

HIGH SCHOOL FILMMAKING LAB

12-Week Introduction to Narrative Filmmaking

Ages	14–18 (High School Students)
Program Length	3 months / 12 weeks
Schedule	2 sessions per week
Session Length	2 hours
Total Sessions	24 classes
Total Instruction	48 hours
Enrollment	Maximum 20 students
Production Teams	4 teams of 5 students
Final Projects	4 original short films
Tuition	\$1,200 total, billed at \$400/month

Program Purpose

This hands-on introductory filmmaking program gives high school students the opportunity to experience the complete filmmaking process from original idea through public premiere. Students work in four production companies, develop an original short film, and rotate through creative and technical filmmaking responsibilities.

The goal is not simply to teach students about filmmaking, but to have them make a film while learning the organization, collaboration, communication, and technical skills required to bring an idea from the page to the screen.

Full-Course Commitment

Enrollment is for the complete 12-week program. Students do not enroll on a per-class, drop-in, or month-to-month basis. The curriculum is intentionally sequenced so that each class builds on the previous one and every student remains part of a production team from the beginning through the final screening.

Tuition is structured as three monthly payments of \$400 to make the total program cost easier for families to budget. The monthly billing schedule is a payment arrangement for the full \$1,200 course, not a month-to-month enrollment option.

A full-course commitment protects the integrity of the production teams. Every student has responsibilities that carry from the writing room to the set, through editing, and into the final premiere.

Production Company Model

Students are divided into four balanced teams of five. During Class 1, students randomly draw one of four genres and may voluntarily trade with another student so that each genre ultimately has five students.

Production Company	Assigned Genre
Team 1	Horror
Team 2	Thriller
Team 3	Drama

Production Company	Assigned Genre
Team 4	Comedy

Once teams are formed, each group creates its own production company name, logo, and optional tagline. Their branding follows them throughout the program and appears on scripts, production documents, posters, credits, and premiere materials.

Individual Student Production Binder

Every student receives a personal filmmaking production binder during Class 1. This is not simply a handout packet. Students build and complete the binder throughout all 12 weeks alongside the filmmaking curriculum.

By the end of the program, each student leaves with a fully completed filmmaking reference library containing the guides, templates, checklists, production documents, notes, and personal reflections they created and used during the course. The binder is designed to remain useful if the student continues creating films or other video projects independently.

Binder Section	Contents
Filmmaking Fundamentals	Filmmaking pipeline, crew positions, set terminology, set etiquette.
Story Development	Story ideas, logline, synopsis, character development, story structure, beats, genre references.
Screenwriting	Screenplay formatting, scene writing, dialogue guidance, script and revision checklists.
Pre-Production	Script breakdown, storyboard, shot list, schedule, call sheet, location, props, wardrobe, equipment, meeting templates.
Camera	Shot sizes, camera angles, composition, movement, exposure, focus, white balance.
Lighting	Three-point lighting, natural light, lighting setup notes, safety.
Sound	Microphone guide, boom operation, audio checklist, room tone, dialogue recording.
Production	Set workflow, slate/clapper procedure, continuity, daily production checklist, media backup.
Post-Production	Editing workflow, file organization, editing checklist, sound design, color correction, titles/credits, export.
Marketing & Exhibition	Poster checklist, synopsis template, trailer/teaser checklist, premiere checklist, basic festival submission reference.
Personal Reflection	Crew-role reflections, skills learned, strengths, next skills to develop, personal filmmaking goals.

The binder is one of the program's core take-home deliverables: students leave with both a completed film and a reusable filmmaking toolkit.

Student Learning Objectives

- Develop an original story concept and write a short screenplay.
- Understand the filmmaking pipeline from development through public exhibition.
- Understand key crew responsibilities including directing, producing, cinematography, sound, editing, production design, assistant directing, and production assistance.
- Use basic camera, lighting, and sound equipment safely and effectively.
- Create storyboards, shot lists, schedules, call sheets, equipment lists, and other production documents.
- Direct actors and communicate effectively on a working set.
- Capture usable picture and clean dialogue while maintaining continuity.
- Organize, back up, and manage digital media.
- Edit a complete short film with picture, sound, music, titles, credits, and basic color correction.
- Create basic promotional materials for an original film.
- Work collaboratively, solve creative problems, meet deadlines, and give and receive constructive feedback.
- Build a personal filmmaking reference binder that can be reused for future projects.
- Present a completed film to a live audience and discuss the creative process.

