

EE Ford Faculty Innovation Grant 2017-2018
Recipient: Christian Kiley

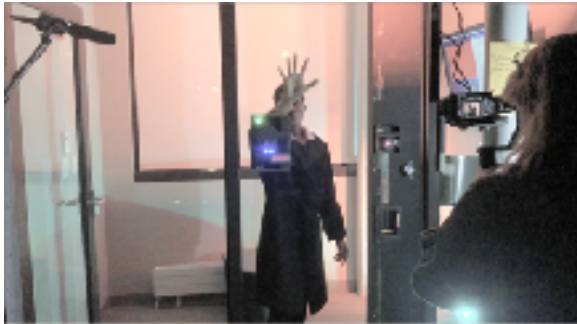
This Innovation Grant was used fund the purchase of four Sony A6300 cameras, two Zhiyun Crane 3-Axis Gimbal Stabilizers, 35mm and 50mm prime lenses, heavy-duty tripods, monopods, and high-speed SD and SSD storage media. This purchase aimed to strengthen our Video Arts curriculum in the Upper School, and gives students access to current technology for their work in the Digital Cinema Class offerings at Brimmer.

Purchasing:

Upon receipt of the grant monies, I did some additional research to be sure that the equipment mentioned in my original proposal was still up-to-date. Some minor changes and additions to the equipment list were made possible because of price reductions for the Sony A6300, a welcome surprise.

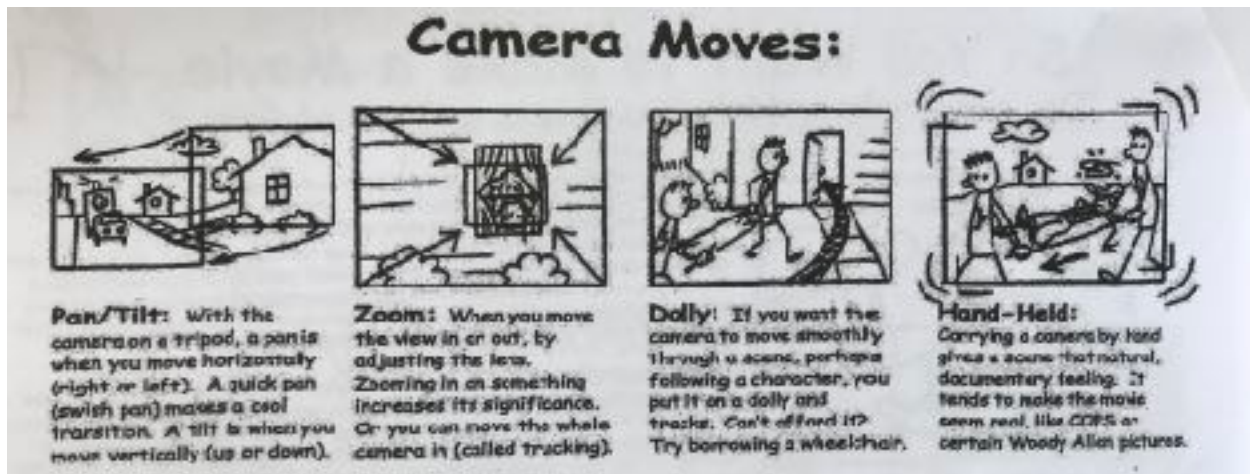
Implementation:

Over the course of the year, students in Digital Cinema class trained with the Sony A6300 cameras to learn about best practices in videography– including but not limited to in-camera image settings, frame rates and shutter speeds, framing conventions and techniques as well as encoding and management of video files in Final Cut Pro.



Clockwise from top left: Advanced Digital Cinema shoots a sci-fi short using both practical ...and digital set pieces. Students perform a scene for camera in Mr. Jacobs' drama class. Gator News Network anchors film a segment against the green screen.

Using Brimmer's new Media Center, students in Advanced Digital Cinema created virtual sets using track points and practical foreground elements. The gimbal stabilizers made these advanced techniques possible. Great emphasis is placed on creative process, as well– so in addition to learning to balance the new 4K cameras on their gimbals, students are also tasked with proposing shot lists for in-class filming projects.



An example of our shoot-to-edit approach: how to storyboard moving shots, which are easier to capture using the Zhiyun Crane stabilizers.

The shot lists are a concrete way for students to demonstrate their understanding of visual narratives. Much of the work at the beginning of each semester consists of using shot lists to plan shoot-to-edit mini-projects. Once this framework is in place, it is inspiring to watch students take the initiative— one student, a junior, has been learning to map digital backgrounds and create graphical overlays in Adobe After Effects.

Outside of Digital Cinema classes, students have used our new equipment to increase production values for the Gator News Network and produce promotional videos for school events— including performances in the Ruth Corkin Theater. The fall semester's World Religions class created a short PSA about religion in the Brimmer community, and Mandarin students created a music video using our new USB microphones and, of course, the gimbal stabilizers.

Additionally, Mr. Jacob and I have been working with drama students to create short scenes focused on acting for the camera. I am impressed with these students' focus and commitment to memorizing their lines and staying in character for the camera. It is a valuable experience distinct from, but complimentary to their usual stage performance activities.

To view selected student works, [please visit our Vimeo page!](#)

I also offer training sessions to Brimmer's faculty and staff, in the hopes that we can incorporate more video into our various curricula. This was well-received this year and I expect I'll offer more professional development opportunities to my colleagues going forward.

This year's Innovation Grant has given the community the opportunity to begin exploring various aspects of filmmaking as a discipline. As students continue to familiarize themselves with the plethora of tools and techniques required for visual storytelling, I expect we'll see much more engaging, original content from the Brimmer community.