Today in lab no students came in to work on projects, and I believe that is because it is the beginning of the semester and students are just being assigned to projects. I was able to get a lot done on Honors Thesis video. I am working on editing a promotional trailer for the final video that I will present with my partner Giovanni Roberto to the Lee Honors College. Giovanni and I wanted the trailer to be short, introduce the information, and grab the audiences’ attention. At first it was a struggle to go through all of the footage I took over the first semester and rename the files to be able to more successfully edit and know the different types of shots and takes that I have. After I finished going through the footage it was also a challenge to initially get started. Giovanni and I have a vision for the promo and the final video, and it was difficult to look at the abundance of footage and know where to begin with the editing. Finally I just started to pull clips from the browser and into the sequence. Finally it clicked, I started forming a new vision when I actually started editing hands on a little different than our idea during preproduction. Another issue I ran into when uploading the footage is the footage from the DSLR Canon Ti would not transfer into Final Cut Pro 7. I contacted Dr. Machiorlatti and she contacted other students to help fix the issue. After taking the advice and some trouble shooting, I was finally able to upload the footage from a different camera.

While working on the trailer I have found that while editing I form ideas and realize other shots I need to obtain my vision. The footage I have now is mainly
interviews from Phipps Conservatory and the Tyson Research Center. These are two trips Giovanni and I took to interview individuals that successfully met the requirements for the Living Building Challenge. I also have a lot of footage of run down buildings in Detroit, people, transportation, and buildings in New York City, and minimal footage of the Living Buildings themselves. An issue we found when we traveled to Phipps conservatory was that was scheduled to have interviews all day from morning to evening, which was great to be able to have multiple interviews from different views of the challenge. The problem with this is that it gave us very little time to actually retrieve b-roll footage of the building itself. Another aspect of footage that the video needs is b-roll footage of students in their element on campus. The target audience of the video is primarily to raise awareness to students, faculty, and the community. The best way to do that is to add images and footage of campus and the students and faculty working cohesively in the environment. I plan to reach the audience with this footage because when they recognize the individuals and the area they will be able to relate the issue that we are trying to surface. One of our mentors Dr. Harold Glasser, is the Executive Director for Campus Sustainability. I believe it is important to interview him because he is the individual trying to bring the challenge to our campus. An interview with Dr. Glasser will bring up important information for our community to understand that was not mentioned in the interviews, such as why it is important for Western Michigan University to inhabit this type of building on our campus and what it will do for others locally and
globally. The next steps for the project is: to contact Giovanni to send me the important research he has gathered to add to the video, to retrieve more footage and images (from Phipps, or previously shot b-roll. If there is no footage available I shoot this footage) of the LBC buildings and students/faculty on campus, and interview Dr. Glasser. I will continue to edit and finish the promotional trailer. I also need to find royalty free music online or from a student. I plan to contact a fellow student about creating an animation graphic to go in the video. Another important aspect that my mentor, Dr. Machiorlatti has really instilled in me is the importance of preproduction. The majority of first semester was dedicated to this and production. Another important aspect of this project is for me to gather and reorganize the documents and papers needed for the preproduction folder.

Today was very productive in the lab, and I plan to set a schedule in when I plan to reach these goals. This project is a lot of work, and I have learned more than I thought possible so far. I was able to work with students and faculty from other disciplinary, travel and interview prestigious and accomplished individuals, and research and work on a video. This project has opened many doors and opportunities for me. I am able to create an important video that has the power to make a change locally and globally. I am feeling the pressure knowing that many people are counting and will watch this video. I have received lots of support from Giovanni, our mentors Dr. Machiorlatti, Dr. Glasser, the Lee Honors College, the College of Arts and Sciences, Tyson Research Center, Phipps Conservatory, and
many other individuals that have helped Giovanni and I have the tools and support to create a high quality thesis. I am learning how to successfully create a video from beginning to end and have resources to do so. I have accomplished many of my goals for the video thus far, but still have a ways to go. I plan to keep positive and working hard to meet my goals and finish the video in a timely manner.
Journal #2

This week I was unable to attend lab due to the snow day. The snow day gave me the opportunity to be able to work on my projects. I have goals set to accomplish during this semester. My number one goal is to finish my thesis. The other two aspects I must accomplish are my production resume and reel. These are two aspects that are important when applying for internships and jobs. I have been looking through the different videos I have created and deciding which works is best for my reel. After I create my reel I want to show others to get their opinion on what I should change. Having a reel is very important and I want it to display my work in the best way possible. Is there a specific program to use to create the DVD setting to maneuver to different videos? I will have to play around with different programs to be able to make each video separate, but also a capability to play all. As for the production resume I will have to refer to my business styled resume now and add the positions I have done for different videos. Right now I am also applying to study abroad. The program is through Michigan State University. It is a summer program titled, Film in Britain. I am still waiting to hear back, but the program is a perfect fit for what I was looking for. The program is led by accomplished filmmaker Dr. Justus Nieland and Dr. Swarnavel Eswaran Pillai and give the students an opportunity to take at least nine credits and create various videos while abroad. Not only are there opportunities to take beneficial classes and create videos in London, but also there are talks and screenings set up with contemporary British filmmakers and media
artists. I have an opportunity to meet and learn from famous filmmakers and it includes field trips to film premieres, sites of film historical interest and film festivals. They even include time to explore and study the country on our own time with fellow students. I hope to hear back soon, but in the meantime I have been applying for scholarships to help with funding. I have been looking into many different film companies that would be my dream to work for one day. I am trying to decide what would be the best next step for me in my career path to then do an internship with hopefully one of these large companies, or just shoot for applying for a job position. I am not sure if it is easier to get hired by a company if one is an intern for them first. I bet it is different for everyone, but I wanted others thoughts on this.

