

Please note that all course descriptions and curriculum detail herein are subject to change. Instructors may present course content in different sequence and/or otherwise vary course content and structure according to their wishes. Specific classes may or may not be taught on all campuses, and may be consolidated and/or eliminated due to demands of attendance, staffing, equipment, facilities, and/or space.

Assistant Director Training Program

Objective: To train Connecticut residents in the basic responsibilities and functions of the Assistant Directors.

Program Synopsis: The first week will be a half-day lecture involving an overview of the production and what happens during preproduction, with time spent on the basics of how it works. In the second week, production will be discussed. Scheduling will be explained, with practical exercises in Scheduling and creating a call sheet. The following lesson plan defines specific subjects to be covered in the training program. Within the described daily and weekly framework of the program, the grantee and/or hired instructor are encouraged to supplement the curriculum as they see fit. Because all feature film positions and departments are not currently included in the training program, the use of guest speakers is encouraged as an enhancement to the lesson plan. Recommended guest speakers for the Assistant Director Training Program include Production Managers, Production Designers, Directors of Photography, Costume Designers, Prop Masters and Location Managers.

Required Text: TBD

Half-Day Introductory Lecture Assistant Director Department

The Role of the Assistant Director

- Life in the Movie Industry
- Director's Asst. vs. Assistant Director
- Job Categories within the Department
- Pre-production & Production
- Tools of the Trade
- Breakdown & Organization
- Departmental Paperwork
- AD Responsibilities
- Walkthrough of Day-to-Day Prep
- Walkthrough of Day-to-Day Shoot
- Working with Department Heads
- Working with Actors & their Agents

Week Two, Day One

9:00 – 10:25am: The Job Category and The Title

- Assistant Directors (AD)
- Director's Guild of America (DGA)
- Membership requirements
- DGA job category definition
- The AD career path
- PA Days
- DGA Trainee Program
- Non-union path

Qualities of an Assistant Director

- Ability to solve problems quickly & efficiently
- Do-it-yourself skills
- Meticulous attention to detail
- Strong organizational skills
- Ability to work to deadlines
- High standards of accuracy
- Team player
- Computer literacy (PC and Mac)

10:25 – 10:35am: Break

10:35 – 12:00pm: The Hiring Hierarchy

- Order of hiring and number of prep weeks and why.
 - 1st AD (6-8 weeks prep film/1-2 weeks TV)
 - 2nd AD (4-6 weeks prep film/7-9 days prep TV)
 - 2nd 2nd (depends on project)
 - DGA trainee & PA's (1 week prep film depending/1 day TV)

12:00 – 1:00pm: Lunch

1:00 – 5:00pm: Putting Together your Prod. Team

- 2nd 2nd AD
 - On Set with 1st AD all day
 - Organizing PA's
 - Setting background in shot
 - Communicating information to all crew
- DGA Trainee

- Communicating information to all crew & Prod. Office
- Daily Production report
- Distribution of correspondence from office
- Key PA
 - Organizing PA's
 - Setting Lock ups
 - Setting background in shot
 - Communicating information to all crew
- 1st Team PA (With 2nd AD Supervision)
 - Communicating with Hair/MU/Wdr
 - Keeping the actors informed
 - Getting the actors through the process
 - Attending to the actors needs
- Background PA (With 2nd 2nd AD Supervision)
 - Working with Extras casting
 - Signing in Extras
 - Helping Locations with holding area
 - Getting Extras through the works
 - Signing out Extras
 - Voucher paperwork & breakdown
- Walkie PA
 - Responsible for signing in and out all walkies
 - Sending broken walkies to office for repair
 - Lock-ups
 - General tasks on set
- Addl. PA's
 - Lock-ups
 - First Team Assistant

Homework: Assigned reading

Week Two, Day Two

9:00 – 10:25am: Pre-Production Meetings, with Who & Why

- Script Supervisor (Day breakdown)
- Prop Dept (Props & Vehicles)
- Special FX
- Costumes
- Stunts
- Extras Casting
- Locations
- Art Dept
- Animals
- Discussing the difference between TV & Film

