# Guide to Student-Generated Videos

*Prepared for:* Students and Instructors Using Video Cameras in Their Classrooms  
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Why Student-Generated Videos?
Personal, portable communications-entertainment-computing devices, such as the iPod and iPhone, have revolutionized the way we conduct our personal and professional lives. They have expanded the way we keep in touch with our family and friends, accelerated communications in the business world, and allowed us to access and use information in ways never dreamed of just a decade ago. With their large hard drives and vivid screens, these devices have changed the way we experience music, videos, games, and other forms of entertainment media. Now they are transforming education by providing hands-on, interactive, minds-on experiences that promote student learning. At the same time, ready access to audio and video through these devices has opened the opportunity for student participation in content creation. Student-produced videos promote the development of important career skills, such as communications, resume and portfolio building, and, at the same time, promote content mastery and conceptual understanding of course topics in an outcome-driven and highly assessable way. With the introduction of iTunes U, Apple’s “educational” segment of the popular iTunes music and video browser, the possibility exists for world-wide distribution and sharing of student-generated content, and student bragging rights for a job well done.

What’s In This Guide?
Professor Sean’s Guide to Student-Generated Videos gives students and instructors the inspirational, organizational, and practical tools for quickly creating and producing documentaries for classroom presentation and distribution on iTunes U. The Guide provides a framework for visualizing, storyboarding, planning, shooting, editing, exporting, and distributing short videos. The main goal here is to get students up and running in an hour or less. So there’s no time to waste. Let’s get started.

What Equipment Do I Need?
- A dirt-cheap video camera, such as Pure Digital’s Flip camera (see below)
- Access to a Mac or PC computer
- Pencil and lots of scratch paper!
1. Student-Generated Videos Rock!

In Fall 2008, students in my classes created more than 200 short videos on topics ranging from weather forecasting and climate change to ocean recreation and overfishing. Some of the videos were fantastic, very creative and well produced. Some were impactful in their simplicity. Still others were, well, a bit rough. Despite their differences, they all shared one thing in common: they provided a three-dimensional, true-life window into the world of my students.

Student-generated videos provide an opportunity for students to express their thoughts and ideas, their concerns and challenges, their passions and their beliefs in a way that is not possible through the filter of academic writing or even oral Powerpoint presentations. Their videos may not be the most articulate, or the most accurately stated, but their ideas, “warts and all,” give a genuine visual and oral representation of the minds, personalities, and cultures behind those ideas. In video, we see students as whole beings, using all the tools they’ve got, for expressing the sum of their knowledge and ideas. When a student “gets it,” there’s a feeling of wow! When a student stumbles, their errors are in plain view, not just from what they are saying or doing, but from the apparent uncomfortable body language that says “I don’t really know what I am talking about!” What’s more, because there is a more personal connection to their work (they see themselves on screen) and a greater potential for public display (either in class, on YouTube, or in iTunes), there is more willingness on their part to correct their mistakes. Oftentimes, a simple reshoot and reedit of the “broken” parts can salvage the whole shebang.

Fundamentally, student-generated videos offer a organic, visually and orally rich, and meaningful experience for the instructor and the student. They make the process of identifying erroneous statements and misconceptions more apparent and easier to grade. They put the responsibility for mastering facts and concepts on the students, who, in essence, become teachers through the lens of the camera. They provide insights into the academic, personal, and cultural differences among our students, and greater instructor awareness of the challenges faced by our students. They provide a tool that promotes mastery of facts and more thoughtful learning of concepts by students and a greater sense of accomplishment by making their work publicly available.
Something for Everyone!

For students...

Student-generated videos give students:

- a cool and creative means of self-expression and knowledge demonstration
- a fun way to learn course materials
- motivation for learning and understanding important concepts and ideas
- a rockin’ time producing videos with classmates
- awesome skills for career and life
- unique opportunities to show off their work to family and friends

For instructors...

Student-generated videos offer instructors:

- a cool and creative means for engaging students
- a useful and exciting tool for delivering and teaching course content
- a rapid and revealing medium for assessing student knowledge and understanding
- promotion of team-building, cultural awareness, and shared success
- a tool for building student career and life skills
- opportunities to showcase exemplary student work
Mind Sketching

Use this activity to generate ideas and identify your motivations for shooting short documentaries. Don’t worry about “getting it right” or organizing your work into tidy boxes or ordered lists. This is where you sketch thumbnails, throw the paint at the canvas, doodle ideas until one or more repeat themselves and grow into full-fledged children of your mind! Share and discuss your answers with a classmate.

