Passion, Dedication, Excellence

Course Number: Comm_4310_001  
Course Title: Advanced Production: Documentary  
Credit Hours: 3  
Semester: Fall 2015  
Time/Location: Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:30 p.m. – 4:45 p.m. BH 235

Instructor: Edward R. Tyndall  
Office: 223B Bay Hall  
Office Hours: Tues and Thurs 12:30 p.m.-2:00 p.m. and Wed 1:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m  
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Phone: 361-825-2296

TEXT:  

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:  
Work in the Editing Lab OUTSIDE of class time is required to be successful in this class!

REQUIRED MATERIALS:  
Funds to submit to one film festival (approximately $35)  
Funds to print an 11x17 poster (approximately $15)  
500 gigabyte (or greater) external hard drive with Firewire 800 port and cable (recommended, not required)

CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION:  
Advanced techniques in the creation of documentary media content with a focus on conceptualization, production, and distribution of a short documentary film. This course serves as a capstone for the Media Production Track.

PREREQUISITES:  
Comm 3313, 3315 and 3316

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:  
-Practice approaches to planning and directing documentary film content through preproduction and production of a short documentary film.  
-Illustrate mastery of documentary postproduction workflows by editing a short documentary film.  
-Demonstrate an understanding of media distribution by successfully promoting and distributing a short documentary film.  
-Employ successful visual storytelling techniques in documentary film.
ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE TURNED IN ON THE ASSIGNED DATE:
No late assignments will be accepted. Assignments turned in after the due date will receive a zero. Incomplete assignments will be graded as is. No exceptions other than for family tragedy or medical emergencies (w/documentation). No incompletes will be given for this course.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:
Strict attendance is required. There are no “excused” absences other than medical emergencies for which a physician’s care is required and that can be documented in writing or validated by the University Health Center. Such documentation or validation must be at the student’s initiative. All documentation must be submitted within one week (seven days) after you return to class.

After the second (2nd) absence (excluding documented, medical emergencies as just noted), the course grade will be reduced by one-third of a letter grade (3.33 points on a 100-point scale) for each absence. After the fifth (5th) unexcused absence, the student will be given a failing grade in the course. Tardiness or early departure from the class will be considered an absence unless the instructor has been informed and has approved, in writing, of mitigating circumstances.

DROPPING A CLASS:
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class.

CLASSROOM/PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR:
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

NOTICE TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you suspect that you may have a disability (physical impairment, learning disability, psychiatric disability, etc.), please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office, located in Driftwood 101, at
825-5816. If you need disability accommodations in this class, please see me as soon as possible.

ACADEMIC ADVISING: The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. The College's Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E, and can be reached at 825-3466.

GRADE APPEAL PROCESS: Students who feel that they have not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in this class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, cl.tamucc.edu/students/studentinfo.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean.

GRADING:
10% Pitch
30% Proposal
10% Small Group Criticism
20% Fine Cut
30% Final Cut (Including Deliverables)

GRADING SCALE:
100 – 90 = A
89.99 – 80 = B
79.99 – 70 = C
69.99 – 60 = D
59.99 – 0 = F

TOPICAL OUTLINE:

August 27 --- Review of Syllabus
Assignment --- Begin work on pitches. (Due September 15!!!!)
Assignment --- Screen FIVE Short Documentaries online
Assignment --- Get Textbook
Assignment --- Read Chapters 1-8 Creative Documentary (Due September 3)

September 1 --- Refresher Camera and Audio

September 3 --- Refresher Interview Lighting Setup
Reading Due --- Chapters 1-8 Creative Documentary
Assignment --- Read Chapters 9-15 Creative Documentary (Due September 10)
September 8 --- Film Viewing and Discussion

September 10 --- Film Viewing and Discussion
Reading Due --- Chapters 9-15 Creative Documentary
Assignment --- Read Chapters 16-21 Creative Documentary (Due September 17)
Assignment --- Finish Pitches

September 15 --- Pitches Group 1
Due --- Pitches

September 17 --- Pitches Group 2
Reading Due --- Chapters 16-21 Creative Documentary
Assignment --- Begin scheduling your shoot (14 Days Until Shoot!!!)
Assignment --- Begin work on proposals (14 Days Until Proposals Due!!!)
Assignment --- Read Chapters 22-23 Creative Documentary (Due September 22)

September 22 --- Small Group Preproduction
Reading Due --- Chapters 22-23 Creative Documentary
Assignment --- Create Film’s Facebook Page

September 24 --- Small Group Preproduction

September 29 --- Small Group Preproduction
Deadline --- Shoot Scheduled/ Subjects Locked In
Assignment --- Finish Proposals
Assignment --- Finalize Preproduction

