

DEREE COLLEGE SYLLABUS FOR: CN 4239 MAKING THE SHORT DOCUMENTARY				
<div>Instruction hours/lab hours/ US credits: 3/0/3</div> <div>UK LEVEL (appropriate only for validated courses): 6</div> <div>UK CREDITS: 15</div> <div>(Updated: Fall 2025)</div>				
PREREQUISITES:	CN 2005 Introduction to Digital Video CN 3160 Digital Storytelling			
CATALOG DESCRIPTION:	Researching, focusing, planning, shooting, writing, and editing the short documentary, or industrial or public relations, film. Ethical issues and principles. History of the different documentary types.			
RATIONALE:	Students learn to make a 9-12 -minute documentary or industrial video. They availability of cheap, easy-to-use cameras and editing software make it essential that students learn how to use video-production technology today: documentary production skills are useful in film, journalism or PR --related jobs and to people who wish to do freelance work. This course focuses on documentary methods and principles.			
LEARNING OUTCOMES:	<i>As a result of taking this course, the student should be able to:</i> 1. Differentiate between alternative documentary types and identify their cinematographic historical context. 2. Demonstrate detailed knowledge of the visual, stylistic and structural elements necessary for communicating messages. 3. Apply their knowledge in producing a short documentary or industrial or public relations video. 4. Apply ethical judgment in addressing issues related to objectivity, balance, truth, bias, fairness in media communication. 5. Conduct interviews and other relevant research for the completion of the project.			
METHOD OF TEACHING AND LEARNING:	In congruence with the teaching and learning strategy of the college, the following tools are used: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lectures and class discussions.• Homework assignments.• Film and video screenings.• Film labs and equipment demonstrations• Editing labs• Office hours held by the instructor to provide further assistance to students.• Use of library facilities for further study and preparation for the exams• Use of the Blackboard course management platform to further support communication, by posting lecture notes, assignment instruction, timely announcements, formative quizzes and online submission of assignments.			
ASSESSMENT:	<div>Summative:</div> <table><tr><td>First assessment: Preparatory research and proposal (2,700-3,000)</td><td>30</td></tr></table>		First assessment: Preparatory research and proposal (2,700-3,000)	30
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	<table border="1" data-bbox="643 147 1441 295"> <tr> <td>Second assessment: Second assessment: Portfolio of writing and shooting exercises</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr> <td>Final assessment: Third assessment: Final Documentary (9-12 minutes)</td><td>60</td></tr> </table> <p>Formative:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="643 367 1441 479"> <tr> <td>Written outline of project</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr> <td>in-class presentation</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr> <td>Shooting and Editing Exercises</td><td>0</td></tr> </table> <p>The first assessment (preparatory research) tests Learning Outcomes 1,2 and 4. The second assessment (portfolio) tests Learning Outcomes 2 The third assessment (final project) tests Learning Outcomes 3 and 5</p> <p>Students are required to resit failed assessments in this module.</p>	Second assessment: Second assessment: Portfolio of writing and shooting exercises	10	Final assessment: Third assessment: Final Documentary (9-12 minutes)	60	Written outline of project	0	in-class presentation	0	Shooting and Editing Exercises	0
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<p>INDICATIVE READING:</p>	<p>REQUIRED READING: Nichols, B. & Jamie Baron (2024). Introduction to Documentary, (4rthed.), Indiana University Press.</p> <p>RECOMMENDED READING: Rosenthal, A., & Eckhardt, N. (2016). Writing, directing, and producing documentary films and digital videos (Fifth edition). Southern Illinois University Press. Anderson, K., & Lucas, M. (2016). Documentary Voice & Vision (1st ed.). Routledge. Bernard, Sheila Curran. Documentary Storytelling: Creative nonfictions on screen. Focal Press. 2010 Bricca, Jacob. Documentary Editing: Principles and practice. Routledge. 2017 Cook, Pam. <i>The Cinema Book</i>. BFI Publications, London, 2008 Hampe, Barry, <i>Making Documentary Films and Videos: A Practical Guide to Planning, Filming, and Editing Documentaries</i>, Holt paperbacks; 2007. McLane, Betsy. A new History of Documentary. Continuum. 2012 Rabiger, Michael, <i>Directing the Documentary</i>, Focal Press, 2014 Shook, Fred, John Larson, and John DeTarsio. <i>Television Field Production and Reporting</i>, Allyn and Bacon; 2009. Quinn, James. Adventures in the lives of others: ethical dilemmas in factual filmmaking. IB Turis. 2015 Papazian, E., & Eades, C. (2016). The Essay Film. WallFlower Press. Bricca, J. (2023). Documentary Editing (2nd ed.). Routledge.</p> <p>Other sources, including journal and newspapers' articles, research papers etc. recommended by the instructor throughout the semester.</p>										
<p>INDICATIVE MATERIAL: (e.g. audiovisual, digital material, etc.)</p>	<p>REQUIRED MATERIAL: Click or tap here to enter text.</p> <p>RECOMMENDED MATERIAL: Filmmaker magazine (quarterly)</p>										