- The final production meeting before shooting
 - The role of the First AD
 - Taking careful notes
 - Preparing notes to conduct an efficient meeting
 - How to run it
 - What's important to cover

10:25 – 10:35am: Break

10:35am – 12:00pm: Location & Tech Scouting:

- Who's involved
- What to look for while location scouting
 - Load in
 - Noise
 - Distance from other locations scheduled near by
- Preparing notes to conduct an efficient Tech scout
- How to run it
- What's important to cover

12:00 – 1:00 pm: Lunch

1:00 – 5:00pm: The Production Process (Principal Photography)

- Blocking
- Lighting
- Rehearsals
- Shooting
- Aerials
- Water
- Animals
- Children
- Sex

AD's Safety Responsibility on the Set

- Safety meetings on set
- Guns
- Special FX
- Stunts
- Ambulance on set
- Animals

Homework: Assigned readings

Week Two, Day Three

9:00 – 10:25am: Paperwork

- Shooting Schedule
- Production (Strip) Board
- One-Liner
- Day out of Days
- Specialized Schedules (2nd Unit/Stunts/FX)
- Script Revisions (confidentiality)
- Colors
- Call sheets
- Extras breakdown
- Pre-Production Schedules
- Daily timelines

10:25 – 10:35am: Break

10:35a – 12:00pm: Scheduling Parameters

- Geography
- Studio vs. Location
- Cast Availability
- Holds
- Drops & Pickup
- Night vs. Day
- Interior vs. Exterior
- Sequence
- Children
- Climate
- Special Effects
- Stunts
- Second Camera
- Second Unit
- Cranes
- Special Equipment
- Locations:
 - The Locations Process
 - Director's input
 - Production Designer's input
 - The Location Manager
 - Pre-Production
 - Production
 - Location Scouting
 - Accommodations (On-location AD role)

- Heating & AC (AD Role)
- What an AD looks for while Scouting
- Time Constraints (load in/out)
- Space for Equipment & Camera
- Parking
- Proximity to other Locations
- Sound issues

12:00 – 1:00 pm: Lunch

1:00 – 5:00pm: AD's Relationship with the Crew during Shooting

- On Set (1st AD & 2nd AD)
 - Director of Photography/Camera Dept
 - Gaffer/Electric Dept
 - Key Grip/Grip Dept
 - Prop Master/Prop Dept
 - Scenic
 - Location Manager
 - Actors/Extras
 - Medic
 - Script Supervisor
 - Set Dressing
 - Scenic/Greens
 - Sound Mixer
 - SFX Coordinator
 - Stunt Coordinator
 - Still Photographer
 - Dialect Coach
 - Craft Service
- Off Set (2nd AD/Trainee/PA's)
 - Production Office
 - Teamsters/Transportation
 - Art Department
 - Casting
 - Catering
 - Costume
 - Make-Up & Hair
 - Actors/Extras
 - Locations
 - Editing
 - Prop Master
 - Publicity
 - Craft Service

Homework: Assigned readings

Week Two, Day Four

9:00 – 10:25am: Set Operations

- A Typical Day
 - On-Set Decorum
 - Sight Lines
 - Walkie-Talkie Etiquette
 - Call Sheets
 - Production Reports
- The Actors On-Set
- The Second AD
- Dealing with egos
 - Dressing Room
 - The Honeywagon
- “The Wrecking Crew”
- Wardrobe
- Stars & Principals
- Supporting Players
 - Weekly vs. Daily contracts
- Stunt Performers
- Stand-ins
- Silent Bits & Special Ability
- Extras, setting and continuity
 - Union (SAG)
 - Non-union

10:25 – 10:35am: Break

10:35am – 12:00pm: Breaking down the Script for Scheduling

- Reading the script, what to look out for
- How to divide the script into 1/8
- Demo script for the class to see
- Numbering the script
- Making categories
 - Cast
 - Set
 - Props
 - Stunts
 - Vehicles
 - Animals
 - Featured Extras
 - Photos
 - Wdr/Hair/MU
 - FX

