

Costume Design for Cinematography

Level: 3

Career Cluster: Media Arts

Program: Media Production and Broadcasting

Pathway: Cinematography and Film/Video Production

Aligns with: THE 1004 Basic Costume Design and Apparel Construction

Course Catalog Description

Introduces digitally enhanced costume design and construction for film and video production through script analysis, digital research, mood boards, pattern work, sewing techniques, continuity tracking, and the creation of camera-ready costume pieces using both physical and digital workflows.

Summary

Develops costume design and construction skills for cinematography and film/video production through a blend of hands-on making and digitally based industry workflows. Students explore costume-related careers and postsecondary pathways, analyze scripts and character needs, evaluate fabrics for on-camera performance, interpret and modify print and digital patterns, and apply sewing, cutting, fitting, and finishing techniques to create camera-ready garments and accessories. Emphasis is placed on digital research, digital mood boards, continuity documentation, collaborative production planning, digital presentation, professional portfolio development, and the design, construction, and exhibition of original costume work for student film projects.

Notes

The updated course reflects a shift from a traditional theatre-based costume design framework to a more specialized, media-focused and industry-aligned curriculum. The original course emphasized foundational costume design concepts such as garment construction, historical research, character analysis, and stage-based production applications. In contrast, the revised course expands these concepts into film and media contexts by integrating costume design with cinematography, visual storytelling, continuity, and production workflows. Additionally, the new version introduces clearly defined learning strands and strengthens alignment with modern CTE expectations through the inclusion of career exploration, portfolio development, leadership, work-based learning, and a formal final assessment project. Overall, the update modernizes the course by connecting traditional costume design skills to digital media production environments and emphasizing professional practice, collaboration, and real-world readiness.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Career Exploration and Postsecondary Opportunities

Objective: *Students will explore and analyze career pathways related to costume design and production for film, television, and theatre by examining professional roles, tools, digital technologies, work environments, ethical and legal responsibilities, certifications, professional organizations, and Colorado postsecondary education options in order to make informed academic and career decisions.*

- 1) Identify employment opportunities in various fields with a focus in the area of cinematography and film/video production
 - a. Recognize the work typically performed, tools, digital platforms, and technology used, and the nature of work environments
 - b. Identify potential certifications within the careers
 - c. Find membership organizations associated with the careers
 - d. Understand the necessary education associated within the careers
- 2) Define professionalism within the context of cinematography and film/video production, including expectations for digital communication, file management, and online collaboration.
 - a. Criticism and evaluation
 - b. Presentation
 - c. Assessment
- 3) Recognize laws, regulations, and ethics significant to the fields of cinematography and film/video production
- 4) Identify postsecondary opportunities offered in the state of Colorado, including programs that use current digital design, production, and portfolio tools.
 - a. Technical college, community college, 4-year institutions
 - b. Certificates, associates, bachelor, and advanced degree opportunities

2. Fabric Foundations for Film

Objective: *Students will identify, evaluate, document, and select fabrics based on their behavior under lighting, movement, and camera conditions using both hands-on testing and digital reference tools.*

- 5) Identify common and specialty fabrics used in film costuming.
- 6) Differentiate fabrics based on weight, drape, sheen, and durability.
- 7) Analyze how fabric properties affect on-camera appearance and character portrayal, including documenting observations with digital photos or notes.
- 8) Select appropriate fabrics for specific costume builds using physical testing, digital reference libraries, and documented comparison notes where appropriate.
- 9) Explain cleaning requirements and apply correct care methods, including maintaining digital care logs or costume maintenance records when appropriate.
- 10) Evaluate cost, sustainability, and availability when choosing materials.

3. Pattern Interpretation, Drafting and Costume Planning

Objective: Students will interpret, create, organize, and modify print and digital patterns to plan and prepare garments for cinematic use.

- 11) Interpret commercial and digital patterns using industry symbols.
- 12) Create basic pattern pieces for shirts, pants, skirts, robes, and dresses using hand drafting or digital pattern tools where appropriate.
- 13) Combine pattern pieces to construct multi-part garments.
- 14) Modify patterns to adjust fit, silhouette, or character needs.
- 15) Analyze scripts to determine costume requirements and record findings in digital annotations, breakdowns, or planning documents where appropriate.
- 16) Organize costume plots and construction timelines using digital or print planning systems.

