

DOC224
Documentary Production 1
Winter 2024
Mondays 1:30 — 4:45 pm
Room: 14EAS - 211

Course Overview This introductory 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.

PREREQUISITES: FILM 110 or FILM 111 or FILM 102

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Please feel free to email with any questions or concerns. If you don't hear back from me within 24 hours, email me again! I will thank you for the reminder.

Office Hours: Mondays before class or via Zoom by appointment

Grading Letter grades will be based on the minimum percentages of total points earned. See below for assignments and grading.

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 Text Introduction to Documentary. Nichols, Bill. ISBN: 9780253026903
Available online through the library.

Required Materials and Equipment Appropriate Hard Drive and access to adequate software for editing projects.

Class Format Class meetings will involve screenings, lectures, discussions, pitches, presentations, and critiques.

Additional media will be available on D2L to be completed each week. Students should expect to spend 8 to 10 (5-week term) hours per week outside of class time on course-related work including filming and editing.

Academic Deadlines WI 2024

1/12 Last day to add classes

1/19 Last day to drop classes

1/20 Grades of “W” assigned for classes dropped on or after this day

1/22 Last day to select pass/fail option

2/23 Last day to withdraw from classes

COVID INFORMATION 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. This new resource is for general tech support and will serve as a unified point of contact for various issues. This includes any issues with your This email address will be monitored during the following hours: Monday - Friday: 8:30am – 8:30pm Saturday: 10:00am – 6:00pm Sunday: 12:00pm – 6:00pm

EQUIPMENT The equipment cage is open and you will have access to equipment. However, the check-in and check-out times will be limited. You may use any equipment you have. This can include your phone camera, webcam and other prosumer/professional equipment you have access to.

SOFTWARE Adobe Premiere: The following link contains the instructions for you to access Adobe Premiere for fall quarter. You must use your **@depaul.edu** email addresses to sign up. https://depaul.service-now.com/sp?id=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=KB0010764

ASSIGNMENTS

The class assignments have been modified to allow you to create the best work possible, with limited means and a restriction on movement. All assignments are due on Sunday by midnight.

GROUP PROJECTS This class incorporates group work in a flexible and safe way. You will have multiple options and resources to complete your assignments successfully. If you have any reservations about the assignments or class expectations, please reach out to me immediately and I will do my best to assuage your concerns.

THE DEAN OF STUDENTS OFFICE (DOS) helps students in navigating the university, particularly during difficult situations, such as personal, financial, medical, and/or family crises. Absence Notifications to faculty, personal or medical Administrative Withdrawals, and Community Resource Referrals, support students both in and outside of the classroom. DOS is committed to your success as a DePaul student. Please visit DOS www.studentaffairs.depaul.edu/dos/

ASSIGNMENTS

PROJECT TOTAL POINTS

A Day in the Life - Process Based 30%

Pre-production

Fine Cut

Final Project – Archival Based 40%

Pitch

Preproduction Package

Rough Cut

Fine Cut

Quizzes (D2L) 10%

Attendance & Class Participation 20%

Total Points 100%

Look at assignment guidelines on D2L for detailed breakdown. Letter grades will be based on the minimum percentages of total points earned.

Excellent - A 94% - 90%

Very Good - B+ 87%

Good - B 83% - 80%

Satisfactory - C+ 77% - 73%

Below Expectations - C- 70% - 60%

F 0%

Late Assignments Completing assignments on time and having them ready for discussion and critique in class is essential for this class.

Incomplete Grades An incomplete grade is given only for an exceptional reasons. 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.

Presence Your active presence is important in class. Many sessions are centered around analyzing films, presenting ideas, and receiving feedback. We rely on each other to ask questions, make observations, and learn together. This also means no electronic devices unless you're taking notes.

Attendance Students are expected to attend all classes, including any online classes via Zoom. If you're unable to attend due to technical difficulties, please let me know asap. This class will be flexible, but it needs everyone to contribute in a timely manner. Your active participation and engagement in class is expected and is required to get

credit for this portion of the course grade. This includes online discussions and comments, as well as completing group work on time.

Excused Absence In order to petition for an excused absence, students who miss class due to illness or significant personal circumstances should complete the Absence Notification process through the Dean of Students office. The form can be accessed at [http:// studentaffairs.depaul.edu/dos/ academicprocesses.html](http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/dos/academicprocesses.html).

Diversity Statement At DePaul, our mission calls us to explore “what must be done” in order to respect the inherent dignity and identity of each human person. We value diversity because it is part of our history, our traditions and our future. We see diversity as an asset and a strength that adds to the richness of classroom learning. In my course, I strive to include diverse filmmakers, perspectives, and styles. I also encourage open dialogue and spaces for students to express their unique identities and perspectives. I am open to having difficult conversations and I will strive to create an inclusive classroom that values all perspectives. If at any time, the classroom experience does not live up to this expectation, please feel free to contact me via email or during office hours. College is supposed to challenge assumptions and to provide new and sometimes uncomfortable ways of looking at issues, but if you feel uncomfortable regarding content or perspectives that are presented or discussed by me, guest speakers, or other students, I encourage you to contact me immediately.

