



Studio Directing and Technical Directing

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Welcome to the Studio Directing and Technical Directing class! This class is designed to prepare and qualify you to act as the Director and/or Technical Director on programs produced in the Fayetteville Public Access Television studio. In order to pass this class, you must complete the instructor-led, hands-on training and score at least 70% on a proficiency test.

The Role of the Director and the Technical Director:

The role of the Director is to orchestrate the actual recording of the program. In television production, the Director is responsible for the look of the program. S/he is in charge of all crew members, and is responsible for coordinating all technical aspects of the show. They will determine what kinds of shots and camera movements to use during the production. In addition to these duties and responsibilities, they help the crew and talent to function as a team. The Director's job is to clearly and effectively guide the crew through the production.

Assisting a Director in the control room is the Technical Director, who operates the video switcher and other equipment. They are the physical extension of the Director in the control room. They are responsible for executing the technical aspects of the production and following the instructions of the Director. In many cases, the Director may choose to also act as the Technical Director.

Communicating with the Crew:

For the Director, communication with crew members is crucial to the successful execution of any studio production. Before a production begins, the Director should put on their headset and make sure that each crew member can hear them clearly.

Directing Commands:

Because studio production involves the activities of numerous crew members, the Director's instructions must be clearly phrased. Even the sequence of the words used is important. When these cues are given, the Technical Director and other crew members will perform the action that has been requested. Below are some directing cues and their meanings.

'STAND BY'

This command is given by the Director to prepare crew members for the action the Director is planning to execute and will be followed by the command for that action. (EXAMPLE: "Stand by to take camera two")

'FADE UP' / 'FADE DOWN'

The fade up or fade down command is given when transitioning from black to a video source or from a video source to black, or fading up or fading down an audio source.

'DISSOLVE'

A dissolve command is given when the Director is requesting a video transition between two video sources where one source dissolves or blends into the next.

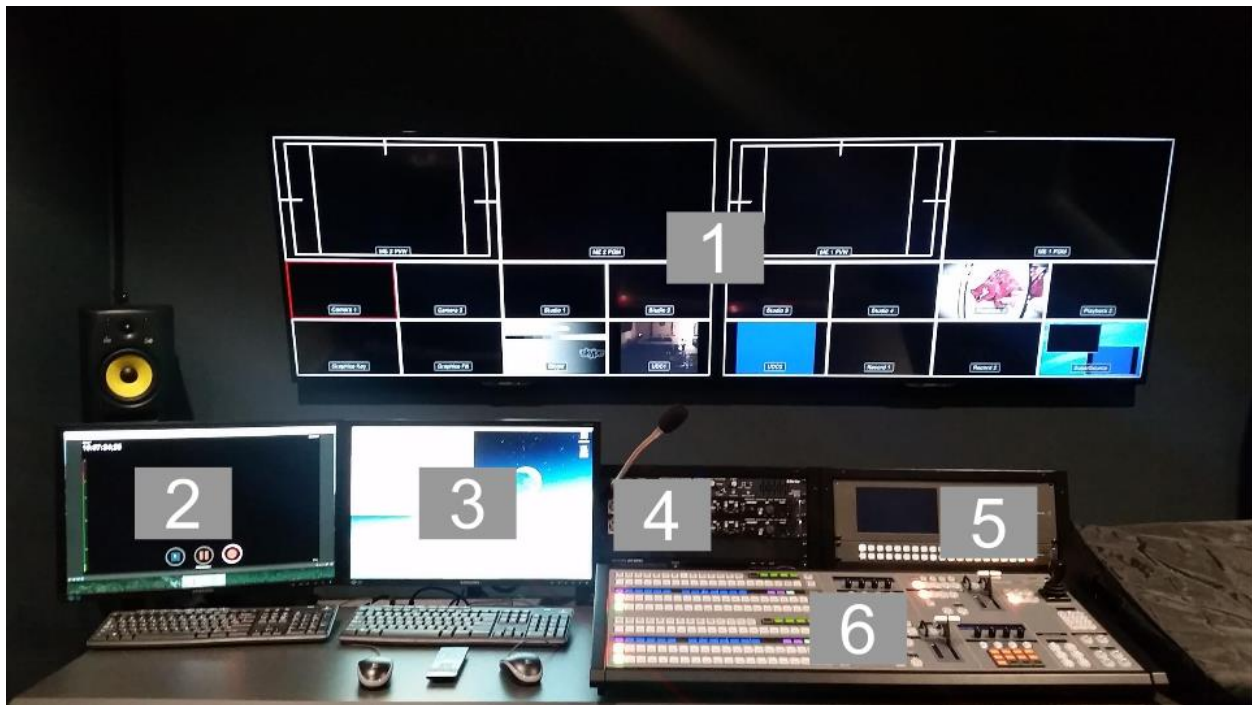
'TAKE'

