NEW COURSE PROPOSAL

SPC 426: Documentary Film Analysis

Credit Hours: 3
In Class Instructional Hours: 2  Labs: 2  Field Work: 0

Catalog Description:
Prerequisites: COM 215
Study of selected themes, ideas and movements of the documentary film through analysis of representative documentaries; includes major modes of documentary production and historical, social, ethical and artistic developments of the documentary. Students develop a significant research project focused on selected topic; course may be repeated if topic is different.

Reasons for Addition:

This history and analysis course parallels similar Communication courses studying history, ethics and major figures in public communication and journalism. It will provide an upper level study of the history and modes of documentary filmmaking, which will be useful to media production and communication studies students because it offers a deeper understanding of the development of the film form. Documentary analysis will fulfill ACEJMC (Accrediting Counsel on Education Journalism and Mass Communications) accreditation parameters requiring focus on ethics, diversity and history. In various iterations it will offer analysis of issues in sports and athletics, gender roles, race and class as represented in media, useful to students entering the communication field. For example, when taught as Sports Documentary Analysis, it will fulfill a requirement for the Sports Communication Certificate.

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<tr>
<th>Student Learning Outcomes: The student will:</th>
<th>Course Content References:</th>
<th>Assessment:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Outline the history and aesthetic development of the documentary film form since 1900</td>
<td>III, V</td>
<td>1. Class participation, exams, written assignments</td>
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<td>2. Explain how documentary films fit into cultural, historical and social contexts</td>
<td>III, V, VI</td>
<td>2. In-class presentations, papers, exams</td>
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<td>3. Compare and contrast documentary works that come from different times and places in film history</td>
<td>I, II</td>
<td>3. Participation in class discussion, in-class presentations, written assignments</td>
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<td>4. Interpret film texts using formal, thematic and contextual evidence</td>
<td>I, II, VI</td>
<td>4. Class discussion, in-class presentations, written assignments</td>
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<td>5. Analyze cultural and historical issues and themes as they are represented in documentary films</td>
<td>I, II, V</td>
<td>5. In-class presentations, papers and exams</td>
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<td>6. Examine the issues related to genre subject matter in our culture, including the impact of the historical exclusion of various groups</td>
<td>IV, V</td>
<td>6. Papers, exams, analysis and discussion of texts, small-group activities</td>
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<td>7. Synthesize representation of issues in documentary media.</td>
<td>I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII</td>
<td>7. Annotated bibliographies, papers, posters, podcasts, videos, or websites</td>
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Course Content:

I. History of documentary film
   A. Early documentary
   B. Voice of God documentary
   C. Cinema verite
   D. Interview documentary
   E. Self-reflexive documentary
   F. Re-enactment and hybrid documentary

II. Technical advances in film
   A. Synch sound
   B. Portable cameras
   C. Small formats
   D. Advances in lighting and sound
   E. Video and digital video
   F. Interactivity

III. Representation in documentary film
   A. Point of view
   B. Indexicality
   C. Truth
   D. Representing the other
   E. Representation of self

IV. Ethics in filmmaking
   A. Producer – subject – audience relationships
   B. Legal & Copyright issues

V. Documentary genre themes
   A. Identity
   B. Ethics
   C. Equality
   D. Law
   E. Narratives in history and culture
   F. Politics and rights

VI. Close reading techniques
   A. Three act structure
   B. Shot analysis
   C. Frame-by-frame analysis
   D. Mise-en-scene
   E. Production value
   F. Time

VII. Research methods
   A. Primary and secondary sources
   B. Annotated bibliographies and abstracts
   C. MLA/Chicago/APA style guides
   D. Theory & evidence based research
   E. Presentation modes
Resources:

Scholarship in the Field:


Periodicals:


*The Independent Journal of Film and Video*. AIVF. New York, NY.
*American Cinematographer.* American Society of Cinematographers. Los Angeles, CA.
*Filmmaker Magazine: The Magazine of Independent Film.* Independent Film Project. Brooklyn, NY.
*Kino.* Union of Bulgarian Filmmakers. Sofia, Bulgaria.
*RES Magazine, of Film Music, Art, Design & Culture.* RES Media Group.

**Electronic and/or Audiovisual Resources.**

The Advocate  
http://www.advocate.com

American Radio Works Educational Radio Documentaries  
http://americanradioworks.publicradio.org/education.html

GLAAD LGBT Film Festival Blog  
http://glaad.org/blog

International Documentary Institute  
http://www.documentary.org

National Sports Law Institute  
http://law.marquette.edu/cgi-bin/site.pl?2130&pageID=160

The Sundance Institute  
http://www.sundance.org/programs/documentary

Title IX Info  
http://www.titleix.info/

Top Documentary Films  
http://www.topdocumentaryfilms.com

Women’s Sports Foundation  
http://www.womenssportsfoundation.org

World Conference on Racism  
http://www.un.org/WCAR