



# Digital Cinema Production

Andrew Tsao, Associate Professor

[tsao@uw.edu](mailto:tsao@uw.edu)

Course handout





# Overview

- To understand and implement the theory and practice of cinematic film grammar.
- To give students the opportunity to work in various “crew” positions on a film set per industry standards.
- To practice simple cinematic staging with actors.
- To understand the fundamentals of narrative film editing principles: Cutting for story in time.
- Students are expected to work 2 hours outside of class per week on shooting assignments, editing or crew positions.



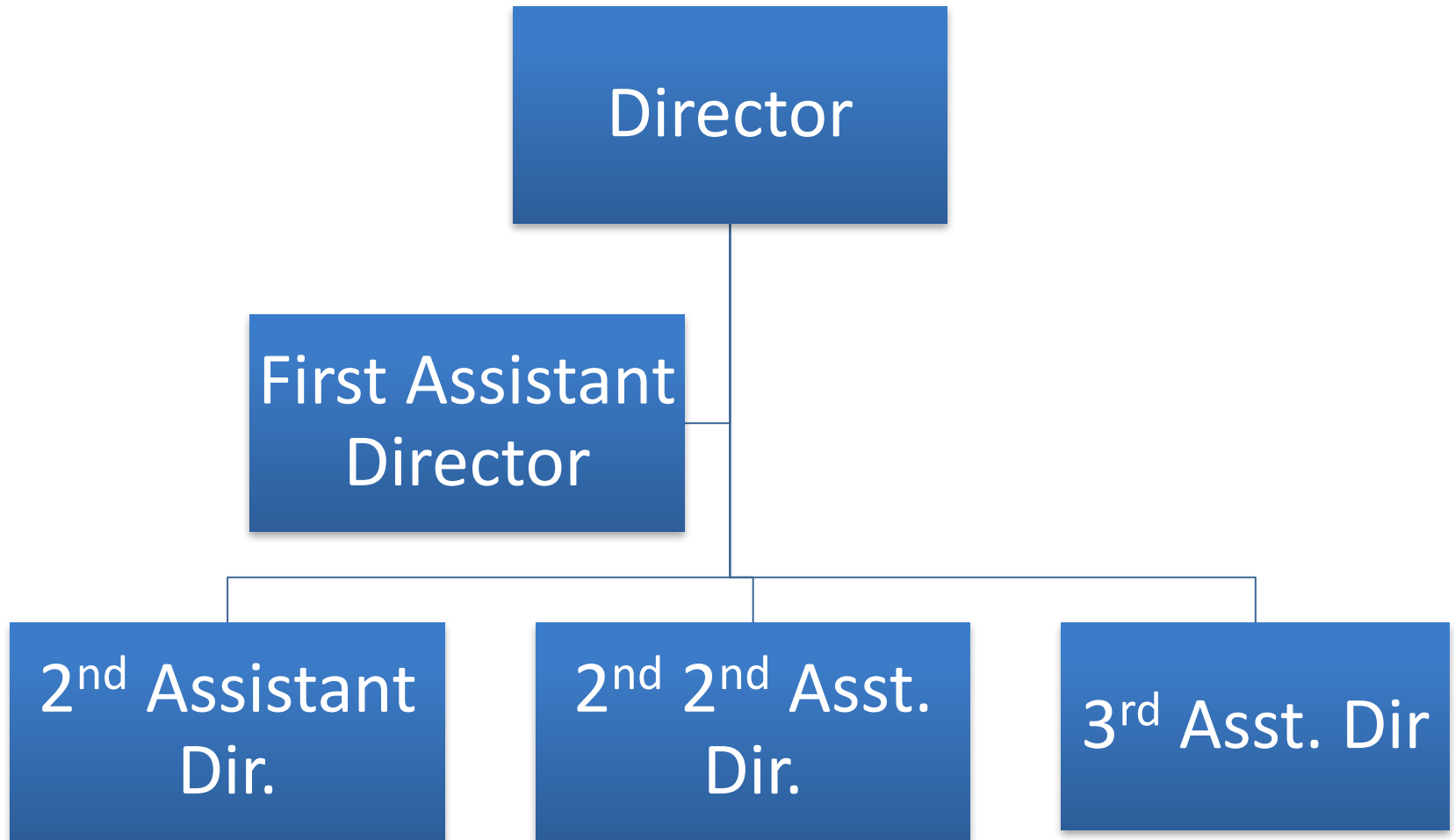
# Film Grammar

- Long Shot: Full body plus landscape
- Full Shot: Full body or two.
- Cowboy: shot cutting person at mid thigh.
- Medium Shot: Frame at waist.
- Medium Close: Frame at chest.
- Close up/Close: Frame at head.
- Extreme Close Up (ECU) / Tight: Frame face only.
- Dolly Shot: On tracks.
- Crane or Jib: On extension device.
- Steadicam: Hand held device that creates “floating” effect, for intricate sequences.
- Hand Held: Allows for “shake”, mimics documentary style.
- Reframe: popularized on TV by NYPD Blues – Slap zooms, refocus, reframing of shot in action.
- Swish Pan: Rapid pan of camera back and forth for dramatic effect.
- Dutch angle: tilted frame.

