Settings for the Panasonic Pvgs320 (the camcorders you can check out for this class),

Use them as a guide for your camcorder settings. Some camcorders don’t have all these features. With some you can only change the shutter speed by selecting a “Scene mode”. Many camcorders will only allow you to lock the focus (point the camera and push a button) while others have wheels to focus with or better yet a focus ring. But you need to figure out how to control these things on you camcorder, especially Aspect Ratio (set to 4:3), Manual Exposure (Iris), Manual Focus, White Balance.

These are my preferred settings. I have omitted settings that I don’t consider important.

Menu:
Basic:
Scene Mode: Off or check the manual. This automatically sets optimum shutter speeds and apertures depending on the mode you select (Sports, Portrait, etc).
Rec Speed: SP (standard play). Don’t use LP (Long play) this speed will increase your recording time (1.5x) but it will decrease your picture quality.
Wind Cut: On or Off This reduces the wind noise coming into the microphone when recording.
Aspect: Set this to 4:3 for this class.

Advanced:
O.I.S. (optical image stabilizer) generally I leave this OFF because it drains batteries, but sometimes it is useful. Optical image stabilizer function This feature reduces the jitter caused by hand movement when recording. Recording in various situations
Guide Lines: generally I leave this OFF but sometimes it is useful.
Fade Color: It doesn’t matter, If I record the fade I can’t remove it or reposition it, so I don’t record fades, I add them in during editing.
Audio Red: 16bit this is 48kHz stereo audio. This is the appropriate setting for DV/NTSC editing. (12bit audio is 32 kHz audio-when you capture it with Final Cut, it will warn you that the audio isn’t 48kHz)
DLOom: (Digital Zoom) Off (don’t use this it will give you fuzz pictures)
Zoom Mic: Generally Off but it is your choice. Zoom Mic is Interlocked with the video zooming operation, the microphone will clearly capture sounds far away with the tele-shot or those in the vicinity with the wide-angle shot.

SetUp:
Display: On This will display setting in the view finder-very useful.
Date/Time: OFF This is important. If you have date/time on it will record on your tape. The Date/Time cannot be removed (at least very easily) but can be added easily later in editing.
Power Save: Off generally, but if you set 5 minutes when 5 minutes passes without any operation, the Camcorder automatically turns off to protect the tape or to prevent the battery from running down. When you want to use the Camcorder, turn it on again.
Quick Start: Off
AGS: Off. This function prevents unnecessary recording when you forget to pause recording and walk with the Camcorder tilted upside down while recording continues. If the Camcorder continues to be tilted upside down from the normal horizontal position while recording on a tape, it is automatically put into recording pause.

Initial Set: leave it at No unless you wish to reset the camcorder to its original default settings.

Manual Setting: Switch on side of camcorder and use the joystick to adjust.

Focus: Push the button on the side of the camcorder forward and a >MF lights up in the viewfinder. This tells you the Manual focus is on. It will be focused where you were pointing it when you turned it on. You can adjust the focus with the joystick or you can turn it off (push the button on the side forward), point it at the critical point of focus and turn it on again (push the button on the side forward).

The following settings are adjusted with the joystick, but first you have to turn on the Manual button on the side of the camcorder.

WB (White Balance) controls how the camcorder responds to the light temperature (color).

AWB Auto White Balance works well most of the time, but the automatic white balance function may not reproduce natural colors depending on the scenes or lighting conditions. If so, you can adjust the white balance manually. It doesn’t do a very good job under some fluorescent lights or in certain situations, like when you pan the camera over a window, it will change the balance on you during the shot, etc. So sometimes you need to lock the White Balance.

Indoor mode (a light bulb symbol) for recording under incandescent lamps

Outdoor mode (a sun symbol) for recording in sunlight.

Manual adjustment mode (a square with two small triangles on the bottom symbol) to manually set the white balance, select the symbol with the joystick. Then, while viewing a white subject on the entire screen, move the joystick up to select it again.

When the camcorder is turned on with the lens cap attached, the automatic white balance adjustment may not function properly. Please turn the camcorder on after removing the lens cap

When setting both the white balance and the iris/gain, set the white balance first.

Whenever recording conditions change, re-set the white balance for correct adjustment.

IRIS adjusts the exposure (the light) by opening or closing the aperture or adding electronic gain (lighting enhancement). Use the joystick to adjust.

SHTR Shutter speed 1/60 to 1/8000 of a second. The faster the shutter speed the brighter the picture is, which requires more light. The slower the shutter speed the darker the picture is, which requires less light. Use the joystick to change