ARCH 585: Visual Storytelling and Entrepreneurship in Media (2.0 UNITS)
A master class in online media making, distribution, and discoverability to benefit architecture and design students who want to develop their visual storytelling skills to explore how climate change is changing our approach to designing the built environment, and how architects, landscape designers, and urban planners may respond to the climate emergency.

**Semester:** Fall 2022  
**Grading Type:** Letter Grade  
**Lectures:** Tuesdays, 1 PM – 2:50 PM Pacific Time  
**Lecture Location:** Online

**Instructor:** Lee Schneider  
Office: Will be meeting on Zoom  
Office Hours: Send instructor an email or book your appointment at this link:  
[https://calendly.com/redcup/usc-office-hours](https://calendly.com/redcup/usc-office-hours)

Contact Info: schn467@usc.edu  
[https://arch.usc.edu/faculty/schneider](https://arch.usc.edu/faculty/schneider)

Instructor will try to respond to emails and notes on Blackboard within 24 hours Monday-Friday or on the Monday following a weekend or holiday break.

**Course Description**

Designers are storytellers. Each line we draw or model we build expresses intent. Historically, drawing has been the primary medium of expression in the communication of design ideas. Anyone can tell a story, but learning to tell an engaging, poignant story that generates real interest, enthusiasm, support and excitement is a vital tool in today’s fast-moving digital culture. This course helps the student understand how visual stories can serve as an active tool to critically explore, evaluate, and express ideas. This course specifically stresses the instrumentality of online videos for communicating and thinking, and as a foundation for creative action.

This master class in media making, distribution and discoverability will benefit architecture and design students who want deeper and more practical uses for visual storytelling. Every student in the class will create a video. The theme of the student video will focus on exploring the climate crisis from an architectural or design perspective. The climate crisis is the defining existential emergency of our time. Given its enormity, and the approaching deadline for global disaster, the crisis can bring on feelings of helplessness and hopelessness. As creators, designers, and architects, we can gain agency by making media to inform, enlighten, and fight the disinformation proffered by politicians, lobbyists, and those who minimize or even deny the effects of climate change. This course will show students how to make media using the equipment that they already have — a smart phone, Zoom, or a video camera if available.
Students pick their own topics for videos, according to the theme of the course. For example, the student video may be about a design-based solution to mitigate climate change, discuss an architect’s or designer’s response to climate change, document a community’s response to the climate crisis, or feature large-scale architecture, landscape, or urban planning solutions to climate issues. In the course, we will address how to upload a video for mass distribution and promote the video to the right audience.

In the first half of the course, the emphasis is on telling a visual story effectively. How can we use the equipment we have already to create a compelling online video?

The second half is devoted to presentation and promotion. We will discover what makes an online video effective and compelling, using examples from viral YouTube videos, movie trailers, design documentaries, corporate efforts at climate misinformation, and video messaging about the climate crisis from architects, designers, and scientists. We will discuss crowdfunding as a vehicle to take video projects from idea into distribution. The emphasis throughout is always on the deep structure that is critical to creating an effective visual story, whether the story is used to communicate design ideas or becomes part of a portfolio, pitch or a resume.

The core concept of this course is that architecture and design students are entering a profession that is increasingly entrepreneurial. We need to know how to make our own media.

The lines between design practice, marketing one’s work, maintaining an online presence, preparing an offline presentation, and receiving public and private support for design concepts have been blurred. Resumes and portfolios must be as effective on paper as they are online. Support for projects may come from architecture firms, from civic sources, from private benefactors, or crowdfunding.

The core skill required to drive these entrepreneurial behaviors is storytelling. This class takes design storytelling methods and shows how to deploy them online, with a thematic focus on the climate crisis. We will combine traditional methods of expression with current online technology to create unique and compelling visual stories.

Part I (Sessions 1-9) Designing a Story and Effective Video Communication
Part II (Sessions 10-15) Promotion, Online Communities and Crowdfunding

Learning Objectives

1. To explore new media frontiers for fresh ways to communicate and disseminate design concepts, process, and development as well as critical examinations of the built environment.
2. To sharpen visual literacy and strengthen visual communication skills in video format and to develop the ability to execute a narrative vision that can generate a human connection in the online world.
3. To develop a critical lens through which to engage visual culture, representation, and signification through visually based research methodologies.
4. To explore building an audience for creative work using an entrepreneurial approach that reinvents traditional concepts of marketing.
Communication

Communications and collaboration are essential for design professionals working on any project. I want you to feel comfortable asking questions and giving feedback on this course, just as I, and your classmates, will be providing you with feedback on your assignments. If you have questions or comments, please speak with me directly after class or email me.

Course Structure

The course is delivered online over 15 weeks. Each class meets over Zoom.

