

DRAFT PROPOSAL FOR COMBINED FILM AND VIDEO MAJOR.

1. BACKGROUND.

For the last few years there has been vague talk that combining the Film major and Video major would be an advantageous thing.

The main reasons seem to be:

1. Just as in film and video culture and industries both film and video are being worked with together, so our teaching of these two mediums should be more integrated.
2. It is desirable to provide access to both mediums for as many students as possible. As pressure for places in video subjects increases, film students don't get the access to video that they once did. It has obvious advantages not to separate film students out as a totally separate 'elite'. The optimum would be to eliminate 'selection' into the film major and to open up units to both Film and Video students.
3. The film major has increasingly tried to make closer links with the screen studies major but this has not yet worked for the video major. The combined major allows the opportunity to restructure completely and design new units with such an interrelationship in mind. This parallels the desire of the Screen Studies major to encourage more video study.

At the moment only a small number of students have done screen studies units and applied them to their projects in the production majors.
4. Lecturers and students have noticed a repetition of teaching/learning of certain production techniques and technical areas in various subjects and in both majors. There is not enough opportunity for focussing on more advanced work. There's a desire to emphasise conceptual work in later year units (Stage III).
5. The relationship of 'Scriptwriting for Film and TV' to the various majors including the writing major has been unclear. Scriptwriting is essential for all video and film students yet a lot of students do both majors without the benefit of scriptwriting. It's also been suggested that we need an 'Advanced Scriptwriting' unit.
6. The Film ⁴major has had a unit which has focussed on project development (Film) which video students need/would like.
7. There has been concern that both majors have too much focus on large completed projects too early in the major. There's a need to alter the relationship of finished projects to exercises which are a working out of conceptual work.
8. It has long been identified that we need in both majors more specialized units such as 'electives' which allow for special interests and changes that are identified within the wider Film/video culture and industry.

2. PROPOSED STRUCTURE FOR COMBINED FILM AND VIDEO MAJOR.

(Section 3 deals with questions about the structure and proposals for how the teaching could be organised.)

OUTLINE OF COMBINED FILM AND VIDEO MAJOR.

Stage II	FILM AND VIDEO 1	<i>Screen theory / Screen production</i>	(4 hours)
Stage III	FILM AND VIDEO 2 and SCRIPTWRITING		(4 hours)
Stage IV	FILM 3 (4 hours) OR VIDEO 3 (4 hour) <i>M3, Studio eff, Multi, Lighting</i>	<i>Super 8 and 16mm (restricted)</i> and 2 of:	NARRATIVE (2hr) <i>(no tech teaching)</i> OR DOCUMENTARY (2hr) OR EXPERIMENTAL (2hr) <i>(Tech teaching studios)</i>
Stage V	ADVANCED SCRIPTWRITING (4hrs) OR PROJECT DEVELOPMENT (4hrs) OR ELECTIVES (4 hr) <i>e.g. (restricted)</i>	VIDEO CULTURE AND PRODUCT. <i>eff. promotion</i> ADVANCED VISUAL STYLE <i>video</i> ADVANCED SUPER 8 <i>genre shorts</i> SOUND TRACK <i>multi-track</i> FILM ANIMATION <i>opt 2 outside</i> COMPUTER ANIMATION	
Stage VI	PROJECT (4hr) <i>(must done elsewhere)</i> OR ELECTIVES (4hr)		

and 2nd year

*3/4
Screen production
Video + S8
(no tech teaching)
(Tech teaching studios)*

*eff. promotion
video
genre shorts
multi-track
opt 2 outside*

Brief outlines of each subject:

* STAGE II. FILM AND VIDEO 1. (4 hours.)

A new unit which combines the theoretical base of Screen Theory and the practical production techniques such as those in Screen Production. Students would work in Video 8 only and each week would be structured by exercises which link conceptual and technological learning. Students would complete 1 project in Video 8.

LIMIT NUMBERS INTO STAGE III.

