

## CER Technology Fellowship Program –2008

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**Project Title:** The Essentials: A Database of Film History & Aesthetics

**Audience:** Initially the audience will be the students in the *Introduction to the Study of Film* course taught in the Film and Media Studies program, starting with the course offered in the fall of 2008. Most film professors here would eagerly embrace such a lecture tool, but few have the time or technological skill to create it. This project would provide the means for making that tool available to all film courses.

**Pedagogical Issue:** Effective teaching of film and media studies courses requires the use of numerous film clips during a class period. Trying to search a film DVD for a single short clip is time consuming and detracts significantly from the flow of the lecture. Faculty members would like to find a way to present a number of film clips during the course of a lecture, without having to switch among several different DVDs. As it stands, faculty frequently don't show nearly the number of clips their students should see because it is simply too difficult to search each DVD to find the desired short sequence during the lecture.

**Solution:** The project fellows propose to capture, edit, and create on a series of DVDs, a precise sequence of clips tailor-made for each lecture in the course *Introduction to the Study of Film*. This project will greatly facilitate the seamless presentation of course materials.

The course is offered every year and is a requirement for all film majors, and a standardized set of DVDs containing clips to match course content would be of immense value for whoever teaches it. In addition, because the clips will include a wide range of classic films from American and international cinemas, it can form the basis for the eventual development of a clip set available to anyone who teaches film at Hopkins. Most film professors here would eagerly embrace such a lecture tool, but few have the time or technological skill to create it.

**Technologies Used:** Adobe PDF, Digital Audio, Digital Video

**Project Abstract:** In the course "Introduction to the Study of Film," which is an overview of film history and aesthetics, undergraduates must learn to master not only the vocabulary of film—editing, cinematography, *mise-en-scene*, frame composition—but must learn to use that vocabulary to actively and critically read the moving image. The bulk of each lecture is given over to the careful study of clips from historically and aesthetically significant films; thus students view and analyze a multitude of film clips, often from several films, during every class period. Over the course of the semester, this adds up to roughly 100 clips or more. Viewing and reading these images is the essence of the course. But the task of searching through each DVD or VHS, as well as switching from one DVD to the next, is extremely time-consuming and breaks the flow of the lecture, a serious impediment to effective teaching. Existing technology can solve this problem. Using a variety of software, we propose to capture, edit, and create a precise sequence of clips tailor-made for each lecture, greatly facilitating the seamless presentation of

course materials. The course is offered every year and is a requirement for all film majors, and a standardized sets of clips to match course content will be usable for whoever teaches it. In addition, because the clips will include a wide range of classic films from American and international cinemas, it can form the basis for a set available to anyone who teaches film at Hopkins. Most film professors here would eagerly embrace such a lecture tool, but few have the time or technological skill to create it. This project would provide such a tool for *Introduction to the Study of Film*, and would provide the means for making that tool available to all film courses.