

SM4713: DOCUMENTARY II

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Documentary II

Subject Code

SM - School of Creative Media

Course Number

4713

Academic Unit

School of Creative Media (SM)

College/School

School of Creative Media (SM)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

SM1006 Documentary or SM2719 Documentary I

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

SM2229 Documentary Production

Part II Course Details

Abstract

As a follow-up course of SM1006/SM2719, this course aims to introduce the first experience of independent documentary making. Many great filmmakers began with documentary as the form is not limited by various industry rules and

requirement for investment. Students will be guided through each step in the making of a 20-30 minutes documentary, from preliminary research, to production plan, to actual shooting, to editing and test screening. As students need to deal with different subjects living in various socio-cultural conditions, they are encouraged to take up the challenge of establishing a comfortable and positive relationship between their camera and their subject(s), and, to explore various techniques of effective documentation when the use of camera is limited. Methods of material organization and narrative streaming are introduced to prepare students for future work in the making of non-fiction works.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	To identify a theme of interest, subject(s) for shooting, and a filmable process or event within the semester;	25	x	x	
2	To follow the subject and the identified process or event, and to overcome various obstacles in the shooting process;	25	x	x	
3	To discover important questions raised from the shooting process, subject behavior, and/or unexpected occurring;	25	x	x	
4	To demonstrate the strength in organizing disconnected materials into a relatively complete narrative or innovative work	25	x	x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs		Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Writing and discussion on production plan	To discuss the feasibility of shooting plans and to foresee difficulties to be encountered;	1	12
2	Invite guest directors to share how they take on the matter	To discuss examples moral or ethnic dilemmas occurred during shooting and experiences with private and public spaces;	2	12

3	Close monitor of the editing process will enable the making of decisions	To discuss possible directions from the shot materials and development in the understanding of selected subject/matter;	3	9
4	Screening of students work in class and involve discussions	To explore ways of extending understanding or expression beyond the initial documentation.	4	6

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?	
1	Production plan and on-line reflection	1	25	-	No
2	Shooting reports and footage presentation	2	25	-	No
3	Transcription and paper editing	3	25	-	No
4	Final version screening and discussion	4	25	-	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Minimum Continuous Assessment Passing Requirement (%)

0

Minimum Examination Passing Requirement (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

1. Production Plan and On-line Reflection

Criterion

This assessment will grade on rationality, clarity and fluency of argument and comment. The threshold of 'discovery' lies in a student's ability to negotiate a position that is informed, defensible, and standing on personal insight.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

- Excellent grasp of materials, ability to explain key concepts, assumptions, and debates, demonstrating sound knowledge of the field
- Rich content, exceptional ability to integrate various resources into primary and secondary levels based on demand;
- Design and conduct research which is firmly built on thorough knowledge of existing theoretical frameworks
- Evaluative judgments about existing research and demonstrate application of strong critical thinking skills
- Organization and procedural clarity at the same time demonstrating the importance of the process

Good (B+, B, B-)

- Firm grasp of materials, ability to explain key concepts and assumptions
- Adequate content, strong ability to integrate various resources into primary and secondary levels based on demand;
- Design and conduct research which is built on thorough knowledge of existing theoretical frameworks
- Ability to approach a text or a theme using a variety of theories and analytical tools

Fair (C+, C, C-)

- Comprehensive grasp of materials, able to explain key concepts
- Adequate content, fair ability to integrate various resources into primary and secondary levels based on demand
- Appropriate judgments about existing research
- Weak ability to approach a text or a theme using a variety of theories and analytical tools

Marginal (D)

- Loose grasp of materials, cannot explain key concepts
- Weak content, with primary and secondary levels
- Marginal judgments about existing research
- Poor ability to approach a text or a theme using a variety of theories and analytical tools

Failure (F)

- Poor grasp of materials
- Inadequate content, without primary and secondary levels
- Fail to make reasonable judgments about existing research
- Fail to approach a text or a theme using a variety of theories and analytical tools

Assessment Task

2. Shooting Report and Footage Presentation

Criterion

This assessment will grade on rationality, clarity and fluency of argument and comment. The threshold of ‘discovery’ lies in a student’s ability to negotiate a position that is informed, defensible, and standing on personal insight.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

- Rich content, excellent ability to interpret and integrate various resources
- Well defined and reasoned points of view grounded in insightful interpretation of existing literature
- Readiness to respond to peer opinion and other views initiated in class discussion

Good (B+, B, B-)

- Adequate content, sufficient ability to integrate various resources based on demand
- Clear elaboration of ideas that sticks to the point, with clearly differentiated issues, ability to interpret opinions independently
- Sufficient responses to peer comments to sustain a discussion

