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Brian Fuller, Assistant Professor, Cinema, Film Video
Chair Observation of Teaching, Fall 2021
Observer Prof. William Mathie, Interim Chair

I observed Brian Fuller's ART414 Light & Sound on Thursday October 7th, 2021.

Professor Fuller began by showing students some new equipment. The students were quite excited about some time savings the equipment would bring. This effectively gained the full attention of all the students. Then he jumped into his teaching. He outlined what each student should prepare to discuss during the class. Students had recently completed a film shoot and the questions he asked them to prepare for pertained to that shoot. The students all began writing. After a few minutes Brian began his presentation that was projected on a large screen at the front of the room. He went over the calendar in D2L and explained an involved process for peer evaluations. The students were working on one film with each of them responsible for a different task; lighting, sound, camera, editing… and their evaluations would offer feedback to each other.

Professor Fuller explained how all of the parts would come together to make the film. He explained the importance of each step in the process and what must be accomplished with each. He then asked the students the prompted questions. Students' answers revealed the logistical successes and challenges they faced. One question asked what things surprised them during the shoot. Professor Fuller's questions illustrated his great knowledge of the problems students were dealing with. The students had performed exceptionally well on the shoot. They had foreseen and adjusted for numerous problems that often trip up young filmmakers. Prof. Fuller praised the students for all the good work. His questions led to lively discussion. Every student was fully engaged in the discussion. They had clearly come together as a team and were fully invested in the project.

The students then shared some of the footage from their shoot that had taken seven hours each on Saturday and Sunday. The footage was presented within film editing software. Professor Fuller reviewed the sound and color levels, it revealed that the students had done an excellent job keeping both within ideal ranges. He then led the students through the process of setting up the footage for editing. A student in the class sat at the computer and Professor Fuller directed her through each step. The other students observed closely. He stood at the screen and pointed to the image of each menu button to hit. This was an extremely clear approach to show every detail for each step within the software, which is complex and segmented into numerous areas dealing with sound, video, and time.

Professor Fuller very successfully gained and maintained the students' attention throughout the class. The students were hungry for the information that was presented in a very clear organized manner. The course is also very organized on his website, that offers numerous tutorials, and other resources. The students asked questions freely and clearly   displayed the knowledge they were gaining. There was constant back and forth between Professor Fuller and the students, allowing him to access their learning and provide immediate feedback. This was an ideal teaching environment with every student engaged, working productively and learning.

All of the content presented was squarely focused on the students understanding of Light and Sound, and the logistical tools and obstacles students must tackle. Prof. Brian Fuller has successfully organized a course that relies heavily on every student buying into the team work required to create a complex group project. The students have transitioned to the mindset of working professionals. Their teamwork and constant interaction on best practices hones their problem solving and critical thinking skills. This is excellent preparation for their future careers. Everything I observed is clear evidence that Professor Brian Fuller is an excellent teaching professor.

William Mathie, Interim Chair