

# Operations Handbook

This handbook outlines the policies of the Pittsburgh Filmmakers Student/Member Equipment Access Program. Students and members are expected to know the policies specified herein. Violation of these policies constitutes grounds for termination of access.

## General Access Policies

Equipment is available to students/members for the sole purpose of creating non-commercial projects. No one may use Pittsburgh Filmmakers' equipment on projects for which they will be paid. However, royalties, awards and grant income are not considered commercial income.

As part of the agreement allowing students and members to access equipment, equipment is to be used exclusively by the student or member who is accessing it. Neither students nor members may check out equipment for use by other persons. Pittsburgh Filmmakers reserves the right to fine for any rules broken. Equipment access will be denied and grades will be withheld until all fines are paid in full.

Each course designates the equipment that students will be able to access. Students may not access equipment higher than their course allows, nor equipment which has not yet been covered in their class. Students wishing to use equipment covered in a previous course and not designated by the current course may rent such equipment according to the rates established for Artist Members. See the Equipment Office Staff for the rates.

Students enrolled for Independent Study can only access equipment specified by the original contract and must be approved by the Director of Education before the course work is to begin. Access should follow the normal parameters of the academic term.

Should a student/member encounter a problem with a piece of Pittsburgh Filmmakers' equipment, they should return the equipment as soon as possible or call the Equipment Office to report the problem. Under no circumstances can the student/member or anyone else disassemble or attempt to repair the piece of equipment. Students/members risk access loss and/or fines if they proceed.

# Hours of Operation

Monday - Thursday	10 AM - 9 PM
Friday	10 AM - 6:30 PM
Saturday - Sunday	10 AM - 2 PM

*Administrative offices open M-F from 9-5pm*

## Hours for out-of-house equipment check-out

Monday- Thursday	10 AM - 8 PM
Friday	10 AM - 6:30 PM
Saturday - Sunday	10 AM - 2 PM

## Final deadline for out-of-house equipment check-in

Monday - Thursday	4 PM
Friday	2 PM
Saturday - Sunday	12 PM

*No equipment given out/returned after 8 PM, M-Thurs!*

The In-House Equipment Office is open during all scheduled hours of operation.

## **ID Cards**

Members will be sent their ID cards in the mail. Upon paying their membership fees they will be issued as a receipt. This receipt will serve as a temporary card until the official card is received.

Student access begins after the second week of class, and continues to the last day of the semester. No access will be permitted beyond the last day.

Course fees cover the cost of equipment access for each course. Full Access members of Pittsburgh Filmmakers may take one class per semester on a non-credit basis without paying the course fee. ID cards will be available at the equipment office after the second week of classes. No access will be permitted without your ID card. Lost cards can be replaced at the Administrative Offices for a \$5 processing fee.

Each student will be asked to sign a statement which confirms their knowledge of the policies specified herein, and acknowledges their financial responsibility for any equipment that the student checks out. Each student will be held fully liable for any damage to, loss or theft of Pittsburgh Filmmakers equipment. In the higher level courses, where equipment is most expensive, it is recommended that students purchase insurance. Any damage, loss or theft will have to be fully reimbursed before further access will be allowed. Furthermore, students repeatedly unable to adhere to Pittsburgh Filmmakers' access policies will have their access suspended pending the completion of a meeting with the student, a Pittsburgh Filmmakers education department representative and a Pittsburgh Filmmakers equipment office representative.

### **Incomplete Grades**

Incomplete grades are only given for an extended illness or a family emergency. Students who request an incomplete must submit the proper form along with signatures by their instructor and the Director of Education. If approved, students will be charged a full course fee and gain access only for a limited time which is determined by the nature of the request.

### **Interim Access**

Students who are not enrolled in summer courses may obtain an Interim Access card for the summer. Students with access can use equipment thus far covered in their course work. To receive access, students must have been registered for the previous term and also be registered for the following term. The cost is \$25 per calendar month. Winter break access is also available for \$25. Students should see the Registrar for an interim access card.

# Equipment

Equipment is divided into two categories: In-House equipment and Out-of-House equipment. This distinction refers to whether or not the equipment borrower is permitted to take the equipment away from the Pittsburgh Filmmakers building. All equipment is available to be used in the building. However, only items designated as Out-of-House equipment may be taken off the premises. In-House equipment is strictly for use in the Filmmakers building.

## **HOW TO BORROW EQUIPMENT for OUT-OF-HOUSE USE:**

Borrowing equipment for Out-of-House use is a process comprised of three procedures.

