

**DC 289 Documentary Production I**  
**Fall Quarter 2018**  
**Monday 5:45-9PM 14 E Jackson Room 507**

**COURSE SYLLABUS**

Instructor: Susanne Suffredin Office: CDM 459  
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 Email will be answered within 24 hours; Saturday emails by Monday

**Course Overview and Learning Goals**

**Course Website** D2L

**Course Overview**

This introductory hands-on course explores a wide variety of documentary styles and techniques. Through screenings of classic and contemporary films, lecture and discussion, students learn different styles of documentary storytelling and visualization and apply these to exercises over the quarter. Every student will rotate through crew roles and produce, direct, shoot and record sound.

**Learning Goals:**

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Verbally pitch a compelling idea
- develop skills in conceptualizing, directing and editing short documentary pieces.
- understand and incorporate interview techniques, visualizing and shooting observational footage, and construct narratives through the integration of sound and images.

- PREREQUISITES: DC 210 and DC 220 or equivalent.

**Required Text**

Rabiger, Michael. *Directing the Documentary*. Sixth Edition. Boston: Focal Press, 2014.

**Required Materials and Equipment** Firewire or USB 3.0 Hard Drive and access to adequate software for editing projects.

**Grading:** Assignment Guidelines and Evaluation Criteria will be posted in D2L

PROJECT	POINTS
Vox Pop	10
Documentary Interview/archival	10
Ideal Film Pitch	10
What I Love Piece	
Pitch	5
Pre-production Package	5
Rough Cut	10
Fine Cut	15
Participation	20
Attendance	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

A = 100-93      A- = 92-90      B+ = 89-88      B = 87-83      B- = 82-80  
 C+ = 79-78      C = 77-73      C- = 72-70      D+ = 69-68      D = 67-63      D- = 62-60      F = 59-0.

A indicates excellence (all assignments are graded excellent and submitted on time), B indicates good work, C indicates satisfactory work, D indicates unsatisfactory work, and F is a failure to demonstrate an understanding of course concept

**Class 1 9/10    Intro to class, assignments**

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Review Documents posted in D2L  
Communication/ Posting Cuts  
Documentary today: your skill sets and your definition  
Groups Created  
Screen: Quest  
Assign: *Vox Populi* – DUE: 9/24  
Two ideas for Archival/Interview DUE: 9/24  
Reading: Rabiger: Story Elements and Film Grammar Part 2, Ch. 5 pg. 75-93  
Capturing Sound, Lighting, Camera Part 4, Ch. 10-12., pg.141-197

**Class 2 9/17    Visualizing the Documentary**

Camera and Sound overview  
Screen: Cameraperson  
Review: Reading  
Equipment List  
Present: Vox Pop ideas  
Assign: Rabiger: Part 7 Chapter 31 Conducting and shooting Interviews pg. 450-467  
Developing and Pitching a Short Documentary Part 3 Ch. 8 and 9, pg.127-136

**Class 3 9/24    Developing Story Ideas**

Present: Ideas for Archival/Interview: Written ideas to present  
Present: *Vox Pop* exported file DUE to screen in class  
Assign: Rabiger: You and Film Authorship, The Nature of Documentary,  
Documentary History Part 1, Chapters. 1-4, pp. 1-64  
Developing Story Ideas Part 3, Chapter 6, pp. 97-117  
Directing Part 4 Ch. 13, pp. 199-203.

**Class 4 10/1    Interviews**

Review: Production Checklists (posted in D2L)  
Introduce: Story Structures/ Pre-production package  
Interviews – preparing and research  
Assign: Archival/Interview edit  
Review: Rabiger: Part 7 Chapter 31 Conducting and shooting Interviews  
Directing Part 4 Ch. 13, pp. 199-203.  
You and Film Authorship, The Nature of Documentary,  
Documentary History Part 1, Chapters. 1-4, pp. 1-64  
Developing Story Ideas Part 3, Chapter 6, pp. 97-117  
Assign: Rabiger: Research Part 3 Ch. 7.

