

Teaching Observation of Professor Brian Fuller
Conducted by Brad Pattullo
Spring Semester 2021

I observed Professor Brian Fuller's Film and Video Production 1 class (ART 267) on Tuesday, April 13, 2021. The class met on Zoom; there were nineteen students present. Brian began the class by answering student questions as other students were logging into the Zoom call. He began by stating the thesis for today's class: filmmaking is a cumulative art form, and problems that start out small can snowball. He announced that the class would be focused on the "Hospital Assignment", which I came to understand was largely an editing project: Professor Fuller had provided a script and footage for students to download and edit. He stressed the importance of editors knowing the script and the storyboards as well as the footage they were working with. He instructed students to read the script and provided questions for the students to formulate answers to, including:

Where's the climactic moment? Who's the main character?

These questions were typed by Professor Fuller into the chat window of the Zoom call. After all of the students had indicated that they had finished reading the script, Professor Fuller called on individual students to identify their answers to the questions. He used the annotation tool in Zoom to highlight their answers. He stressed that as editors, we decide the climax of the scene with our editing choices. The question of the identity of the main character is often framed as the character who undergoes the most change. To highlight this, Professor Fuller used the example of superhero movies, which are often origin stories because the hero needs to change over the course of the film to avoid being overshadowed by the villain.

Professor Fuller then began the demonstration portion of the class, where he shared his screen and opened Adobe Premiere, the main editing software used by our students and faculty. In the project window, Professor Fuller showed his system of organization, which first included folders for different types of shots: shots of each character, master shots, and insert shots were examples. Professor Fuller further pointed out the "metadata" shown in various columns in the Premiere project window. The default columns included information like the frame rate and length of the shot. Brian began customizing this window so that the columns were more useful to an editor: for example, information from the slate of the shot was included. He also made a column for "log notes" which included notations like "bad focus", "light stand", and "right heavy frame". He stressed that this type of organizational work was typically performed by an assistant editor and were a crucial part of the editing process. The students were working along: they had apparently begun this project and imported their footage in a previous class. At several points, Brian paused the demonstration to answer questions or to help students who were stuck.

After the demonstration, Professor Fuller instructed students to organize their project windows as he had done; he gave them fifteen minutes to do the work. As students were working, Brian summarized the demonstration in the chat window. He also reiterated his thesis: that film is cumulative, and that small problems need to be addressed before they become big problems. As I took my leave, students were finishing their work and Professor Brian Fuller was preparing to observe their organizational systems. Overall, my impression is that Professor Fuller has done an admirable job adapting his curriculum to online learning, as evidenced by the participation and the interest of the students in this class.