### **1. Reserving Out-of-House Equipment.**

Out-of-House equipment can be reserved up to two weeks in advance. Equipment may be reserved to be borrowed for a two day period (e.g. equipment reserved to be picked up on a Monday must be returned on the subsequent Wednesday). The exception to this rule is that equipment reserved for a Friday check-out can be borrowed for a three day period, making it due back on the following Monday.

Reservations are made at the equipment office and can be made by phone or in person. *No reservations will be taken on Mondays until 4 p.m. and on Fridays reservations will only be taken before 2 p.m.* Other than this reservations will only be taken when the equipment office is open. There must be 48 hours in-between reservations to allow all students equal opportunity to equipment access. Reservations that can't be kept must be cancelled before check-out time begins. Failure to cancel will result in a fine. The Equipment Office reserves the right to postpone taking reservations at any time.

### **2. Out-of-House Equipment Check-Out**

The first step in equipment check-out is to present a Filmmakers' ID at the Equipment Office. Absolutely no equipment will be lent out without presentation of a Filmmakers' ID. There are no exceptions to this rule.

Upon presentation of an ID, the student or member will receive the equipment that has been reserved. Before leaving the building, the equipment should be thoroughly inspected and tested. At this time any problems with the equipment should be brought to the attention of the Equipment Office staff so that the current borrower will not be held responsible for previous damages. Some pieces of equipment are supplied with checklists detailing the small removable parts of that particular item. Make sure that all of the parts on the list are accounted for before taking the equipment from the building.

Students may not pick up equipment for other people, nor may they have others pick up their equipment for them.

### **3. Out-of-House Equipment Return**

The time of day equipment is due back at the Equipment Office depends on what day of the week the equipment is due back.

MONDAY - THURSDAY	10AM-4PM
FRIDAY	10AM-2PM
SATURDAY - SUNDAY	10AM-12PM

Any equipment returned past the check-in deadline will result in a fine of \$5.00 per piece of equipment, per day late. Traffic, parking and other delays should be anticipated by the equipment borrower, and do not justify late equipment. Repeated late returns will result in access suspension.

**Equipment may be returned early at any time the equipment office is open.**

As the equipment is being checked in, any difficulties experienced with the equipment being returned should be reported. Upon return, the Equipment Office Staff will inspect the equipment. All cameras and sound recorders are supplied with usage cards for students to report how long the equipment was in use. These usage cards should be filled out prior to equipment return. **People other than the student who checked out equipment may return the equipment; however, the student who originally checked out the equipment remains responsible for any breakage, loss and late returns of equipment.**

**EXTENSIONS**

Anyone who will not be able to return equipment at the appointed check-in time must request an extension before taking equipment out. Traffic, parking and other delays should be anticipated by students who have an extension. In emergencies, students should contact the Equipment Office to avoid being fined.

**ABSOLUTELY NO EXTENSIONS WILL BE GRANTED AFTER THE EQUIPMENT HAS LEFT THE FACILITY.**

***In-House Facilities***

In addition to Out-of-House equipment, Pittsburgh Filmmakers offers an extensive array of In-House facilities designated strictly for use on the premises of Pittsburgh Filmmakers. These facilities include photography darkrooms, film and video post-production equipment and digital workstations. In-House equipment can be accessed during Equipment Office hours:

Monday -Thursday	10AM-9PM
Friday	10AM-6:30PM
Saturday - Sunday	10AM-2PM

**Equipment designated as In-House may not leave the building. Anyone caught removing equipment from the building will be fined \$50.00 and stripped of access privileges.**

Students working In-House are expected to leave the facilities clean and orderly. Food and drink are restricted to the lounge areas. In addition, smoking is not permitted anywhere inside the Pittsburgh Filmmakers building. Violators will be fined or have their access limited.

**Reservations**

Some In-House facilities are available for individual reservations. Reservations can be made for up to 4 hours at a time up to two weeks in advance. Students may not reserve the same space on two consecutive days. Reservations are automatically forfeited once the reservation holder is 30 minutes late. Cancellations must be done prior to the time a reservation begins. A \$5.00 fine will be charged to those who fail to cancel. In-House reservations and changes can be made by phone or in person. The equipment office reserves the right to postpone taking reservations at any time .

***Though reservations can only be made for four-hour blocks of time, media artists are permitted to continue working in an In-House facility beyond the end time of their reservation, provided that the facility being used is not requested or reserved by another person.***

**Class Reservations**

Sometimes rooms will be reserved exclusively for class use. This is particularly true of the darkrooms and digital labs. A list of all class reservations will be posted following the second week of class. Anyone using a class reserved space must leave 15 minutes before the reservation begins

# **Editing Suites**

Pittsburgh Filmmakers' has editing labs and rooms for both film and video. None of the editing equipment may leave the building. Eating and drinking are not allowed in the editing labs/suites. Editing facilities are to be left in a clean and orderly condition. Violation of these rules will result in fines and possibly suspension of access.