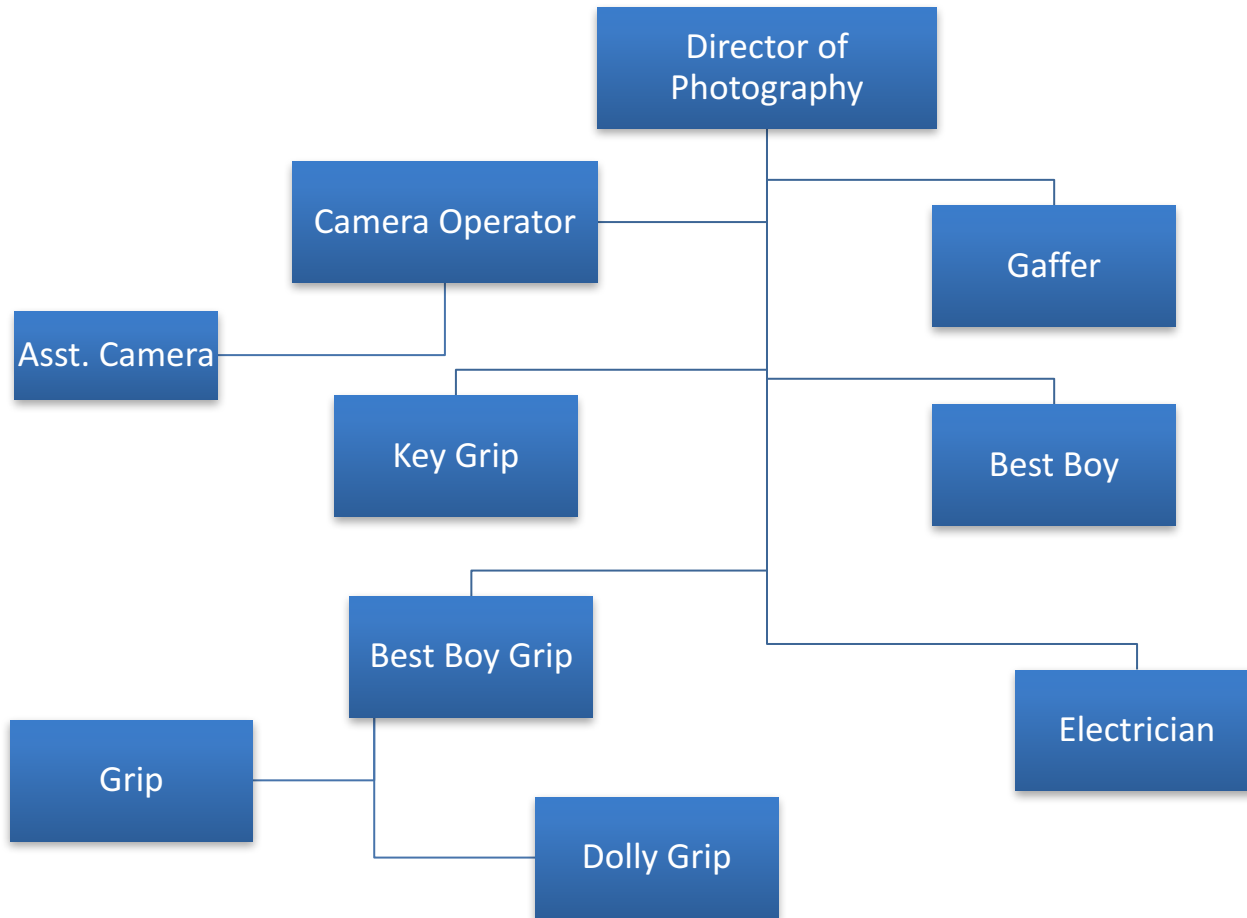
# Production Positions 1

- “Above the Line” positions refer to personnel who are involved in a production in a leadership / creative capacity, above “the line” of craft and technical personnel. (The line is a reference to the position of Line Producer, who handles budgeting / production costs.)
- Above the Line: Producer, Director, Screenwriter, Actor, etc.
- What is a Producer? Someone involved in bringing a project into being, either as an owner of a creative property (book, story, rights to a story, etc.) or as a leader who brings “talent” such as writers, directors and actors together.
- Producers often have relationships with studios, distributors, networks, agents, managers, literary publishers, etc. and are able to bring together the core talent, financing and infrastructure required to make a film or TV series. In television, Executive Producers are the “Show Runners” or head writers responsible for the creative identity of a series.
- There are many variations in terms of responsibilities and titles: executive producer, producer, associate producer, co-producer, etc.