For the thesis, Giovanni and I are trying to tighten our vision for the video. The reason we were struggling to get started is because we had a vast amount of information and we did not know the best way to narrow it down to reach our target audience and raise awareness. We have met up a couple of times and have thought of different ideas to accomplish this. We decided we wanted to implement the metaphor of the flower from the Living Building Challenge to the video. I want to somehow get a shot of water dripping down leaves or a flower. We have currently decided to have the metaphor of the flower string the whole video together and it is something that is strong and easily to understand. We have also found some possible royalty free music for the video, but I would love some music ideas from
other students. Also, I am planning to contact Jeremy about possibly creating a Living Building Challenge graphic for our videos beginning and end. We are making progress; once our ideas are clearly straightened out the editing will flow and get done a lot faster. Once we have more done I will meet with you to make changes and get your opinion.
Making Connections

This week was very productive and successful for me. I was able to accomplish a lot of work in the lab including the first minute and beginning to our thesis. It is finally clicking and I am really happy with the beginning. I want to set up a meeting to show you what we have so far. The next step for us is to go through the multiple interviews we have. The majority of the interviewee’s answers are very long and have a lot of “ya know,” and “um” in between which makes it hard to find the good responses to our questions. There were a couple of the people we interviewed that do not have that issue, but most did. This is a learning experience on how to make the speaker sound good, and keep the audiences attention. The beginning of our thesis displays the pollution shots we took, and it has very intense music. We are now trying to find a way to just the flower metaphor to transition from the dark stages to the change and introduce the Living Building Challenge. It is two different moods with music and the footage itself and it is a challenge to find a seamless transition to connect the two. I might just start working on going through the interviews and creating the second half of the video and maybe a transition will come to me in the midst of editing. Creating the beginning of the video was the best feeling ever when it all finally clicked and was edited perfectly to the music. I find that I really enjoy editing, but it does have its challenges. One issue I have is I previously planned a Spring Break trip this year and Giovanni recently informed me that on March 7th there is going to be a LBC workshop in Detroit that teaches about
the LBC. Going is normally $196, but Giovanni made a deal with them that we can get in free of charge if the footage we get they can use as well. Unfortunately, I will be out of town and this is a perfect time to get more footage for the thesis. I was wondering if anyone on the production team would be able to attend, it would be great experience, and a very interesting workshop. If no one can on the production team can, is there anyone else or another student that would be up to it? I am looking for someone to help me with the filming on the day, if worse comes to worse, Gio said he could film it, but I would rather a film student do it and it would be great experience for them.

I am also working on my reel. I have all of my videos exported and I have been following your directions, but I feel that I am doing a step wrong on compressor because I cannot get it to work. I hope to set up a meeting with you to run through how to create a reel and get your advice on my best work so far that I should put in the reel.