	Documentary (quarterly) Sight and Sound (monthly) Premiere (monthly)
COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS:	Blackboard and an active ACG email account. High standards of oral and written English for all assignments
SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS:	MS Office and Blackboard CMS Digital Video Camera; Computer equipped with editing software
WWW RESOURCES:	http://www.nfb.ca/ https://www.shortoftheweek.com/channels/documentary/ https://www.nytimes.com/video/op-docs https://vimeo.com/guardianvideo https://www.openculture.com/free-documentaries-online https://fieldofvision.org/ http://freedocumentaries.org/ http://www.dfgdocs.com/ http://www.documentary.org/ http://www.documentaryarts.com/
INDICATIVE CONTENT:	<p>.1 Defining the documentary</p> <p>1.1 History of documentary</p> <p>1.2 Documentary and representation</p> <p>1.3 The rhetorical tradition of documentaries</p> <p>1.4 Types of documentary</p> <p>1.5 Industrial and public relations videos</p> <p>1.6 Reporting and storytelling</p> <p>2. Ethical Issues</p> <p>2.1 Objectivity, truth, balance, and fairness vs. limited knowledge and point-of-view</p> <p>2.2 Getting permission to shoot video</p> <p>2.3 Getting permission to conduct interviews</p> <p>2.4 Revealing intentions to interviewees</p> <p>2.5 Getting permission to conduct research</p> <p>2.6 Considerations in using information</p> <p>2.7 Deciding whether or not to allow source interference in the structuring of interviews or use of information</p> <p>3. Conception and Initial Planning</p> <p>3.1 Being realistic: Can you do it, and by deadline?</p> <p>3.2 The concept: Putting it into a simple sentence or two</p> <p>3.3 Considering the audience and client</p> <p>3.4 The proposal: film statement; background and need/objectives; approach, form, and style; shooting schedule; audience</p> <p>3.5 Research: texts, photos and stock video, interviews, location</p> <p>4. Shaping the Film</p> <p>4.1 Essay vs. narrative; combinations</p> <p>4.2 Angle: finding a character to focus on</p> <p>4.3 Structure: complication-resolution; timelines</p> <p>4.4 Tools of style and freedom of imagination</p> <p>4.5 Writing the first draft</p>

	<p>4.6 Staying focused and the art of omission</p> <p>5. Shooting, Narrating, and Editing</p> <p>5.1 Planning shots for structure and meaning</p> <p>5.2 Useful shots (establishing, wide, medium, close-up, cutaway, macro) and their uses; shots to avoid (pan, zoom)</p> <p>5.3 Deciding whether to use music and other sound effects</p> <p>5.4 Shooting sequences</p> <p>5.5 Providing visual “proof” of points</p> <p>5.6 Shooting beginnings and ends</p> <p>5.7 Conducting and shooting interviews</p> <p>5.8 Logging video</p> <p>5.9 Arranging video shots</p> <p>5.10 Preparing narration, natural sound, and/or sound effects</p> <p>5.11 Editing the final project</p>
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