Western’s Production Studio Comes to Life
With Faculty, Student Creative Collaboration

Western faculty members have launched an experimental filmmaking project that not only takes students behind-the-scenes but also before-the-scenes.

The project entails producing a film based on a Western professor’s short story and a documentary about how to do it. Students are involved in every step.

“The creative method usually takes place behind closed doors,” said Jack Sholder, professor of digital motion pictures and video. “We are opening those meetings. Students and viewers get to see something they wouldn’t normally get to see.”

Last fall, classes did everything from plan lighting to operate cameras in order to gather footage of the earliest discussion of converting a narrative into a script.

At an office-like set built by the theatre department under Assistant Professor Luther Jones, Sholder met with Terry Curtis Fox, an associate professor who teaches screenwriting, and Ron Rash, Parris Distinguished Professor of Appalachian Cultural Studies, who wrote the short story, “Chemistry.”

The three men brought a range of experience to the table. Sholder directed such movies as “The Hidden” and “Nightmare on Elm Street 2.” He won an Emmy Award for his editing work on “3-2-1 Contact.” Fox is a screenwriter whose credits include “Hill Street Blues,” “Diagnosis Murder” and “Stargate SG-1.” Rash, a two-time novelist, has won wards such as the O. Henry Prize for short fiction, but he has never written a screenplay.

The trio tossed around ideas at the first meeting for the project and asked questions about “Chemistry,” Rash’s story of a man struggling with depression and death while scuba diving as told

On-Campus Memorial Service Scheduled Jan. 21 To Remember Western’s Malcolm Loughlin

An on-campus memorial service for Malcolm John Loughlin, associate dean of distance and continuing education at Western, is scheduled for 11 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 21, in the Coulter Building recital hall.

Well-known around the world as a leader in international education and widely admired as a member of the university community, Loughlin died Wednesday, Jan. 4, after a battle with cancer.

Loughlin came to Western in 1977 from Aberdeen, Scotland, and held a number of offices of teaching, coaching and administrative positions during his 28 years with the university.

Loughlin helped implement collaborative programs between Western and the University of Wales at Glamorgan, the University of Galway in Ireland and the nation of Jamaica. His association with Jamaica and love for Jamaican students was particularly strong, and he was especially proud that Western has “literally trained thousands of Jamaican teachers,” Loughlin would often remind listeners.

During his time in Cullowhee, he coached swimming and men’s soccer; taught in the department of administration, curriculum and instruction; worked with The Cullowhee Experience, Western’s summer enhancement program for gifted and talented students; and served as an adviser in the Counseling, Advisement and Placement Center.

He joined the administrative staff of Western’s Division of Summer School and Continuing Education (now Distance and Continuing Education) in 1988, serving as associate director, interim dean, acting dean and associate dean.

In recognition of his support for international education throughout his career, Western’s Delta Zeta chapter of the Phi Beta Delta Honor Society for International Scholars bestowed honorary membership onto Loughlin last semester. A scholarship fund has been established in honor of Loughlin’s memory. Contributions to the Malcolm J. Loughlin Scholarship Fund should be sent to the Western Carolina University Foundation, 401 H.F. Robinson Building, Cullowhee, NC 28723.
Earlier this year, “High Mountains Rising” received the 2005 Appalachian Book of the Year as well as an excellent text for students of Appalachia. The reference for understanding Appalachia for both longtime residents and newcomers to the region, by regional residents. Previous recipients of the award include Wilma Dykman, John Ehle, publications that promote the history and culture of the region, or publications that were written by regional residents. The WNC Historical Association presents the Thomas Wolfe Award to outstanding issues such as stereotypes, music, folk life, language, literature and religion. The facility, which opened two years ago, features high-tech equipment such as the type of TV switcher that NBC used for the Olympics and the type of high-definition video camera that George Lucas and others use to produce digital motion pictures. Western students are using state-of-the-art equipment to cultivate their technical skills while also witnessing the genesis of the short film project. Rash said he learned a lot from listening to the different ideas for developing a script. “It’s interpreting the written word into a language of images,” he said. “They helped me see it in ways I had not thought about before.” Rash will work on a draft to be discussed at another meeting this year, which will be used in a new “Elements of Motion Picture Production” class that invites students to walk through the steps of a producer and director. “We need a script so we can then start to break it down into a movie,” Sholder said. He compared the teaching method in the course to teaching a new cook a very complicated recipe — explaining why you have to put the sugar in after you beat the eggs, only using the ingredients of motion pictures. Rash said he’s excited about the project. “Usually when we think of movie adaptations, we think more of novels,” he said. “I am certainly honored and delighted they believe the short story could be a short film.”

Book Edited By Blethen Wins Award

“High Mountains Rising: Appalachia in Time and Place,” a book co-edited by Western history professor H. Tyler Blethen, is the 2005 winner of the Thomas Wolfe Memorial Literary Award from the Western North Carolina Historical Association.

Blethen collaborated on the book with Richard A. Straw, a history professor at Radford University. Consisting of 14 essays written by top scholars in Appalachian studies, the book is considered to be the first comprehensive volume to unite Appalachian history and culture.

The first half of “High Mountains Rising” deals with historical issues such as Native Americans, pioneer settlement, industrialization, migration and modernization, while the second half of the book focuses on cultural issues such as stereotypes, music, folk life, language, literature and religion.

The WNC Historical Association presents the Thomas Wolfe Award to outstanding publications that promote the history and culture of the region, or publications that were written by regional residents. Previous recipients of the award include Wilma Dykman, John Ehle, Charles Frazier, Gail Godwin and John Parris.