1. What do you really like to do? What’s your heart’s passion? What kind of things really get you pumped up? What issues really concern you? What world problems make you stand up and shout, “no more!”?

2. When you think of the things you really like or are passionate about, what images come to mind? What scenes, people, activities, patterns, and colors come to mind?

3. When you think of your passions, what sounds come to mind? What music makes up the soundtrack of your passions? What explosions, ripples, laughs, cries, and screams underscore your soundtrack?

4. What single words capture the essence of your passions? (Think of a Batman TV show where the words fly off the screen in the heat of the action.)

5. What kind of meal best portrays the issue(s) you are passionate about? Fast-food? Light breakfast? Seven-course dinner? Thanksgiving feast? Describe your issue as if it were a meal.

6. What feeling best sums up how you would like other people to feel about your issue? In other words, after talking to someone for an hour about your most passionate issue, how would you like them to feel?

7. Draw a concept map based on everything you wrote in items 1-6 above. Put your central issue in a box in the middle of a blank sheet of paper. Create a separate box for each image, sound, word, meal, and feeling you wrote above. Connect the boxes with arrows. On the top of each arrow, write a verb clause that connects the side box (image, sound, etc) with the central box (your passionate issue). For example:
2. Every Video Tells a Story, Don’t It?

The Greek philosopher Aristotle (384-322 BC), arguably the greatest mind that ever lived and undoubtedly one of the pillars of modern Western thinking, was the first to expound upon the form and structure of the video documentary. (Okay, not exactly, but his ideas about story apply universally.) In *Poetics*, he writes:

“The structuring of the incidents...is the greatest thing of all...the heart and soul...an imitation of an action which is whole and...which has beginning, middle, and end.”

In short, video, like books, artwork, music, films, and theatre, tells a story. But, according to Aristotle, the way we tell a story is just as important as the story itself. Great works of art engage us because their structure provides the framework that holds the story together.

The **beginning** of a story is variously called the setup, the hook, the introduction, or the problem. It introduces us to the location, characters, conflicts, and details that stimulate action. The **middle** provides the action of the story, the relationships between characters, their conflicts, challenges, setbacks, and successes that build to a point of no return. The **end** of the story resolves the conflicts, completes the arc of character relations, and defines the themes of the story. The end often hints at a moral choice, a message, a lesson to be learned. Videos that incorporate these structural elements have maximum impact on their audience.

Aristotle also gave us a way to test whether our story successfully followed these “rules.” He states that:

“...the component events ought to be so firmly compacted that if any one of them is shifted to another place, or removed, the whole is loosened up and dislocated; for an element whose addition or subtraction makes no perceptible extra difference is not really a part of the whole.”

In other words, if you can remove a clip from your documentary, and it makes no difference, then that clip shouldn’t be there in the first place. If, however, omission of that clip alters the story, then it’s an integral part of your documentary. I once had a writing teacher who applied this test to every word in our novels!
Great Videomaking = Great Storytelling

- Good videomaking, even documentary videomaking, uses the principles of good storytelling to engage the audience and make a point.

- Every video should have a beginning that introduces the topic and gets the audience thinking “this might be important.”

- A beginning may start with a personal story that tugs at our hearts and gets us emotionally involved, it may present a precarious or consequential situation, or it may pose thought-provoking questions.

- Every video should have a middle that builds on the elements introduced in the beginning, expands on those elements, and brings us to a climax where the audience is thinking “these things are important.”

- The middle of the story should build from least important elements to most important elements; each element may have a mini-beginning, middle, and end; the middle of the story should build to one all-important conclusion; it should provide the “evidence” upon which your conclusion is based; it should convince us that you are right!

- Every video should have an end that recaps the main elements, that provides answers to the questions raised in the beginning, and that resolves the action in a satisfactory manner; the end should not leave us with more questions or confusion than we had in the beginning.

- The end should leave us with a feeling, a perspective, and perhaps even a call to action, something that makes the audience think, “that was important and I am going to do something about it right now!”
Tell Me a Story!

