

**Fall 2010** | Monday & Wednesday 3:30 – 4:45pm

**COMM 373** | Documentary Production

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### **DIVERSITY COMMITMENT**

The SCSU Department of Mass Communications is committed to preserving and fostering diversity and complying with the equity guidelines set by the university. We recognize diversity in faculty, staff and students, and strive to enhance the richness offered by this variety. As we examine the history of human visual communications and television production, some of the language, topics and sources involved may challenge your sensibilities. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your professor for a conference. Television is an international growth medium encompassing many forms and platforms. Understanding and respect are critical survival skills in a very competitive world business.

I will insist that you be mindful and respectful of your students' opinions. While you are in my classroom I will be adamant that you treat others accordingly, with professionalism, being mindful of a person's worth, dignity, and value as a human being. EVERYONE'S opinion is valid and will be treated fairly regardless of gender identity, class, ethnicity, color, religion, disability, nationality, and sexual orientation.

As with many mass communication courses, politics will be difficult to avoid. As long as your expressed viewpoint follows the above guidelines, ALL political views will be accepted and tolerated, though not always agreed with, by all class participants.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVE**

The objective of this course is to teach the student documentary theory and practice. We will explore the concepts and principles of documentary production and then each student will produce and direct his or her own documentaries. The specific emphasis will be on the knowledge of the methods and techniques of documentary production, the philosophy of the documentary as a social influence, the integrity and truth of the documentary as persuasion, and the values within the persuasive methods.

### **COURSE STRUCTURE**

The class will meet two days per week. Most weeks one class will consist of lecture on the theoretical and practical principles of documentary production as well as on production methods and technique. In the other class we will watch a select group of documentaries and analyze their principles and techniques. Several classes are scheduled as workdays and students are required to come to these classes ready to shoot or edit.

Students will produce, shoot and edit a 10-minute radio documentary with no or limited narration (only natural sound and or music) as their first project. Students will produce, shoot and edit a 10-minute video documentary with no narration (only natural sound and or music) as their second project. Students will then be paired up and each team will produce a 30-minute documentary as their third project. The first project is due on Monday Week 4. The second project is due on Monday Week 7. The third project (team project) is due Monday of Week 15. All members of the class are expected to help each other in the production of the documentaries regardless of the pairings.

### **TEXT**

John Hewitt & Gustavo Vasquez, Documentary Filmmaking  
 Carolyn H. Miller, Digital Storytelling

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### **CLASS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS**

	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>WEDNESDAY</b>
<b>WEEK 1</b>	Class Introduction	Hewitt: <i>Part 1</i> Miller: <i>Forward &amp; Part 1</i> VIEW: RADIO DOC
<b>WEEK 2</b>	Radio Documentary Proposals DUE	Hewitt: <i>Part 2</i> Miller: <i>Part 2</i> VIEW: RADIO DOC
<b>WEEK 3</b>		Miller: <i>Part 3 &amp; 4 (Ch. 14-18)</i> VIEW: RADIO DOC
<b>WEEK 4</b>	Radio Doc Project DUE	Hewitt: <i>Part 3</i> STUDENT DOCS
<b>WEEK 5</b>	Short Documentary Proposals DUE	Hewitt: <i>Part 4</i> STUDENT DOCS
<b>WEEK 6</b>		Miller: <i>Part 4 (Ch. 19-24) &amp; 5</i>
<b>WEEK 7</b>	Short Doc Project DUE	<b>TEAM ASSIGNMENTS</b> STUDENT DOCS
<b>WEEK 8</b>	Q & A	<b>MID-TERM EXAM</b>
<b>WEEK 9</b>	Long Documentary Proposals	STUDENT DOCS

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DUE

<b>WEEK 10</b>	Work Day	VIEW: DOC
<b>WEEK 11</b>		VIEW: DOC
<b>WEEK 12</b>	Work Day	VIEW: DOC
<b>WEEK 13</b>		VIEW: DOC
<b>WEEK 14</b>	Work Day	VIEW: DOC
<b>WEEK 15</b>	Long Doc Project DUE	STUDENT DOCS
<b>WEEK 16</b>		STUDENT DOCS

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**FINAL EXAM WEEK**

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**GRADING**

1st Documentary: 100 pt  
2nd Documentary: 150 pt  
3rd Documentary: 400 pt  
Mid-Term Exam: 150 pt  
Final Exam: 200 pt

Course Total: 1000 pts

**ADDITIONAL COURSE MATERIALS**

MiniDV tapes. Digital Voice Recorder (optional). External hard drive (recommended).

**ATTENDANCE**

College students are adults, as such; it is the student's responsibility to attend all scheduled class. Attendance is not only vital for the student success in class but for the success of the full educational experience of the entire class. Since we must all function in the real world, the student will have two free absences for the semester. No excuse is necessary, but if a real emergency or illness has occurred and the professor is notified in advance of class the absence will be considered excused. After the two free absences, the student will loss 2 points from there final grade for each additional absence.

A sign-in sheet will be available in class for each scheduled day. It is the students responsibility to make sure they sign the sheet to be counted present.

**ADDITIONAL ISSUES**

**Plagiarism:** Please review the University's policy on academic integrity.

**Special Arrangements:** Students with impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills are encouraged and have the responsibility to contact their instructor, in a timely fashion, regarding reasonable accommodations.

### **SYLLIBUS CHANGES**

This syllabus is subject to change. Changes will be noted in class, via email or other university sanctioned means.