Class Discussion and Civil Discourse DePaul University is a community that thrives on open discourse that challenges students, both intellectually and personally, to be socially responsible leaders. It is the expectation that all dialogue in this course is civil and respectful of the dignity of each student. Any instances of disrespect or hostility can jeopardize a student’s ability to be successful in the course. I will partner with the Dean of Students Office to assist in managing such issues. Student participation in class discussions will be measured in two ways. First, students are highly encouraged to ask questions and offer comments relevant to the day’s topic. Participation allows the instructor to “hear” the student’s voice when grading papers. Secondly, students will be called upon by the instructor to offer comments related to the reading assignments. Students must keep up with the reading to participate in class discussion.

I would like to use your preferred language when addressing you, so please let me know if your preferred name (or the pronunciation of that name) differ from what I am using and I ask that each of you let me know your preferred gender pronouns. Your suggestions on how to incorporate diversity in this course in a meaningful way are appreciated and encouraged.

Resources for Students with Disabilities Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential. To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact the instructor as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of class), and make sure that you have contacted the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at: csd@depaul.edu. Lewis Center 1420, 25 East Jackson Blvd. Phone number: (312) 362-8002 Fax: (312) 362-6544 TTY: (773) 325-7296

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. Students complete the evaluation online at [https:// mycti.cti.depaul.edu/mycti](https://mycti.cti.depaul.edu/mycti)

Visit the Writing Center Consider visiting the Writing Center to discuss your written assignments for this course. Writing Center Tutors are specially trained undergraduate and graduate students who can help you at any stage of your writing project. They can help you focus and develop your ideas, review your drafts, and polish your writing, as well as answer questions about grammar, mechanics, style, and citation. You may schedule appointments on an as-needed or weekly basis. In addition to Face-to-Face appointments, the Writing Center also provides written feedback by email and online appointments. Be sure to schedule your appointment with enough time to think about and incorporate the feedback you'll receive. To schedule a Written Feedback by Email, or Online Appointment, visit www.depaul.edu/writing . You can also call the offices: (312) 362-6726 (Loop Office, 1600 Lewis Center) or (773) 325-4272 (LPC Office, 250 McGaw Hall). When possible, the Writing Center accepts walk-in requests, but it's always a good idea to schedule your appointment ahead of time. You may schedule tutorials on an as-needed basis or as weekly standing appointments up to 3 hours per week. All Writing Center services are free to the DePaul community. **Academic Integrity & Plagiarism** This course will be subject to the academic integrity policy passed by faculty. More information can be found at <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/>.

1. DEFINING DOCUMENTARY

Intro to class, assignments, and expectations

- Review: Zoom, D2L, frame.io
- Communication/ Posting Projects
- Screen / Analyze : Various shorts

READ: Chapter 1: “How Can We Define Documentary Film?” Chapters provided on D2L.

ASSIGN: Project #1 A Day in The Life - Ideation

ALWAYS CHECK D2L for ASSIGNMENT UPDATES!

2. INTERVIEWS

- Interviews: preparing and research
- Analyze various Shorts / Clips
- Discuss assignment

READ: Chapter 6: “How Can We Differentiate Among Documentary Models and Modes? What are Poetic, Expository, and Reflexive Modes?”

Project #1

- Discuss ideas with group

Assign: **Project #1 - Production**

3. DOCUMENTARY MODES

- Non-Fiction Storytelling -

READ: Chapter 7

“How Can We Describe the Observational, Participatory, and Performative Modes?”

Assign: Day in The Life - Post-Production

4. DOCUMENTARY MODES

- Representation in Non-Fiction Cinema - Ethics - Observational / Verité

READ: Chapter 2: “Why Are Ethical Issues Central to Documentary Filmmaking?”

Due: Idea for Project #2: Archival/Interview

Screen Rough Cuts for Project #1

Assign: Revise and submit final edit for Project #1

5. PERFECTING THE FEEDBACK

Critiques and Feedback

- Camera Overview, Filming Verité, Observational, B-Roll
- Interviewing tips / techniques

SCREEN DAY IN LIFE / PROCESS

DUE: DAY IN LIFE - FINAL CUT

6. PERFECTING THE PITCH

What makes a good pitch?

PITCH: Archival / Interview -

Discuss Final film // Groups

READ: Chapter 10: "I Want to Make a Documentary, Where Do I Start?"

ASSIGN:

Archival Pre-Production Package

7. NO CLASS

Group Meetings: Final Project pre-production

READ: Chapter 3: "What Gives Documentaries a Voice of Their Own?"

Due: Archival Pre-production Packages

8. STRUCTURING A NARRATIVE

- Structuring a narrative
- Analyze / Break down structure of short doc
- Organizing footage, Transcription and Logging

READ: Chapter 4: "What Makes Documentary Filmmaking Engaging and Persuasive?"

Assign:

PRODUCTION: ARCHIVAL FILM

9. POST-PRODUCTION

SCREEN: Interview / Rough Cuts

- Assembly to rough cut to fine cut
- Work on final film.

READ: Chapter 8: "How Have Documentaries Addressed Social and Political Issues?"

Due:

ARCHIVAL Rough Cuts

10. SCREEN: Archival Fine Cut

Attendance is mandatory. An absence = a grade of 'F'.

Due:

ARCHIVAL FINE CUT