Use one of story elements at bottom--a computer, a string of pearls, a safe, or a key--to create a complete short story--beginning, middle, and end--for the scene of a thief. Use all of the storyboard boxes on the next page to compose your story. Write directly in the boxes. Clearly identify the story elements, the action, any dialogue, and external sounds/music for each of the nine boxes of the storyboard on the next page. Begin and end your story with the scene below. Share your story with a classmate and suggest ways to improve the story.
3. Lights, Action, I Need a Camera!

We are so lucky to be living in the 21st century. Digital technology has transformed what we can do and when we can do it. Equipment that used to occupy the space of a small room now fits in your pocket. Rolls of film, cases of tapes, even paint and paintbrushes are no longer necessary. And while you’ll still have to drop some coin if you want to produce even simple videos, the options now available are within the price range of your monthly Starbucks’s budget.

In my classes, we use the highly affordable ($129-$149) and very-easy-to-use 60-minute Flip Ultra from PureDigital Technologies. The camera captures video at 30 frames per second (standard for video) at a resolution of 640 x 480 (sufficient for computer viewing at about the size of a 4 x 6 photograph; see theflip.com for more details). The camera also carries on-board software, FlipShare, that you can install onto your computer (PC or Mac) for downloading of clips, simple editing, and saving of movies as files or burning to DVD. You can even add a soundtrack of your own music if you like. What I especially like about the Flip camera is that it takes replaceable AA batteries. Rechargeables are nice but if they go out, you’re dead in the water for videomaking. The camera also has some nice accessories, including a $15 tripod, a $15 strap mount (for attaching to your bike or ski helmet), and my favorite, a $50 underwater case for depths down to 30 feet. All in all, the Flip camera makes great videos for posting to iTunes U or YouTube, and for viewing on a video iPod or video cell phone. It’s perfect for student-generated videos!

Other than a video camera, you’ll need access to a computer. Our campus has an Apple computer lab in the art building. PCs can be found in the library or one of several computer labs. If you’re using the Flip software, you’ll need a computer that lets you install the software. Otherwise, you can simply transfer your recorded video clips (just like you would transfer files from a USB flash drive) to the computer, and edit the clips using Apple’s iMovie (or Windows Movie Maker on a PC). See web site tutorials listed in Chapter 8.
Equipment Checklist

Camera Gear
- Video camera
- Soft cloth for cleaning camera
- Extra AA batteries
- Tripod or bean bag
- Plastic bag and rubber band (in case it rains)
- Camera case
- Camera accessories (strap mount, underwater case)
- Composition notebook for logging shots, i.e., time, date, location
- Release forms for on-air "actors"
- Permission forms for non-public location shooting
- Pencils, pens, markers, blank paper for various uses
- Duct tape...you never know when it might come in handy.

Location Gear
- Small plastic tarp for low-angle shots (handy for gear, too)
- Folding chair or stool for high angle shots (handy for divas, too)
- Sun reflector (optional)
- Water and munchies for the crew

Computer Gear
- Mac or PC computer
- FlipShare software, iMovie, or Windows Movie Maker
- Storage media, such as a USB flash drive, CD, or DVD (optional)
Anatomy Lesson

Identify the fourteen parts of the Flip camera.
4. Location, Location, Location!

The most brilliantly written video script will flop like a wounded fish if the video clips and soundtracks that make up the video are poorly executed. Out-of-focus shots, extraneous action, distracting noise, and poor lighting top the list. Lack of visual clarity, lack of relevance, weak artistic skill, and lackluster artistic vision make up the list of easily remedied but oft ignored principles for successful videomaking.

Good videomaking starts with choosing good locations for your shots. Before you begin shooting, it’s highly recommended that you scout ahead of time the sites that you plan to shoot, and, if possible, at the time of day you plan to shoot. An shoot in what-you-thought-was a bright location may end up in the shadows if you don’t plan carefully. An empty schoolyard or parking lot might be bustling with activity at different times of day, so, depending on the shot you want, you’ll need to take these time-dependent activities into account.

Good location scouting also means checking for noise. Just about any kind of unintended noise can be an unwelcome distraction on a video. A barking dog, a passing car or bus, an airplane flying overhead, people talking, an air conditioner, and similar background noises can kill the moment. It’s a good idea to do a thorough sound check when scouting your locations. That means sitting and listening for a few minutes and paying attention to potential sources of noise.