* STAGE III. SCRIPTWRITING FOR FILM AND VIDEO. (4 hours.)

Similar to current unit but focussed on 'short' filmmaking, including narrative and non narrative approaches to scriptwriting.

FILM AND VIDEO 2. (4 hours.)

This unit would use the mediums currently taught in Screen Production e.g. super 8 and 3/4" portapak video with the addition of post production video techniques and vision mixing. It would teach in more depth camera, lighting, sound, editing, direction while still maintaining an exercise base similar to F & V. Super 8 would be transferred to video for editing.

Students would complete one project which involved both film and video mediums.

* STAGE IV. FILM 3. (4 hours.)

Selection into the unit.

A unit similar to Film 2 in its introduction to sync sound 16mm... development of crew responsibilities, production methods of sync sound filming, 16mm editing, tracklaying, sound mixing, advanced lights, sound recording and direction. It would be an exercise based unit where students work in crews for four exercises which develop in complexity.

OR

VIDEO 3. (4 hours)

This unit would provide the technical knowledge for students who want to work in video for their ongoing work. The skills taught in unit would include: advanced lighting both studio and location, M3 camera, multicam operation, studio based video F/X, advanced direction, sound track work. From this base students can apply the skills to their work in Narrative or Documentary which they are doing concurrently. This unit combines skills which formerly were spread over Video Studio/Documentary/Video Drama.

AND TWO OF THE FOLLOWING THREE UNITS.

NARRATIVE. (2 hours)

Conceptual unit exploring approaches to narrative film/video. Skills are developed by exercises in direction, visual style, coverage, multi camera compared to single camera. Exercises are completed in groups but no project work. It is a place where technical skills involved in Film 3 and Video 3 are applied.

DOCUMENTARY. (2 hours)

Similarly to the Narrative unit, this does not have technical teaching but rather conceptual work on approaches to documentary making, visual styles and critique of contemporary documentary work. No project produced but exercises done.

EXPERIMENTAL. (2 Hours.)

This unit differs to the other two choices in that there is production work which emphasises experiments with *image* construction and relationship between sound and image. It combines work in current Film 3 (optical printer, bolex camera, super 8) and Video New Techniques (studio produced effects).

Students do exercises which link the technical experiments to conceptual work. Screenings and discussions will provide the basis for this.

- * STAGE V. ADVANCED SCRIPTWRITING. 4 hours.
 OR
PROJECT DEVELOPMENT. 4 hours.

A unit that combines the current material in Film 4 with advanced technical work ... budgeting, producing, production management of larger project, marketing and distribution. Script development of project idea to shooting script stage, screenings and discussions appropriate to types of projects in the class.

OR

ELECTIVES

Suggested rotating electives include:

Video Culture and Production. 4 hours.

A unit which would work with the community sector in video production such as the production of sponsored videos or with exhibition and distribution activities (e.g. Video Festival). It is also a unit that could allow students credit for attachments and other community production work.

OR

Advanced Visual Style. 4 hours.

The content could vary each semester but would focus on one visual style and explore it in depth. Screenings and exercises would focus on that particular style, e.g. cinema verité, one shot filming, genres etc. examining both the conceptual and production issues involved.

OR

Sound Track Composition. 4 hours.

An advanced unit in sound which would work with multitrack and film music composition (using outside resources). Students would produce a sound track rather than image work. Screenings and analyses of other soundtracks would provide the conceptual structure.

OR

Advanced Super 8. 4 hours.

An opportunity for students who may not have done Film 3 to continue in film by working with advanced Super 8 technology. A super 8 project would be produced within this unit. Emphasis would be on advanced soundtrack work, perhaps in 16mm soundtrack work, perhaps in 16mm soundtracks and mix onto mag stripe. The unit would emphasise work which maximised the advantages of super 8 over 16mm and video.

OR

Film Animation. 4 hours.

An advanced unit for students wishing to focus on film animation - scripting, storyboard design, graphic elements, timing and realisation of animation, and sound for animation. Students would produce a 2 minute animation using 16mm animation bench.

