

## COM 433 Advanced TV Documentary Production

**Credit Hours: 3**

**In Class Instructional Hours: 2**

**Labs: 2**

**Field Work: 0**

### **Catalog Description:**

*Prerequisite: COM 312*

Capstone experience in producing and directing television documentaries, with hands-on experience in planning, writing, shooting and editing; focus on analysis and evaluation of documentary productions.

### **Reasons for Addition:**

(Fall 2008). This is a new course filling the need for both media production and journalism students to gain expertise in the unique method of documentary production. This proposal is part of a general program review, through which Communication seeks to update its courses in light of departmental experience with the previous program version, evolving departmental needs, and expanding scholarship in the field. This course is also in compliance with requirements of the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, specifically addressing ACEJMC standards focused on writing, technology, law, ethics, visual communication and critical thinking.

<b>Student Learning Outcomes:</b> At the completion of this course, students will be able to:	<b>Course Content References:</b>	<b>Assessment:</b>
1. Understand and explain the producer's and director's roles in documentary production	I, III, VIII	1. Exams, papers, written assignments, presentations, class participation
2. Understand and discuss the history of documentary production and various modes of production	II	2. Exams, quizzes, written assignments, presentations, class participation
3. Develop and execute plans to address ethical and legal issues surrounding documentary production	V	3. Exams, papers, applied projects, presentations
4. Produce and direct documentary productions with an advanced level of proficiency	III, IV, VII, VIII	4. Applied projects, in-class and assigned exercises
5. Integrate learning about program content and production technique to	III, IV, V, VI	5. Applied projects, in-class and assigned exercises, presentations

<p>plan for an solve problems associated with documentary production</p> <p>6. Analyze and evaluate both planned and completed documentary productions at an advanced level</p>	<p>IX</p>	<p>6. Exams, quizzes, papers, in-class critiques, presentations</p>
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**Course Content:**

- I. Documentary Producer/Director
  - A. Roles
  - B. Research and planning
  - C. Pre-production
  - D. Production
  - E. Post-production
- II. Documentary History & Modes of Production
  - A. Griersonian documentary
  - B. Cinema verité
  - C. Interview documentary
  - D. Self-reflexive documentary
  - E. Documentary/fiction blends
- III. Documentary Storytelling
  - A. Story basics
  - B. Structure
  - C. Manipulating time
  - D. Approach
- IV. Project Development
  - A. Research
  - B. Pitching and proposal writing
  - C. Budgets
  - D. Outlines, treatments, scripts
  - E. Selecting Participants
- V. Ethics
  - A. Producer/subject relationship
  - B. Producer/audience relationship
  - C. Legal issues
  - D. Moral issues
- VI. Objectivity/Subjectivity
  - A. Potential for objectivity
  - B. Balance
  - C. Disclosure
- VII. Production Technique
  - A. Working with crews
  - B. Camera technique

- C. Field audio recording technique
  - D. Field lighting technique
  - E. Editing technique/style
- VIII. The Interview
- A. Interviewing approaches
  - B. Preparation
  - C. Subject selection
  - D. Visual approaches to the interview
  - E. Pre-interviewing
  - F. Shooting with editing concerns in mind
- IX. Evaluation and production standards
- A. Analytical skills
  - B. Norms for critique and evaluation
  - C. Critique of planned productions
  - D. Analysis of completed productions

**Resources:**

Scholarship:

Artis, Anthony Q. (2007). *The shut up and shoot the documentary guide*. New York: Focal.

Ascher, Steven, and Edward Pincus. (2007). *The filmmaker's handbook: A comprehensive guide for the digital age*. New York: Plume.

Barnouw, E. (1993). *Documentary: A history of the non-fiction film*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). London: Oxford University Press.

Barsam, R.M. (1992). *Non-fiction film: A critical history*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Bernard, S.C. (2004). *Documentary storytelling for video and filmmakers*. London: Focal.

Boyle, D. (1997). *Subject to change: Guerilla television revisited*. London: Oxford University Press.

Cunningham, M. (2005). *The art of the documentary: Ten conversations with leading directors, cinematographers, editors and producers*. Indianapolis, IN: New Riders.

Ellis, J., & McClaine, B. (2005). *A new history of documentary film*. New York: Continuum International.

Jacobs, L. (1979). *The documentary tradition*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: WW. Norton.

Kochberg, S. (Ed.). (2002). *Introduction to documentary production*. London: Wallflower Press.

Nichols, B. (1994). *Blurred boundaries: Questions of meaning in contemporary culture*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Nichols, B. (2001). *Introduction to documentary*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Nichols, B. (1991). *Representing reality*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

- Rabiger, M. (2004). *Directing the documentary, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition*. London: Focal.
- Renov, M. (Ed.). (1993). *Theorizing the documentary*. New York: Routledge.
- Rosenthal, A. (2005). *New challenges for documentary*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Manchester UK: Manchester University.
- Rosenthal, A. (2002). *Writing, directing, and producing documentary films and videos*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Carbondale IL: Southern Illinois University.
- Ruby, J., Gross, L.P., & Katz, J.S. (Eds.). (2003). *Image ethics in the digital age*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota.
- Shamberg, M. (1971). *Guerilla television*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, Winston.
- Stubbs, L. (2002). *Documentary filmmakers speak*. New York: Allworth.

Periodicals:

- AfterImage*, Visual Studies Workshop, Rochester, New York.
- American Cinematographer*, American Society of Cinematographers, Los Angeles, CA.
- DV: Digital Video*
- Independent Journal of Film and Video*, AIVF, New York, NY.
- International Documentary Magazine*, International Documentary Association, Los Angeles, CA.
- VideoMaker Magazine*

Electronic and/or Audiovisual Resources:

- Association of Independent Film and Video*  
[www.aivf.org](http://www.aivf.org)
- Documentary Film Forum and Resources*  
<http://forum.documentaryfilms.net/>
- DV: Digital Video Magazine*  
[www.dv.com](http://www.dv.com)
- Frontline Investigative Journalism Series*  
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/>
- HBO Documentary Films*  
<http://www.hbo.com/docs/>

*Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival*  
<http://www.hotdocs.ca/>

*Independent Lens Series*  
<http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/about.html>

*International Documentary Association*  
<http://www.documentary.org/>

*P.O.V. Non-Fiction Film Series*  
<http://www.pbs.org/pov/>

*Silverdocs AFI/Discovery Channel Documentary Festival*  
<http://silverdocs.com/>