Another good idea when scouting is to take a still camera along and make some test shots of your subjects in the places where you intend to shoot them. Shoot from different angles, both close up and wide angle (far away). Keep detailed notes of times, locations, and what you intended for the shot. Also, list any relevant visual elements that might positively or negatively impact your shoot. Look back over your test shots when back at home. Is the lighting right? Is the shot appropriately framed? Is there a better angle you might use? Are there nearby backup locations just in case?

Planning your shots ahead of time is the most important part of videomaking, hands down. Pay close attention to the when, where, and why of your locations and you’ll be shooting like a pro in no time.
Location Checklist

Lighting
☐ Sufficiently lit?

☐ High and low angles checked?

☐ Sun shining on face of subjects?

☐ Actors wearing neutral-colored clothing? (Avoid all black, white, thin stripes, bright reds and bright greens.)

☐ Hats off actors? (Hats create shadows over the actor’s eyes.)

☐ Distracting shadows?

☐ Free of glare and sun sparkles?

☐ Any way to improve lighting?

Appropriateness
☐ Scene relates to content?

☐ Sufficiently “uncluttered”?

☐ Activity level appropriate for content?

☐ Distracting movements of plants, animals, or people?

☐ Better camera placement or angles possible?

☐ Permissions obtained to use private location?

☐ Any commercial logos visible?

☐ Would content be enhanced by a different scene location?

Noise
☐ Sufficiently quiet?

☐ Any distracting background noises?

☐ Can you hear person speaking slowly and clearly?

☐ Would sound be improved at another location?
What’s Wrong With This Picture?
Write a couple sentences about the problem(s) with each of these photos and how you might correct them.
5. See Me, Hear Me, Touch Me...

Up to this point, we’ve talked mostly about the structural elements of a good video. How to tell a story, what kind of equipment to use, how to choose good locations, and how to shoot with proper lighting and sound represent the mechanical part of videomaking. But what fun would making a video be if there wasn’t something of the artiste involved? Brilliant videos, like memorable movies, take audiences to places they’ve never been before. They touch the audience intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually. They move us with sights and sounds. They pique our curiosity and stimulate our minds. They make us laugh, make us cry, make us come back for more. With access to high-quality equipment at the consumer level these days, it’s the intangible artistic qualities that define the difference between the amateur and the professional. Anyone can shoot high-definition video and edit it together in the form of a video. But will it capture our hearts and minds?

Undoubtedly, experience plays a part in crafting a kick-ass video. Nonetheless, a camera-aware newbie videomaker can emulate the artistic qualities of outstanding videographers. For example, amateurs often video tape their subjects with their heads in the middle of the screen. An artistic videomaker places the subject in the right or left third (rarely the center) of the screen. Amateur videographers frequently zoom (moving closer to or further away from the subject) and pan (moving the camera side to side). Professionals rarely zoom, unless it has a specific purpose, such as bringing attention to the emotion of the subject, and they rarely pan, unless it follows the natural actions of the subject, or transitions the video from one scene to the next. Most of the time, the camera sits still on a tripod, letting the action unfold before it. Even still, there’s lots of artistic leeway. Low angle shots looking upwards give the subject an aura of power, or make the action seem close, whereas high angle shots from above make the subject seem more vulnerable. Different camera angles can add artistic dimensions to a video (if not overused). And don’t forget about the “B” roll, the establishing and scenery shots that provide a sense of place and setting. Use shots of city and street signs to establish location. Use busy city streets or flashing neon signs to give a sense of bustling activity or a quiet park or calm ocean to add a sense of serenity.

Experiment with different approaches. Develop your own style. Have fun. Be all the video artist you can be!
Angling for a Better Shot

☑ Establish location and setting.

☑ Consider different angles and how they might advance your story.

☑ Shoot wide, medium, and close, and use them to take your story from general to specific.

- Experiment! You may not use most of what you shoot but you’ll learn what works and what doesn’t.
I’m Just Sayin’...
Identify the type of shot (establishing, high, low, wide, medium, close, etc.), describe the emotion evoked by each image, and identify what it is about the image that makes you feel the way you do.