OR

Computer Animation. 4 hours.

Advanced unit specialising in computer animation techniques in a similar method to film animation but possibly leading to computer animation outside of NSWIT.

* STAGE VI. FILM AND VIDEO PROJECT. 4 hours.

A unit in which students produce a project on film or video. Such a project has been developed in Project Development.

OR

ELECTIVES. 4 hours.
(see Stage V)

3. ISSUES/QUESTIONS ARISING FROM NEW STRUCTURE.

1. Selection. At the moment there are approximately 200 students in both majors each semester. Our resource base is unlikely to increase. We're having a resource crisis now and can't take more students in than we currently do. That implies the need to select from F & V₁ into the major. On what basis? We think that's a question for whole Faculty. We can't offer sync sound 16mm film to everyone but there is currently only selection into Film 3, purely a resource based rationale.

2. ACCESS TO FILM VS VIDEO.

All students in the major have access to film in the following units: F+V₁ + Advanced Super 8 (super 8) and Experimental and Film Animation (16mm). There will still be an allocation for Film Projects but as in the current situation this will be restricted (to those who have done F₃ plus perhaps additional criteria of readiness to film etc.). The AFC is still committed to assist in post production of 16mm student films to a limited extent. Students will continue to try and raise additional \$\$ as they do now. Film and Video are taught alongside each other as mediums, encouraging students to combine them. The only point at which they are separated out is Film 3, Video 3 and Electives.

3. STRUCTURE OF A MAJOR.

A major will consist of any five units from Stage III onwards. There may have to be a limit on the number of units a student can do (but we don't know extent of that yet). A student could do both Film 3 and Video 3 but their options for other units would be restricted. Film 3 would be wasted if someone was unable to do Project in film.

A student will be able to complete the major with Project Development and Project.

Note that Narrative, Documentary and Experimental are only 2hr. units, in part because they don't include 'technical' teaching but also to allow students more choice, i.e. 2 instead of just 1.

4. RELATIONSHIP TO SCREEN STUDIES MAJOR.

It is envisaged that the current subjects 'narrative', 'documentary' and to a lesser extent 'other cinema' in Screen Studies major will be redesigned. Some of the material currently taught in these will come into the new units Narrative, Documentary and Experimental in the combined film and video major.

Screen Studies lecturers will be able if they want/are free to teach in subjects in the production major especially: Narrative, Documentary, Advanced Visual Style, F + V₁ or to offer electives.

5. ELECTIVES.

These are very desirable for both teaching staff and students. The rate of availability of electives will not be clear till we're further on with proposed new structure. It will be affected by teaching hours and class sizes. See below.

6. TEACHING BLOCKS OF 1 WEEK.

We are keen to examine the possibility of teaching some subjects in a 1 week block followed by 2hr classes during the semester. Such subjects are F+V₂, Film 3 and Video 3. They would be taught for four days in the first week before classes or in first tutorial week, i.e. 32 hours in a block with rest of 24 hours in 12 weeks of 2 hour sessions.

The week block has a lot of educational advantages as long as it's followed up by 2hour classes throughout semester. This is not appropriate for all subjects just ones that have an initial technical base which must be taught before more advanced work in applying that technical knowledge. It presents some problems for P/T students.

7. CLASS SIZES.

Some units within the major will be able to have larger class sizes, e.g. Project Development, Project, Narrative, Documentary perhaps 23 rather than 15.

8. RESOURCES.

It has never been envisaged that a combined major would save money. The costs overall will be the same. The access to what equipment we do have should be better organised with greater access to studio and editing post production facilities by students. For F+V₁ to work successfully and be open to all who want it as a Stage II unit it must be resourced more adequately than Screen Production currently is. A detailed resource implication, staffing, capital, recurrent will be done when there is in principle acceptance of the idea of the major.

Written by Sarah (for Annmarie and Gill),
24.9.1987.