# Production Positions 2



# Production Positions 3

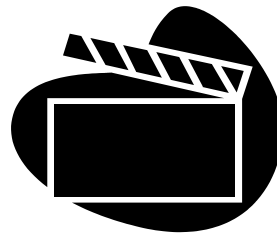


# Shooting Protocol

- “Quiet on the set.” –The first AD means this. Set folks who do not respond to this command get fired.
- “Picture’s Up” or “Lock it up” First AD gets set ready for shooting.
- “Last Looks” Hair/Make Up, Wardrobe descend on actors for hair and make up, costume touch ups.
- “On a bell” or “Standby” First AD alerts all to shooting. (Bell refers to a loud buzzer or bell often used.)
- “Camera ready?” First AD asks.
- “Ready” Camera operator replies loud enough for set to hear.
- “Sound ready?” First AD asks.
- “Sound Ready” Sound recordist replies clearly.
- ~~“Roll Sound” First AD calls for “Double system” sound roll. In video, not necessary.~~
- ~~“Speeding” Sound recordist replies when sync speed is reached. (Again not necessary in video.)~~
- “Roll Camera” First AD calls for camera operator to roll.
- “Rolling” , then “Speeding” Camera operator replies that camera is rolling, then up to recording speed.
- “Slate it” First Ad calls for camera assistant to slate shot.
- “Scene #, Shot #, Take #” Called out by camera assistant.
- “Action” Director only calls action.
- “Still rolling” If director stops action without cutting, to adjust something.
- “Cut” Director only calls cut.
- “Back to one” First AD calls order to set if another take is needed.
- “Moving on” First AD calls if moving to new set up. (Often “New Deal” is used.)

# Other Terms

- “10-100” AD notifies relevant people that someone is going to the bathroom or their trailer.
- “Props” “Sets” “ Hair” “Make-up” “FX” “Grip” “Electric” “Wardrobe” Are all First AD calls to departments for help on a set.
- “NG” Not good, perhaps for camera, sound, set, lights, etc.
- “Woof” Old school lang to tell someone to place an object. “Camera left, more, more...woof.”
- “Walk away” For Lighting and electrics crew, when DP likes where it is after adjustments.
- “Wrangle” Term for having control over: extras, animals, children, onlookers, traffic, etc.
- “Martini” Last shot of the day.
- “Script” AD or Director calls for script supervisor to come on set with script.
- “MOS” from the German/English slang “Mit out Sound” means no sound recorded. Written on slate.
- “Pick up” new or improvised shot not on existing shot list.
- “ Flying in” When a crew person is delivering a needed item to the set area. Get out of the way.
- “Hot Points” Crew member carrying object with sharp edges or points. Get out of the way.
- “That’s lunch, one hour” AD calls lunch break.
- “That’s a ten” AD calls ten minute break.
- “Tail slate” slating a shot at the end of the scene.
- “Room tone” Sound needs 30-60 seconds of stillness from crew to record base location sound.
- That’s a wrap” Shoot is over. Start wrapping equipment in an orderly manner.





## Script Supervisor

1. Vertical lines through script, one for each take.
2. Shot# , take # at top of line, line continues down page until a cut or stop in action.
3. Cut denoted by dash at end of line.
4. Stop in action, or other problem in scene noted by zigzag mark.
5. Circled take is director's selected.
6. Arrow off line to dialogue may indicate missed line or misphrase.
7. Separate page of notes, or facing page of notes correlated by shot and take number.

INT. ROOM. NIGHT.

JAKE wakes suddenly. SARAH is climbing through the window wearing a polar bear costume.

JAKE

You gotta be kidding me.

SARAH

Happy birthday.

Sarah pulls a bottle of champagne out of a paper bag.. She settles down on the edge of the bed.

JAKE

Where were you?

SARAH

I'm here now. You wanna bitch or get drunk?

JAKE

I'm in love.

## The shooting process

1. Crew arrives on location, stages equipment.
2. Director, AD, DP, Sound, Super, Electric, Grip, Art watch a blocking rehearsal. AD MAKES THE SET SILENT FOR REHEARSAL.
3. Actors are sent to wardrobe. DP gives instructions to crew based on staging /camera conversation with director. Crew goes to work setting up shot SILENTLY.
4. Director consults with Art/Props on element placement in shot. Art/Prop crew get to work.
5. Director visits wardrobe/hair/makeup to consult with actors on scene changes, adjustments, ideas.
6. Once set is up, stand ins walk the set for DP/camera/sound/sets, etc.
7. Actors arrive on set. AD SHOULD SCHEDULE THE TIMING OF THIS WITH PRECISION.
8. Rehearsals on camera .
9. Shoot.
10. Camera moves.
11. Shoot. Repeat as called for in scene/shot list.
12. AS THE SHOOT PROGRESSES, EACH CREW MEMBER STANDS BY TO MAKE ADJUSTMENTS / CHANGES.
13. **EVERYONE IS FOCUSED ON THE PROGRESSION OF THE SHOT SEQUENCE AND THE PERFORMANCES.**
14. When the director has all the shots and pick ups, AD calls a location wrap. Unit either moves to new location or wraps for the day.
15. An average day is 10-12 camera set ups, perhaps one location move, and 3 to four pages of feature script
16. An indy, small cast and crew or low budget film might reach for 20-24 set ups a day, or 7-9 pages of feature script. A set up is defined as a move for the camera.
17. Whatever time you have scheduled to shoot, it is not enough. You will fall behind. This is the law of film.