

University of Southern California School of Cinematic Arts

Shaping the future of film



USC School of Cinematic Arts

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Los Angeles, California

<http://cinema.usc.edu>

Results

- Prepared graduates for video-editing career success by adopting what the industry requires
- Leveraged Adobe workflow and integration, with common key commands and interfaces
- Helped students work quickly, meet deadlines, and graduate with valuable job knowledge

World-renowned cinema school empowers students for career success by replacing Final Cut Pro with Adobe Premiere Pro software

The University of Southern California (USC) School of Cinematic Arts was among the first American film programs. The USC School of Cinematic Arts started as part of an agreement 80 years ago between the school and the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences, the organization well known for the Academy Awards, to create an academic program for aspiring filmmakers. Benefactors to the prestigious school include George Lucas, Steven Spielberg, and Jeffrey Katzenberg.

The program's goal is to groom the world's best filmmakers and creative artists. Norman Hollyn, professor and head of the Editing Track at USC School of Cinematic Arts and president of the University Film and Video Association, is not only an educator but a working editor and influential part of the Hollywood post-production community.

It was Hollyn who spearheaded the decision to adopt Adobe Premiere Pro software as a core component of the school's filmmaking curriculum. Together with his colleagues Hollyn replaced Final Cut Pro with Adobe Premiere Pro in the school's curriculum and state-of-the-art filmmaking facilities. Today, the program teaches both Adobe Premiere Pro and Avid Media Composer.

"As a film editor with a long career, I see Adobe Premiere Pro as a crucial part of training those who are destined to become our industry's new leaders," says Hollyn. "We are 'future-proofing' our editing software to teach students the most valued skill sets so they can enter the industry at the highest level of expertise and work in any discipline."



Challenge

- Prepare students for successful careers
- Find alternative to Final Cut Pro that is intuitive to learn and offers integration with other Adobe tools
- Help ensure that students will flourish in multidisciplinary industry

Solution

- Establish Adobe Premiere Pro as part of standard video-editing curriculum
- Introduce Adobe Creative Cloud for multidisciplinary skill sets

Systems at a glance

Adobe Creative Cloud. Components used include:

- Adobe After Effects
- Adobe Encore
- Adobe Illustrator®
- Adobe Media Encoder®
- Adobe Muse™
- Adobe Photoshop Extended
- Adobe Premiere Pro
- Adobe SpeedGrade™

Multicultural, interdisciplinary

The USC School of Cinematic Arts is among the most selective and distinguished schools for filmmaking on earth. In the production division, the undergraduate and graduate schools each accept approximately 110 students each year, from all corners of the world, including Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and the United States.

There are six divisions within the School of Cinematic Arts—Film & TV Production; Animation & Digital Arts; Writing; Producing; Critical Studies; and Interactive Media—as well as an interdivisional Media Arts + Practice Ph.D. program. The school recommends interdisciplinary work and encourages students to explore various distribution methods. Students learn a variety of skillsets but, in the Production Division, they must specialize in at least two topics. Sharing work online is encouraged: it helps students gain visibility—and, even more important, obtain jobs upon graduation.

More flexibility = greater employment success

For Hollyn, the ability to teach students multiple skills and how to work with different mediums meant moving to a more flexible technology environment that could accommodate the multi-disciplinary world his students will enter upon graduation. Although Adobe software such as Adobe Photoshop® and After Effects® are already used throughout many programs, Hollyn made the crucial decision of replacing Final Cut Pro with Adobe Premiere Pro software as a standard in the curriculum. He initially brought Adobe Premiere Pro into the graduate-level intermediate video editing class, and is now expanding its use into other programs.

According to Hollyn, the latest versions of Adobe's video tools offer incredible integration, more robust features, enhanced media management, and a greatly advanced—yet familiar—user interface in which students are really comfortable working. As a result, all 160 stations at the school are now equipped with Avid, Adobe Premiere Pro, and the complete set of Adobe video software, so students have the best tools available for every task, from editing to animation.

"The user interface and features of Adobe Premiere Pro have advanced so much that the software is now comfortable to use in any professional editing environment," says Hollyn. "The filmmaking industry is moving from a choice of Final Cut Pro or Avid to a choice of Adobe Premiere Pro or Avid."

Additionally, Adobe video software allows students to use a wide variety of cameras. Adobe software accepts virtually any digital video format, from iPhone footage to a variety of Sony, Alexa, and RED camera codecs. A drag-and-drop file transfer process brings digital footage into the Adobe Premiere Pro timeline without transcoding or working with intermediate formats.

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Norman D. Hollyn, professor of cinematic arts,
USC School of Cinematic Arts



Professional video toolset

Adobe software has always been the heart of the animation and digital arts programs at USC School of Cinematic Arts. Most students know Adobe After Effects and Photoshop software, and use them to create everything from animations to visual effects and motion graphics. As integration among all Adobe video tools has improved, USC now believes in the value of incorporating Adobe software into its curriculum to a greater degree—and expanding it across the entire program.

Additional Adobe tools officially added to the curriculum include Adobe SpeedGrade for color correction, Adobe Media Encoder for creating multiple encoded versions of source files, and Adobe Encore for designing and burning DVDs or Blu-ray disks. The similarities among Adobe software tools, keyboard shortcuts, and interfaces make it easy for students to learn the new software and integrate it into their projects.

Keeping students current

USC School of Cinematic Arts is also recommending Adobe Creative Cloud for all students. The affordable cost of a Creative Cloud membership, along with the ability to consistently and automatically have the most up-to-date version of Adobe video tools, makes it attractive for students, many of whom are living on a tight budget or student loans.

By the time they reach their advanced classes, most editing students have purchased software for systems they have at home and work is done both at home and on campus. One advantage of Creative Cloud, is that students can take projects back and forth between home and school without any concerns about version incompatibilities. Through Creative Cloud, some students have even started using Adobe Muse for creating websites without writing code, which they can use to promote themselves and their work in a professional way across a variety of screens.

Faculty, staff, and students, can come up to speed quickly on Adobe Premiere Pro through superb training and support materials such as Adobe TV and Lynda.com. Through Lynda.com, for instance, instructors can assign homework and tools for classes, all complete with tracking of assignment completion. Everything, says Hollyn, is either inexpensive or free, and that's crucial for this large educational institution.

Overall, Hollyn is pleased to be offering students the opportunity to work with tools that challenge them at a professional level. "Adobe Premiere Pro is perfectly suited to a digital world in which tapeless formats are taking over, and the need for integrated software with many capabilities continues to expand," says Hollyn. "Adobe is paving new roads that will help filmmakers of all kinds succeed—and it's now a standard part of our training facility and our curriculum."

For more information

www.adobe.com/products/creativecloud.html

www.adobe.com/products/premiere

