

# **MEDIA PRODUCTION WORKSHOP**

## **SUBTITLE: DOCUMENTARY PRODUCTION**

**COMM 356 – Spring 2019**

University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

TR 1-2:50 CAC 112/301

### **Faculty Info:**

Chris Shofner

Associate Professor

Office: CAC 312

Email: [cshofner@uwsp.edu](mailto:cshofner@uwsp.edu)

Phone: 715-346-3601

### **Office Hours:**

MW: 11-12

TRF: By Appointment

### **Course Description:**

An advanced production course in which students will hone skills learned in 105 and 253 through production of documentary works. Students will be exposed to the historical and contemporary practices of documentary storytelling.

### **Course Objectives:**

1. Students will critically develop an idea and produce meaningful documentary works.
2. Students will demonstrate technical aspects of the selected tools as well as an understanding of their essence
3. Students will effectively evaluate and interpret their work. This evaluation and interpretation will be informed by a working knowledge of the historical and contemporary theories of documentary production.

### **Required Supplies:**

1. Stereo Headphones
2. Personal Hard Drive (USB 3.0)

### **Weekly Outline:** (Subject to Change, Expand, Contract)

#### Week 1

Course Introduction

Capturing Reality: The Art of Documentary (97 mins) (online)

Discuss: A) What is Documentary? B) What is not a Documentary?

Assignment: Watch A Documentary

#### Week 2

Discuss: Interview Composition, Lighting, Sound

Discuss: Project 2, Legalities, Release Forms

#### Week 3

Demo: Interview Composition, Lighting, Sound

View: Freedom of Expression: Resistance & Repression in the Age of Intellectual Property (53 mins) (online)

Week 4

No class on Tuesday  
Practice Shooting Interviews

Week 5

Watch practice interviews  
Introduce Project 1  
View: American Movie (105 mins), Project 1  
Discuss: A) Critical Needs [Characters and Strong Sequences]  
Assignment: Project 1, Documentary Proposal, Worksheet  
View: Interview Assignments Due  
Discuss: A) Developing the Idea

Week 6

View: Supersize Me or Bowling for Columbine  
Discuss: Narrative Structure, Scripts and Editing  
Assignment: Narrative Structure Outline Discussion  
Lab: Partial Work Day

Week 7

Lab: One-on-One Project Meetings – Proposals Due  
Lab: Partial Word Day

Week 8

View: What Would Jesus Buy? (91 mins) or similar style  
Discuss: A) Using Music in the Documentary  
Assignment: Discussion worksheet  
Lab: Partial Work Day

Week 9

Spring Break

Week 10

View: Ken Burns Documentary  
Discuss: Historical Documentary, Ken Burns Effect, etc.  
Lab: Partial Work Day

Week 11

View: The War Room  
Discuss: Cinema Verite  
Lab: Partial Work Day

Week 12

No Class – gone to conference

Week 13:

Project 1 Due/Screening Day 1  
Project 1 Due/Screening Day 2

Week 14

View: Body Song (78 mins) or other Experimental Documentary  
Discuss: A) Experimental Documentary B) Interactive Multimedia Documentary

Lab: Partial Work Day

Week 15

Project 2 Work Days

Week 16

Final Project Work Day

View Final Project Critique Day #1

Week 17

View Final Project Critique Day #2 – Monday, May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2:45-4:45

**Brief Project Descriptions**

1. Interview Project: Students will plan and produce a 1-2 minute nonfiction interview complete with appropriate B-roll and brief script. You will receive a detailed handout.
2. Documentary Production: Students will produce a 5-12 minute original documentary work. This work must be submitted to at least one exhibition opportunity (it does not have to be accepted). You will write critically about your work. You will receive a detailed handout.

**Assignment Policy:**

**Late assignments will not be accepted.** Students are responsible for all course materials, including, but not limited to: class lectures, handouts, textbook reading assignments, projects, labs, and quizzes. Assignments and due dates may be changed at the instructor's discretion with fair notice to students. Please see the attached tentative course schedule for specific assignments and due dates.

**Attendance Policy:** Students are expected to attend class regularly. Three absences are allowed. The fourth absence will lower the final grade by one letter. The fifth will lower the final grade by two letters. On the sixth absence, the student must drop or s/he will fail the course. If a student must be absent the day a presentation/project or exam is scheduled, s/he must notify the instructor prior to class time. No make-ups will be given if the instructor is not given a legitimate excuse before the time of the assignment due date. Students who are excessively late to class will be counted as absent.

Last day to drop without a grade: 1/31/2019

Last day to drop the course: 4/5/2019

**Grading:**

|                               |     |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Interview Practice Assignment | 10% |
| Interview Project             | 30% |
| Final Project                 | 40% |
| Final Project Paper           | 10% |
| Lab Assignments               | 10% |

**Grading Scale:** A= 94-100%; A- = 90-93%; B+= 87-89%; B= 83-86%; B- =80-82%; C+=77-79; C=73-76%; C-=70-72%; D+=67-69%; D=63-66%; D-=60-62% F= Below 60%

**Electronic Device Policy:**

Do not use cellular phones or other electronic devices (i.e. social media) during class instruction time. In addition, students are asked to use classroom computers for class work only. The use of any electronic device during an exam or quiz will result in an immediate "F" for that assignment.

**Email Notification:**

The instructor may send information to students through the campus computer system. Therefore, students **MUST** check their UWSP campus email on a regular basis. The instructor will post information on D2L as well. Students must check D2L regularly.

**Americans with Disabilities Act Statement:**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal law requiring educational institutions to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information about UWSP's policies, check here:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/ADA/rightsADAPolicyInfo.pdf>

If you have a disability and require classroom and/or exam accommodations, please register with the Disability and Assistive Technology Center and then contact me at the beginning of the course. I am happy to help in any way that I can. For more information, please visit the Disability and Assistive Technology Center, located on the 6th floor of the Learning Resource Center (the Library). You can also find more information here: <http://www4.uwsp.edu/special/disability/>

**University Handbook Statement:**

UWSP values a safe, honest, respectful, and inviting learning environment. In order to ensure that each student has the opportunity to succeed, we have developed a set of expectations for all students and instructors. This set of expectations is known as the *Rights and Responsibilities* document, and it is intended to help establish a positive living and learning environment at UWSP. Click here for more information:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Pages/rightsandresponsibilities.aspx>

Academic integrity is central to the mission of higher education in general and UWSP in particular. Academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, etc.) is taken very seriously. Don't do it! The minimum penalty for a violation of academic integrity is a failure (zero) for the assignment. For more information, see the UWSP "Student Academic Standards and Disciplinary Procedures" section of the *Rights and Responsibilities* document, Chapter 14, which can be accessed here: <http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/SRR-2010/rightsChap14.pdf>