**Basic Lighting Equipment every film program needs to have**

LIGHTS

By far the best lights – the most durable and most usable - are the Arri lights. Arri lights are the professional workhorse in location lighting. In studios the standard lights are Mole Richardson, as they can be dropped from a grid and still work. But Mole lights are heavy and larger in size so that makes them less optimal for location shooting, which will be what most students will be doing. Lowel kits are inexpensive, but also have cords that will get lost and melt and these lights are very fragile. They also get very hot and are really made for a single user/owner. This makes them less than ideal for student usage. The Lowel Rifa light, however, is a very good light for student usage. But as it is collapsible, it is also breakable. The nice thing about Lowel is that they guarantee their lights, so you can mail it back to them and they will either fix or replace it.

For most students projects, the following are basic minimum lights that should be avilable for student use and which will withstand student handling.

Arri 650w Fresnel lights

Arri 300w Fresnel lights

Arri 150 w Fresnel lights

Lowel Rifa 500w or 750 w lights

For programs wanting to expand into fluorescent units it is important to get units that can withstand student abuse and poor car packing abilities. While 4x4 Kinoflos are standard in the industry they are also much more likely to get shattered by students. They are also just a little too long for most student automobiles. It is best to have units with a smaller profile and with more hard metallic frames with barndoors that can close and better protect the lamps. Therefore I recommend;

Kinoflo Diva 400w

FloLight 2x2 units

For programs wishing to spend the extra money and expand into the new LED light technology I recommend;

Ikan LED bi-color 500w units.

These units are sturdy, more economical and produce a very nice output. They are half the price of the standard Litepanel and produce just as nice a light.

LIGHT KITS

1. *For dramatic production*

Arri Softbank I tungsten kit – This kit comes in a sturdy rolling case that can fit in the back of a car and contains four lights and 4 stands. The Arri Softbank I Tungsten 4 Light Kit is rather standard and has 1 open-faced 750w, 2 -650s fresnels and 1-300w Fresnel. The kit also comes with a chimera for the 1k, gloves, an extension card and a cloths pin bag. The top of the kit opens so that you can stack it with pieces of gel and diffusion. This kit can be purchased from Barbizon, FilmTools, B&H Photo, Adorama and a variety of other lighting retailers.

1. *For documentary production:*

As documentary filmmakers need to travel light, set up fast and use as require as little electricity as possible, the lowel slim light Rifa pro-2 kit works well for interviews. The wattage is low and the three lights come in a small bag. For more money you can get the Rifa blender 2 kit which comes with two LED lights instead of the Pro lights. The Rifa will be your key light and the two other lights your ¾ backlight and fill. The only draw back about these kits is that the Rifa light is only 200w, which isn’t very powerful. If you are shooting with a very high speed digital camera, it might work okay, but I would never work with anything less than a 500w Rifa or a 750w Rifa. The Blender lights are very small and while they don’t require much electricity which makes them good for documentary work (as you never know how much electricity you have available), they also don’t have much of a throw. Again, these are really just for medium shot interviews, not for lighting an entire area.

ELECTRICAL DISTRIBUTION

25’ 12 gauge extension cords, known as 12/3. Do not use extension cords from a hardware store as they are too small a gauge and can melt. Have at least one extension cord per light.

Milk crates to transport extension cords in.

ACCESSORIES

Basic minimum accessories that every film program should have avilable for student usage;

Gloves

Cube taps

Ground lifters (3 to 2)

Wooden clothes pins (in string tie bags)

Gaffer’s tape

Diffusion – Rosco Opal, Lee 216, Lee 250 and Lee 251

Gel – Full CTO, half CTB, half minus green, 85ND3, ND 3

Showcards (black & white)

Bead Board cut into 4x4 sections

Formcore, cut into 4x4 sections

GRIP

40’ grip stands, with heads and arms

Westcott or RoadRag flag kits

Shotbags or sandbags