



Copyright Campaign USC School of Cinematic Arts

Learn something about Copyright - it's good for you

2005 USC School of Cinema-Television

Frequently Asked Questions
PRODUCTION DIVISION
Revised on August 10, 2005

WHO GETS TO USE THE EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES? The equipment and facilities of the School are for the use of registered students in making projects required by the courses in which they are currently enrolled. The equipment and facilities are not for use on student-owned, personal or terminated projects. There are severe penalties for using the School's equipment or facilities without authorization

ARE THERE ANY SCHOLARSHIPS FOR PRODUCTION STUDENTS? The CNTV Scholarship Package for the following academic year is made available each Spring semester. There are several scholarships available in each division. Look for posted notices of the scholarship seminar and distribution of applications. Contact the Scholarship Coordinator, Lezra Portillo - lezra@cinema.usc.edu, in the Dean's Office for more information.

WHAT IS THE UNIVERSITY'S COPYRIGHT POLICY?

For a complete and detailed explanation of the copyright policy as it applies to student work, see "THE SCHOOL OF CINEMA-TELEVISION COPYRIGHT POLICY" (a .pdf file can be found at cntvcommunity.usc.edu under "Production Documents")

In Summary:

- The University of Southern California owns the copyright to any film or video made at the School of Cinema-Television and has the right to make copies of it. That is the copyright - the right to make copies.
- You, the student, cannot sell the film, put it on the internet, distribute it or publicly exhibit it in any way. Only USC, as the owner of the copyright, can do that. The Office of Festivals and Distribution works with students to find the widest audience possible for their films and videos.
- You, the student, retain ownership of the underlying intellectual property rights and can develop the ideas from your film or video into feature films, sitcoms, game shows, hand puppets, interactive videos or anything else you can imagine. The University has no ownership or interest in these properties.

CAN I PUT MY FILM ON THE INTERNET?

The short answer is "no".

You cannot put your film on the 'net' -- or distribute it in any way -- only the Office of Festivals and Distribution can do that. The Internet (personal websites, online film festivals and free exposure providers) is considered commercial distribution. Additionally, USC has specific policies for students, faculty and staff, regarding the use of University computing and electronic communications resources.

These policies are noted on USC's website at -- usc.edu/isd/policies -

WHY IS THE TUITION SO HIGH?

The School of Cinema-TV tuition is the same as the other schools throughout USC. Tuition covers the same thing it covers in the other schools - classroom instruction. Unfortunately, while it may be enough to cover the costs of a traditional lecture course, it is nowhere near enough to cover the expense of operating a film and television production. The school loses an estimated \$5000 annually on each production student. Only 60% of undergraduate tuition stays in the School of Cinema-Television. The rest goes to larger University-wide expenses.

WHAT ARE ALL THESE LAB FEES ?

Since tuition doesn't cover the cost of operating production courses, the School assesses these fees to cover the cost of the materials and equipment that it provides to the students. Whenever possible we have tried to lower or eliminate the fees. It is common practice for schools that provide equipment and facilities in excess of traditional classroom instruction to assess lab fees to students in order to operate effectively.

WHY DO I HAVE TO PAY AN INSURANCE FEE?

The School is self-insured. USC projects are insured for use of locations, camera, grip and electric equipment and rented properties (such as costumes/props) through the USC Insurance Agreement. The monies assessed for insurance fees go into a fund for maintenance, repair and replacement of lost and damaged gear. The fees are established on the basis of the value of equipment used and past history of damages and loss. Much of the equipment you will be using requires careful handling. Seek advisement in use of equipment from your instructor, teaching assistant or the appropriate staff personnel. Also, to prevent theft, never lose sight of your equipment, and never leave it unattended in your car.

I'M USING MY OWN CAMERA - WHY DO I STILL HAVE TO PAY THE INSURANCE FEE?

The policy provides coverage for the camera, grip/lighting equipment, locations, and post facilities (coverage includes two million dollars worth of liability insurance and up to a million dollars worth of property insurance). As you continue to work on productions, you will find that locations, equipment houses, etc. require proof of this coverage. The University also provides Worker's Compensation insurance to all volunteers on student projects. Be aware that anyone YOU PAY on a production is an independent contractor and is therefore not a volunteer. They MUST provide their own insurance. See the production book or SPO for more information. The only way to get a Production Number is by paying the Insurance Fee. Without a Production Number students are unable to access the School's equipment and facilities.

I PAID THE INSURANCE SO WHY DID I GET CHARGED FOR "EQUIPMENT DAMAGE"?

Each premium level has a deductible ranging from \$250.00 to \$2,500.00. The student is responsible for the deductible -- the insurance pays for the amount of loss above the deductible. In addition, fines are assessed for late return of equipment.

WHAT IS THE MUSIC USE POLICY FOR STUDENT FILMS & VIDEOS?

THE USE OF PUBLISHED MUSIC IS NOT PERMITTED IN STUDENT FILMS OR VIDEOS.
Please come into SPO for a more detailed explanation.