12:00pm – 1pm: Lunch

1:00 – 2:30pm: Creating an Extras Breakdown

- Explaining why the industry uses Excel instead of EP Scheduling
- Roughing in the first draft
- Discussing the director's vision
- Budgeting the numbers
- Scouting the locations
- Doubling and creating the illusion of many
- Keeping the vision within budget
- The difference between film & TV
- Period films vs. Modern day
- Location vs. Stage or Town
- Discussing who gets the breakdown & why

2:30p – 5:00pm: Begin Scheduling Exercise

Using overhead projector displaying Movie Magic Scheduling software, the instructor will guide trainees through the creation of a complete Schedule. Taking the already broken down script and inputting all the information to create all the vital documents need to schedule the project. Then discussing what documents the schedule creates and who should receive them.

Homework: Assigned reading

Week Two, Day Five

9:00am – 12:00pm Continued Scheduling Exercise

Using overhead projector displaying Movie Magic Scheduling software, the instructor will guide trainees through the creation of a complete Schedule. Taking the already broken down script and inputting all the information to create all the vital documents need to schedule the project. Then discussing what documents the schedule creates and who should receive them.

10:25 – 10:35am: Break

12:00 – 1:00 pm: Lunch

1:00pm – 5:00pm: Call Sheet Exercise

Using overhead projector displaying an Excel call sheet, the instructor will guide trainees through using the shooting schedule, crew list and extras breakdown

from the previous days to create a daily call sheet. Once the call sheet is finished, discussing the importance of accuracy and how to use it to confirm the next day's events.

Homework: Assigned reading

Week Three, Day One Prep

9:00am – 12:00pm

- Read and Breakdown Script
- Create Location List
- Concept Meeting (TV) AD, Director, Producer, Prod. Designer, Loc. Manager

12:00 – 1:00 pm: Lunch

1:00 – 5:00pm:

- Meet with Director & Casting Director
 - Director views any available audition tapes
- Begin inputting schedule

Week Three, Day Two Prep

9:00am – 12:00pm

- Create rough shooting schedule
- Meet and discuss schedule with Director.
- Meet and discuss schedule with Director, Loc. Manager & Prod. Designer.

12:00 – 1:00 pm: Lunch

1:00 – 5:00pm:

- Scout Locations
- Prop Meeting w/Director, Prop Master, Picture Car Coord.
- Continue inputting schedule

Week Three, Day Three Prep

9:00am – 12:00pm

- Scout Locations
- Create Extras Breakdown
- Meet with Director & Costume Designer

12:00 – 1:00 pm: Lunch

1:00 – 5:00pm:

- Produce One-line Schedule, DOOD, & Extras Breakdown for distribution to Dept. Heads.
- Casting session: Director & Casting director
- Cont. inputting notes in Shooting Schedule

Week Three, Day Four Prep

9:00am – 12:00pm

- Extras Meeting with Director & Extras casting
- Begin inputting Call Sheet
- Start contacting actors/agents about schedule

12:00 – 1:00 pm: Lunch

- Any additional meetings script calls for. (Stunts/FX/Animals)
- Final Casting Session for Director & Casting Directors
- Meet with or get Day breakdown from Script Supervisor
- Input final notes on Shooting Schedule

Week Three, Day Five Prep

9:00am – 12:00pm

- Shot list and walk through locations with Director

12:00 – 1:00 pm: Lunch

1:00 – 5:00pm:

- Cast read-through with Director & Casting director

- Prop Show & Tell with Director & AD
- Begin preparing for Production Meeting and Tech Scout
- Finish contacting actors/agents about schedule
- Release final one-liner, DOOD & Extras Breakdown

Week Four, Day One

9:00am – 12:00pm

- Tech Scout Locations all Dept. Heads

12:00 – 1:00 pm: Lunch

1:00 – 2:30pm:

- Production Meeting with all Dept. Heads

2:30 – 5:00pm:

Create call sheet and contact all involved for first day of shooting

Week Four, Day Two – Five

- Shoot as per Shooting Schedule.