams are included in your tuition for this class, but will not be calculated in your final grade.** However, certification can be a very powerful tool for getting hired when you first start out in the industry. Plus, students who get certified get an automatic 100% on their final exam and do not have to take it.

There will be multiple opportunities to re-take the certification exam. Students who pass with an 80% or higher will become Certified Media Composer Specialists. Certification lists students on a searchable database for potential employers and demonstrates a working knowledge of the software for those with less experience.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Students are neither required nor expected to use their own equipment for this course. Students who request it can receive a free semester's subscription to Avid Media Composer for their personal computer. It should be noted, however, that Media Composer's minimum system requirements might be too much for some machines. Furthermore, students are **not** permitted to remove the footage used in class or projects from campus ([see: Copyright Law](#)).

Furthermore, this will be a course that relies on the students' own core computer literacy. I will do my best to bridge any gaps in the students' knowledge. However, students who are not confident on their own computer literacy (specifically Windows 11) are encouraged to seek out other resources.

CLASSROOM SCREENINGS

Lectures will include screenings and discussions of various editing examples from a variety of media, genres, and editing styles. Some of these samples may be recent and may be from popular forms of media. Students are not exempt from these screenings just because they "don't want spoilers". Students participating in screening discussions are expected to be courteous and thoughtful (see *Student Behavior*).

Some of these screenings may cover uncomfortable material for some people, in which case a content warning will be provided before watching. That said, **I am not perfect and I am not a mind reader.** I will warn for violence, gore, etc. by default. Some clips will also feature strong language. If students have specific triggers, they are responsible for making me aware of them. I cannot fix problems if I don't know they're there!

STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including University and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct.

Disruptive behavior includes but is not limited to:

- Talking with classmates
- Using lecture time to work on projects, whether they are for this class or not
- Excessive cellphone usage (See *Mobile Device Policy*)

For further information, students may reference the Code of Student Conduct: deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct.

MOBILE DEVICE POLICY

Department of Media Arts production courses prohibit the use of personal electronic devices during class, unless specifically determined by the individual Instructor. Unless those exceptions are contained in a course syllabus and/or altered by the instructor of record, department policy takes precedence.

Personal electronic devices include (but are not limited to) mobile phones, digital media players, digital readers/tablets, and some handheld computers. All devices should be turned off before entering the classroom or laboratory area. Personal computers and some tablets may be used in the classroom for note taking with instructor permission.

Each student will receive one warning. Afterwards, any student found in violation of the personal electronic device policy will incur a 5% penalty to their overall final course grade for each occurrence. **Penalties are not negotiable.**

SUCCESS IN THE COURSE

UNT endeavors to offer you a high-quality education and to provide a supportive environment to help you learn and grow. And, as a faculty member, I am committed to helping you be successful as a student. Here's how to succeed at UNT: Show up. Find support. Get advised. Be prepared. Get involved. To learn more about convenient campus resources and information on how you can prioritize wellness and achieve success with the support of UNT's caring community, go to succeed.unt.edu (<https://success.unt.edu/>) and explore wellness.unt.edu (<https://wellness.unt.edu/>).

I value the many perspectives students bring to our campus. Please work with me to create a classroom culture of open communication, mutual respect, and belonging. All discussions should be respectful and civil. Although disagreements and debates are encouraged, personal attacks are unacceptable. Together, we can ensure a safe and welcoming classroom for all. If you ever feel like this is not the case, please stop by my office and let me know. We are all learning together.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STANDARDS AND CONSEQUENCES

According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University.

COURSE SPECIFIC ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STANDARDS, COPYRIGHT LAW, & AI USAGE

Just because this is a course that deals with digital media instead of the written word **does not mean that plagiarism is not possible**. This course is intended to help students find their own artistic style and learn how to make your own editing decisions. You are only hurting yourself if you simply copy others' work.