During our online class sessions, we open with a lecture and then break into small groups on Zoom to discuss the lecture and evaluate student work. Students may interact via chat during and after the lecture to ask questions or provide other input. Some class sessions will include a Q&A with a guest. The instructor will offer office hours online, via Zoom.

Online Format

This is an online course. All class materials will be recorded and transcribed. Recordings and transcripts will be made available to students asynchronously (at any time outside of class time).

Students may listen to the lectures anytime since they are recorded but must participate in the online discussion group following lectures in real time. While in the synchronous part of class, students are encouraged to use video so that we can see each other, but the use of the video part of Zoom is not mandatory.

This is a two-unit course, which means that we require 30 hours of class time (lectures and discussions) and 60 hours of homework (weekly assignments, readings, video project) over the course of the 15 sessions. Students should expect a total of 18 hours of faculty lectures and 12 hours of faculty-facilitated discussions.

Online files (including new materials, assignments, completed assignments) will be updated every week. Students will be notified of new content in two ways: via email to his/her USC account, and via a Blackboard announcement. All class work (journals, videos, etc.) is due on a weekly cycle. All classes and discussions are recorded for later listening and watching. Zoom captures audio (the lecture or discussion) video (the slide deck), any videos played as examples, and the chat session during class. In this way, students have a complete experience of the course, even if they participate in some aspects of it asynchronously. We will also use OneDrive and Google Drive to store videos for critiques and sharing.

Students will be required to participate on a regular basis and their participation will be monitored on our online webinar platform (Zoom) and also in Blackboard. We reserve the right to drop any student who does not participate in online activities for more than one week without contacting faculty.
**Course Requirements and Grades**

45% Class Assignments – (10) assignments each worth 5% of the course grade. Assignments consist of both written and filmed/video work

15% Online Participation – synchronous discussions, viewing of weekly lectures

40% Final Project – a short form video to promote or present design work or to launch a crowdfunding campaign (video requirements, details, etc will be outlined in the Final Project handout, the project will be due on the last day of class)

**Required Text**

Richardson, Bailey, *Get Together*, Stripe Press, 2019

**Other Required Reading**

Refer to Course Schedule for readings. Students are required to complete all required reading before each discussion session. Most readings will be posted on Blackboard. Refer to Course Schedule and Selected Bibliography.

**Description of Assignments**

I expect students to submit weekly assignments in a timely matter, and a final project, according to the schedule set forth by the instructor. The weekly assignments are designed to test the learning of that week’s particular lecture; some assignments involve recording video. The final project is designed to use all the lessons learned to create a short-form video for use online, and to prepare a promotion, build community, and a crowdfunding campaign around the video. See the Course Schedule for more detail. The Assignment Schedule is also posted on Blackboard.

Written assignments have a one-week turnaround. Assignments are given on Tuesdays at the end of class and are due the following Tuesday. Video assignments have longer deadlines – see the Course Schedule for details. It is critical that you finish by the deadlines that have been set. Each assignment builds on the next. Written assignments may be turned in on Blackboard or via email. Video assignments may be posted to Google Drive, OneDrive, or Dropbox and the link posted to Blackboard. There are no make-ups on assignments. As the semester progresses, I may add assignments if I determine that other topics need to be covered.

The instructor will comment on your assignments in Blackboard. We will also assess assignments together in class during our online discussion groups.

**Announcements and News**

Announcements and news about the course will be posted by the instructor in Blackboard.
Course Policies

Academic Integrity

Unless otherwise specified, you are expected to complete all the work of the course yourself. Copying other people’s work or downloading digital files will result in no credit for the assignment and the potential for disciplinary action.

Attendance

As this is an online course, we have to work a little harder to connect with each other. Attending each “live” as it happens will help you get the most out of the course. You have the option of listening to the recordings later if you cannot attend a lecture as it happens.

The University of Southern California recognizes the diversity of our community and the potential for conflicts involving academic activities and personal religious observation. The university provides a guide to such observances for reference and suggests that any concerns about lack of attendance or inability to participate fully in the course activity be fully aired at the start of the term. As a general principle, students should be excused from class for these events if properly documented and if provisions can be made to accommodate the absence and make up the lost work. Constraints on participation that conflict with adequate participation in the course and cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the faculty and the students need to be identified prior to the drop/add date for registration. After the drop/add date, the University and the School of Architecture shall be the sole arbiter of what constitutes appropriate attendance and participation in a given course.

Please contact the instructor by the end of the second week of class if you anticipate conflicts with religious holidays, including missing lectures, and ability to finish homework assignments on time, or other items that may hinder your work in class

Classroom Norms

Sharing our work with others and opening ourselves to critique and peer feedback can be a vulnerable process. Tomorrow the expectations of professional work and firemen in our field to promote a respectful classroom environment we agree to the following.