The last aspect of my week that I want to discuss is a great opportunity I was able to experience yesterday. I have mutual friends with a free lance DP for Sports Television. His name is Matt Regimbal, and he shoots for various events like the Tigers, Pistons, Red Wings, and any other jobs that come his way. I was given his number and I talked to him for an hour about the different aspects of his job, the pros and cons, any advice he had for me entering the field and so on. The conversation was very helpful, and I asked if I could Shadow him and he said yes.
Yesterday, I was able to shadow him at the Pistons Game. I shadowed him and others at Fox Sports. I met an abundance of people and was able to talk and ask questions about their positions. It was a great opportunity for me to see the TV Production side of things and the intensity of sports. I was able to witness the set up which started at 1:30 PM for a 7:00 PM game. I watched them set up their cameras, “fax” different cameras make sure everything is running properly, and the many different positions available to make a show possible. I got the tour of the truck that includes the video, switcher, and the engineering side of things. There were people from the opposing show and the home show all in one truck. They fit so many people and equipment in one truck it was amazing to witness. I was able to meet the producer and director of Fox Sports and the Producer gave me his business card. I was able to make some contacts during my visit as well. For the first half of the game I was on the court under the basketball hoop. It was very cool to be so close to the action and I watched Matt film and run on the court during time outs to get shots. The “Utility” is the eyes for the camera operator and guides them when to go and move, and wraps the cord as they go to make sure it does not get tangled. The utility position is at the bottom and they must work their way to the position they want, which could take years. They gave me a headset to hear the directors cues as they were filming which helped to understand what was going on better than just watching. They also had me get them water and tea, which I was fine with and realize that I may be doing tasks like these when I first start out. I was then able to
go into the truck and watch the director, producer, switcher, and all of the other positions work together. I was blown away at how they made it happen. With the show being live I feel like it is a lot of pressure to make sure the camera shots you choose are good make the right calls all very quickly. The final job, which they all said is the worst part is packing up all the equipment into the truck. It was snowing and very cold and wrapping cables in this condition is not enjoyable. The day was finished at midnight and many of them had a job the next day at 8:00 AM for the Red Wings game at the Joe and some had a job at 4:00 AM. They told me that the hours are rough, and to not expect an 8-5 day, but their office is not a cubicle, but a different venue each job, which is a positive. Some people spoke of the hard work that goes into it, but overall said that once one is in they never want out and there are people who have been in the business for years. On the flip side, one specific individual talked to me multiple times about getting out now while I can, and that he would never let his children go into this business. Matt told me that there are people that love the job and hate it, and that it is a tough industry. I took lots of photos and video during this experience. Everyone was very kind to me and told me I could contact them for any advice or if I need a reference. I found how important connections are and how I would not have had the experience I did without, “knowing someone that knew someone.” They spoke of different internship opportunities. It is a possibility for me to go into TV production, and it truly amazed me at the hard work that goes into it, but I believe my true passion lies with
filmmaking. It is great the opportunities available for Sports TV, but because I am not passionate about sports it makes it harder for me to do. There were about four women working on the crew that day and one was a DP. A huge factor that draws me into this industry is because there are minimal females in the industry, but thankfully there is more each year. They complimented me on my drive and for asking to be able to shadow because they said they have never had a shadow before and said it was a smart idea to see first hand how everything works. I completely agree, witnessing everything first hand I learned more than I thought possible and I had to let it all soak in. I had such a good day that I could not even sleep because I could not stop thinking about all the work and people it took to make it happen. The producer, Christopher Wesielewski gave me a phone number to shadow Joe Nikkola during an Oakland University basketball game today. I called and they are able to get me the credentials to go. I am very blessed at the opportunities that have come before me and will take what I learned into consideration when looking for an internship or career. Many of them jokes about me being their PA one day and to remember them. I plan to keep in contact with them, and put this experience on my resume.

I look forward to meeting with you this upcoming week to discuss my projects, and talk to you about future goals.
The Trial and Errors in Editing

I am currently in the editing stages for the honor thesis video. Giovanni and I are going through each question of each interview to find the perfect response to put in the video and help explain the importance of the Living Building Challenge to Western Michigan University. Right now it is very tedious to go through each question because there are chunks of the different interviewee responses that work to answer the question. The issue is finding the transitions to help make the response flow when using short snippets of each interviewer. I am afraid it will be rushed if there are short portions of each interview one after the other introduces the speaker in a short response. It is also difficult to find good b-roll and images to help transition each speaking fluidly. I found working with interviews is challenging in this aspect and also the aspect in how the interviewer speaks. There seem to be a lot of “um,” “ya know?” and other terms that the English language tends to add mid sentence. I am working on finding a way to edit these to make the message powerful and make the speaker sound good. This is a huge learning experience to find a way to correctly display the interviews with image and b-roll to get the message across. It is taking time, but we are setting short goals each time we meet to get through. We also want to add a transition with text to have a white background, but the words of the text only show the video playing behind it and then have the video come through on the screen. I am working and researching how to make this possible. I am planning to play around with LiveType to see if they have a text that can do this.
Also, in the lab I have been working on creating my reel. I worked with Dr. Mac, and the outline description of how to use compressor and iDVD. The tutorials helped a lot, but I am still playing around with the different aspects of the program to make it perfect. I am also trying to figure out how to export a video into compressor or iDVD that is already exported. A group member of mine has the project in final cut on her hard drive, and I do not have it to be able to render it once more and send it to compressor. I am working to figure out how to do this.

Overall, the projects are coming together and I am making sure to work on them every chance I get. I am hoping to work with others on ideas to help create transitions within the interviews and capture more footage on campus. I am writing out everything I need to get accomplished and setting dates to achieve these goals.
This week I have gotten a lot accomplished. I am almost finished with the reel, which is very important for me to accomplish before March first. I have having trouble connecting more than two videos back to the main menu. Once I figure out how to do that I will be finished with my reel and will finally be able to apply for multiple jobs and internships for when I graduate in the summer of 2013.

The thesis is making lots of progress as well. Giovanni and I have been very dedicated this week and spending lots of time going through the interviews and editing the video. We interviewed about eight individuals and we found ourselves trying to include every interviewee at least once because they were all so helpful, but all did not give the best answers. Finally after days of going through the interviews we decided that we don't need to be nice and try to include everyone we interviewed in the video, but we need to use the best responses to get the information across. Once we made this decision the editing has been much easier and flows very nicely. I rented a CANON VIXIA Camcorder, Tripod, Light Kit, and boom microphone for this weekend to go on campus and get footage of the different buildings and students working in them. This will help bring our video to Western Michigan University, and the students, faculty and the community will be able to relate better to the video with these additions. We also are going to try to purchase a flower and focus on a drip rolling down the petal. We are going to try different ways to achieve the shot we are looking for. We are going to get shots of impressive
buildings and run down buildings to display the different between both and the importance of an environment. Another step we are working on is explaining the Living Building Challenge, in a short synopsis that will be beneficial and understandable for the viewers. The answers of the interviews do not adequately explain the challenge to an individual that has never heard of it. We are thinking about making each petal and a sentence explaining the petal in Photoshop. We also received confirmation from the Living Building Challenge that we are allowed to use any images on their site. This is very helpful to use for transitions. Giovanni and I are still looking for an individual to be able to film during the Living Building Challenge workshop in Detroit on March 7th. It will be a great opportunity and learning experience if anyone is able to attend.

