



**THE 530.001 Documentary Production, Summer II 2014**  
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**Office Hours: MW Wed. 12-1 pm by appointment**

### **COURSE INFORMATION**

**Text: Documentary Storytelling (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.), Sheila Curran Bernard. ISBN: 978-0-240-81241-0**  
and selected online reading as listed on the course outline: [www.tonydemars.com](http://www.tonydemars.com)

**Course Description:** This course focuses on directing and producing documentaries. Beginning with a historical review of significant documentaries and types, the course helps students use this history and theory to be able to produce a semester-long, professional quality documentary project. A combination of workshops and screenings will supplement discussions and analysis to help students understand the difference in storytelling techniques of documentaries compared to narrative films, while also appreciating aspects of film structure that pertain to both documentary and narrative. (For Summer II 2014 this is a web enhanced class, with selected meeting times)

**Student Learning Outcomes--**Through readings, instruction, practice, and projects, students will:

1. Develop or improve skills in basic video technology and operation of cameras, audio, lighting and other television production equipment;
2. Achieve critical appreciation for the aesthetics of sound and image production;
3. Achieve a high level of literacy in the “language” of film and video, including shot composition and continuity editing;
4. Develop or improve skills in digital nonlinear postproduction; and
5. Gain a greater understanding of writing and storytelling in non-narrative visual productions.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**Grading policies:**

**Projects:** The class is organized to introduce students to techniques for single camera (film style) video shooting and editing. Each student will do required pre-production work as dictated by project work, then submit rough cut and fine cut content based on project guidelines. Assigned work not turned in on time will be late regardless of the reason—it is your responsibility to meet the deadline regardless of technical or other problems. Carefully read and follow the project directions for each student’s individual work. Projects require submission of scripts and/or storyboards, shooting and editing, in-class presentations and discussion, and/or arranging of guests. Missing any part of a project will affect the final project grade. Scripts must be submitted complete, typed, and in the assigned format to be counted as being submitted. **You must work alone when shooting or editing, except when specifically approved in project directions by the instructor or as specified by a particular component of the project.** You are also graded based on editing training and skills. Students will work in teams of about three, but each student must contribute his/her own individual work as part of the group production. Topic: “How City Government Works in Texas,” or “How School Districts Operate in Texas.”

**PROJECT STEPS:**

**Step 1** – Each student will come in for initial shooting training sessions, then initial Final Cut Pro training sessions, or proficiency exams. Students with previous shooting and editing experience must schedule a FCP training exemption test BEFORE the first training session is scheduled, or must attend training. Everyone must do shooting training. Each training session late arrival and/or applied demerit for lack of involvement causes a letter grade course grade reduction.

**Step 2** – Each student researches and scripts material related to their assigned component of the project. Your group will determine 3-4 main topic areas that would be 2-3 pages of scripted content per topic area. Individuals write their segment of the complete production, then the Lead Producer coordinates merging the segments into an initial draft of a program script. Students then create shot lists and interview scripts to guide gathering of raw footage.

**Step 3** – Each student shoots meeting, interview and b-roll footage guided by completed scripts. Raw footage must be done as assigned, shooting sequences and without zooms and pans.

**Step 4** – The Lead Producer will work with the team to evaluate footage and create an Edit Decision List. Using the EDL, the team will work together to fine tune the original program script, then select voice-over talent to record the narration. Narration will be recorded while sound bites are selected to create a skeleton of the full program.

**Step 5** – Students **must work together** to assemble the rough cut by 5 pm 7/25. All members of the team must be present and participating in the editing process. The rough cut must be uploaded and the URL sent to Tony.DeMars@tamuc.edu.

**Step 6** – Students **must work together** to create or acquire copyright-legal music to score the production and clean up issues noted by the review of the rough cut. The fine cut must be uploaded by 5 pm 8/7 and the URL sent to Tony.DeMars@tamuc.edu.