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 
7. 
8. 
9. 
10. 
11. 
12.
6. Life With All The Boring Parts Chopped Out

My good friend and colleague Bob Jensen describes theatre as “life with all the boring parts chopped out.” This description applies to just about any work of art, especially video. In addition to getting well-composed shots with clear sound, a smart videographer continually asks, “Can the story be told a different way? Can it be told more efficiently and effectively?” A golden rule of screenwriting is enter a scene late and leave the scene early, which means starting the action at the last possible moment and ending it as soon as possible to advance the story. It means getting the biggest bang for your buck with every image and sound.

Many people think that editing starts when all of the scenes have been shot. In fact, a kind of mental editing should be happening as you’re shooting. Now, that doesn’t mean you should shoot less video. On the contrary, it means you should shoot more video, lots more, and with different compositions and at different angles. You want to give yourself as many options as possible to tell the story when the editing begins. That way, the inevitable “boo-boo” can be corrected when you sit down in front of the computer and begin putting together the sequence of shots that make up your video. For example, B-roll footage interspersed with an interview soundtrack not only breaks up the monotony of the talking head, but it lets you “cover up” distractions, such as the interviewee scratching their nose.

Mental editing while shooting provides the opportunity in the “editing room” for putting together a sequence that establishes time and place, gives a sense of the general surroundings, then focuses on a specific detail or storyline. Thinking this way gives you an enormous advantage when editing, because now you have all of the scenes available to you to tell the best story. There’s nothing worse than discovering later that your best scene didn’t turn out or that you wished you had a scene that you didn’t think of while shooting.

Like a great chef, videographers prepare their ingredients ahead of time. That way, when the video is being prepared, there’s fewer chances for failure and a greater likelihood of a visual feast par excellence.
Tips for Editing

- Keep a detailed log of all shots, including purpose of shot, time, date, location, camera angle, actors, scene description, and anything else that might help you later find the shot you need when editing.

- Start shooting a few seconds before the scene starts and continue shooting for a few seconds after the scene ends to allow enough “space” for editing.

- When editing, be careful not to crop the audio too soon before the scene ends; let the subject quit speaking and give a second for what they said to sink in.

- When assembling scenes into a sequence, consider carefully the order in which you place them. Typically, you want to establish the location, give a general sense of the action (wide angle), and then focus on a particular element of the action (medium and closeup shots).

- Keep it moving! Most videos lag in the middle because the editor has not paid enough attention to the pacing of the scenes. If you’re on a roll and making strong points with compelling action, don’t slow it down with “scenery” shots. Remember, if you can remove a scene and it makes no difference to the final result, cut it. As Oscar Wilde said, “Kill your darlings.”

- If you underscore your video with a soundtrack, make sure the music is in the public domain, make sure it matches the mood you intend, and make sure it doesn’t overpower the dialogue. iMovie lets you control the volume in every scene. Pay extra attention to the sound. It’s where most of the meaningful information comes from, especially if your video includes interviews.

- Don’t forget opening and end credits. Your opening credits should include a title, the script writer, the actors, the camera-person, the editor, and the director at a minimum. The end credits should repeat the opening information along with any thanks to people who provided off-camera help, and persons who gave you permission to shoot at their location. Use large, clear fonts. No frillies!
Edit This!
Edit the script below as if it were the transcript of an actual video. Cut out extraneous materials, rearrange scenes, and suggest reshoots. Make notes on your editing choices and discuss them with a classmate.

Visuals

FADE IN:

Segment 1: We’re All Gonna Die! (1:00)

1. Shots of people’s feet.
2. Nuclear explosion from internet
3. CU of child covered in dirt.
4. CU of burned forest.
5. Graph of property loss due to flooding.
6. California fires from space.
7. Head shot of Joe Student.

Audio

Music: “End of the World as We Know It” by REM.

JOE: Are we shooting? Okay, hi everybody. This is Joe from Professor Chamberlin’s class. This is my video, well, actually, our video. So, if you’ve been paying attention to the Professor, our world faces a number of urgent problems brought about by human overpopulation, overutilization of resources, and unsustainable activities.