4. Sewing Techniques and Machine Operation

Objective: Students will operate, demonstrate, document, and apply sewing techniques to construct durable, camera-ready garments while using digital resources to support skill development and troubleshooting.

- 17) Operate a sewing machine safely and efficiently.
- 18) Differentiate between machine types and stitch applications.
- 19) Demonstrate hand-sewing, basting, hemming, and finishing techniques.
- 20) Apply appropriate stitching methods for different fabrics and seams.
- 21) Troubleshoot common machine issues using observation, reference materials, and digital tutorials or guides when appropriate.
- 22) Construct sample swatches demonstrating stitch accuracy and consistency, and document results with digital images or annotations.

5. Cutting, Construction and Assembly Techniques

Objective: Students will demonstrate, construct, document, and evaluate garment construction techniques used in film costuming through physical builds supported by digital planning and reflection tools.

- 23) Demonstrate proper cutting techniques using shears and rotary tools.
- 24) Construct basic garments and bags using patterns and stitching while following print or digitally based construction plans where appropriate.
- 25) Analyze garment construction to understand seams, closures, and structure.
- 26) Assemble specialty items such as hats, leggings, and accessories, documenting process steps with digital photos, notes, or checklists where appropriate.
- 27) Evaluate fit and make necessary alterations.
- 28) Apply finishing techniques to create polished, camera-ready garments.

6. Cinematic Costume Design and Visual Storytelling

Objective: Students will apply, justify, create, and communicate design choices that support character development and cinematic storytelling using sketches, digital mood boards, continuity tools, and collaborative presentation formats.

- 29) Analyze character arcs and story themes to inform costume choices.
- 30) Apply color theory, silhouette, and texture to enhance on-camera appearance.
- 31) Collaborate with directors and cinematographers to maintain continuity using digital costume plots, continuity logs, or shared production documents.
- 32) Create design boards, sketches, and swatch collections in digital formats where appropriate, while also being able to work in physical formats as needed for production.
- 33) Justify design decisions in written or verbal presentations supported by digital slides, boards, lookbooks, or production documents where appropriate.
- 34) Evaluate how costume choices influence audience perception.

7. Portfolio Development and Presentation

Objective: *Students will develop and present a professional costume design portfolio by curating completed garments, documenting design and construction processes, reflecting on creative and technical growth, and organizing physical and digital artifacts that demonstrate readiness for postsecondary education or careers in costume design and production.*

- 35) Curate portfolio artifacts that demonstrate costume design knowledge, technical skill, and creative growth.
- 36) Organize portfolio materials including sketches, patterns, construction samples, finished garments, process photos, and digital files.
- 37) Present and explain portfolio selections using appropriate design vocabulary, professional communication, and digitally based presentation formats where appropriate.

8. Leadership

Objective: *Students will demonstrate leadership in costume and production environments by applying communication, collaboration, initiative, responsibility, ethical decision-making, and effective digital collaboration skills to support team effectiveness and successful costume design execution.*

- 38) Demonstrate leadership skills through communication, initiative, accountability, professional behavior, and responsible use of digital collaboration and communication tools.
- 39) Collaborate effectively by contributing to production goals, resolving challenges, and supporting team success.
- 40) Participate in leadership experiences such as CTSO involvement, production roles, or peer mentoring.

9. Work-Based Learning

Objective: *Students will connect classroom learning to industry practice by participating in work-based learning experiences, applying technical and employability skills, using digital collaboration and documentation tools, and reflecting on professional expectations within costume design and production careers.*

- 41) Participate in career-connected experiences such as job shadows, client-based projects, mentorships, or internships.
- 42) Demonstrate employability skills including punctuality, communication, adaptability, professionalism, and effective use of digitally based workplace tools where appropriate.
- 43) Reflect on work-based learning experiences to evaluate skill development, career interests, and future pathways.

