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.

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

6. Analyze and evaluate both planned and completed documentary productions at an advanced level

6. Exams, quizzes, papers, in-class critiques, presentations

---

**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:**


Periodicals:


*American Cinematographer*, American Society of Cinematographers, Los Angeles, CA.

*DV: Digital Video*


*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/](http://forum.documentaryfilms.net/)

*DV: Digital Video Magazine*  
[www.dv.com](http://www.dv.com)

*Frontline Investigative Journalism Series*  

*HBO Documentary Films*  
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/