The association’s awards committee found “High Mountains Rising” to be “an important reference for understanding Appalachia for both longtime residents and newcomers to the region, as well as an excellent text for students of Appalachia.”

Earlier this year, “High Mountains Rising” received the 2005 Appalachian Book of the Year Award for nonfiction from the Appalachian Writers Association.
Monday, Jan. 16
Martin Luther King Jr. celebration—town of Sylva. Prayer Breakfast. Terry Bellamy, mayor of Asheville, speaker. 8:30 a.m. Golden Age Center, Sylva. (227-2276)

Martin Luther King Jr. celebration—"A Day On, Not A Day Off," Day of Service. 10 a.m.–3 p.m. Community Table, Sylva. Reception, 5 p.m. Grandroom, UC. (227-2276)

Martin Luther King Jr. celebration—Candlelight Vigil and Unity March. 6 p.m. Theater, UC. (227-2276)

Lady Catamount basketball—vs. Georgia Southern. Southern Conference game. $. 5 p.m. RRAC. (227-2276)

Catamount Concert Series—Pavel Wlosok & Friends. 8 p.m. RH. (227-7242)

Wednesday, Jan. 18
Meeting—Faculty Senate. 3 p.m. 104 Killian. (227-3966)

Lady Catamount basketball—vs. UNC Greensboro. Southern Conference game. S. Noon. RRAC. (227-7338)

Thursday, Jan. 19
Martin Luther King Jr. celebration—"The Civil Rights Movement: Where It’s Been and Where It’s Going." panel discussion and movie "From Montgomery to Memphis." 4 p.m. Theater, UC. (227-2276)

Traditional dance gathering—bands and callers provide music. 7 p.m. Grandroom, UC. (227-7129)

Lectures, Concerts and Exhibitions—Judy Richardson, civil rights leader and co-producer of the films “Eyes on the Prize” and “Malcolm X: Make It Plain.” 7:30 p.m. Performance Hall, FAPAC. (227-7206)

Friday, Jan. 20
Martin Luther King Jr. celebration—spoken word and poetry slam. 9 p.m. Illusions, UC. (227-2276)

Saturday, Jan. 21
Lady Catamount basketball—vs. Furman. Southern Conference game. $. 5 p.m. RRAC. (227-7338)

Mountain Heritage Center
Gallery A: “Migration of the Scotch-Irish People” (permanent exhibition). Includes text panels, illustrations, artifacts and vibrant murals that trace Scotch-Irish Appalachian settlers from Ulster to Pennsylvania, the Shenandoah Valley, and into Western North Carolina.

Gallery C: “After the War: Conflict and Domestic Change in the North Carolina Mountains.” Portrays how wars and their aftermath have shaped the lives of people and communities in Western North Carolina. Through May 2007.

Mountain Heritage Center hours: 8 a.m.–5 p.m. Monday–Friday. (227-7129 or www.wcu.edu/mhc)

Submissions: Send news items and calendar notices to WCU Calendar, 1601 Ramsey Center, Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, NC 28723 or e-mail to: Reporter@email.wcu.edu. Submit items for the university’s online calendar at least one week prior to the event.

Key: $—Admission fee; BB-Belk Building; CAC-Catamount Athletic Center; CAT-Center for Applied Technology; FAPAC-Fine and Performing Arts Center; HA-Howard Auditorium; HFR-H.F. Robinson Administration Building; HS/CF-Henson Stadium/Childress Field; MHC-Mountain Heritage Center; NSA-Natural Sciences Auditorium; RH-Ramsey Regional Activity Center; UC-A.K. Hinds University Center; UOC-University Outreach Center; WS/BW-Whitmore Stadium/Bob Waters Field.
A student/faculty delegation from Western attended the 13th Annual North Carolina Campus Compact Conference at Appalachian State University on Nov. 5. With more than 240 students and faculty in attendance from colleges and universities from throughout the state, the event marked the largest Campus Compact conference in the program’s history.

Campus Compact is a national coalition of more than 950 college and university presidents – representing some 5 million students – dedicated to promoting community service, civic engagement, and service-learning in higher education by deepening their ability to improve community life and to educate students for civic and social responsibility.

The North Carolina Campus Compact, headquartered at Elon College, coordinates the state conferences for students and faculty, and provides resources and training for faculty seeking to integrate civic and community-based learning into the curriculum.

Western students Garrett Richardson, Jason Eckard, Will Goode and Crystal Belch accompanied Vera Guise, Faculty Fellow for the College of Arts and Sciences in the department of service learning and a visiting lecturer in the department of political science and public affairs. Their workshop, titled “Citizenship — Have Americans Lost Their Swing?,” challenged participants to work to re-institutionalize civic service as an effortless component of living and climbing the success ladder in America.

“The 9-11 attacks and the recent Gulf Coast hurricanes have put human tragedy before Americans on a scale they have not seen, but busy schedules, tight budgets and civic and political apathy cramp our instinctive urge to reach out to others in a shared and frictionless motion,” said Guise, in her opening statement.

Richardson, Eckard and Goode elaborated on hot political topics and issues such as voter apathy and the social security debate, and Belch summed up with a discussion of the results of a community and campus research project conducted at Western last year by students in one of Chris Cooper’s political science classes.

The project revealed aspects of the relationship between the university and surrounding community, and identified methods for augmenting the region’s successful growth through an improved partnership between the university and the community at large, Belch said.