EXPANDED COURSE DESCRIPTION

FILM AND VIDEO

School of the Arts, Media, Performance and Design
Department of Cinema and Media Arts

FA / FILM 3002 6.0 SECTION A
DOCUMENTARY PROJECT WORKSHOP I
FALL 2020 / WINTER 2021

Last Modified Date: 09/03/2020

COURSE CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

Explores the practice, aesthetics and theory of documentary film and video making, at an advanced level. Over the course of the year, students will engage in various preparatory practical exercises, culminating with the production of a short documentary on film and/or video. Prerequisites: FA/FILM 2010 6.00 or FA/FILM 2010 9.00 and permission of the Film Department.

INSTRUCTOR(S)

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Section / Format / Term</th>
<th>Contact Email</th>
<th>Contact Phone</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evans, Barbara</td>
<td>Sec. A / STDO / Y</td>
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SPECIAL FEATURES

Expanded Course Description

The Documentary Project Workshop explores the practice, aesthetics and theory of documentary filmmaking at an advanced level. Over the course of the year, students will engage in various exercises, culminating in the production of a short documentary on film and/or video. Throughout the year, consultation on the various stages of production of each documentary will take place and be a priority of the workshop. Assigned readings will support the production process and invited guests will share their vision and experience of documentary filmmaking. Screenings and discussion of a range of documentary films, both Canadian and international, will provide an overview of the historical, traditional, experimental and emerging forms of the documentary, raise current issues and dilemmas and develop critical viewing skills. Throughout the year, deadlines will be established that are imperative that students meet in order to successfully complete the course. Please note that students enrolled in FA/FILM 4002 must complete an additional research project. Students in both FA/FILM 3002 and 4002 will be required to make in-class presentations on assigned topics at set dates throughout the year.

TOPICS AND CONCEPTS

Weekly Course Schedule

To be determined in collaboration with students according to the production schedules of their individual projects. Resulting schedules will be posted on the course website.

Course Texts

Required


Please note that additional readings may be assigned or recommended during the course.

Other recommended texts
Aufderheide, Patricia, Honest Truths, Center for Social Media, American University, pdf.
Bernard, Sheila Curran, Documentary Storytelling, Focal Press, 2011 (Also available as an eBook from York University Libraries)
Grant, Barry Keith and Sloniowski, Jeannette, Documenting the Documentary, Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 1998.
Renov, Michael, The Subject of Documentary, Minneapolis, University of Minneapolis Press, 2004
LIST OF LEARNING OUTCOMES AND EXAMPLES OF

1. Statement of purpose
The purpose of this course is to assist and support students at each stage of the making of a documentary film, from research and pre-production through to exhibition, and to develop a historical understanding and critical overview of the social, economic and aesthetic conditions which have informed the development of documentary practice. Students will be familiar with a wide variety of aesthetic approaches and be able to critically analyze the historical developments, from the hand-cranked celluloid past to the digital present and to compare and contrast various documentary modes. Students will be able to discuss the major theoretical issues and arguments surrounding documentary film.

2. Specific learning objectives
   a. An enhanced overall understanding of all aspects of documentary pre-production, production and post-production.
   b. Enhanced skills in researching, interviewing, writing proposals and treatments, shooting and editing documentary films.
   c. The tools to successfully complete a documentary production.
   d. A broad overview of the historical developments surrounding documentary film.
   e. Knowledge of some of the key theoretical and critical issues of documentary film.
   f. Familiarity with a range of key Canadian and international documentary films, both contemporary and historical.
   g. An ability to transfer theoretical, critical and historical knowledge to the production of their own documentaries.
   h. An increased ability to discuss and write about key issues and aesthetic approaches in documentary film.
   i. An increased understanding some of the key contemporary issues and arguments surrounding documentary film.
   j. An enhanced ability to collaborate with the various members of the production team.

GRADED ASSESSMENT

Handouts detailing assignment requirements, criteria and deadlines will be distributed in class.

Short Preliminary Documentary Assignments
A variety of short documentary projects which cover various topics and approaches.

Major Project
The greater balance of the year’s course work will be constituted of the preproduction, production and postproduction of a documentary film (maximum 15 minutes in length). In consultation with the course director, students will prepare a full proposal and schedule for this proposal which may only proceed with the approval of the course director. Ideally, students will work with members of specialty classes (production
management, cinematography, and picture and sound postproduction) to complete their projects, and the ability to collaborate with various members of the production team is one of the course objectives.

Film Journals
For each project, each student must keep a journal or personal diary/log book showing times and dates, and describing all production activities and crew roles. Your journal should include what you learned on the project and comments on how the production could be improved. You will be asked to answer specific questions given on the project assignment sheet. The journals will be submitted as part of each completed assignment and will be graded separately from the project.

Detailed assignment sheets for each of the above will be distributed in class.

Grading
The final grade for the course will be based on the following items weighted as indicated:

- Short Preliminary Assignments 15%
- Documentary Proposal and Presentation 10%
- In-class presentation of readings and documentary excerpts 10%
- Film journal (fall term) 5%
- Film journal (winter term) 5%
- Major project (Rushes 10%, Rough Cuts, 15%, Picture Lock/Fine Cut 15%) 40%
- Participation, professionalism and collaboration 15%

100%

Attendance and Participation
Attendance and participation in classes are essential for the successful completion of the course requirements. Much goes on in class that cannot be repeated and that requires your participation. Staying away to work on your film or on an upper-year project is not a valid excuse for missing class and you will be marked as absent. Participation in critique sessions is essential and an important part of your film education. Class begins promptly at 2:30 so plan to arrive a few minutes early. Late arrival is disruptive, and arriving late while “touching up” your documentary for presentation in class is unacceptable. You must ensure that our project is ready for screening at the beginning of class. Handing in your assignment late will result in the lowering of your grade as indicated below unless medical documentation is submitted. It is unacceptable to miss class because you are working on a production from another class.