**Exams:** A mid term and final exam, each consisting of approximately 50% short-answer and/or multiple choice/True-False content and 50% discussion questions. Keep notes and accumulate knowledge of what we cover in order to be prepared for the exams. No make-up exams given except in a dire emergency and then only if the instructor is contacted in advance; no make-up is possible for the Final. Documentation verifying the cause of the absence would be required; make-up format would include fill in the blank, listing and essay. Test dates are listed on the outline; plan accordingly. Quizzes at each class meeting will ask discussion questions that can only be answered if you have read the assigned material. You are expected to have read assigned chapters before the day they are to be discussed in class--see the course outline. These quizzes will be averaged and count 20% of the course grade. You cannot miss class meetings in a web-enhanced summer session class: once you have missed more than a bare minimum of hours, your participation grade will be reduced by 20 points for each additional hour missed.

**Grade evaluation:**

Mid Term and Final Exams.....(200 pts. each).....	400
Individual Grade Evaluation for Project.....	200
Participation and Attendance Grade.....	100
Graduate Student Final Evaluation Paper.....	100
Reading Quiz Grade.....	100
Final Project Grade.....	100

**Points required for:**

"A"—900+    "B"—800-899    "C"—700-799    "D"—600-699

## COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

### **Faculty / Student Commitment:**

- To accomplish the course objectives, the instructor will be in class on time, and prepared to guide each student's learning. Students should also be in class on time, committed to benefiting from the class time by being prepared, arriving on time, and staying involved the full class time.
- If at any time you are doing your part to do well in this course, but are having difficulty, please arrange a time and speak with me in my office. I cannot discuss your course status, grades or other information about your work or activities in the course just before class, during class time (including breaks), or immediately after class—nor can I discuss or respond to any of these issues via phone or e-mail.
- The keys to success in this class: Commit to learning the material we cover, read the required reading, take good notes in class and while reading, study the material as we go through it, ask questions in class about things you do not understand, and do the assigned work and turn it in on time.

## COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

**Attendance:** See [www.time.gov](http://www.time.gov) for the correct time—the time that shows on your watch or cell phone may not be accurate. Students arriving late are marked absent. Class begins at the scheduled starting time. Arriving late or leaving at any time, even if you return, will result in being marked absent. There are no excused or unexcused absences. Points related to attendance are based on missing in-class work as noted above, plus deductions of 10 points each time from your participation grade starting with the 4<sup>th</sup> hour late / absence. Excuse reports are not required for this class except as noted above. If you have an emergency reason to arrive late or leave early you should discuss this with the instructor in advance. Note: Very occasionally, an emergency break might be needed. If this occurs, feel free to leave without penalty, and simply remind me to mark it at the end of that class. If you do not remind me that day, it would remain marked as an absence. You should expect to have no more than one of these per semester. The participation grade is the instructor's subjective assessment of each student's involvement and contribution during class times--affected by but not limited to such issues as violating stated course policies, inappropriate talking during class, disrupting class, late arrivals, and not taking notes during lectures, and improper use of technology in class. Children or other guests are not allowed in classes.

**IMPORTANT: STUDENTS WHO MISS MORE THAN SIX HOURS OF CLASSES MAY FAIL AUTOMATICALLY OR BE DROPPED FROM THE COURSE.**

### **UNIVERSITY ATTENDANCE POLICY**

**13.99.99.R0.01 Class Attendance** – “Students are responsible for learning about and complying with the attendance policy stated in the catalog, Student’s Guidebook, and/or faculty syllabus. Faculty members will provide details on requirements and guidelines for attendance in their classes in their course syllabi.” Students are responsible for reviewing remaining university attendance policy elements.

**Academic Honesty:** If you turn in work that is plagiarized, or take any action that violates TAMU-Commerce Academic Honesty policies, you will fail the course. All TAMU-Commerce students are responsible for knowing the standards of academic honesty. Please refer to the Student's Guide Handbook for the University Academic Honesty Policy. Plagiarism is the use of someone else's work as your own and/or failing to properly cite sources. Work submitted will be checked via an Internet search including [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com) for each submission. Using a report you did not create or having someone else do any of your work violates Academic Honesty guidelines.