10. Final Production Project and Exhibition

Objective: *Students will produce, refine, document, and present a final costume demonstrating mastery of course skills through a blend of physical construction and digitally based planning, documentation, collaboration, and exhibition methods.*

- 44) Produce a complete costume or multi-piece look for a film or theatre project using production plans, reference assets, and digital workflow tools where appropriate.
- 45) Document the construction process through photos, digital notes, continuity records, and reflections.
- 46) Evaluate their craftsmanship and design effectiveness using teacher, peer, and self-assessment supported by digital or print-based reflection tools where appropriate.
- 47) Collaborate with film/theatre teams to integrate the costume into production using shared communication, planning, and continuity tools where appropriate.
- 48) Reflect on their growth as designers and makers through written, verbal, or digitally based reflection formats.

11. Career and Technical Student Organizations

Objective: *Using the CTSO Resource Document, chapter activities will provide some of the best opportunities CTSO members will have to learn by doing. A successful program of work creates a positive learning atmosphere in the classroom. CTSO members learn how to accept responsibility, work as a team, manage a budget, and handle success and failure. Per the CTE Admin Handbook, CTSOs should be embedded in course content.*

Professional Development

Prepare each member for entry into the workforce and provide a foundation for success in a career. Becoming a professional does not stop with acquiring a skill, but involves an increased awareness of the meaning of good citizenship and the importance of labor and management in the world of work.

Community Service

Promote and improve goodwill and understanding among all segments of the community through services donated by CTSO chapters, and to instill in its members a lifetime commitment to community service.

Business and Industry Connections

Increase awareness of quality job practices and attitudes, and increase the opportunities for employer engagement and eventual employment.

Financial Leadership

Plan and participate in activities to allow all members to carry out the chapter's projects. Educate members on their own personal finance for current and future success.

Public Relations

Make the general public aware of the good work that students in career and technical education are doing to better themselves and their community, state, nation, and world.

Social Activities

To increase cooperation in the school and community through activities that allow CTSO members to get to know each other in something other than a business or classroom setting.

Academic Standards Alignment

Colorado CTE courses are required to integrate academic and essential skills into course content. The following academic standards have been identified as aligned to this course and should be integrated throughout instruction.

[CO CTE Academic Standards Resources](#) (Rubrics, integration strategies, etc)

[CDE Colorado Academic Standards Online](#) (Online standards lookup tool)

Note: Mathematics and Science standards will be added in the future. Visit the [Colorado Academic Standards](#) page for the most current version.

Reading, Writing and Communicating Crosswalk

Course: Costume Design for Cinematography

Colorado Academic Standards – Reading, Writing and Communicating

Standard	Prepared Graduate Competency	Description	Course Evidence / Alignment
Standard 1: Oral Expression and Listening	Prepared Graduate 1 – Collaboration	Collaborate effectively as group members or leaders who listen actively and respectfully; pose thoughtful questions, acknowledge the ideas of others; and contribute ideas to further the group's attainment of an objective.	Students collaborate with directors, designers, and production teams, participate in fittings and critiques, and contribute ideas to develop cohesive costume designs using verbal, written, and digital communication tools.
Standard 1: Oral Expression and Listening	Prepared Graduate 2 – Oral Presentations	Deliver effective oral presentations for varied audiences and varied purposes.	Students present costume design concepts, sketches, renderings, mood boards, and design rationales for productions using in-person and digital presentation

			formats.
Standard 2: Reading for All Purposes	Prepared Graduate 4 – Informational Texts	Read a wide range of informational texts to build knowledge and to better understand the human experience.	Students read and apply informational texts such as scripts, design briefs, costume plots, measurement charts, sewing instructions, safety guidelines, and digital production documents.
Standard 2: Reading for All Purposes	Prepared Graduate 5 – Language in Context	Understand how language functions in different contexts, command a variety of word-learning strategies to assist comprehension, and make effective choices for meaning or style when writing and speaking	Students use appropriate costume and technical theatre vocabulary and adapt language for creative collaboration, fittings, production documentation, and digital portfolio communication.
Standard 3: Writing and Composition	Prepared Graduate 7 – Informational Writing	Craft informational/explanatory texts using techniques specific to the genre.	Students write costume design statements, research notes, production documentation, reflections, digital portfolio entries, and explanations of costume construction and design choices.
Standard 3: Writing and Composition	Prepared Graduate 9 – Writing Process	Demonstrate mastery of their own writing process with clear, coherent, and error-free polished products.	Students revise written documentation, update digital planning

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			materials, and refine design plans to produce clear, coherent, and production-ready costume materials.
Standard 4: Research Inquiry and Design	Prepared Graduate 10 – Research and Ethics	Gather information from a variety of sources; analyze and evaluate its quality and relevance; and use it ethically to answer complex questions.	Students research historical periods, styles, fabrics, and character needs; evaluate sources; and apply ethical practices including safety, sustainability, and intellectual property awareness.

