

## COMM 5304 Documentary Post Production

Summer II 2015  
Mondays and  
Individual Meetings By Appointment  
9am -12 pm  
Fab 208 / BAB 303

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Office Hours: by appointment

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This class is a production workshop in the art of Documentary Filmmaking. Documentaries are unique in the world of film in that the form is wide open, and most often dictated by the discoveries made by the filmmakers in the *process* of making the film. The topics, themes, construction, and resulting films are as varied as the breadth and depth of human experience. Where fiction films are written, planned, and then executed, Documentaries are planned, executed, and only *then* are they written.

In this class, students will plan, produce, and edit individual short documentaries. Any topic is open for the creative process – the focus is on finding the story the student wants to tell, followed by the practical process of turning the story idea into a movie.

Now we've reached the second part of the class. Post Production. Post, as you'll see, is where the heavy lifting of documentary work happens.

As this is a graduate level section, my expectation is that topics will be thoughtful, the work will be well-developed, and the overall post-production result will be at a minimum of B-level work (see grading scale at the end of the syllabus).

If time permits, we will also screen at least a portion of some significant documentaries during class.

### PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

<b>Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) The Graduating Student...</b>
1. Demonstrates the ability to competently deliver public presentations, including the use of presentation technology such as presentation software, video, and audio.
2. The ability to analyze communication content for argument, including identification of major elements, such as claims, warrants, data, etc.
3. Demonstrates the ability to complete appropriate discipline specific writing assignments.
4. The ability to apply communication theory to the analysis of communication situations appropriate to each degree specialization.
5. Demonstrate competent use of media technology including video, audio, and internet-based technology.

**PREREQUISITES**

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None.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

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By the end of this class, students will:

- Develop a working definition of the documentary form
- Gain familiarity with the elements involved in planning a documentary film
- Demonstrate a working understanding of the various crew roles in documentary production
- Cultivate beginner-level experience with the technology, equipment, and techniques used in professional filmmaking

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:**

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- 1) Terminology / Definitions Quiz
- 2) Complete set of dailies
- 3) Assembly Cut
- 4) First Cut
- 5) Final Cut, including sound design
- 6) Full participation in class discussion / critique

**Required Textbooks for this class:**

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*None.*

**Materials Required:**

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*None.*

**CLASS DATES: Assignments and Deadlines**

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*Note that these dates and the details of each class are subject to change at the instructor's discretion*

Class	Date	Topics and Assignments
1	July 9	Finish shooting – class does not meet
2	July 13	Intro to basics of Final Cut Pro. Review Dailies. Begin assembly.
3	July 20	Watch assemblies. Notes for First Cuts.
4	July 27	Watch First Cuts. Notes for Second Cuts.
5	August 3	Watch Second Cuts. Notes for Final Cuts and Sound Design.

6 August 10 FINAL SCREENING

## **GRADING**

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Assignments are valued as follows:

1) Terminology / Definitions Quiz	15%
2) Assembly	15%
3) First Cut	20%
4) Final Cut w/ Sound Design	30%
5) Full participation in class discussion / critique	20%

### **Grading Criteria:**

A = Exceptional. Demonstrates mastery of material beyond expectation. Professional quality of work. Highest level of scholarship.

B = Above average. Demonstrates mastery of material. Work is of better-than-expected quality, but not quite professional. High level of scholarship.

C = Average. Demonstrates proficiency with material. Work is of amateur quality. Ordinary level of scholarship.

D = Below Average. Less than proficient with material. Work shows errors, careless mistakes, or is just plain wrong. Poor scholarship.

F – Failure. Material incomplete. Work grossly negligent or incomplete. No evidence of scholarship present.

## **TARDINESS / ABSENCE POLICY**

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Attendance is 10% of your grade. That’s the difference between an “A” and a “B”...or an “F” and a “D.”

### **TARDINESS**

Class **BEGINS EXACTLY AT THE APPOINTED TIME**. It is your responsibility to be prepared to begin **BEFORE** the class starts.

Three instances of tardiness is equivalent to one absence. See below for the class absence policy.

**THE INSTRUCTOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO DENY ENTRY TO STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT PRESENT AT THE START OF CLASS\* – ON THE HOUR. PLAN ACCORDINGLY. ON-TIME is EARLY!**

\*Exceptions will be made only for those with classes located in RAS whose end time makes on-time arrival impossible.

Punctuality is essential in this business. Tardiness will not be tolerated.

Absence Policy, from the Sul Ross State University 2012-2014 Course Catalogue:

## **CLASS ATTENDANCE**

Regular class attendance is important to the attainment of the educational objectives of the University. Each instructor will keep class attendance records, and the instructor's policy on class attendance will be explained at the beginning of the semester or term.

The instructors will drop a student from a course when the student has a total of nine absences. A student will be dropped for excessive absences in remedial courses after nine absences.

An absence is defined as non-attendance in fifty minutes of class; for example, non-attendance in a one and one-half hour class will constitute one and one-half absences and non-attendance in a three-hour class will constitute three absences. An absence because of participation in an official University activity is considered to be an authorized absence.

## **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

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The University is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Accessibility Services Coordinator assists students with disabilities in providing academic programming accommodations. If you need accommodations, please see the instructor for a referral to the Accessibility Services Coordinator.