Fair (C+, C, C-)

- Adequate content, fair ability to integrate various resources based on demand
- Relevant points made to the subject matter in question
- Ability to respond to other statements and engage in class discussion

Marginal (D)

- Weak content, limited use of resources
- Relevant points to the subject matter, marginal ability to interpret opinions
- Ability to respond to other comments in simple terms

Failure (F)

- Inadequate content, no/ irrelevant use of resources
 - Irrelevant points to the subject matter, no ability to interpret opinions
 - Fail to respond to other comments
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Assessment Task

3. Transcription and Paper Editing

Criterion

This assessment will grade on rationality, clarity and fluency of argument and comment. The threshold of ‘discovery’ lies in a student’ s ability to negotiate a position that is informed, defensible, and standing on personal insight.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

- Work has strong affective quality and the articulation of personal styles and signature
- Work raises questions and instill insights about the process of conception, creative strategization and production
- Efficient adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources

Good (B+, B, B-)

- Work has articulation of personal styles and signature
- Work shows important issues that requires exploration
- Proper adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources

Fair (C+, C, C-)

- Work is relatively complete and comprehensible
- Limited ability to demonstrate creative thinking or exploration
- Fair adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources

Marginal (D)

- Work is not affective at all
- Marginal ability demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration
- Limited adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources

Failure (F)

- No appreciation of the aesthetics and expressive qualities of the medium
 - Fail to create work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration
 - No adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources
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Assessment Task

4. Final Version Screening and Discussion

Criterion

This assessment will grade on rationality, clarity and fluency of argument and comment. The threshold of ‘discovery’ lies in a student’ s ability to negotiate a position that is informed, defensible, and standing on personal insight.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

- Work has strong affective quality and the articulation of personal styles and signature
- Work raises questions and instill insights about the process of conception, creative strategization and production
- Excellent reception from viewers and peers

Good (B+, B, B-)

- Strong exploration and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium
- Ability to create work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration
- Good reception from viewers and peers

Fair (C+, C, C-)

- Basic appreciation and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium
- Limited ability to create work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration
- Fair reception from viewers and peers

Marginal (D)

- Marginal appreciation of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium
- Marginal ability to create work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration
- Poor reception from viewers and peers

Failure (F)

- No appreciation of the aesthetics and expressive qualities of the medium
- Fail to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration
- Very poor reception from viewers and peers

Additional Information for AR

All A+/A/A- grade assignment should comply with the highest performance of Discovery-oriented learning.

Part III Other Information**Keyword Syllabus**

1. Identifying a Valuable Topic: What Should be Documented
2. Around the Corner of Your Life: Finding the Subject
3. Getting to Know Your Subject (I): Human Behaviors in Various Environment
4. Getting to Know Your Subject (II): Creating an Interactive Relationship
5. Getting to Know Your Subject (III): Finding the Motivation and Predicting the Future Actions
6. Establishing the Time in Your Work
7. Establishing the Space in Your Work
8. Make Your Subjects into Memorable Characters
9. Establishing the Timeline of Filming and Editing
10. Representing the Past: How to Turn Past-perfect Actions into Filmable Present-tense Actions
11. The Delicate Matter of Moral Judgment: Private Space and Privacy
12. Techniques in Documentary Editing: Use of Sound and Visual Materials
13. Overall Structure of Your Documentary

Reading List**Compulsory Readings**

	Title
1	Baker, Maxine. Documentary in the Digital Age. Oxford: Focal Press, 2006.
2	Baddeley, W. Hugh. The Technique of Documentary Film Production. London: Focal Press, 1969.
3	Eckhardt, Ned. Documentary Filmmakers Handbook. Jefferson: McFarland, 2012.
4	Hewitt, John and Gustavo Vazquez. Documentary Filmmaking: A Contemporary Film Guide. New York: Oxford UP, 2010.
5	Jolliffe, Genevieve. The Documentary Film Makers Handbook. New York: Continuum, 2006.
6	Rabiger, Michael. Directing the Documentary.
7	Rotha, Paul. Documentary Film: The Use of the Film Medium to Interpret Creatively and in social Terms the Life of the People As It Exists in Reality. London: Faber and Faber, 1952.
8	Ruby, Jay. Picturing Culture. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2000.
9	Stubbs, Liz. Documentary Filmmakers Speak. New York: Allworth Press, 2012.

10	Heycock, David. Paul Watson: Documentary Film Maker/ BBC Television Training. Princeton: Films for the Humanities, 1993.
11	Documentary Filmmaking: Tips form the trenches.

Additional Readings

	Title
1	Nil