When working in collaboration with other students, it is essential that students fully participate in pre-production meetings, on shooting dates, and in post-production responsibilities. The attendance/participation/professionalism grade includes: attitude and effort on projects, during workshops and in-class discussions, plus cooperation with other students and department and studio staff.

The grading scheme for the course conforms to the 9-point grading system used in undergraduate programs at York.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Grade Point</th>
<th>Per Cent Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>Exceptional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>80-89</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>75-79</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>70-74</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>65-69</td>
<td>Competent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>Fairly competent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>55-59</td>
<td>Passing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50-54</td>
<td>Marginally Passing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(marginally below 50%)</td>
<td>Marginally Failing</td>
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Assignment Submission Guidelines:
In accordance with professional practice, proper academic performance depends on students doing their work not only well, but also on time and collaboratively. Accordingly, assignments for this course must be received on the due date specified for the assignment.

Projects to be viewed in class must be screened on the deadline date and be ready for projection as a QuickTime movie file before the beginning of class.

All written submissions must be typed, double spaced and properly identified with a title page that indicates your name, student number, course number and title, assignment topic and date. Email submissions will not be accepted without the permission of the course director.

Assignment Deadlines and Lateness Penalty:
All deadlines will be announced in class and on the class website. There will be intermediate stage deadlines for rushes and rough cuts and final deadlines for fine cuts for all projects. Deadlines should be considered as absolute, and grade penalties will apply for lateness. Normally deductions are a half grade for missing an intermediate deadline, (e.g. B+ to B) and a full grade per week (e.g. B+ to C+) for missing a completed project deadline. No assignments will be accepted three weeks after the due date. Exceptions to the lateness penalties for valid reasons such as illness or compassionate grounds will require supporting documentation (e.g. a doctor’s note).

Equipment Borrowing Privileges, Insurance and Crewing Rules
Students should read the sections on equipment policy and studio procedures online at http://www.yorku.ca/film411. University equipment may be borrowed for the production of approved course projects only. Equipment must be returned on time or students may lose their borrowing privileges. The University insurance policy has a $5,000.00 deductible for use on campus and provides no coverage off campus. Students will be responsible for the repair or replacement cost of equipment damaged or lost while in their care.

Production Costs
Production equipment, including digital video cameras, 16mm cameras, tripods, microphones, lighting kits and computer editing facilities are provided by the department. Students are responsible for all other costs incurred in their productions. Each student will be required to purchase his or her project production materials and lab services. These costs include 16mm film stock and processing/transfer costs and gaffer tape, gels etc. Costs will vary according to your production decisions.

Please note that directors and crewmembers are expected to share production costs.

Retention of Course Work
Students are advised to retain all course work for one academic year for their own protection. This will ensure that should there be any discrepancies regarding grades or any academic honesty issues you will be able to provide copies of your work.

Email Policy
Please reserve e-mail for making appointments and for asking brief questions. The course director will endeavour to answer e-mails as promptly as possible but please allow one week for a response. Substantive discussion about course material and assignments should occur during office hours.

Proficiency Tests
Students must take and pass equipment proficiency tests where required.

Posting Productions on the Film411 Website
All major documentary projects must be posted on the Film411 website. All films and videos produced by the students of the Department of Film are owned by the students but must bear a stand-alone screen credit at the end of the tail credits as follows:
Produced at
York University
Department of Cinema and Media Arts
(Year of completion)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Last date to drop a fall term (F) course without receiving a grade: November 6, 2020
Last date to drop a winter term (W) course without receiving a grade: March 12, 2021
Last date to drop a full year (Y) course without receiving a grade: February 5, 2021

Academic Policies / Information

The Senate Academic Standards, Curriculum and Pedagogy (ASCP) provides a Student Information Sheet that includes:

• York's Academic Honesty Policy and Procedures / Academic Integrity Web site
• Access/Disability
• Ethics Review Process for Research Involving Human Participants
• Religious Observance Accommodation
• Student Code of Conduct

Additional information:

• Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities
• Alternate Exam and Test Scheduling
• Grading Scheme and Feedback Policy

The Senate Grading Scheme and Feedback Policy stipulates that (a) the grading scheme (i.e. kinds and weights of assignments, essays, exams, etc.) be announced, and be available in writing, within the first two weeks of class, and that, (b) under normal circumstances, graded feedback worth at least 15% of the final grade for Fall, Winter or Summer Term, and 30% for ‘full year’ courses offered in the Fall/Winter Term be received by students in all courses prior to the final withdrawal date from a course without receiving a grade.

• Important University Sessional Dates: you will find classes and exams start/end dates, reading/co-curricular week, add/drop deadlines, holidays, University closings and more at http://www.registrar.yorku.ca/enrol/dates/index.htm

• "20% Rule"

No examinations or tests collectively worth more than 20% of the final grade in a course will be given during the final 14 calendar days of classes in a term. The exceptions to the rule are classes which regularly meet Friday evenings or on Saturday and/or Sunday at any time, and courses offered in the compressed summer terms.

Final course grades may be adjusted to conform to Program or Faculty grades distribution profiles.

Many courses utilize Moodle, York University’s course website system. If your course is using Moodle, click here to access it.
Moodle @ York University