MUSIC: Stop

JOE: What can we do about these catastrophes? Should humans get off the planet? Who is responsible for the mess we’re in? I think I messed up a line. Can we do that again?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visuals</th>
<th>Audio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Segment 2: Human activities are destroying the planet.</strong> (2:00)</td>
<td>NARRATOR: Human activities are destroying our planet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Tree in my front yard.</td>
<td>...Logging of old growth forests...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Image of people eating sushi</td>
<td>...Overfishing of the world ocean...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Image of a city bus</td>
<td>...Too many cars...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Image of a house</td>
<td>...Keeping the thermostat too low in your house...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. People smoking cigarettes</td>
<td>....and global warming due to too many hurricanes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Joe in park with children playing kickball nearby.</td>
<td>JOE: So as you can see, we have lots of serious problems...watch it, little fella...we’re screwing up our world making it unsafe for children and nature’s beasts. Sweet! Let’s ask some of these peeps in the park what they think of global warming. Excuse me, is it alright if I interview you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Back of head of adult (we forgot to get permission) with Joe interviewing.</td>
<td>PARENT: What are you doing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JOE: We’re doing a documentary on global warming.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PARENT: I don’t believe in it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Joe on a swing.</td>
<td>JOE: Okay, a real ding dong there. Let’s try to find someone who knows something.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Elderly woman on bench.</td>
<td>JOE: Excuse me, sir. We’d like to know your opinion about global warming.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visuals</td>
<td>Audio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Joe sitting next to woman.</td>
<td>ELDERLY WOMAN: This used to be a nice park until the children came. I used to feed the pigeons here every Sunday...sit and talk with Wilbur, my late husband...a kind man. You know we were married in Hawaii on the beach? Kind of wish we’d been married in a church...would have made my mother happier...but then, we were wild ones back then.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEGMENT 3: The End (0:30)</td>
<td>JOE: So, as you can see, it’s a messed up world where children can’t even play without pigeon-lovers getting all up in their business...haha...just thought I would throw that in. Yep, it’s a messed up world, and even though we couldn’t get anyone to really talk about it, well, you know what I mean. Until next time, this is Joe. Thanks for watching. See ya!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. CU of Joe</td>
<td>MUSIC: U2 “One”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. That’s A Wrap

Now that you’re movie is edited, there’s a few more things to do before creating your final work of art. First, play the movie with the sound turned off and pay attention to the visual elements. Do they follow the guidelines set out in Chapters 4 and 5? Now, turn on the sound and listen to your movie without watching it. Does everything check out like we covered in Chapters 4 and 5? Now look and listen to your movie, and pay attention to scene length and the transitions between scenes. Do they incorporate elements of Chapters 5 and 6? Finally, “pre-screen” your movie with a friend or family member. Did they understand your story? Are there any final tweaks that you can do to polish the final product?

The next point of consideration is getting your video out there for all to see. While simple in principle—just export your project as a movie (*.mov or *.wmv), there are some key details that will make your movie easier to view, easier to share, and easier to transform for DVD, web, or iPod/iPhone media. First, name your file in a manner so that the person receiving it can figure out who it’s from without having to open it. Can you imagine the confusion if everyone named their movie Project 1? Your first and last name makes an excellent file name, such as sean_chamberlin.mov. In addition, make sure your movie is in a format that is universally readable. Quicktime’s mov format and Windows’s wmv format are the best bets. Avoid other formats as they may not be viewable to everyone (like your classmates and professor).

Another important consideration is file size. Ideally, you’ll want to export your movie with the highest quality setting. However, exporting at maximum size creates a large file that is not suitable for e-mail and pretty unwieldy for uploading. You’ll need to transfer the file to a CD or save it to a USB flash drive that you can hand to someone. There are two “don’ts” here: Don’t create a self-playing DVD movie, and don’t upload your movie to YouTube. Both DVD and YouTube formats prevent recipients from sharing your movie with others or transforming it for other media. High-quality, mov or wmv files offer the most flexible formats.

Follow these simple rules and you’re video will be seen, talked about by, and cherished by more people than you might ever imagine. I know your Professor will cherish it!
Final Checklist

Video
☐ Opening and ending credits complete and readable?

☐ Scenes, sequences, and segments in logical order?

☐ Narration and dialogue audible?

☐ Sound effects effective and supportive (not overpowering)?

☐ Does your video have a clear beginning, middle, and end?

