



THE 530.001 Documentary Production, Spring 2017

Dr. Tony DeMars

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COURSE INFORMATION

Text: Documentary Storytelling (4th ed.), Sheila Curran Bernard. ISBN: 978-0-415-84330-0
and selected online reading as listed on the course outline: 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 reading to help the student to 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. Expository, observational and other approaches will be explored.

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 further students’ skills in the techniques of 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.

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. Each training session late arrival and/or lack of involvement causes a letter grade course grade reduction.

Step 2 – Each student researches and scripts material related to their assigned documentary project. After consultation with the professor and selection of documentary approach and topic, students write their own script. Students then create and submit shooting schedules, shot lists and interview scripts to guide gathering of raw footage.

Step 3 – Each student shoots coverage, 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 –Using an EDL, the student will work 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 assemble and submit the rough cut by 5 pm 4/7. The rough cut must be uploaded and the URL sent to Tony.DeMars@tamuc.edu, followed by a review/critique meeting.

Step 6 – Students must work to create or acquire copyright-legal music to score the production, add professional quality graphics and clean up issues noted by the review of the rough cut. The fine cut must be uploaded by 5 pm 4/21 and the URL sent to Tony.DeMars@tamuc.edu.

Exams: Sectional exams including mid term and final exam, each consisting of short-answer and/or multiple choice/True-False content and discussion questions. 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. You are expected to have read assigned chapters by each assigned date.

Grade evaluation:

Mid Term and Final Exams.....(200 pts. each).....	400
Sections 1 and 3 Exam grades.....(100 each).....	200
Documentary Project Scripting & Pre-Production.....	100
10-minute Documentary Project production.....	200
Graduate Level Final Evaluation Paper.....	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 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 20 points each time from your participation grade starting with the 4th 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. 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 for each submission. Using a report you did not create or having someone else do any of your work violates Academic Honesty guidelines.

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

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

COURSE EVALUATION APPEAL: Students with concerns regarding their courses should first address those concerns with the instructor in order to reach a resolution. Students who are unsatisfied with the outcome of that conversation or have not been able to meet individually with their instructor, whether in-person, by email, by telephone, or by another communication medium, should then schedule an appointment with the Department Head or Assistant Department Head by completing a Student Grievance Form (available in the main office, HL 141). Students should also consult University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.05 (“Student Appeal of Instructor Evaluation”).

CAMPUS CONCEALED CARRY STATEMENT: Campus Concealed Carry - Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to (<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedure/s/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>) and/or consult your event organizer). Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR – located at www.tonydemars.com
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