IN SEARCHING FOR FUNDING FOR MY ADVANCED FILM PROJECT (581 & 587), ARE THERE PEOPLE OR PLACES THAT I CANNOT CONTACT FOR FUND SOLICITATION?

There are very specific rules about whom you may -- and may not -- contact for funds. Violation of these rules may result in serious disciplinary action.

1. You may not contact any USC School of Cinema-Television alumni or alumni from other USC schools unless you have received written authorization from your mentor, Chair or the Dean's Office.

2. You may not contact USC or Cinema-Television board members, major donors or foundations with whom the School has a relationship.

3. You may not use existing e-mail addresses that might be available on the USC -- or any other -- website to contact any alumni.

4. Before contacting companies for goods or services, you should clear the request, in writing, with your mentor or instructor. Each of the Schools at the University of Southern California (including Cinema-Television) has its own active Development Office that works directly with the alumni.

If you contact those alumni directly you risk jeopardizing the relationship the Development Office has worked hard to cultivate.

COMPARISON SHOPPING

The USC School of Cinema-Television provides its students with more equipment and facilities with which to make their films and videos than any other school.

The Production Division offers its students access to
(a partial list not including grip/electric/sound equipment):

Avid Xpress DV Avid Film Composer/Media Composer ProTools stations Flatbeds Sony digital cameras Sony 600 BetaCam
Sony DV Cameras
Sony DSR 500 DVCam
16mm cameras
Sound stages
Scoring Stages
Re-recording stages
HD cameras

The Production Division of the School offers 60 courses that involve some degree of film and/or video production activity. These courses have an enrollment of more than a thousand students. In the course of one academic year students produce more than 2000 projects with a combined running time of over 250 hours.

That's the equivalent of more than 100 feature films.

WHAT IS SPO AND WHAT DOES IT HAVE?

SPO is the Student Production Office located just off of the Lucas Lobby in the heart of the Cinema complex. As a student in the School of Cinema-TV, you can consider this YOUR OFFICE.

You can come here to write, make phone calls, cast, location scout, network, etc. Some of what we offer includes: Hollywood Creative Directories Access to Computers Final Draft Movie Magic Budgeting Movie Magic Scheduling Casting Resources Headshot Binders Location Permit Database Crew Books Equipment Books Basic Supplies Phones for free local calling Printer Fax Machine (local only) Thomas Guide Notices on Campus Happenings Frameforge (3D storyboard software) All Forms and Paperwork On-Campus Location Releases Production Binder Samples First Look DVDs DP and Composer Reels Information for your Production UTA Joblist Cinema-TV Letterhead Stamps

WHAT DO I DO IF I WANT ACADEMIC ADVISEMENT?

Each division has an academic advisor in the department office. Start there.

WHAT PRODUCTION OPPORTUNITIES ARE THERE?

In addition to production classes offered each semester, there are often production opportunities available because of the large number of advanced projects always in production. Volunteer in support roles on advanced productions.

There are always 480s, 546s, 581s, 582s or 587s, as well as interactive projects and projects from other divisions, seeking supporting crew such as production assistants, grips, set dressers, and more. SPO maintains a list of active advanced projects and the producer/director contact

information. We can connect you. Also look for notices posted around the cinema complex. Additionally, look into TrojanVision, now cablecasting on USC Cable channel 8, reaching over 40,000 potential viewers. The station houses production, sales, promotions, news, programming, and traffic departments ? which are all staffed by student managers. TrojanVision offers real world experience for those interested in the television industry. Students from all majors and levels of experience are encouraged to get involved. TrojanVision is always seeking new show ideas, as well as volunteers to help produce shows. Positions range from behind the scenes technical work ? or producing the content ? to on-air talent.

Contact the personnel manager at (213)-743-2725 for more information or visit the website at www.trojanvision.org

CAN I SHOOT A FILM WITH A CHILD ACTOR?

Yes. However, a certified studio teacher/welfare worker must be on set at all times, and you will have to pay this individual.

Start your research in SPO.

IS ALL OF THE EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE TO ME ALL OF THE TIME?

NO.

Before using equipment, check with the appropriate faculty regarding its availability. Equipment on stages is also needed for classroom instruction and **IS NOT TO BE TAKEN OFF OF THE STAGE.**

Additionally, there is no lending of equipment or production. Anything that happens to equipment or under your production number while it is under your name is entirely your responsibility.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS?

The best place to start with any questions you have is SPO.

We will direct you to the appropriate source for answers if we do not have the answer here.

phone: 213-740-2895 fax: 213-740-7308

email: spo@cinema.usc.edu

JOHN LONGENECKER, DGA
USC Cinema Alumni member
StoryRights.org
800 470-4602

If you ever loose your rights to your original work - a short film - the loss will not be based on U.S. Copyright Law - it will be because your own signature is on an agreement document or a simple form somewhere. Be thoughtful about your signature. A signature is not an ornament.