## ***Video/Digital Film Editing***

Pittsburgh Filmmakers offers community digital labs and individual editing suites for upper level courses. Both Video and Film students share these labs/suites.

No food or drink is permitted in the suites or labs. Editors should leave rooms in a clean and orderly condition. Changing a wiring set-up in an editing station without authorization will result in fines. When finished using a suite or editing station in a lab, make sure all equipment is powered off and left in orderly fashion.

## ***Film Editing***

Pittsburgh Filmmakers offers reservable bench editing suites to be used for either 16mm or Super8 editing. There are also Steenbeck flatbed editors. Intermediate/advanced/thesis film students will have access to these flatbed editing machines (provided they have been cleared on the equipment) and should consult the In-House reservation procedures on pg. 9 for further details.

While in the Film Editing Rooms students are responsible for cleaning up their film trims and splice litter before they leave. Any editing debris (including film trims) left behind will be disposed of. Leaving a messy editing space is grounds for fining or access suspension/termination.

## ***Final Cut Pro Suites***

Students in both Filmmaking and Video Production classes will be assigned a partition on one of the FCP machines and will be able to work and store their material on that machine ONLY. An exception would be if a student owns or acquires an external hard drive.

## ***Avids***

Avid students will also be assigned a partition for storage on the Avid machines.

# Digital Labs

Pittsburgh Filmmakers digital facilities are reservable through the procedures described under “In-House Reservations.” Students and members using the digital facilities are required to check-in at the Equipment Office before going onto a computer. Any key lent out for the purpose of entering a digital workroom must be immediately returned to the Equipment Office once the door is unlocked.

Food and drink are PROHIBITED in all digital facilities. Do not modify the configurations of any digital suites. When a work session is finished, the computer and all components should be turned off, and the work station left clean and orderly.

Failure to comply with these policies and procedures will result in fines and possibly loss of access.

## ***The Community Digital Labs/Digital Photography Lab***

These labs are sometimes reserved for class use. Closing schedules are posted on the lab doors.

The scanning/printing stations are also reservable through In-House reservations. **Scanners can only be reserved for 2 hour periods, every other day.** Please be courteous and do not work at one of these computers if you do not need to scan or print.

It is important that students and members using the digital labs refrain from switching computers due to computer problems during a work session. Any computing problems should be reported at the Equipment Office.

Students and members have access to Filmmakers’ Server Storage. Each current digital student or member will be given a password and login which will enable them to connect to the server. Each person then has access to a personal folder where they may store work.

***It is advised that users back-up work on cd's/zip disks/flash or external drives. If your computer does not have an internal cd/dvd burner or zip drive an external device may be checked out at the Equipment Office.***

# Photography

The photography area is made up of - the Daylight (wet) Rooms, the Community Darkrooms and the Color Rooms, the Finishing (dry) Room, and the Digital Photography Lab.

## **Daylight Rooms**

### **Wet (Chemical) Room**

This room is used for loading film and processing negatives. All chemistry should be kept near the sinks. Most of the photo chemistry will be mixed in large drums and kept in the daylight room. When a drum is running low please inform staff so new chemicals can be mixed. The remainder of chemistry will be emptied into a clearly labeled bottle.

Always use these bottles first, since the new chemistry may be too hot. This is one method of how chemistry is conserved at Pittsburgh Filmmakers. Always try to conserve chemistry when possible. Photo-flo is found in 1 gallon jugs atop the processing sinks.

Developers, Stop Bath, Perma-wash and Photo-flo are poured into the sink after processing negatives. Fix or Hypo is returned to the original drum after processing negatives, and dumped into the Silver Recovery Unit when exhausted after paper processing. **DO NOT DUMP FIX DOWN THE DRAIN! DO NOT DUMP FIX DOWN THE DRAIN!**

Be careful not to drip water or chemistry onto the floor. Always have a towel or rag to wipe up any messes.

Processing ware (measuring cups, cylinders, etc...) should be rinsed and returned to the drying rack.

### **Finishing (dry) Room**

This room is to be used for strictly *dry* photographic applications. Finishing, matting, mounting and viewing work can be done here. Always remember to turn off any of the hot presses and tacking irons (they get very hot!) when you are finished using them. Remember to throw away any paper scraps or other leftover materials that you don't use. Failure to do so will result in fines.

### **Darkrooms**

The Community Darkroom (a.k.a. B/W 1) is for students and members who are enrolled in B&W I or have comparable experience. Each enlarger is labeled with a large number. The accessories needed to use the enlargers are available at the Equipment Office, and come in a Darkroom Kit marked with a corresponding number. Use the enlarger with the same number as the kit. For example: Kit#4, is to be used with enlarger #4. Enlargers and kits with mismatched numbers are not to be used together.