A take is an instant switching from one video source to another. A take is also referred to as a 'CUT'. (EXAMPLE "Take camera two")

'CUE'

This command is given to the talent to begin speaking or taking appropriate action. It is given by the Director and relayed to the talent by the Floor Director using hand signals.

Studio Control Room:

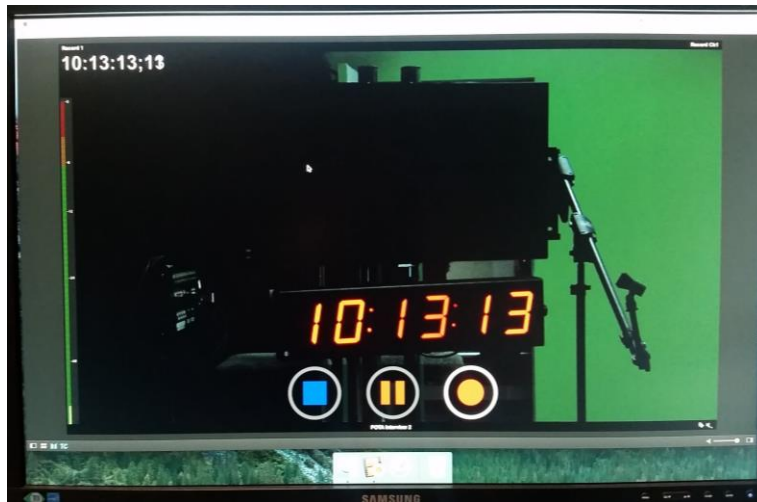


The FPTV Studio Control Room houses the following equipment:

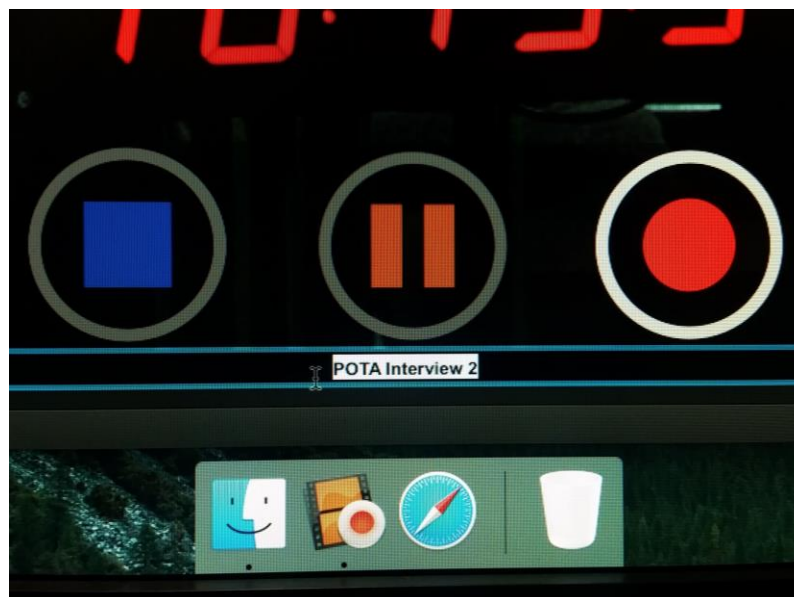
1. Multi-view Monitors
2. Display 1
3. Display 2
4. Camera Controls and DVD player (not available)
5. Quality Control monitor
6. Switcher control