I talked to Michael Frawley about the idea of creating a Facebook group with everyone involved in the independent study. This would be a great form of communication to ask others for tips, help, and about future projects to the group. It would be an easy way to talk to the group as a whole because it has been hard to meet up with everyone’s schedules. This way I could ask the others in the group if anyone is able to attend and shoot the LBC workshop in Detroit, and also ask different inquiries during my editing. It would be a great form of collaboration and communication. If there is anyway you could send me a list of names of everyone in the Independent Study that would help me vastly, if this were allowed to happen.
Overall, I am reaching my short term and long-term goals. I am feeling more confident now that things are falling into place. Now I just need another set of eyes and thoughts from others to make the fine details complete. We look forward to showing you the updates to our Thesis video.
A Taste of the Real World

For the thesis, Giovanni and I have showed our first draft of our video. Although it is definitely a raw cut of the video, we wanted to receive feedback from our peers and mentors to ensure we are headed in the right direction. I was unable to attend the meeting, and I look forward to receiving critiques on what we have done thus far. It was a struggle for me to edit not having enough b-roll footage, and images to use. I raised this issue with Gio on multiple occasions and decided to use filler images for the time being. It appears we will need to travel to another Living Building in the near future to get that footage. I have asked Gio to ask and see if any of the professionals that work for the Living Building Challenge would have any high-resolution photos or footage for us to use. Our biggest enemy for the project is time. I spend every moment I can work on the project, and working around circumstances that life brings. This is a huge learning experience to make sacrifices to make the time to get it done. I am feeling the pressure that this industry brings, and must remember to not to take the criticism personally. I am very devoted to this project, and found it I have put myself into my work. The project has become apart of me with the amount of time, dedication, and expenses the project brings. I am thankful to get a taste of these issues before entering the real world. I have also learned how to work with others that are very different from myself. It can be a struggle when different mentalities and ideas clash. I know I will be working with many different people in my future, and it is a huge learning experience to learn how
to deal with and compromise in these situations. I have found that not everyone appreciates or communicate positively with others. It is a cutthroat industry and people will not be nice to get what they want from you. Running into challenges during editing has also become such a learning experience. I have to take the time and try many different things to make it turn out the way I planned. By using my Final Cut Pro 7 guide book, the Internet, and trial and error I have learned how to do different editing techniques that I have not known how to do before. I taught myself how to layer video on top of each other and move the images around, and change the opacity to create an entirely new look and dimension. I was very impressed by how it turned out. I also learned how much editing to music helps the video flow. I remember what I learned in the “Intro to Video Production” class that it is important to edit to the music, but also switch up how you edit to the different beats so the editing isn’t predictable. I used this tactic when editing for the intro of our piece. I edited to the different beats of the music, and it really made a dramatic effect. I am very proud of the beginning of the video. I now need to make the second half of the video just as crisp and effective.

Overall, I know I have a lot of filming, and editing ahead of me for this project. It is a very stressful feeling to know there is not much time, but in the real world there will always be short deadlines. I plan to create short goals for each step of the video to reach the big goal of the final thesis video. Thinking of everything I have to do, as a whole can be very intimidating. Although it is a lot of work, I have faith that
Giovanni, my mentors, and peers that are passionate for the project will be a helping hand during this process. I am impressed with all I have learned thus far, and look forward to the new skills I will gain in the future of this project.
Hard work, Communication, and Collaboration

The honors thesis video I have been working on has been a great hands on learning experience. One aspect of the video creation that has made the video so great to work on is the collaboration taken place. Many people have been intrigued by the videos main ideas, and have been more than happy to help. The newest additions to the video are Ben woody, and Alyssa Masters. They have agreed to help by using After Effects, Illustrator, and Photoshop to create animation and titles. It has been great to work with others in film, and get another perspective on the video. Our next goal is to contact a student in Music studies to help with the audio of the video. Not only does this make the piece more professional, it is also a first for me to be able to collaborate with people from different majors and work on a video together. I am and will learn a lot working with these students, and I am so thankful that they are determined to get it done in such a short amount of time.

Over break, during a group meeting I was not able to attend for the honors thesis, our mentors, Dr. Machiorlatti, and Dr. Glasser, my partner in this project, Giovanni, and about 12 students watched the video even though it was still a work in progress. It was too early to be shown by others, but it turned out to be fine because great feedback was received for the video. Working on a video for hours at a time can be hard to pick out changes or transitions, that is why it was wonderful to have fresh eyes on the video and find out what I need to edit and work on. Dr. Machiorlatti graciously met with me to explain these edits. There is a lot to
accomplish in a short amount of time, and it was great that she talked me through the changes step by step and set up short goals for me to reach to get them all done. This is very helpful to know that the workload is possible to get done by the end of the semester. I am excited to make these changes, and to start the fine-tuning of the video, by locking picture and working with the other students to make the changes for titles, animation, sounds, and color correction.