☐ Does the beginning raise questions that are addressed in the middle and resolved by the end?

☐ Does your video pack a gut punch? Does it incorporate your “issue-items” in Chapter One?

☐ Will people understand your video? Have you kept it simple enough for the average viewer?

☐ What kind of a meal is your video? Is it too fast-food? Overloaded like a Las Vegas buffet? Just right, like a nice, well-cooked meal?

Final Cut

☐ Project file named according to first and last name of movie director?

☐ Exported with highest quality setting?

☐ Exported as mov or wmv?

☐ Burned to CD that can be read in Mac and PC computers?

☐ Names of all contributors written in Sharpie on face of CD?

☐ CD placed in case on which is written the names of all contributors and their class section?

☐ Copies made for contributors?

☐ CD submitted on time?
Progress Checklist

Use this checklist to organize your work and measure your progress as you create your video masterpiece.

☐ Team of hard-working, compatible video-makers assembled.

☐ Ideas brainstormed and concept-mapped.

☐ Main idea and backup idea chosen and storyboarded.

☐ Storyboards evaluated for punch, practicality, and doability in the time allotted.

☐ Storyboard chosen, revised, and finalized. Copies distributed to everyone, including professor.

☐ Locations scouted and approved. Backup locations scouted. Information entered in logbook.

☐ Equipment reserved and assembled. Information recorded in logbook.

☐ Actors and interviewees contacted and appointments made.

☐ Permission forms and approvals obtained. Forms stapled to log book.

☐ Shooting schedule prepared and distributed to actors and crew.

☐ Scenes shot with extra footage for B-roll and boo-boos. All scene information recorded in logbook.

☐ Video files downloaded from camera to computer. Backed up on CD or flash drive. Equipment returned.

☐ Video edited. Soundtrack and graphics added. Images and sound checked. Credits added.

☐ Final cut screened and discussed. Last-minute edits made.

☐ Video saved as mov or wmv, burned to CD, and distributed to contributors and professor along with typed transcript of narration and dialogue.
8. You Are Your Most Useful Resource

No single guide (especially this one!) offers everything you might need to know to successfully create, produce, and distribute your own video. There are entire industries built around screenwriting, filmmaking, equipment selection, and the like. Truth be told, no 100 guides (or videomaking classes) can give you that special something that makes your videos stand out from the crowd. The secret to successful videomaking is making videos, over and over, again and again, learning what not to do from your mistakes and learning what to keep doing when your videos get millions of views on YouTube. If your heart is in it, your videos will shine. That’s the first rule of anything you do. Love it. Pour your soul into it. You’ll be rewarded a zillion-fold.

The world’s most successful video- (and film-) makers employ the same tools that the most careful scientists use. They tune their eyes, ears, nose, fingers, and tongue to see, hear, smell, feel, and taste every detail of the world around them. They notice things that other people don’t notice. They hear things that other people don’t hear. Their senses are focused on the world like the lens of a camera, constantly framing, shifting, zooming, pulling back, finding the exquisite combination of sights and sounds that produce a special feeling. And, like good scientists, they make notes, copious notes, frequent notes, notes-in-the-middle-of-the-night-kind of notes. They are sensually obsessed with the natural world and all that it offers to the human experience. When, eventually, they put their camera to work, they have a very clear idea of the images, sounds, and feelings that move their audience in a particular way. That’s great videomaking!

At the same time, great videomakers practice a bit of the Pirate’s Code. No, they don’t wield pistols and plunder their neighbors. They steal ideas (not literally, but figuratively). They watch copious amounts of video and film and pay close attention to the work of other videomakers. They witness in person great works of art, sculpture, architecture. They visit national parks and wilderness areas, pay attention to plants and animals, and take ideas from Nature. They keep a diary and make notes about what works and what doesn’t work. Get in touch with your inner pirate! Use your everyday life to inspire, inform, and illustrate ideas that you can use in one of your own videos.
If You Must Learn More...