**Class 5 10/8    Doc Production/ Archival**

Present: Archival/Interview Edit Due  
Review: Filming  
Sensitive to environment  
Thinking visually  
Good sound/(practice!)  
Steady camera  
Creating content  
Look for what helps tell the story  
Review: Rabiger: Research Part 3 Ch. 7.  
Assign: What I Love I minute piece  
Reading: Rabiger: Documentary Aesthetics Part 6, Chapters 17-20., pg.257-325

**Class 6 10/15 Structuring a narrative**

Present: WIL Pitch  
Assign: Editing Part 5, Chapters 14 and 15, pp. 211-240.  
Review: Rabiger: Documentary Aesthetics Part 6, Chapters 17-20., pg.257-325

**Class 7 10/22 Editing – Organizing footage, Transcription and Logging**

Due: WIL Pre-production Package  
Review: Editing Part 5, Chapters 14 and 15, pp. 211-240.  
Assign: WIL Rough Cut  
Introduce: Integrating interview and observational scenes, building a flow  
Post Production in Documentary

**Class 8 10/29 Rough Cuts**

Making the cut coherent and manageable  
Length  
Assembly to rough cut to fine cut  
SCREEN: WIL Rough Cuts

**Class 9 11/5 Rough to Fine Cut**

Assign: Film I'd Love to Make Pitch  
Review: WIL cuts/ process

**Class 10 11/12 Fine Cuts/Class review**

SCREEN: Screen Final Exported cuts  
Attendance is mandatory.

**FINAL 6-8:15 PM**

Present Film I'd Love to Make Pitch  
Attendance is mandatory.

**Changes to Syllabus**

**This syllabus is subject to change as necessary during the quarter. Depending on time factors and guest artist opportunities, the assignments projected for the term may require slight alteration or rescheduling. If a change occurs, it will be addressed during class or posted in News in D2L.**

**Attendance is mandatory.** An absence is defined as not showing up for class, or showing up 15 minutes or later without notice. Any unexcused absences, late arrivals or early departures will result in a reduction of the attendance/participation grade.

**Assignments** – Assignments must be completed by the due date as indicated in the syllabus. Late work will not be accepted without prior consent of the instructor.

**Screenings** – Film screenings and assignment screening discussions are an integral part of the course participation grade. Selected films will be analyzed for specific conceptual and stylistic choices. We will apply the same standards to the analysis of group projects. Be open to being challenged and honest as there will be differing ideas and points of view expressed. These discussions are important in the development of your ability to collaborate.

**Equipment Use Policies** – Policies for checking out equipment and reserving the CDM "Stage" are posted on the D2L Course website. A list of equipment used in this class is also provided.

**School Policies**

**Online Instructor Evaluation:** Evaluations are a way for students to provide valuable feedback regarding their instructor and the course. Detailed feedback will enable the instructor to continuously tailor teaching methods and course content to meet the learning goals of the course and the academic needs of the students. They are a requirement of the course and are key to continue to provide you with the highest quality of teaching. The evaluations are anonymous; the instructor and administration do not track who entered what responses. A program is used to check if the student completed the

evaluations, but the evaluation is completely separate from the student's identity. Since 100% participation is our goal, students are sent periodic reminders over two weeks. Students do not receive reminders once they complete the evaluation.

**Email:** Email is the primary means of communication between faculty and students enrolled in this course outside of class time. Students should be sure their email listed under "demographic information" at <http://campusconnect.depaul.edu> is correct.

**Academic Integrity Policy:** This course will be subject to the academic integrity policy passed by faculty. More information can be found at <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/>

**Plagiarism:** The university and school policy on plagiarism can be summarized as follows: Students in this course should be aware of the strong sanctions that can be imposed against someone guilty of plagiarism. If proven, a charge of plagiarism could result in an automatic F in the course and possible expulsion. The strongest of sanctions will be imposed on anyone who submits as his/her own work any assignment, which has been prepared by someone else. If you have any questions or doubts about what plagiarism entails or how to properly acknowledge source materials be sure to consult the instructor.

**Incomplete:** An incomplete grade is given only for an exceptional reason such as a death in the family, a serious illness, etc. Any such reason must be documented. Any incomplete request must be made at least two weeks before the final, and approved by the Dean of the College of Computing and Digital Media. Any consequences resulting from a poor grade for the course will not be considered as valid reasons for such a request.