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### MART 491.01: Special Topics - Producing I

Andrew J. Smith

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COURSE SYLLABUS – AUTUMN 2014  
UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA – SCHOOL OF MEDIA ARTS  
**MART 491: PRODUCING**

Instructor: ANDREW SMITH  
THURSDAY 9:10am – 10:30am  
McGill 227  
Phone: 396-5052

Office/Hours: room 232  
TH 11am- 1pm  
or by appointment  
[andrew.smith@mso.umt.edu](mailto:andrew.smith@mso.umt.edu)

**Course Description:**

The secret history of great filmmakers is the history of great producers working behind the scenes to give the director the freedom and the resources to focus on his or her “vision.” This class asks: how does one produce a film? What do producers *do*, anyway? Why do they do it? And most importantly: HOW do they do it?

This class invites a number of guest speakers to share their experiences and their advice about filmmaking. Most of these speakers are producers, or work in the world of film production and development. You will be responsible for researching these guests BEFORE they appear in class, so you can ask useful and engaging questions, and make the most of their appearances.

The main work of this class will be the preparation of full **production plans** for short films to be shot in the spring (or winter). We call this a Bible, because on a film set, it is Gospel. You will each prepare a Bible for an upcoming short film project. In addition to nuts-and-bolts elements (shooting schedule, budget, call sheets, etc.), you will also help the director (who may be yourself) create a “Proof of Concept” or “Marketing & Distribution Plan.”

**Grading:**

You can earn your grade this way:

30% Daily Class Participation

30% Turn in Class assignments ON TIME (and do them well!)

30% Final presentation of your film project – will include a summary of your budget, production, marketing & distribution plan

The extra 10% you gain through going the extra mile – volunteering at a film festival, attending a film festival and writing about it, attending a film conference or panel, working on a professional (e.g., non-student) film or TV project, and telling us about it. Or by doing extra research on a producer or production company and presenting on it.

A 94%

A- 90%

B+ 87%

C 73%

C- 70%

D+ 67%

B 83%  
B- 80%  
C+ 77%

D 63%  
D- 60%  
F Below 59%

## MART 491: COURSE SCHEDULE

August 28– intro to one another and projects/ **what is a producer?**

Sept 4 –The Project: The Team & The Pitch

Sept 11 – Guest Speaker-- **Mike Steinberg**, Executive Director, Roxy Theater

Sept 18 –**Matt McCormick**-- living as an Indie Filmmaker.

Sept 25 –Script Breakdown: Guest Speaker: **Susan Kirr**

Oct 2 – Reality TV Production-- **Chris Richardson**

Oct 9 – Development-- **Laverne McKinnon**, Denver & Delilah

Oct 16 – Writer/Director as Producer-- “Passion Projects” -- **Ken White**

Oct 23 – Budgets & Production: **Brunson Green & Charlsey Adkins**

TBD: MONTANA INDIE FEATURE FILM ROUNDTABLE: BELLA VISTA, SUBTERRANEAN, WITB, CUTBANK Jeri Rafter, Brooke Swaney, Vera Brunner-Sung, Deny Staggs, Andrew Smith, Ken White

Oct 30 - Licensing & Contracts/ Adaptations/ “IP”-- **Angela Cheng Caplan** (Manager)

Nov 6 – Funding your project/crowd-sourcing-- **Patrick Cook**

Nov 13 –Setting up your company/ BUSINESS PLAN-- guest **TBA**

Nov 20 – Marketing your film/ Film Distribution-- guest **TBA**

Nov 27 – Thanksgiving (NO CLASS)

Dec 4 – Bible & Marketing Plan Presentations

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