Web sites

Apple iMovie tutorials
http://www.apple.com/ilife/tutorials/

Windows Movie Maker 2 tutorials
http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/using/moviemaker/default.mspx

StudentGenerated.com
For the student and instructor, this web site provides an overview and resources for student videomaking.
http://www.studentgenerated.com/Main/Main.html

Mark Freeman Films
Professor Mark Freeman, San Diego State University, understands videomaking. Check out Videomaking: It Starts with a Pencil (and watch his way cool documentaries online as examples of what to do!)
http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/~mfreeman/resources.php?content_id=12

Books

Hands down, the best-quickest-simplest way to get started. It's amply illustrated and abundantly detailed, perfect for student-projects and weekend, semi-professional videomakers.

This is a great reference book for shooting, creating, editing, and producing video in iMovie.


The Little Prince by Antoine de Saint Exupery. 1943. Harcourt, Brace & World: NY
Because more than 80 million copies of this little book have been sold in more than 180 different languages and because everyone should read it for its timeless message: “One cannot see well except with the heart, the essential is invisible to the eyes.”
Semi-Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>actors</th>
<th>the peeps who appear in your video, usually for free under sh$%*&amp; conditions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>angle</td>
<td>the position of your camera relative to the subject, such as high (above) or low (below), wide (faraway), medium, or close up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>approach</td>
<td>the way you tell your story combining images and sound, camera angles, scene pacing, point of view, and the intangible artistic qualities that make your video your own</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>audience</td>
<td>the peeps who will watch your video and love it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-roll</td>
<td>video footage of scenery, surroundings, or action external to the main subject; usually intercut with main action to provide background and interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>backlit</td>
<td>when your subject is lit from behind; makes your subject appear in silhouette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>boo-boos</td>
<td>undesired footage resulting from unintended or unnoticed actions, such as an interviewee picking their nose or some ding head yelling at the cameraman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>camera</td>
<td>the thing you hold in your hand that records the life in front of you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD</td>
<td>the round disks of metal to which you transfer (i.e, burn) your finished video</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concept-mapping</td>
<td>a visual-tactile tool for brainstorming, mind sketching, organizing, and planning a video</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>content</td>
<td>the facts of your story; what it’s about; the subject and themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>copies</td>
<td>digital files produced from the original file</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clips</td>
<td>all of the pieces of your original footage; these are what you trim, string together, and rearrange in your editing software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>copyright</td>
<td>legal right of content creators to control the reproduction and distribution of their work; includes music, images, graphics, video, and anything else; just don’t do it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>credits</td>
<td>words placed at the beginning (opening credits) and end (end credits) of your video to indicate who worked on your video and what they did</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dialogue</td>
<td>noise that comes out of your actor’s mouths when they speak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>term</td>
<td>definition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>distribution</td>
<td>activity of handing out copies, or posting your video online, to attract an audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doability</td>
<td>realistic assessment of time, budget, and logistical constraints of videomaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>editing</td>
<td>chopping out all of the boring, irrelevant and stupid parts of your video</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>format</td>
<td>type of digital code in which you’ve exported your original footage, i.e., mov or wmv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>framing</td>
<td>composing your shot for maximum effect, impact, and artistic value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iMovie</td>
<td>video editing software for Apple computers; the simplest to use, hands-down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iPod/iPhone</td>
<td>a handheld device for watching videos and telling your friends about it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iTunes U</td>
<td>Apple’s educational wing of the iTunes browser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>location</td>
<td>the place(s) where your video is shot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>log or logging</td>
<td>detailed notes taken before, during, and after shooting video</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>narration</td>
<td>off-camera speaking that provides explanation or plot movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>permission</td>
<td>a signed document that indicates a person’s willingness to appear on video</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pirate’s Code</td>
<td>“borrow” approaches to videomaking but never steal another videographer’s work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan B</td>
<td>where you will shoot your video and what you will do if your first plan sucks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>production</td>
<td>pre-; the things you do before you shoot; post-; the things you do after you shoot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>public domain</td>
<td>music, images, graphics, video, etc. that are without copyright restrictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scene, sequence,</td>
<td>a scene is any uninterrupted piece of video; a sequence is a series of scenes of a single action (e.g., chase sequence); a segment is a chapter, a main point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>segment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>soundtrack</td>
<td>the appropriate music or sound effects that play beneath dialogue or narration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>storyboard</td>
<td>a scene-by-scene description and timeline of every shot in your video</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tripod</td>
<td>use one, don’t leave home without it, the Blair Witch is dead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>videomaking</td>
<td>what you should be doing instead of reading this silly guide</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>