The Advanced Community Darkrooms (a.k.a. B/W 2 and Darkroom 2000) are for students and members who are enrolled in B&W II or higher or have comparable experience. B&W I students/members are not permitted to use the advanced darkrooms. The same procedure for checking out kits will be used in the advanced darkrooms.

If you are the first student in the lab and the chemistry is already out but covered with Plexiglas, check the chemistry and use it if it is still good. Developer and stop change color when exhausted. Fix must be tested with hypocheck. When the developer or stop is exhausted empty it into the sink. When the fixer is exhausted pour it into a pitcher and carry it back to the Silver Recovery Unit in the Daylight Room. (Please don't dump fix down the drain!) If there are no printing trays out, look under the sinks in the Daylight Room or the Color Room.

It is impossible to overstate the importance of cleaning up after yourself and discarding wastes. It will make the difference between a functioning darkroom and an unusable mess. Each student is responsible for their enlarger booth.

**Failure to clean up after yourself will result in fines and/or loss of access.**

## **Color Rooms**

The Color Photography Area has seven individual darkrooms used for color or black & white processing and printing. Each darkroom is already equipped with enlarging gear: lens, negative carriers glass, foam and easel. These darkrooms can be reserved at the Equipment Office under the same policies and procedures described earlier under "In-House Reservations."

Each individual darkroom is locked. The keys are available at the Equipment Office and should be returned immediately upon unlocking the door. When you're finished, empty your trash into the large trash can in the general work area.

## **COLOR CHEMISTRY IS EXPENSIVE!**

If you cannot make your reservation please call and cancel. Failure to do so may result in a fine!

## **Important Safety Precautions**

Photography chemicals are hazardous. To protect your health please read the following:

- Use the tongs or wear gloves when working with the chemistry.
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water when finished in the labs.
- We recommend that contact lenses not be worn in the darkroom. The chemical vapors may cause an irritation to the eyes.
- Note the location of eyewash stations in each chemistry area. If chemicals get in your eyes, flush with the eyewash solution immediately.
- If you are pregnant inform your instructor immediately. The chemicals could cause birth defects.

For more information about the chemicals being used, there are Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) hanging near the entrance to the processing room. For further reading, the book *Overexposure: Health Hazards in Photography* is available at the Pittsburgh Filmmakers Library.

# After Hours Procedures

When the operating hours of the Equipment Office end for the day, students and members are permitted to remain working in the building. This is called After-Hours Access, and it is a privilege that will be revoked from any individual unable to adhere to the after hours rules. Firstly, these rules serve to keep people working in the building safe. Secondly, these rules serve to keep the equipment and facilities secure.

After-hours Access is a privilege offered to all students and members at Pittsburgh Filmmakers. Any behavior that jeopardizes the safety of other students and members or endangers the facility and equipment will result in immediate termination of all access. Surveillance cameras are in place for your protection and to insure that our policies are followed when staff may not be present.

## ***How to take advantage of After-Hours Access:***

The first step in being able to work after the Equipment Office is closed is to be in the building and working before the Equipment Office is closed. The doors are locked promptly at closing time. No one will be permitted to enter the building once the doors are locked.

If you are working in the building at closing time, an Equipment Office staff-person will come around to sign you in on the after-hours record sheet. Only people working after-hours may stay past closing time. Those who are in the building, but not checked-in at the Equipment Office will be ushered out. Once everyone in the building has been signed-in, the after-hours record is placed outside the In-House equipment office. Anyone working after-hours must sign out on the after-hours record sheet when they leave. Students and members must find the line on which they signed-in earlier and sign their name and the time of their departure from the building. Failure to sign-out will result in a \$5.00 fine. The last person on the record to sign-out is responsible for turning out the lights.

Once the doors to the building have been locked, the only time they may be opened is for after-hours workers to exit the building. Opening the doors for any reason other than to leave will result in loss of after-hours privileges. Under some circumstances violation of this rule will be grounds for termination of all equipment access. Propping the door open to smoke, have food delivered or for another person working after-hours to run to their car are all violations of this rule. Letting someone into the building after-hours or asking to be let into the building after-hours will result in termination of all equipment access.

The last person in any work area is responsible for leaving that area in a clean and orderly fashion. They are also responsible for turning the lights out in that work area. Leaving a messy space or leaving the lights on will result in fines or suspension of access.

Additional after-hours responsibilities are specific to what facility is being used. For questions regarding after-hours duties specific to the space you are working in, ask the Equipment Office Staff before the Equipment Office is closed, or when you are being signed-in.