Free Resource Links

1. Career Exploration and Postsecondary Opportunities

- CareerOneStop – Costume Designer Career Profile (career pathways, salary, training)
<https://www.careeronestop.org/Toolkit/Careers/careers.aspx>
- O*NET Online – Fashion Designers (job duties, skills, certifications)
<https://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/27-1022.00>
- Bureau of Labor Statistics – Fashion Designers (employment outlook, education pathways)
<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/arts-and-design/fashion-designers.htm>
- Colorado Community College System Programs (postsecondary options, certificates, degrees)
<https://cccs.edu/programs/>

2. Fabric Foundations for Film

- FabricLink – Fabric Guide (fabric types, properties, care)
<https://fabriclink.com/university/>
- Mood Fabrics – Fabric 101 (fiber types, drape, weight, uses)
<https://www.moodfabrics.com/blog/category/fabric-101/>
- Threads Magazine – Fabric Behavior (analysis under movement and wear)
<https://www.threadsmagazine.com/>
- Sew Guide – Fabric Types Overview (durability, sheen, texture)
<https://sewguide.com/fabric-types/>

3. Pattern Interpretation, Drafting and Costume Planning

- Sewing.org – Pattern Basics (pattern reading, symbols, layout)
<https://www.sewing.org/>
- Professor Pincushion – Pattern Tutorials (commercial and digital patterns)
<https://www.professorpincushion.com/>
- The Spruce Crafts – Pattern Reading Guide (symbols, instructions, planning)
<https://www.thesprucecrafts.com/>
- BBC Costume Design Resources (script analysis, costume planning)
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach>

4. Sewing Techniques and Machine Operation

- Singer Sewing Company – Sewing Tutorials (machine basics, stitching)
<https://www.singer.com/tutorials>
- Made to Sew – Sewing Techniques Videos (hand and machine sewing)
<https://www.madetosew.com/>
- Threads Magazine – Sewing Skills Library (hemming, finishing, troubleshooting)
<https://www.threadsmagazine.com/>
- YouTube – Sewing Machine Basics (operation, troubleshooting)
https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=sewing+machine+basics

5. Cutting, Construction and Assembly Techniques

- Craftsy – Garment Construction (cutting, assembly, finishing)
<https://www.craftsy.com/>
- Instructables – Sewing Projects (construction techniques and builds)
<https://www.instructables.com/sewing/>
- The Spruce Crafts – Sewing Projects and Techniques (cutting, seams, assembly)
<https://www.thesprucecrafts.com/>
- Sewing Insight – Construction Techniques (fit, alterations, finishing)
<https://sewinginsight.com/>

6. Cinematic Costume Design and Visual Storytelling

- The Costume Society – Costume in Film (history, design principles)
<https://costumesociety.org.uk/>
- StudioBinder – Costume Design for Film (visual storytelling, character design)
<https://www.studiobinder.com/blog/costume-design-in-film/>
- FilmSkills – Costume Design Basics (collaboration, continuity, production)
<https://www.filmskills.com/>
- Khan Academy – Pixar in a Box (visual development and storytelling concepts)
<https://www.khanacademy.org/partner-content/pixar>

7. Portfolio Development and Presentation

- Adobe Portfolio (professional portfolios, showcasing costume and design work)
<https://portfolio.adobe.com/>
- Fashion Institute of Technology – Portfolio Resources (portfolio development, presentation)
<https://www.fitnyc.edu/>
- Canva Presentation Templates (portfolio presentation, visual organization)
<https://www.canva.com/presentations/templates/>
- Costume Designers Guild (professional portfolios, industry examples)
<https://costumedesignersguild.com/>