12-Week Curriculum at a Glance

WEEK 1: Introduction & Team Formation

- Class 1: Welcome, filmmaking pipeline, crew roles, genre draw, production company creation, individual story idea, and production binder setup.
- Class 2: Storytelling fundamentals, short-film structure, team discussion, each team develops 2 concepts.

WEEK 2: Story Development

- Class 3: Loglines, synopsis, characters, beats, three-act structure; choose final concept.
- Class 4: Screenwriting Part 1, screenplay format, visual action, dialogue, in-class drafting.

WEEK 3: Script Completion & Production Breakdown

- Class 5: Screenwriting Part 2, finish screenplay, table read, feedback, revisions.
- Class 6: Script lock, production breakdown, crew assignments, and production binder development.

WEEK 4: Visual Storytelling & Production Planning

- Class 7: Camera angles, shot sizes, movement, composition, continuity, storyboards and shot lists.
- Class 8: Producing fundamentals, locations, props, wardrobe, scheduling, call sheets, equipment and safety planning.

WEEK 5: Camera, Lighting, Sound & Rehearsal

- Class 9: Camera, lighting, and sound boot camp with hands-on exercises.
- Class 10: Blocking and rehearsal, actor direction, camera placement, lighting, sound, rehearsal takes.

WEEK 6: Production

- Class 11: Production Day 1, interior/dialogue scenes, set workflow, slating, sound and camera procedures.
- Class 12: Production Day 2, coverage, inserts, cutaways, multiple takes, continuity.

WEEK 7: Production Continued

- Class 13: Production Day 3, exterior/action scenes, sunlight, location etiquette, problem-solving.
- Class 14: Production Day 4, finish principal photography, pickups, B-roll, picture wrap.

WEEK 8: Media Management & Editing

- Class 15: Backup, file organization, naming conventions, project structure, importing footage.
- Class 16: Editing fundamentals, timeline, trimming, visual storytelling, begin rough cut.

WEEK 9: Editing

- Class 17: Rough cut development, pacing, continuity, story clarity, instructor feedback.
- Class 18: Fine cut, timing, transitions, scene flow, peer review.

WEEK 10: Sound, Color & Titles

- Class 19: Sound design, dialogue cleanup, music, sound effects, Foley, audio mixing.
- Class 20: Color correction, basic grading, titles, credits, export Version 1.

WEEK 11: Final Cut & Film Marketing

- Class 21: Final polish, screenings, notes, revisions, final edit.
- Class 22: Marketing, movie poster, synopsis, teaser/trailer, social graphics, premiere promotion.

WEEK 12: Premiere Preparation & Showcase

- Class 23: Final exports, audio/video checks, production binders, presentations, premiere preparation.
- Class 24: Student Film Premiere, family/friends screening, Q&A;, certificates, photos and celebration.

Detailed 12-Week Curriculum

MONTH 1: PRE-PRODUCTION

Class 1: Welcome, Genre Challenge & Binder Setup

Students learn the filmmaking pipeline and major crew roles. They draw/trade genres to form four balanced production companies, create a company name and logo, receive their individual production binder, and begin the first section. Each student develops and pitches one original movie idea.

Class 2: Storytelling & Concept Selection

Students learn character, conflict, stakes, theme, beginning/middle/end, and short-film structure. Each team evaluates its ideas and develops two concepts.

Class 3: Story Development

Teams create loglines, one-page synopses, character profiles, and beat sheets. They select one final concept to produce and add story-development materials to their binders.

Class 4: Screenwriting Part 1

Students learn screenplay formatting, scene headings, visual action, dialogue, and showing rather than telling. Teams begin writing the screenplay in class and add screenwriting references to their binders.

Class 5: Screenwriting Part 2

Teams complete the screenplay, conduct a table read, identify pacing and dialogue issues, revise, and prepare for script lock.

Class 6: Script Lock & Production Breakdown

Teams lock the screenplay, break it down for production, identify characters, props, costumes, locations, and special needs, assign crew roles, and add production-planning documents to the individual binders.

