

TEACHING OBSERVATION

By James Parlin, Department Chairperson

FACULTY MEMBER: Brian Fuller

I observed Assistant Professor Brian Fuller teaching ART467/Film & Video Production IV on October 22, 2019. Professor Fuller's syllabus says, "This course in professional film, video and computer art production emphasizes double-system shooting, traditional and computer-based editing, computer-based sound mixing, special effects, title work, computer imaging, and electronic cinematography. Students produce major projects with film, video, and computer." Course objectives include: "Through the project-based work of this course, the student will articulate principles governing and practice skills related to:

- Pre-Production...
- Production...
- Post-Production...
- Distribution...
- The safety, protocols, and etiquette supporting creative collaboration in the studio and on-location.
- Directing and responding to the direction of others."

On the day I observed, Professor Fuller talked to the group about editing. He began with remarks about editing practices developed by the Russian filmmakers Kuleshov, Pudovkin, and Eisenstein during the Russian Revolution, pointing out the ways in which they built an image and told a story without relying on a simple narrative in time and space. He then suggested that, in general, editing choices lie within the parameters of continuous and discontinuous space and time, which Professor Fuller laid out for his students in a time-space matrix. He reminded them that things need not be continuous in reality in order to be made to appear continuous in film. He stressed that continuity and discontinuity applied to the audio portion of the film as well as the video portion. Finally, he discussed the connection between emotional intensity and the pacing of editing decisions.

He then showed scenes from three different films, *Citizen Kane*, *The Godfather*, and *Moulin Rouge* and asked his students to analyze the editing in terms of the matrix he had proposed and of the pacing of the edits. His students were attentive, readily grasped the principles he was espousing, and were quick to respond to his prompts.

Following the presentation, the student film editors for each working group were to screen rough cuts of the works in progress. Professor Fuller asked the students how they would determine the quality of the rough cuts they would be reviewing. He told them three things are necessary to quality in the art of filmmaking: knowledge, skill, and virtue, or goodness. He suggested that the minimum test for quality is whether or not something is holding our interest.

Professor Fuller's presentation was well-organized and informative. He provided an historical context for the early development of editing techniques and gave a clear explication of each one, with cogent visual samples. His lecturing style was energetic and compelling. His instruction was clearly articulated and appropriate for the level of his students' understanding, and he has a smooth command of the studio's instructional technology. The film scenes he screened were good examples of the techniques he was describing, were well attended to by his students, and elicited remarks that showed the degree to which the students were absorbing the lesson. The atmosphere in the studio was relaxed, but business-like, and conducive to learning. Professor Fuller's students were engaged in the lesson, and comfortable interacting with him and with each other. I observed a competently delivered lesson by one who is clearly an experienced teacher.