

VISION, MISSION AND STRATEGY – EUROPEAN FILM COLLEGE 2009

Vision

The European Film College (EFC) must create a unique and ultimately attractive educational environment for talented young filmmakers, employees and collaboration partners alike.

Mission

EFC shall maintain its position as an exclusive pre film school by devoting itself to the constant refinement and updating of the world's best foundation course in filmmaking.

Strategy

EFC fulfils its vision and mission by attracting the best students and employees and by keeping a constant flow of international guest teachers. EFC shall maintain high technical standards and an extended knowledge about film theory and practice. EFC must have an active involvement with the film business, cultural institutions and society in general.

Our vision, mission and strategy is build on the following premises:

1. EFC's educational environment

EFC is a residential training institution under the Danish folk high school system and in accordance with the folk high school philosophy EFC offers its students a broad humanistic education.

Studying at EFC means a personal development. Students shall encounter subject matters, teachers and lecturers who will enlighten and broaden their perspective on life and they will be challenged on a variety of social, political, cultural and global issues. They will get individual coaching and career advice, and they will engage in collaborative efforts where insight in the process and understanding the responsibilities is more important than the result.

The folk high school law from 2006 states; "There has to be a focus on the global citizenship through work with democratic education in an international perspective". EFC will strive to govern and live up to this point of view as few other educational institutions have better possibilities to fulfil that mission. With over 20 nations represented, EFC boasts of a global atmosphere and an appropriate international perspective.

2. EFC as pre film school

EFC defines itself as a pre film school, meaning that EFC - with its 34-week foundation course - aims at preparing students for further studies. Either at a university, a certificated film school, art schools or institutions offering advanced studies in media and communication.

The holistic foundation course takes students through all basic elements in filmmaking supported by the availability of all required technical items for film production and professional film exhibition. Following the 34 weeks students must be able to recognize and define their individual strengths and weaknesses when working in a crew situation and to determine whether they want to continue their work with film in the future. In order to take students to this level of personal awareness EFC sees film as art, craft and industry.

2.1 Art

In EFC's objective film is the 8th art form (the other 7 being; music, literature, dance, theatre, sculpturing, architecture and painting/ photography). EFC encourages an understanding of film as the quintessential performing art, recognizing the fact that the artistic expression of the media utilizes core aspects from the other performing arts. Subsequently EFC believes that all art forms should be explored in their influence on modern filmmaking, and that the references and influences in the films of this century come from all possible sources. Thus the EFC focuses its teaching on techniques and terms that can be used internationally in both theoretical and practical areas of film. Students at the EFC are encouraged to verbalize their art and work as the ability to express the thoughts behind a film and to elaborate its meaning to any audience is essential in understanding the means of expression and the overall aesthetics of the medium and to appreciate the impact of film criticism on filmmakers as well as society.

To meet these goals EFC presents the following mandatory theoretical courses: Film History, Film Theory, Film Language, Storytelling and Critique. The theoretical courses aim to strengthen the students' understanding of film as a democratic educating medium.

2.2 Craft

To introduce students to the challenging craftsmanship of the filmmaking process the overall curriculum at the EFC offers essential practical courses: Screenwriting, Directing, Cinematography, Documentary-filmmaking, Lighting, Sound (recording and design), Editing, TV-production, Producing, Production Management, Acting and Set Design.

The practical courses incarnate the strength of the foundation course. By knowing and understanding all essential filmmaking disciplines, the students have every possibility of making or contributing to making quality films and respecting every position in a film production.

During the 34-weeks, 6 course periods - each with a length of 3 weeks - further interacts with nine film-projects: One 1 minute-film, three 2 minute-films, one 3 minute-film, one 5 minute-film, one 7½ minute-documentary, one 10 minute-film and one 12 minute-film resulting in a steep learning curve, with maximum attention on the individual student efficiently supervised by the EFC faculty. The students will also make a series of multi-camera productions in the EFC studio, where they will create the entire format from original idea to broadcast.

The productions aim to mirror the production situations the students will meet when they leave EFC, and students are taught the necessity of planning, punctuality, legal issues, copyright and respect for any collaboration partner (actors, extras, sponsors) or location they use. All processes are monitored with maximum attention on the individual student efficiently supervised by the EFC faculty.

2.3 Industry

EFC understands the film industry as a vertically integrated business – focusing on the entire life cycle of a film from the basic idea up to the screening of the final film in front of an audience. EFC aims to create an awareness within students – regardless of whether they wish to become screenwriters, directors or exhibitors – about the whole body of filmmaking: What is the film about, how is it going to be made, whom is it meant for and where and when can it best meet its potential audience? Students must benefit from firm knowledge about how a film should be controlled and protected throughout the process to make the best possible product. Therefore EFC includes evaluation methods and practices as valuable elements in the filmmaking process. All student-films must go through evaluation and debriefing before they can be considered official EFC-productions. EFC maintains close contact and dialogue with both the national and international film industry realised through external teachers, guest lecturers and occasional project cooperation.

