

DOC 224-604 Documentary Production I
Spring Quarter 2024
Thursday 1:30-4:45 PM 14 E. Jackson Room 214

COURSE SYLLABUS

Instructor: Samantha Sanders

Office: off campus

Office Hours: (email to schedule) Zoom Friday 9-12pm

Email: Samantha.sanders@depaul.edu (best way to reach me)

Email will be answered within 24 hours, Saturday emails by Monday

Course Overview and Learning Goals

Course Website D2L

Course Overview

This introductory course will explore documentary styles and techniques using a variety of modes and formats. You will create two short pieces along with writing and pitching your ideas to the class. Also, we should anticipate that changes may need to be made as the quarter unfolds. Those changes will be communicated as timely as possible, and I ask that we all stay flexible and responsive.

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.

Required Textbook

Our textbook for the quarter is: Introduction to Documentary, Third Edition by: Bill Nichols

It is available online through the DePaul library.

Permalink: <https://i-share->

[dpu.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01CARLI_DPU/8tvalj/cdi_askewsholts_vlebooks_9780253026903](https://i-share-dpu.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01CARLI_DPU/8tvalj/cdi_askewsholts_vlebooks_9780253026903)

TECH NEEDS:

Equipment: <https://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Student-Resources/Pages/Equipment-Centers.aspx>

ANNUAL MANDATORY SAFETY TRAINING

Each SCA student must go through SCA Production Training before having access to reserve production equipment from any of our equipment centers. This online training is accessible through SCA Central on D2L to do at your own pace. You can find it by clicking on “SCA Production Training” in the blue box at the top of SCA Central.

<https://d2l.depaul.edu/d2l/home/653204>

Computer: This class requires use of a computer that can handle editing software. Here is a link to the Laptop Loaner Program if you need assistance. <https://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Student-Resources/Pages/Equipment-Centers.aspx>

Hard Drive: This class requires the use of a hard drive. The hard drive capacity should have a minimum of 500gb and run at 7200rpm. USB3, USB-c, Thunderbolt (with adaptor), or FW 800 (with adaptor) connections are recommended.

Software: This class requires the use of Adobe Premiere or other editing software.

Assignments

Please note that late assignments will lose 10% each day they are late.

You must submit on time, even if you are not able to come to class on that day.

Assignment 1: Day in the Life Project

Part 1_DITL Pitch and Pre-Production Package	10%
Part 2_DITL Rough Cut Film	10%
Part 3_DITL Fine Cut Film and evaluation	15%

Assignment 2: Archival Interview Project

Part 1_Archival Interview Pitch and Pre-Production Package	10 %
Part 2_Archival Film Rough Cut	10 %
Part 3_Archival Film and Evaluation	15 %

Reading response 10 %

Attendance/ In Class and Group Participation 20 %

Total Points 100

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

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, B indicates good work, C indicates satisfactory work, D indicates unsatisfactory work, and F is a failure to demonstrate an understanding of course concepts.

Week 1 Intro to class, assignments, structure

Introductions
Class fundamentals
Assignments
Equipment
Questions
Questionnaire (in class)

For Week 2

To Read: Chapter 1 How Can We Define Documentary Film? Pg. 1-28. Answer prompts.

Week 2 The Nature of Documentary

Introduce: Defining documentary – Analyze shorts/clips
Pitching Ideas/ Creating a Pitch Deck/Criteria for a good pitch
Create Teams / Brainstorm ideas in small groups
Day In the Life Project group meetings

Assign: Assignment 1 Part 1: Pitch Deck (due the following class)
Uploaded to D2L>Submissions>Assignment 1 Pitch Deck
Pitch Deck Presentation to class for next week
**READ: Chapter 6+ 7 “How Can We Differentiate Among Documentary Models and Modes?
What are Poetic, Expository, and Reflexive Modes?”**

Week 3 What is the Story?

Present: Assignment 1 Part 1: Give Pitch Presentations to class

Review: Reading – Documentary Modes

Watch In class: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5QMljSnt_E Ten Meter Tower | NYT Op-Docs

Teams break into Groups to discuss next steps

For Week 4:

To Read: Chapters 2 “Why Are Ethical Issues Central to Documentary Filmmaking?”
pg.29-47

Article - Create Free Account to read

https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/29/books/review/who-gets-to-tell-other-peoples-stories.html?mcubz=3&_r=1

Week 4 Philosophies of Approach

Discuss: Representation/Ethics. Observational/Verité

Introduce Project 2 – archival project -discuss Pitch Decks

Review: Reading

Assign: Film DITL film

Update: Teams each give verbal update on Assignment 1

For Week 5:

To Read: Chapter 10 pg. 209-222.

Week 5 The Interview

Discuss: Conducting an interview

Form teams for Project 2 – teams meet and discuss project

Review: Reading

Assignment 1: Day In the Life Class updates/ Edit time

Lab time for production/post on projects

Read: Appendix 223-231

For Week 6:

Finish: Assignment 1 Exported file uploaded to D2I

Assignment 1_ Questionnaire

Assign: Assignment 2: Archival Idea, Pitch and Pitch Deck

Uploaded to D2I>Submissions>Assignment 2 Pitch Deck

Week 6 What Gives Documentaries a Voice of Their Own?

Screen: Day in the Life films

Present: Present Pitch for Assignment 2

Review: Assignment 1 Exported file

Week 7 Working with Archival and structuring your narrative / Post Production in Documentary

Introduce: Doc Editing / Working with Archival

Week 8 : No in person class – Production Week

To Do: Shoot and edit Archival film

Week 9 Addressing Social and Political Issues in Documentaries + Branded Content films

Work on Assignment 2 – Archival Film

Due next week: **Assignment 2 Exported file to D2L**

Week 10 Final Class – MANDATORY ATTENDANCE

To Do: Assignment 2: Class Presentations and feedback – **SCREEN FINE CUTS ARCHIVAL PROJECT**

CHANGES TO SYLLABUS

This syllabus is subject to change as necessary during the quarter. Depending on the many variables outside of our control, the assignments projected for the term may require alteration or rescheduling. If a change occurs, it will be posted under Announcements in D2L. Please ensure that campus connect and D2L have your correct email address. Also, make sure you are receiving all notifications via D2L.

UNIVERSITY:

DePaul University will continue to update their [COVID-19 Updates and Guidance page](#). Please visit that page for the most current information and a list of [university FAQ](#).

CDM

For more specific questions about CDM, check out this page for current info: [Frequently Asked Questions about COVID-19 & CDM](#).

TECHNICAL ISSUES If you're having any tech issues this quarter, please email scaavsupport@depaul.edu.

OUR CLASS

Course Policies

In addition to DePaul University course policies (see student handbook), the following special policies will apply to this course.

Attendance – Classes will consist of lecture, screenings and discussion. Attendance is mandatory unless otherwise stated.

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 be 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.

Plagiarism – Plagiarism on assignments or cheating on exams are serious offenses and earn the student a failing grade for the class. This course will be subject to the academic integrity policy passed by faculty. More information can be found at <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/>

Name & Gender Pronouns. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the quarter so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. Please also note that students may choose to identify within the University community with a preferred first name that differs from their legal name and may also update their gender. The preferred first name will appear in University related systems and documents except where the use of the legal name is necessitated or required by University business or legal need. For more information and instructions on how to do so, please see the Student Preferred Name and Gender Policy at <http://policies.depaul.edu/policy/policy.aspx?pid=332>.