One issue I knew I would have to editing the video is not having enough b-roll footage of the Living Buildings themselves. When Giovanni and I visited a Living Building, we had interviews scheduled from the beginning of the day to the end. We were only able to shoot footage of the building at the end and it was a brief tour due to time. I have asked Giovanni to contact the different constituents involved with the building to retrieve footage from them. He is still waiting to hear back from them. I hope they have high-resolution good quality footage to provide for us because we unfortunately do not have time to travel to another building. Thankfully, Dr. Machiorlatti taught me an editing technique that will help greatly with this issue. She taught me how to grab stills from the footage I did receive from the Phipps Conservatory Living Building. I will use this technique to make a mosaic, and slide show effect of the photos during the interviews. I will feather the edge of the photos to make them have texture, and not be flat in the video. She also has stock footage, of buildings, and nature that I believe will help out vastly to unique views, like Ariel
shots of a city. This will help make the video look professional, and help with the editing of the interviews, and the transitions.

Overall, I am very happy and excited to see where this video is heading. I feel like I am apart of a change happening in our community. This project is a very high endeavor, and it is refreshing to see how many are interested in it and want to learn more. This week I will continue to work on the edits of the video, and reach the first goal I have set for myself. I will then go to Ben Woody’s lab hours to work with him on the animation, and get his opinion on my edits thus far. I am really enjoying the process of creating this video. Although, it can be very stressful at times, the people I am able to work with, and the final product, makes all the hard work worth it.
Importance of Setting Goals

The goals I have set for last week are almost completed. I am fine-tuning the beginning shots for the video. I have changed shots that do not fit or work where they are placed. I have also retrieved footage of buildings, and nature to add for b-roll to help edit the video. I have also organized the clips I do have of the Phipps Conservatory Living Building to know what I have to work with for editing. Giovanni has more clips from when he visited the Tyson Living Building, and some photos he has sent from them. I plan to meet with him as soon as possible to retrieve this footage. Overall, the edits have been going well, the next step is to contact a student in the music department to help me fine tune the audio. Should I set picture to the music before I meet with someone in the audio department? Dr. Machiorlatti’s suggestions for edits have helped me vastly in organizing my goals for editing. I can see the end in site, and it is very exciting. I am enjoying the collaboration happening during the project. Ben Woody has been active in creating animation for the video. We both have contacted a couple of artists to draw the animation we are looking for. He will then scan the image into Adobe Illustrator, and the export the vector image into After Effects where he will create the animation. I am looking forward to working with him on the animation to be able to learn the program a little more myself. After this is squared away we will work on the titles for the interviews.

The next step is to interview, Giovanni, and two students that are very active in the idea of a Living Building Challenge. I will contact Dr. Glasser to find out the
names of these students. I also need to find out a good time for Dr. Machiorlatti, Giovanni, and the two students for the interview. Dr. Machiorlatti expressed that she wants to be present during the interviews to assist. It would also be great to have another helping hand during the interviews to help set up lighting, and microphones. I have written the questions, and Gio is currently reviewing them. We have discussed a few locations like the Sangren or Health and Human services building, but nothing is set in stone. Giovanni and I will be meeting tomorrow to discuss these details.

I cannot thank everyone that has helped me throughout this project so far, and I am so excited to see the many interested people in the Living Building Challenge, and to see the final product. Although I am feeling the pressure of time, I know I work better under this type of stress, and need to remember the smaller goals I have set for myself to reach the big ones. It is also important to stay in good communication with everyone involved in the project.
It's the Final Count Down

The honors thesis project is really moving along, and the end is in sight. The transition from the beginning of the video to the next section is finally flowing. Adding stock footage to the piece really gives the video a professional touch. I have been meeting with Ben Woody a couple times a week and the animation is almost complete. He has done a fantastic job taking the ideas and getting them done in a timely manner. This is very helpful because one of the biggest problems I have dealing with creating this video is lack of time balancing school, work, and other commitments. I am very blessed to be able to work with students that are willing to help on the video, and learn themselves while they do it. The issue we are having now is that Giovanni just informed the group that the Living Building Challenge company is very particular about their logos, and how they are portrayed. We now have to wait for him to confirm with them that our animations are able to be used. I will continue to meet with Ben weekly to work on the animation, titles, and to get a fresh pair of eyes on the video for critiques.

Giovanni and I went location scouting on Friday, and the biggest struggle we found was finding a quiet area where people are not constantly going in and out. We also had to listen for the natural sounds of the building to eliminate any sound problems that we won’t have to deal with when editing. The best place we found was on the third floor of Brown. It’s a conference room that we will be able to rent out without any disruptions and overlooks our campus. We were fortunate that
there are openings for this room this coming week. Our hope is that the fountains will be running during the interview, but maintenance said they would be on late next week. We have contacted the other students we hope to interview and are currently waiting for their response. It is important to conduct the interviews as soon as possible because time is already running short, and I already have a lot of work ahead of me with editing.