Recording:

All studio programs are recorded directly to a hard drive. This hard drive is accessible through the computer on the left of the table. To access the hard drive, you'll need the Production iPad. Turn it on, and select "DVI". Then press the "Recording" button under the "Display 1 Video Source (Left)" tab. The left screen should now show the recorder controls, as in the image below.



To stay organized, you should name your recording. Using the left mouse, select the text box at the bottom of the screen. Use the left keyboard to type in the new name. To start recording, select the record button (the red circle). Each time you stop recording (the blue square) you will create a video file on the hard drive. In order to access these files for post production work at the Television Center, you will need to be qualified to use the editing equipment. See a staff member for information about enrolling in editing classes.



The Video Switcher:

The video switcher is used to select which video input source will be sent to the recorder, which transitions are used, and when and where graphics appear onscreen. This particular model contains two switchers in one control panel. These are called M/E 1 and M/E 2. For this course we will only discuss using M/E 1.



Video Switcher Busses:

On the lower left portion of the video switcher there are two rows of buttons. These buttons are the 'PROGRAM' and 'PREVIEW' busses. The bottom row is the preview bus and the current selection will be lit in green. The current selection on the preview bus will also appear in the preview section of the multi-view monitor. This allows the Technical Director and Director to visually preview a shot before using it in the production. The top row is the program bus and the current selection will be lit in red. The current selection on the program bus will also appear in the program section of the multi-view monitor. Whatever appears on the program monitor is what is being recorded or being telecast live. Directly above the program and preview busses on the switcher is the source names indicator. These source names correspond with the buttons located directly below them.



Transition Controls:



Directly to the right of the program and preview busses are the transition controls.

- The 'FADER BAR' allows the Technical Director to perform a gradual transition between the preview and program busses. The speed of this transition is dependant on how quickly or slowly the bar is moved from top to bottom or from bottom to top.
- Pressing the 'CUT' button will instantly switch the selections on the preview and program busses.
- Pressing the 'AUTO' button will perform the transition selected by the Transition Type buttons between the preview and program busses at the transition rate shown in the window above it.
- The 'DIP/MIX' button allows you to select either a dip or a dissolve transition to be used when transitioning between the preview and program busses.
- The 'WIPE' button allows you to select a wipe transition to be used when transitioning between the preview and program busses.
- The 'DVE' button allows you to select a digital video effect to be used when transitioning between the preview and program busses.

The Multi-View Monitors:

The large video displays located in front and above the video switcher allows the technical team to see the program, preview, and the video sources available on the switcher.



The windows on the video display are M/E 2 Preview, M/E 2 Program, M/E 1 Preview, M/E 1 Program, Camera 1 and Camera 2, Studio 1, Studio 2, Studio 3, Studio 4, Playback 1, Playback 2, Graphics Key, Graphics Fill, Skype, UDC 1, UDC 2, Record 1, Record 2, and SuperSource.

- **Camera 1 and Camera 2.** These are the monitors for each of the studio cameras and allow you to see what the camera operator sees.
- **Studio 1-4.** These are monitors for the optional HD/SDI inputs located inside the studio, and typically not used by FPTV producers.
- **Playback 1 and Playback 2.** These monitors show you the signal from the two playback sources.
- **Graphics Key and Graphics Fill.** These monitors show you the signal from the graphics computer.
- **Skype.** This monitor shows you the signal from the Skype computer which allows video conferencing with talent in an offsite location.
- **UDC 1 and UDC 2.** These monitors show you the signal from the “Up Down Converters” which are used to “scale” sources from their native resolution to match the 1080 60i format of the switcher. We’ll discuss these in more detail in the next section.
- **Record 1 and Record 2.** These monitors show you the signal being sent to the recording computers.
- **SuperSource.** This monitor shows you the signal from the SuperSource which allows multiple input sources to appear onscreen simultaneously.