8. Leadership

- MindTools – Leadership Skills (communication, teamwork, decision-making)
https://www.mindtools.com/pages/main/newMN_LDR.htm
- SkillsYouNeed – Leadership (collaboration, conflict resolution, professionalism)
<https://www.skillsyouneed.com/lead/>
- TED Talks – Leadership (leadership perspectives, communication skills)
<https://www.ted.com/topics/leadership>
- National Society of Leadership and Success (leadership development, goal setting)
<https://www.nsls.org/>

9. Work-Based Learning

- CareerOneStop – Work-Based Learning (internships, apprenticeships, career exploration)
<https://www.careeronestop.org/ExploreCareers/learn/work-based-learning.aspx>
- Colorado Work-Based Learning (state guidance, employer connections)
<https://cdle.colorado.gov/work-based-learning>
- ACTE Work-Based Learning Resources (career readiness, employability skills)
<https://www.acteonline.org/professional-development/work-based-learning/>
- Costume Designers Guild (industry pathways, networking, professional expectations)
<https://costumedesignersguild.com/>

10. Final Production Project and Exhibition

- National Theatre – Costume Design Resources (production and exhibition)
<https://www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/learn-explore>
- Google Arts and Culture – Fashion and Costume Collections (research, inspiration) <https://artsandculture.google.com/>
- Behind the Seams (Costume Design Blog – process and industry insight)
<https://blog.costumedesignersguild.com/>
- YouTube – Costume Design Process (documentation, reflection, showcase)
https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=costume+design+process



Technology Student Association – National Competitive Events

Fashion Design & Technology

Objective: *Students will research, design, prototype, document, and present a wearable garment aligned with TSA competition requirements using appropriate digital design, portfolio, and presentation tools.*

- Research annual TSA themes and industry trends using credible digital sources and competition materials.
- Develop a design concept supported by sketches, digital or physical mood boards, and written rationale.
- Create a wearable prototype that meets TSA specifications.
- Compile a professional portfolio documenting the design and construction process using organized digital files, images, reflections, and presentation assets.
- Prepare and deliver a presentation/interview explaining design decisions with digital slides, portfolio pages, or other presentation media.
- Showcase their garment in a runway or exhibition format, including digitally based displays, portfolios, or presentation components where appropriate.
- Evaluate peer designs using TSA scoring criteria.

Resources

- Technology Student Association – Fashion Design and Technology (competition guidelines)
<https://tsaweb.org/competitions-programs/tsa/themes-problems>
- Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) – Fashion Design Resources (design process, portfolios)
<https://www.fitnyc.edu/>
- Canva – Design Mood Boards (digital design tools for presentations)
<https://www.canva.com/>
- Adobe Express – Fashion Design Tools (sketching, portfolios, presentations)
<https://www.adobe.com/express/>



Technology Student Association – National Competitive Events

Digital Video Production

Objective: Students will plan, produce, document, and present an original digital video that meets TSA Digital Video Production requirements for storytelling, technical production, copyright compliance, and interview presentation.

- Research the annual TSA Digital Video Production theme and develop an original video concept.
- Analyze the story, audience, characters, visual style, costume needs, and production requirements before filming.
- Create pre-production materials such as a script, storyboard, shot list, costume plan, production schedule, or resource list.
- Capture original video and audio using appropriate camera work, lighting, sound, actors/talent, costumes, and crew roles.
- Use costumes, styling, color, and visual continuity to support characterization and storytelling.
- Document the production through a portfolio that includes purpose, storyboard, script, hardware/software list, references, permissions, consent forms, and work log.
- Participate in an interview explaining the video concept, costume choices, production process, technical decisions, and theme connection.

Resources

- Technology Student Association – Digital Video Production competition guidelines
<https://tsaweb.org/competitions-programs/tsa/themes-problems>
- Adobe Premiere Pro – Video editing and production tools
<https://www.adobe.com/products/premiere.html>
- DaVinci Resolve – Video editing, color, audio, and post-production tools
<https://www.blackmagicdesign.com/products/davinciresolve>
- Canva – Storyboarding, planning, and production graphics
<https://www.canva.com/>