Giovanni set the date for the thesis to be April 24th at 5 P.M. This is roughly less in a month away, and I am really feeling the pressure. The best part of this project is the collaboration from the many different people to make it happen. I know I have said this many times, but it is true, and is why it is important to present together as well. I am doing everything in my power to stay positive, set short-term goals, and be proud of everything that is being accomplished. There have definitely been up’s and down’s when working on this project, and it has been a life experience on learning how to deal with these challenges and successful moments. I cannot thank everyone that is supportive, and helpful with the thesis. I just need to finish the editing of the video as soon as possible, to give time to work on the fine tuning, preproduction notes, color correcting, audio, and preparing the presentation. There is more than enough work for me to focus on and I look forward to completing a professional honors thesis that everyone involved and I can be proud of.
My goal for this week was to get the final interviews of Giovanni, and the students completed, and to get an extensive amount of editing done. I accomplished these goals, and it feels good to get it done. I was very blessed to have Dr. Mac, assist me during Giovanni’s interview. It was very helpful to learn tips from her about the contrast levels of a shot, how to achieve the best sound by changing the channels, and most importantly how to phrase questions to get the interviewee to answer them in the way I am looking for. It was a very useful to help guide the interviewer into the answers I am looking for to get the best footage for the video. It was our thought to have Giovanni’s answers to be the narrator in a way of the video. His responses to the questions will help guide the video in to specific directions. His interview turned out well.

The student interviews were conducted on Friday from 1-4 PM. It was a very successful and fun shoot for all involved. I was very lucky to have Mike Frawley, a very skilled and experienced Director of Photography and Audio tech person. He works in the Clifford Media Center, and is very knowledgeable on the equipment, which made our shoot more efficient. He knew how to fix issues with equipment, and that was also a great learning experience for me. I also had two friends of mine one in Film Studies, and another from the business college. They were grips on the shoot Peter operated the boom microphone, and Kevin helped setting up, and taking
Nicole Pascaretta  
Lab #10  
Independent Study

pictures to document the behind the scenes work we were doing, which is great for us to have for our documents.

I interviewed three students involved with the “Super Green Dorm” project. They were very nice, and prepared for the interviews. One of the students in particular was very nervous to be on camera. This was a great learning experience for me to find ways to put her at ease. I found myself to be very good at making people calm that are nervous to be on camera. I told her it was like we were having a conversation, and once she calmed down her answers turned out to be great. We took B-roll footage, interviewed them each separately, and once together to talk about the project as a group. It was a nice sunny day, which made some of the shots too hot in color, but otherwise looked great to film outside. We all had a great time during the shoot and learned a lot from each other. Mike and I were talking about how great it is in our department how the students are willing to work together and collaborate on projects. It only makes sense too because you learn so much in the field of shooting, and filming is not a one-person job by any means.

I am now currently going through the footage, and plugging away at editing every moment I get the chance. Giovanni, Dr. Mac, Dr. Glasser, and I all decided that I would screen a 5-8 minute piece of the video at Giovanni’s thesis defense presentation on April 24th. This is a great solution because we have added even more footage to edit, and go through this week, and it is hard to balance finishing the video, school, and work. My stress level is reduced knowing I have till Summer
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One to finish everything for the video, but it is still not a lot of time I am really pushing myself to work on the video every opportunity I get. Once I finalize picture I will be able to color correct, work on audio, animation, titles, and really fine-tune the piece. I also will need to work on my preproduction folder, and get everything organized. Finally, I will need to create my presentation for my thesis defense presentation and screen the video. Just saying it out loud makes me sweat a little, but I am confident with all of the collaboration and hard work devoted to this piece that it will be done on time, and look professional. I am so appreciative of all of the help that I have received, and continue to receive of this project.
Lee Honors College Honors Thesis Award

The College of Arts and Sciences Research and Creative Studies Award

Nicole Pascaretta Presents

“The Living Building Challenge”

The Lee Honors College, and College of Arts and Sciences has played a huge role with the research and creation of documentary video regarding the “Living Building Challenge,” I have been working on this year. I have learned more during this project then I ever thought possible. I have been able to learn successfully create a documentary start to finish, travel to conduct interviews, work with students and faculty from different departments within the University, and work closely with the Living Building company themselves throughout this project. I was awarded the Honors Thesis Award, and the College of Arts and Sciences Undergraduate Research and Creative Studies award, and I would not have been able to accomplish these high aspirations without this support. I am astonished by the opportunities and large support the Lee Honors College, and the College of Arts and Sciences has given me during my time here at Western Michigan University. This project has been a journey, and this is the most proud I have been about my work thus far at WMU. I cannot thank the Lee Honors College, College of Arts and Sciences, and the many different people I have worked with enough for the success of my documentary.