Selecting UDC Source:

The UDC 1 and UDC 2 inputs can be switched between the DVD player, HDMI input, PC input, or the video router (used by the Government Channel, not FPTV). This gives you greater flexibility in your productions by allowing you to include video/images from a laptop or other source inside the studio. To select which source is routed to UDC 1 or UDC 2, you'll need the production iPad. If it opens to the desktop, select the "Aurora" icon in the lower right corner. Select Scaler. Then, select your desired input source from the list.



YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR PLUGGING THE IPAD BACK INTO ITS POWER SUPPLY.

Graphics:

On the lower right part of the switcher are the 'Downstream Keyers' or 'DSK' buttons. These buttons are used to bring in graphics and take out graphics. There are buttons for both DSK 1 and DSK 2. The reason there are two Downstream Keyers is so you can have multiple graphics up on the screen at one time. DSK 1 has both a 'CUT' and an 'AUTO' button. Pressing the 'DSK 1 CUT' button will instantly bring in a graphic and pressing it a second time will take that same graphic out instantly. Pressing 'DSK 1 AUTO' will bring in a graphic with a dissolve transition and pressing it again will remove that same graphic using a dissolve transition. The same is true of the 'DSK 2' buttons.

We discuss setting up the Downstream Keyers in the "Studio Graphics" course. Until you've taken this course, ask a staff member to assist you with graphics.



NOTES

The Director's Rundown:

The following is a simple Director's rundown to begin your program. The Director should write this out in advance of the production and follow it. Every production is different so tailor the rundown to the specifics of each production. Be sure to include all the necessary elements in this rundown so nothing is overlooked.

Opening:

1. Stand by in the studio. Stand by in the control room
2. Quiet on the set
3. Stand by to record
4. Record
5. Stand by to fade up to camera two
6. Stand by to mic and cue talent in 5, 4, 3, 2, 1
7. Fade up to camera two
8. Mic and cue talent

During the production the Director should continue to follow the action and give commands to crew members to frame their shots, monitor audio quality, and bring in graphics as necessary. Also, it's very important to listen to the talent so you are ready for any breaks, roll in material, or when the program is coming to a close.

Closing:

1. Stand by to wrap talent
2. Wrap talent
3. Stand by to fade out mics
4. Stand by to dissolve to credits
5. Fade out mics
6. Dissolve to credits
7. Stand by to fade to black
8. Fade to black
9. Stop recording, all clear

NOTES

Directing Tips:

- Be extremely familiar with shot composition and terminology and be sure all of your crew understand it as well.
- Always discuss with your crew what you anticipate to occur during the show before it begins. Alert them to any special situation or aspect of the production.
- Give all directing commands clearly and precisely.
- Keep your composure even in difficult situations or when errors occur.
- Call the camera number before giving instructions. For example, “Camera two, give me a close-up of the guest. Camera one, give me a wide shot”.
- Be specific in your commands. When you instruct a camera to zoom, say “Camera one, zoom in to a close up of the host” rather than “Zoom in”.
- Don’t give 'STAND BY' commands too far in advance or your crew may not be ready when the time to execute the command actually arrives. It is okay to give a 'STAND BY' command a second time if it has been some time since you first gave it.
- Always announce which camera is live and remind your operators if the shot is held for a while. For example, “Camera one is live” a minute or two later “Camera one is still live”.
- Talk to the camera operators by the camera number they are on, not by their name.
- Once you have begun a production camera operators and the Floor Director should not speak to you through the headset unless it is absolutely necessary. If a camera person speaks the talent may become distracted.
- If you make a mistake, correct it quickly and forget it. Don’t neglect the rest of the show by dwelling on the mistake.
- During the show speak only when necessary. If there is too much talk people will stop listening carefully and may miss important instructions.