Furthermore, **any use of generative AI in this course is strictly prohibited**. Tools such as Avid's built in speech-to-text transcript tool (**PhraseFind**) may be used, but anything along the lines of **CapCut's** AI full on AI editing tools will not be tolerated. You are in this class to grow as an artist and if you only intend to offload all potential opportunities to think to a computer that is pumping fumes into and stealing drinking water from actual, living people, you are taking up a seat that someone else needs. If you ever tried something like this in the professional world, you would be immediately blacklisted from the entire industry. What's more, if I catch you using GenAI in class, you will face the full consequences available as per the Student Academic Integrity policy. I also warn students away from AI note taking tools as most students who have used them in the past, have not been the ones that do well over all in the class.

With the exception of exercise materials (which are provided on Canvas), the footage used in class and for projects is obtained via a license agreement with EditStock. Our agreement limits use of this footage to **on campus only**. Footage is to be ***only accessed via the server***, even if you want to edit from home. Students who take copies of the footage off campus are in violation of academic integrity standards and jeopardize the University's license with EditStock and therefore other students' ability to access footage. **Don't be the reason we can't have nice things.**

Students may upload their projects publicly for portfolio purposes, **however**, students must include the animated EditStock logo (found on the server with the other footage) either before or after the edited project and students may **not** do anything to claim or infer that their edit is the official one. Violating these rules is a violation of copyright law and students are personally subject to any legal ramifications therein.

Students may use third party music, sound effects, or motion graphics, **however**, it must all be royalty free. Violating these rules is a violation of copyright law and students are personally subject to any legal ramifications therein. Any use of copyrighted music will result in points taken off the assignment unless the student can provide proof of written permission from the rights holder.

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION & PROCEDURES

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to the UNT Learning Management System (LMS) for contingency plans for covering course materials.

COURSE EVALUATION

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The survey will be made available during weeks 13, 14 and 15 of the long semesters to provide students with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. Students will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification" (no-reply@iasystem.org) with the survey link. Students should look for the email in their UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete the survey. Once students complete the survey they will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the SPOT website at spot.unt.edu or email spot@unt.edu.

If 100% of the class submits their SPOT Evaluations at the end of the semester, everyone gets extra credit.

STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTER

The University of North Texas considers the health and wellness of the students a top priority, and essential to the learning environment. In support of student health and wellness, the University has adopted this policy, which governs coverage of health and wellness, medical excuses, the right of the [Student Health and Wellness Center](#) (SHWC) to terminate service, and tuberculosis requirements.

RELIGIOUS ACCOMODATION

HB 256 provides students with an excused absence from attending classes, taking examinations or other required activities in observance of a religious holy day and related travel. It also provides that students be given reasonable time to take an exam or complete an assignment. Requests for accommodation must be made to the instructor a **minimum of three days prior** to the observed religious holy day.

OFFICE OF DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information, refer to the Office of Disability Access website at <https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access>. You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.

SURVIVOR ADVOCACY

UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Federal laws (Title IX and the Violence Against Women Act) and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, and therefore prohibit sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking, and/or sexual assault, there are campus resources available to provide support and assistance. [UNT's Survivor Advocates](#) can assist a student who has been impacted by violence by filing protective orders, completing crime victim's

compensation applications, contacting professors for absences related to an assault, working with housing to facilitate a room change where appropriate, and connecting students to other resources available both on and off campus. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-565-2648. Additionally, alleged sexual misconduct can be non-confidentially reported to the Title IX Coordinator at oeo@unt.edu or at (940) 565 2759.

CARE ASSESSMENT TEAM AND INVOLUNTARY STUDENT MEDICAL WITHDRAWAL

The University of North Texas is committed to providing a learning environment that is conducive for students to develop to their fullest potential. On rare occasions the University may be required to activate a systematic response to students who may be in crisis or whose mental, emotional or psychological health condition may directly threaten the safety of the learning environment. Through the creation of a collaborative interdisciplinary team, the University will provide a caring, confidential program of identification, intervention and response in order to provide students with the greatest chance for success and the University community with the greatest level of protection.