**Classroom Policies:** Students are expected to keep up with assigned reading and be prepared to answer questions in class--be sure you have done all required reading by the date noted on the course outline. **IMPORTANT NOTE: Turn off and put away** cell phones before start of class. You may not use any electronic device in the classroom without specific permission from the instructor through a signed form provided by the instructor—**READ IT CLOSELY**. Any electronic device (computer, cell phone, iPad, etc.) brought to class must be turned off and stored off your desktop during class. **EACH TIME** you are found texting, browsing the Internet, Facebooking, etc. **you will lose 50 points from your final course point total. You may use a laptop or tablet computer ONLY for taking class notes—never for browsing, texting, etc.** Students are expected to arrive to class on time and stay the entire class session to be counted present.

**Deadlines:** Work not turned in on time will be late regardless of the reason—it is your responsibility to meet the deadline regardless of technical or other problems. Deadlines are always at the beginning of class in which anything is due, or at other specific times as noted on the course outline. Work submitted incomplete will be marked as not submitted.

**Behavior:** “Students are expected at all times to recognize constituted authority, to conform to the ordinary rules of good conduct, to be truthful, to respect the rights of others, to protect private and public property, and to make the best use of their time toward an education.” -- Texas A&M University System Student Rights and Obligations

“All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment.” (See Student's Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct) -- Texas A&M University-Commerce Procedures, 12.01.99.R0.05 Guidelines for Content and Distribution of Syllabi: Roles and Responsibilities of Faculty

Anyone who persists in disruptive behavior will be permanently removed from class.

A few other words and restatements on classroom behavior:

- No leaving during class, unless ill. Go to the bathroom and/or get a drink before class.
- Take notes. You won't accomplish much by just being here to warm the chair.
- Turn off cell phones and similar devices when you come into class.
- You may bring drinks or food into class, but use good manners while eating or drinking, and remove all trash when you leave. You MAY NOT have food or drinks in the editing

rooms at any time: each time you are found with food or drink beside equipment you lose 50 points from your course grade—if in a group at the equipment, each person loses 50 pts.

- Read chapters in advance. Be prepared to talk about them.

**Changes to syllabus:** I maintain the right to make changes as needed, in my judgment, from the stated plans contained in the syllabus for this class. Such changes will be announced on the course outline and/or to the class.

### **Students with Disabilities:**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

**Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**  
**Gee Library Room 132**  
**Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835 Fax (903) 468-8148**  
**StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu**

**EARLY INTERVENTION FOR FIRST YEAR STUDENTS:** Early intervention for freshmen is designed to communicate the University's interest in their success and a willingness to participate fully to help students accomplish their academic objectives. The university through faculty advisors and mentors will assist students who may be experiencing difficulty to focus on improvement and course completion. This process will allow students to be knowledgeable about their academic progress early in the semester and will provide faculty and staff with useful data for assisting students and enhancing retention. Grade reports will be mailed by the end of the sixth week of the semester.

**COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR – more detail at [www.tonydemars.com](http://www.tonydemars.com)**

The Course Outline is listed on the course web site, found at:  
<http://www.tonydemars.com> ~ OR ~ <http://faculty.tamuc.edu/tdemars/>

**Graduate student final evaluation paper guidelines will be provided at the online site.**

**NOTE: You must check this site weekly.** It will contain study reviews, information on reading, links to some online reading and other material available to support your work in this class.

**THIS SYLLABUS IS YOUR CONTRACT FOR HOW YOU ARE GRADED FOR THIS CLASS:** The course outline for this course is the key to keeping up with the course and accomplishing the objectives stated above. You will find important information related to the materials we cover week to week. Set aside specific times in your schedule to do the assigned reading, using the course outline as a guide to some of the major terms, ideas, and deadlines. If the course outline shows under Week 1 that you are to have read Chapter 1 and 2, that means read and take notes and learn from that chapter BEFORE coming to class.