MONTH 2: PRODUCTION

Class 7: Storyboarding & Shot Lists

Translate the script into visual shots. Create storyboards, shot lists, and blocking plans. Students add camera and visual-storytelling references to their binders.

Class 8: Producing & Scheduling

Build the shooting schedule, call sheets, equipment lists, location plans, prop/wardrobe lists, and safety plan. Students add reusable production templates to their binders.

Class 9: Camera, Lighting & Sound

Hands-on introduction to exposure, focus, composition, camera movement, three-point lighting, microphones, boom operation, monitoring, and room tone. Students complete technical reference pages in their binders.

Class 10: Blocking & Rehearsal

Rehearse scenes, direct actors, place camera and lights, test sound, and practice the set workflow before filming. Students document lessons learned.

Classes 11–14: Production Days

Film principal photography. Students rotate through crew responsibilities, capture coverage and pickups, maintain continuity, manage media, and solve real production problems. Daily production records and checklists are added to the binders.

MONTH 3: POST-PRODUCTION & PREMIERE

Class 15: Media Management

Back up footage, organize folders, establish naming conventions, and prepare editing projects. Add media-management and backup references to binders.

Class 16: Editing Fundamentals

Learn the editing interface, timeline, trimming, sequencing, and visual storytelling. Begin the rough cut.

Class 17: Rough Cut

Build the complete story and improve pacing, continuity, and clarity.

Class 18: Fine Cut

Refine timing, transitions, scene flow, and narrative rhythm.

Class 19: Sound Design

Clean dialogue and add music, sound effects, Foley, and balanced audio.

Class 20: Color & Titles

Perform basic color correction, grading, titles, credits, and export a review version.

Class 21: Final Polish

Screen, critique, revise, and prepare the final master.

Class 22: Film Marketing

Create a poster, synopsis, teaser/trailer if desired, and premiere promotional graphics.

Class 23: Premiere Preparation

Finalize exports, check audio/video, complete and organize production binders, practice presentations, and prepare the screening.

Class 24: Student Film Premiere

Public showcase of all four films with student introductions, Q&A, certificates, photography, and celebration. Students take home their completed individual production binders.

Tuition & Enrollment Structure

Payment Structure	Amount	Details
Full 3-month enrollment	\$1,200	Required commitment for the complete 12-week program.
Monthly payment	\$400/month	Three monthly payments used to make the full-course tuition easier to budget.
Weekly equivalent	\$100/week	Shown for budgeting purposes only; not a separate enrollment option.
Per-class equivalent	\$50/class	Shown for transparency only; students cannot enroll for individual classes.

Enrollment Policy

Students enroll for the entire 12-week course. The program is not offered as a drop-in, per-class, or month-to-month enrollment. The \$400 monthly billing schedule is simply a convenient way to divide the \$1,200 total tuition into three payments.

Cost breakdown: 24 classes × \$50 equivalent per class = \$1,200 total program tuition. The family payment schedule is \$400 in each of the three program months. The \$50 and \$100 figures are provided only to show the value and make the tuition easy to understand; they do not create separate class or weekly enrollment options.

Final Student Deliverables

- One completed original short film per production company.
- A completed screenplay.
- Storyboards and shot list.
- Production schedule and call sheet.
- Production company name and logo.
- Basic production documentation and project archive.
- Movie poster and promotional materials.
- **Individual completed filmmaking production binder and reusable reference guide.**
- Finished digital film suitable for portfolio use.
- Public premiere experience with audience Q&A.;
- Certificate of completion.

Final Showcase: Student Film Premiere

The program concludes with a special screening event where students invite friends and family to see the films they created. Each production company introduces its film, the films are screened for an audience, and students participate in a short Q&A.; The evening concludes with certificates, photographs, and a celebration of the students' work.

Program Philosophy

This course is designed as an accessible first step into filmmaking. Students do not need prior film experience. The curriculum balances instruction with hands-on production so students learn by doing. The program encourages creativity while teaching the organization, communication, accountability, and teamwork required to bring a film from an idea on paper to a finished screen.

Planned program window: Mid-September through Mid-December • 12 weeks • 24 classes • 48 instructional hours