This policy does not replace any academic based withdrawal or dismissal policies or any Code of Student Conduct procedures to address student disciplinary issues.

PRODUCTION COURSE DISCLAIMER

MRTS 4740 & 5740 are production courses. Equipment checkout penalties in production courses can result in the *suspension of equipment checkout privileges as well as lab access privileges*. Students in the course who have such penalties should always attend class but are still subject to lab access penalties.

INCOMPLETE GRADE FOR THE COURSE

From the UNT Office of the Registrar: An Incomplete Grade ("I") is a non-punitive grade given only during the last one-fourth of a term/semester and only if a student (1) is passing the course and (2) has a justifiable and documented reason, beyond the control of the student (such as serious illness or military service), for not completing the work on schedule.

Under no circumstances will an "Incomplete" be assigned automatically. A student must make a formal request from the instructor (see the above information from the UNT Registrar) which satisfies the listed guidelines, not have excessive absences or late arrivals, and be able to demonstrate proficiency in the creative and technical techniques covered in the course. All requests will be considered on a case by case basis and students must provide verifiable documentation of the reason for the request.

UNT FOOD PANTRY

UNT is addressing food insecurity among its students and is doing so with a vision of partnership and community building. UNT aims to alleviate barriers and challenges associated with food insecurity and hunger, so students can remain in school and, ultimately, earn degrees. In 2015, the Dean of Students established the food pantry providing an accessible on-campus food source for students in need. Current UNT students can visit the pantry, with protocols that allow for student confidentiality and dignity to be maintained. The food pantry helps students bridge the expense gap and have healthy and nutritious meals, allowing them to concentrate on learning. [The Food Pantry presented by Kroger](#) is 450 square feet and is currently housed in the Diamond Eagles Student Resource Center through the Maple Street entrance of Crumley Hall. A refrigerator and freezer were added by a generous donor to the food pantry in 2020 which has helped us extend a variety of food for our students.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Note: some of these dates and descriptions are subject to change as needed. Refer to Canvas course calendar for the most up to date schedule and announcements for changes.

Meeting	Content	
Week 1	Course Introduction & Introduction to Media Composer Student Avid Account Creation Timecode, Colorspace, and more: Why do we do what we do in the digital age? Starting a Project	<i>Discussion One</i>
Week 2	Brief History of Editing, Continuity Editing, & Industry Jargon Building a Sequence	
Week 3	Drag and Drop Editing & Refining the Edit Effective Use of Cuts & Montage Exporting	
Week 4	Introduction to Transition & Segment Effects Narrative Clarity & Dramatic Emphasis	EXAM ONE
Week 5	Subtext Combining Multiple Effects	PROJECT ONE
Week 6	Motion Effects Editing Action & Comedy	<i>Discussion Two</i>
Week 7	Creating Titles & Technical Fundamentals The Big 6	EXAM TWO
Week 8	Workflow and Formats Additional Ingest Techniques	PROJECT TWO
Week 9	Preparing Dailies & Quick Editing Tools Editors to Know & Their Work	<i>MC101 Lessons</i>
Week 10	Re-cutting a Scene Understanding & Trimming Dialogue	EXAM THREE 101 Cert Exam
Week 11	Contributions of Sound & Mixing Sequence Audio Post Production Hierarchy	PROJECT THREE
Week 12	Working with High Resolution Footage Retiming Effects	<i>Discussion Three</i>
Week 13	Multilayer Effects Nesting Multiple Effects Homage	EXAM FOUR
Week 14	Tracking & Blurring/Chroma Key Effects Animated Titles & Graphics	
Week 15	Packaging and Export	FINAL PROJECT 110 Cert Exam <i>MC110 Lessons</i>
Finals	FINAL EXAM	