3. Social Learning

EFC believes that the filmmaking process is equivalent to the collaborative and socially structured educational process of the folk high school system. EFC aims to train students in order for them to develop and realize their responsibility as citizens and to enable them to view filmmaking as a humanistic, democratic and commercial discipline. As an international educational institution the EFC also sees it as its task to be a frontrunner in the multicultural integration and sharing of knowledge and experience. EFC concentrates on three main areas of focus in the education and development of the student's social learning process:

3.1. Language

English is the official language at the EFC. Student films, lectures, announcements, scripts etc. must all be in English. The shared language establishes an international and equal environment. It connects students and transcends national, cultural and religious differences. It encourages the individual to think and develop beyond his or her native and prior background. According to its international foundation the EFC must attract people from all over the world – both as students, teachers, staff and guests. The underlining of the international aspect should embrace the fact that the students live in a differentiated and global society with equal rights in the democratic interpretation of that word.

3.2. Crew-work

All guidelines, assignments and projects at the EFC are derived from an understanding of the sociological, psychological and organisational structure of the professional film crew and the appreciation of filmmaking as a collaborative effort. Teachers must take on the responsibility as crew-leaders and tutor the students in the methods and practices of supreme teamwork. The responsibility towards other crewmembers and the entire EFC-body should be a motivation to fulfil assignments, keep deadlines, punctuality and respect scheduled activities. Students are divided into crews of 13-15 persons and assignments are distributed according to the requirements of everyday college life and the preservation of the educational environment. Students must be able to relate professionally to the value chain in which a film is made and they have to understand the importance of relying to and being dependent to each other in this process. EFC firmly believes that students will benefit from the experience in any situation or job where collaboration and teamwork is required.

3.3. Narratives

EFC perceives film as communication and as a mass medium that contains a narrative foundation for the student's self-realization. Students leaving EFC must possess a knowledge about the principles of storytelling on film, a general understanding of the meaning and function of narratives in our common social life as well as some practical means of how to communicate effectively. EFC considers this a necessary tool in any kind of social and professional interaction between creators and audiences.

4. Social Responsibility

Healthy food, physical activity, environmental awareness and social responsibility must stand out as essential values at the EFC. Future filmmakers from EFC are encouraged to pay attention to what they eat, how they maintain a healthy condition and how they treat the world they live in. As a modern institution EFC believes that it is of importance that EFC interacts with society when focusing on these vital matters. We must help, we must participate and we must have a strong social awareness. EFC supports charity causes and people in need, and we also believe that EFC students carry a responsibility towards themselves.

4.1. Nutrition

The EFC Kitchen serves a varied and healthy, low-fat menu. The amount of vitamins, proteins and minerals in every meal is carefully monitored. The kitchen serves both vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes every day to make sure that students from with different convictions and taste are all appreciated. All dairy products are ecological, the bread is home-baked and fresh fruit is served every day. April 2008 EFC received the highest possible diploma from the Danish Ministry of Food for its outstanding hygiene. A goal is to maintain that diploma.

4.2. Physical activities

Students at the EFC are encouraged to engage in a variety of physical activities to stay active and energetic. Dynamic yoga-classes are offered two to three times a week to both students and staff free of any charge. On campus there is a basketball pitch, a beach volley pitch and ping-pong tables. The surrounding area, which is ideal for running, biking or walking, is introduced to students from the beginning of the 34-week course. Beside the college students have access to a playing field for soccer and softball. The EFC coordinates an internal softball tournament with the participation of the majority of students. EFC offers weekend exercises, where the students are taught how to train and practice sports such as football, boxing and capoeira.

4.3. Environmental awareness

As a global institution the EFC has an obligation concerning both the personal health of students and employees and concerning the surrounding environment. EFC is a non-smoking institution and we encourage all students not to smoke. EFC does not accept drugs or any kind of abuse. EFC encourages students to consider waste of electricity, water and other resources, and insists that both the inside and outside area of the college is kept clean and inspire all students to keep this in mind when they leave the college – a film production should have a strict and explicit environmental policy.

5. Social Behaviour

To maintain the high spirit and friendly atmosphere of the 115 students and approx 40 staff-members, EFC shall strive to integrate three core values in our daily life and work: Respect, professionalism and tolerance.

5.1. Respect

We respect each other across cultural, political, religious and professional differences. In regards to respect and compassion we have no hierarchy at the EFC. The only way we can nourish human empathy, a fruitful educational milieu and appreciation of filmmaking is by paying respect to each other.

5.2. Professionalism

We seek professionalism in every aspect of our work. This implies keeping deadlines, careful planning the process of filmmaking and constant evaluation of our teaching and projects. While we do this we maintain a high service level.

5.3. Tolerance

Life on campus and life on a film set sometimes requires a high tolerance level. We verbalize this from the beginning and develop procedures to handle and deal with challenge. We tell our students and our selves to make an effort to understand views and ways different from those of your own.