I have been working on this project since the beginning of the fall semester. When I was first asked to be apart of the project by another student from the business college, Giovanni Roberto, I did not know what to expect. He was very interested in the “Living Building Challenge,” and wanted to make multiple efforts to begin the awareness of the
challenge, and eventually have one built on campus. The challenge was very interesting to me, and being a Film, Video, and Media major I was very interested in being apart of this initiative to help improve WMU. I knew creating a documentary would be a challenge, but I was confident with the guidance of my mentor, Dr. Machiorlatti, and the many other individuals, that it would be done well. The project took a lot of hard work, and dedication, more than I even expected. Creating the video has definitely been a learning process. Although there have been problems with time, scheduling, technology, and other aspects of the sort, I am thankful for these moments, because I learned so much in learn how to worth though the many obstacles we have faced throughout the project.

During the preproduction stage Giovanni and I did extensive research on the Living Building Challenge itself. We had weekly meetings discussing what we wanted to video to cover, the message we wanted to give, and our target audience. We decided we wanted the video to be a promotional and informational video. The video would inform and raise awareness to students, faculty, and the community about the Living Building Challenge. Giovanni’s part of the project was to create a marketing plan to implement the Living Building Challenge on campus, and the video I create would be apart of the effort to getting a building on campus to educate and display all that the Challenge has to offer our campus, and community. Giovanni’s mentor is Dr. Glasser, a professor in the department of Environmental studies also worked with us closely about the goals and aspirations of the project. He is also the executive Director for the Campus of Sustainability, and knows a lot about the Living Building Challenge. Giovanni and I met with Dr. Machiorlatti and Dr. Glasser often to discuss details, and short and long-term goals we each had for our parts of the project. Being a film major I knew that this video
would take an extensive amount of time to complete preproduction, production, and postproduction. I still did not realize how long this process would take being responsible for the roles of producer, director, director of photography, and editor all for one piece. I was fortunate enough to have help from other faculty and students to make it all happen.

My meetings with Giovanni were important because he had a vision for the video, and how he wanted it to turn out for it to be apart of his presentation. I worked with him closely discussing the research and information found about the challenge, creating the storyboard for the video, and with contact information and scheduling. Giovanni is the co-producer with the video because during his work with the Living Building Challenge previously he has contacts with them, and set up the interviews and visitations of the different Living Buildings. Once Giovanni, and I contacted various individuals that were apart of creating Living Buildings we finally set up a weekend to travel to Pittsburg to conduct five interviews at Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens. We drove to Pittsburg, and has another student from the business college, Dan Jimenez, helped us out as our grip on the set. I made sure to bring release forms of consent for each person on camera to sign. We conducted five interviews throughout our time at Phipps Conservatory. Everyone at Phipps Conservatory was very helpful, and taught us a lot about what went into completing the challenge. We interviewed Chris Minnerly, the Design Principal at Design Alliance Architects and architect for Phipps Conservatory, Richard Piacentini, the Executive Director at Phipps, Joel Perkovich, Sustainable Design and programs manager at Phipps, Jason Wirick, Director of Facilities and Sustainability Management at Phipps, and Chris Wulff Engineer for Phipps. Conducting the interviews alone was a very huge experience. After everything was scheduled it was my job to rent
out the appropriate equipment needed for the shoot: Canon VIXIA Camcorder, DSLR Camcorder, tripod, Tota Light Kit, Boom Mic, and bounce cards to help light. Carrying and setting up each shoot was very labor intensive. It also took a lot of though to make sure the lighting was placed in the most optimal spot, and that the setting looked good as well. I was lucky to have Dan and Giovanni come along on the shoot to help set up, and ask the questions for the interview. We had to travel to the Design Alliance Architects first to interview the Architect of Phipps Conservatory, Chris Minnerly, and then we went to Phipps conservatory itself to do the rest. Each interview took about an hour to conduct, and not including setting up and striking the set. I sent the questions to the interviewees ahead of time, so they did not have any trouble answers the questions, and was prepared with their answers. Overall, the interviews went very well. I learned how to talk to the different individuals, and present myself as a filmmaker. This was the most professional, and important shoot I have ever done, and I learned a lot of valuable information of things that went well, and aspects I would do differently in the future. Some of the issues I ran into was the reflection of the lights in glasses, static in the audio, and the biggest problem I had was not getting enough ‘b-roll’ footage of the building itself. The interviews were scheduled throughout the day and it gave us very little time to explore the building itself and take pictures of the building, and get footage to use for editing the video together. We got as much as we could until the building was closed. Down the road these issues become problematic for me when editing the video. The best advice I received from Dr. Machiorlatti to avoid these things from happening is to make the shoot in production as perfect as possible to leave less work to be done in postproduction.
The next step for Giovanni and I was to go through all of the responses of the interviews and choose the answers that we thought were most important for the video. This step took lots of time to go through. At first we tried to include each interviewee at least once in the video, and then we decided that the best responses would be included because it would not make the interviewee itself look good if their responses were not the best. This was all apart of the beginnings of the long editing process. I was still capturing footage at this time of WMU campus to use for b-roll. Before we conducted the interviews my father went to Detroit with me to get footage of the run down buildings to give the audience what it feels to be in a bad building compared to a sustainable one. This footage really helped create the feelings, and helped tell the story of how we wanted the video to go. This footage helped with our issue of lack of b-roll of the buildings, and put the video through the stages of: introducing the problem, the solution, bringing it to WMU, and what we can do next to support the challenge. Another way to bring the challenge to WMU is to interview students at WMU. I interviewed Giovanni with the assistance of Dr. Machiorlatti to help me make sure the audio was done better during production. I also interviewed three students working on Sustainable projects in Dr. Glasser’s class, Howard Barrons, Nicole Davenport, and Mike Lucas. I was very fortunate to receive help from other students for these interviews. Mike Frawley, a student studying Film, Video, and Media studies who is very experience with camera work, and audio helped out with setting up and creating the shot. Peter Rous another student studying in film helped as the boom mic operator. Kevin Thomas, a student from the business college also helped as a grip, moving, and setting up the equipment for each shoot. One strength that I learned about myself on this shoot was that I was very good at making people feel comfortable in
front of the camera. Students were very nervous to be interviewed on camera, and I found that I was good at making them feel at ease, and eventually be able to answer the questions. The shoot was very successful, and took all day. Not only did capture their interviews we also, took b-roll footage of them walking and talking on campus to help with editing. I was very thankful to receive this help because it is work without pay. They were happy to do it, and learn from the experience themselves.