- Do not interrupt when someone else is speaking
- Critique the work, not the person
- Support critiques with evidence or speak from personal experience
- Allow everyone to critique who wishes to speak
- Keep a positive tone when offering critique and responding to it
- Except the critique and the positive spirit with which it is given
- When on Zoom, have an appropriate background, preferably an image of you for non-video and a background image for you to use in video mode.
Course Evaluation

Students will have an opportunity to submit comments on the mid-semester evaluation form and the standard USC course evaluation survey at the end of the semester. Please feel free to contact the instructor at any time with questions or concerns.

Course Schedule: Weekly Breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class Summary</th>
<th>Assignment Description</th>
<th>Format</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8/23/22</td>
<td>Lecture 1: Telling a Design Story</td>
<td>Write 100-250 words about why you want to bring a story to video.</td>
<td>100-250 word journal entry in Blackboard</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>8/30/22</td>
<td>Lecture 2: Interviews and Scenes</td>
<td>Prepare a list of elements for your story.</td>
<td>Bullet point list in Blackboard. You can write it in Word first and upload.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>9/6/22</td>
<td>Lecture 3: Archive Materials</td>
<td>Create a 2-10 minute interview with a friend.</td>
<td>Upload and post the link to Blackboard.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>9/13/22</td>
<td>Lecture 4: Production I</td>
<td>Casting your video. Consider the role that each interviewee is playing</td>
<td>Bullet point list or table posted as a Journey entry in Blackboard.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>9/20/22</td>
<td>Lecture 5: Production II</td>
<td><strong>Part 1:</strong> Shoot some test video at a location you will use. <strong>Part 2:</strong> What is the action you want your viewer to take after they watch your video?</td>
<td>Part 1: Upload video post the link to Blackboard. Part 2: Post the Call to Action as a journal entry in Blackboard along with your link.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>9/27/22</td>
<td>Lecture 6: Story Arcs</td>
<td>What is the story arc of your video? Discussion of online narrative storytelling.</td>
<td>Describe the journey the viewer will take when experiencing your video.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>10/4/22</td>
<td>Lecture 7: Strong Videos and Low Budgets</td>
<td>Search online for an example of a climate information video that is effective and short.</td>
<td>Post links to your examples in your Blackboard Journal</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>10/11/22</td>
<td>Lecture 8: Post Production</td>
<td>Join two or more clips together from your project.</td>
<td>Upload to the platform of your choice.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>10/18/22</td>
<td>Lecture 9: Promoting Your Work and Understanding Your Online Persona</td>
<td><strong>Part 1:</strong> write a headline for your project that can be used in a news release. <strong>Part 2:</strong> What is the twitter or Instagram bio for the project?</td>
<td>Post in your Journal in Blackboard. You may write in Word first and post the document or write directly into Blackboard.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>10/25/22</td>
<td>Lecture 10: Crowdfunding Overview</td>
<td>Post a string out of your video. A string out is a basic assembly of your</td>
<td>Post your stringout It should not run longer than 5 minutes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Content</td>
<td>Assignment</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>11/1/22</td>
<td>Lecture 11: Pitching a Crowdfunding Project</td>
<td>Post a rough assembly of your video. Post to the platform of your choice and link to Blackboard</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>11/8/22</td>
<td>Lecture 12: Video for Crowdfunding</td>
<td>Continue work on your rough assembly. Post any rough assembly</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>11/15/22</td>
<td>Lecture 13: Promote Your Campaign</td>
<td>Post a first cut of your video. Post your first cut to and provide the link in Blackboard, in a Journal entry.</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>11/22/22</td>
<td>Lecture 14 Sustain Your Campaign and Sustaining Your Mission</td>
<td>Prepare three suggested updates for your campaign, including new perks or incentives. Post your first cut revisions to YouTube, Vimeo, Dropbox, or Google Drive and provide the link in Blackboard, in a Journal entry.</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>11/29/22</td>
<td>Wrapup/Office Hours</td>
<td>Final edit and final written assignment. You will find the spec for the final assignment in Blackboard. We will also discuss in class.</td>
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**Required level of technology and technical competence**

Successful students in the course will have familiarity with the iPhone or Android camera phone for video recording, or access to and basic ability using a digital video camera. Basic familiarity with iMovie, Final Cut Pro or Adobe Premiere is helpful.