October 1 --- Group 1 Equipment Checkout
Due --- Proposals Due

October 6 --- Group 1 Equipment Turn In

October 8 --- Group 2 Equipment Checkout

October 13 --- Group 2 Equipment Turn In

October 15 --- Review Footage/ Organize Browsers
Critical Task --- Bring Footage to Lab

October 20 --- Edit Rough Assembly
Assignment --- Begin Small Group Criticism Meetings (See Due Dates Below)

October 22 --- Edit Rough Assembly
Assignment --- Finish Rough Assembly
October 27 --- Edit Fine Cut
Assignment --- Continue Work on Fine Cut
Due --- Notes #1 From Small Group Criticism Meeting (From Rough Assembly Phase)

October 29 --- Edit Fine Cut
Assignment --- Finish Fine Cut

November 3 --- Screen Fine Cut Group 1
Due --- Fine Cut
Due --- Notes #2 From Small Group Criticism Meeting (From Fine Cut Phase)
Assignment --- Continue Editing!!
Assignment --- Make contact with Composer or begin looking for music

November 5 --- Screen Fine Cut Group 1 Continued

November 10 --- Screen Fine Cut Group 2

November 12 --- Screen Fine Cut Group 2 Continued
Assignment --- Begin Editing for Picture Lock (12 days until Picture Lock!!!)

November 17 --- Edit for Picture Lock
Assignment --- Finish Picture Lock

November 19 --- Work on Color Correction
Due --- Picture locked QuickTime file of film on DVD!
Due --- Notes #3 From Small Group Criticism Meeting (From Picture Lock Phase)
Critical Task --- Hand off picture locked version of film as QuickTime file to composer (if you are working with a composer). You will need the music by December 1.
Assignment --- Finish Color Correction

November 24 --- Work on Sound Design
Assignment --- Finish Sound Design

November 26 --- No Class Thanksgiving Break!

December 1 --- Work on Score/ Final Mix
Due --- Music Cues from composer or other sources secured prior to class
Assignment --- Finish Film including Facebook Page, Poster and Festival Submission

Final Exam --- Screening of Finished Films
Due --- Finished Film and other deliverables (Poster, Proof of Submission to one Film Festival, Proof of Facebook Page)
RELEVANT WEBSITES:
IFP
http://www.ifp.org/
Withoutabox
https://www.withoutabox.com
The International Documentary Association
http://www.documentary.org/
IndieWire
http://www.indiewire.com
IMDB
http://www.imdb.com/
University Film and Video Association
http://www.ufva.org

SUGGESTED FILM SCREENING LIST:
Nanook of the North, 1922, Robert Flaherty
Triumph of the Will, 1934, Leni Riefenstahl
Night and Fog, 1955, Alain Resnais
Fata Morgana, 1971, by Werner Herzog
Grey Gardens, 1975, Albert Maysles
Harlan County, USA, 1976, by Barbara Kopple
Gates of Heaven, 1978, Errol Morris
Ken Burns America: Brooklyn Bridge, 1981, Ken Burns
Vernon Florida, 1981, Errol Morris
Sherman’s March, 1986, Ross McElwee
The Thin Blue Line, 1988, Errol Morris
Roger and Me, 1989, Michael Moore
For All Mankind, 1989, Al Reinert
Baraka, 1992, by Ron Fricke
Brother’s Keeper, 1992, Joe Berlinger
Lessons of Darkness, 1995, Werner Herzog
Fast Cheap and Out of Control, 1997, Errol Morris
Dark Days, 2000, Mark Singer
Fist Person, The Complete TV Series, 2000, Errol Morris
Children Underground, 2001, by Edet Belzberg
Capturing the Friedmans, 2003, Andrew Jarecki
The Fog of War, 2003, by Errol Morris
The White Diamond, 2004, Werner Herzog
Born Into Brothels, 2004, Ross Kauffman
Super Size Me, 2004, Morgan Spurlock
Grizzly Man, 2005, Werner Herzog
The Devil and Daniel Johnston, 2005, Jeff Feuerzieg
Murderball, 2005, Henry Alex Rubin
God Grew Tired of Us, 2006, Christopher Dillon Quinn
The Bridge, 2006, Eric Steel
This American Life Season 1, 2007, G.J. Echternkamp
Helvetica, 2007, Gary Hustwit
What Would Jesus Buy?, 2007, Ron VanAklemade
Man on a Wire, 2008, James Marsh
This American Life Season 2, 2008, G.J. Echternkamp
Kamp Katrina, 2009, David Redmon/ Ashley Sabin
Girl Model, 2011, David Redmon/ Ashley Sabin
Down East, 2013, David Redmon/ Ashley Sabin
Where Soldiers Come From, 2011, Heather Courtney