Throughout this process, I was editing every chance I could to reach our deadlines. With the support of the Honors College, and CAS Undergraduate Research and Creative Studies award I was able to purchase, a MAC book Pro, Dell Monitor, and the Final Cut Pro 7 software. Working in the Film Industry is a very expensive endeavor. The equipment necessary to complete a video is very extraneous, and I am blessed to receive support from the CAS, and to be able to rent the rest of the equipment that I am unable to afford. One of our visions for the video was to have an animation about the Living Building Challenge. Dr. Machiorlatti gave me Ben Woody’s contacts another student in film studies that has lot of experience using the program Adobe’s After Affects. We met a few times, and I explained to him my vision for the animation. Ben wanted to use a drawing of a flower and animate it to grow into buildings. We both contacted artists, and ended up using Cassie Stagner from the Art departments drawing for the animation. Ben scanned the drawing into illustrator and made the image a vector image. He imported the vector image into After affects where we added color, and brought the animation to life. Alyssa Masters another student in Film studies with lots of experience using After Affects, and made titles for me to use in the video. I am currently a lab assistant for Dr. Machiorlatti’s Independent study. I use my time in the lab to help
other students that come into the lab hours when they have questions about things. This has been a great experience to teach others, and learn more myself when helping them. I also use this time to work immensely on the video. Students like Ben, and Alyssa are also Student Lab Assistants. Being apart of this course is like working in a production company. We help and teach each other with the various projects we are working on. I am thankful that I have been able to collaborate with many students, especially in my field of study to learn more from them, and work with them on future projects.

My first deadline is to create a “Work In Progress” version of the final video to show during Giovanni’s Honors Thesis Presentation on April 24th. Throughout my time I have been pretty good about marking down the hours I have spent working on this project. I have spent many hours editing the video to fit our vision and include the many shoots and footage we need. Giovanni and I contacted the Living Building Challenge to receive footage from them of the buildings to help with the lack of b-roll issue. The Living Building Challenge has been very supportive and helpful throughout the entire process. They provided some footage of the Living Buildings, and asked to be credited in the video. Another issue I had to figure out while editing was working with different aspect ratios. During production different types of cameras were used, DSLR, Canon VIXIA, JVC camcorders, and other stock footage, and because of this some of the footage had different aspect ratios then the other. In the future I will make sure each camera is set to the correct aspect ratio to make sure this does not happen again. Dr. Wade Cutler, and Ben worked with me to fix the aspect rations to match the settings in the sequence in Final Cut Pro 7. I completed the ‘Work In Progress’ version of the video for Gio’s thesis with the following work remaining in post production: insert student
interviews, audio mix and equalization, color correction and balancing, add additional
titles, insert animation, sponsor and thank you credits, crew credits, the Challenge
disclaimer/thank you, and the producers final report. I introduced the video, and handed
our a page displaying this information about the video to make sure it was clear that the
video was not yet complete. I explained about the collaboration Giovanni and I did for
the project, and showed the video. Afterwards I asked if anyone has any questions. His
thesis defense presentation was very successful and he introduced the challenge
incorporating the video, and then explained his marketing plan in pursuits to have a
Living Building on campus.

I am now in the final stages of the video. I knew that creating videos was a long
process, but I did not think it would take this amount of time. I am thankful for the
support of WMU, the Lee Honors College, the College of Arts and Sciences, my partner
Giovanni, our mentors Dr. Machiorlatti and Dr. Glasser, and the many other individuals
that put lots of time and effort to make this video possible. I learned an incredible amount
of knowledge about myself as a filmmaker. It was a true test of my knowledge and
experience to create video from beginning to end. Although it had its difficult moments, I
was always able to get through the obstacles, and those are the experiences I am going to
take away from the project. Now that the semester has come to a close, I will not have to
balance this project with taking 15 credits for school, work, family, and friends. I can
now make finishing the final work remaining in Post Production my focus. I never
thought I would make it this far, and feel very accomplished. I want to make Western
Michigan University, and the many individuals involved proud of the final video. The
video will be completed and screened for the first time sometime in June. Thank you very much for your support, and the opportunity to be apart of a life-changing project.