**Required course software, hardware, infrastructure, and connectivity requirements:**

- Blackboard Learning Management System
- Windows or Mac OS, latest version preferred.
- Internet Explorer, Firefox, or Chrome Browser with latest Adobe Flash plugin installed.
- Computer audio headset with microphone preferred for online discussion but not required
- Reliable high-speed Internet connection
- Streaming media access such as USC on iTunes U or YouTube
- Zoom for synchronous meeting; a small free download may be required on your computer, tablet, or phone
- Access to collaboration and search tools: Google, Creative Commons, Flickr
- Phone, smartphone or digital camera with upload capability via WiFi or Firewire
- Video editing software available in any video-capable phone, or Final Cut Pro, iMovie, or Adobe Premiere
Standards of Appropriate Online Behavior
Please access and review the USC Student Computer Use Policy
This document can be accessed at http://www-scf.usc.edu/Pages/ComputingPolicy.html The protocols defined by the USC Student Conduct Code will be upheld in this course. For more information, use this link https://sjacs.usc.edu/students/scampus/

Technical Support
Help with network connectivity and software is available by contacting the consultants at the ITS Customer Support Center by emailing consult@usc.edu or calling 213-740-5555. Walk-in support is available in Leavey Library’s Information Commons, on the lower level. Visit the Customer Support Center page at: https://itservices.usc.edu/contact/

School of Architecture Attendance Policy
A student may miss the equivalent of one week of class sessions (in this case, TWO excused absences are permitted) without directly affecting the student’s grade and ability to complete the course. An excused absence is a confirmed personal illness, family emergency, or religious holiday. For each absence over the allowed number, your grade can be lowered by 1/3-letter grade. If additional absences are required for a personal illness, family emergency, pre-approved academic reason/religious observance, you must discuss the situation with your faculty member immediately.
Any student not in class within the first 10 minutes is considered tardy, and any student absent (in any form including sleep, technological distraction, or by leaving mid class for a long bathroom/water break) for more than 1/3 of the class time can be considered fully absent. If arriving late, a student must be respectful of a class in session and do everything possible to minimize the disruption caused by a late arrival. It is always the student’s responsibility to seek means (if possible) to make up work missed due to absences, not the instructor’s, although such recourse is not always an option due to the nature of the material covered.

Selected Course Bibliography

Books


Articles

Blankenship, Mark. "How social media can and should impact higher education." *Education Digest* 76.7 (2011): 39-42.


Documentaries

My Architect, directed by Nathaniel Kahn, initial release 2002
Sketches of Frank Gehry, directed by Sydney Pollack, initial release 2005
Helvetica, directed by Gary Hustwit, initial release, 2007
Food, Inc, directed by Robert Kenner, initial release 2008
Citizen Architect, directed by Sam Wainwright Douglas, initial release 2010
The Empowerment Project, directed by Sarah Moshman, initial release 2013
Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct:
Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct

Support Systems:

USC Student Health is available through the single phone number 213-740-9355 (WELL)—including all services 24/7. https://studenthealth.usc.edu/

Counseling and Mental Health Services, a division of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Keck School of Medicine of USC

Medical Services, with providers on clinical faculty of the Departments of Family Medicine, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Dermatology, Orthopaedic Surgery, Keck School of Medicine of USC; and professional affiliations with the USC Chan Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy, the USC School of Pharmacy, and the Division of Physical Therapy and Biokinesiology.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services, with counselors who are clinical faculty of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Keck School of Medicine of USC
A nurse (for medical concerns) or licensed counselor (for mental health concerns) is available 24 hours a day, even when the student health centers are closed and during university closures.

Students in crisis may walk-in for urgent mental health services at the health centers (Engemann Student Health Center on UPC or Eric Cohen Student Health Center at HSC) during operational hours without an appointment; this may include urgent matters involving a death in the family, suicide concern, crime/sexual assault survivor counseling, or other high-risk matters.

Urgent “sick” appointments for medical care are available “same-day” for students needing care during operational hours.

The evening operators of the 24/7 phone service line can connect to USC Student Health services when an urgent matter presents itself.

Sexual assault survivors requiring transportation to a SART center can ask RSVP to call a Lyft ride (an “on-call” staff advocates program to accompany survivors is currently staffing operations and will be activated this fall). MySHR (the student health record portal) shows all available regular appointment times; many appointments can be made within 24-48 hours.

Campus incident post-ventions are regularly provided by Counseling and Mental Health Services on campus for students; departments are encouraged to contact us to learn more or to make arrangements.
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1 (800) 273-8255
www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org
Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) | Title IX - (213) 740-5086
equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu
Information about how to get help or help a survivor of harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations.

Bias Assessment Response and Support - (213) 821-8298
https://campussupport.usc.edu/trojans-care-4-trojans/
Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions for appropriate investigation and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776
dsp.usc.edu
Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Campus Support & Intervention - (213) 821-4710
https://campussupport.usc.edu/
Assists students, faculty, and staff in navigating complex issues.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101
diversity.usc.edu
Information on events, programs and training, the Provost’s Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321– 24/7 on call
dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu
Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000 - 24/7 on call
dps.usc.edu
Non-emergency assistance or information.

Office of the Ombuds - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323)-442-0382 (HSC)
ombuds.usc.edu
A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.