N485
Video For Social Change
Spring 2015

Media Arts and Science / Department of Human-Centered Computing
Indiana University School of Informatics and Computing, Indianapolis

Section: 13462
Credits: 3
Time: Thursday 3:00-5:40 PM
Location: IT 270, Informatics & Communications Technology Complex
          535 West Michigan Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202
First Class: January 15, 2014

Instructor: C. Thomas Lewis, MFA (Film)
Office: IT 473
        535 West Michigan Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202
Hours: Tuesday, 2:00-4:00, or by Appointment
Phone: (317) 278-3799 (Office)
Email: lewisct@iupui.edu

Prereqs: N253 (Recommended N353)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will have two primary components: It will explore various theories of documentary filmmaking including screenings of several important documentaries, and students will work with outside non-profits to create video materials for their cause or students will elect to make a documentary about a cause or controversy. Students will be required to produce finished videos for their assigned client and a series of short analyses of documentary films.

Required Texts:

**Title:** Introduction to Documentary, Second Edition
**Author:** Bill Nichols
**ISBN:** 0253222605
**Copyright:** 2010
**Publisher:** Indiana University Press

Available: [http://www.amazon.com/Introduction-Documentary-
           Second-Edition-Nichols/dp/0253222605](http://www.amazon.com/Introduction-Documentary-
           Second-Edition-Nichols/dp/0253222605)
**Teaching and Learning Methods:**

Readings and discussions of documentary theory  
Screenings of 15 feature documentaries  
Writing assignments applying theory to films screened  
Screenings of prior VFSC student films  
Creating two videos for non-profits  
Demonstrations of various tools for documentary filmmaking  
Demonstrations of production and post-production workflow practices  
Critiques of student work at various milestones

**Learning Outcomes:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Upon completion of this course, students will</th>
<th>PUL*</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. comprehend and have applied methods of effective storytelling in the planning and execution of documentary films. (2,3)*</td>
<td>A, B</td>
<td>The artistry, organization, logic and intelligibility evident in both pre-production and in final films</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. have developed proficiency with the tools and technology of film production (3)</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>The production values evident in the students’ final films</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. gained an understanding of and applied concepts of visual literacy as they pertain to relating information. (2,3)</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>The awareness of and sensitivity to the ethical considerations of representation as evident in their films and in discussions of the readings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. comprehend and demonstrate competency in aspects of pre-production, production and post-production of documentary films. (2,3)</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>The production values evident in the students’ final films</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Number indicates category in Bloom’s Taxonomy of cognitive domains.  
*See Below

**Principles of Undergraduate Learning (PULs):**

Learning outcomes are assessed in the following areas:

- **Major Emphasis**
  - A. Core communication: written, oral and visual skills  
  - B. Integration and application of knowledge
- **Minor Emphasis**
  - C. Values and Ethics

Please visit [http://www.iport.iupui.edu/selfstudy/tl/puls/](http://www.iport.iupui.edu/selfstudy/tl/puls/) to learn more.
Teaching Objectives:

• To teach creative methods of documentary video.
• To provide an opportunity for students to work with outside non-profits in the creation of video materials.
• To thoroughly experience the requirements of pre-production, production and post-production as put into practice making documentary/corporate videos.
• To give advanced experience of the tools involved in video production: cameras, lights, grip equipment, microphones and editing & presentation software.
• To give exposure to the theories and discourse surrounding documentary filmmaking.
• To give exposure to key documentary films
• To give a foundational understanding of the history of documentary film.

Core Technical Competencies:

• How to work with organizations to assess their video needs.
• How to successfully plan and fulfill the video needs of a client.
• How to create a documentary that addresses a cause or controversy
• How to record production audio
• How to work with tapeless video acquisition
• How to operate the tools involved in video production: lights, grip equipment, microphones and monitors.
• How to think and write about documentary theory.

Software used:
Avid Media Composer, Adobe After Effects, Adobe Premiere

Class supplies:

• Blank Blu-ray Discs/Cases
• External Fire Wire Hard Drive – 100-150 GB minimum
• Headphones (for editing in lab)
• Leather work gloves for handling lights

EXPECTATIONS, GUIDELINES, AND POLICIES

Attendance:
The success of the course depends on the consistent attendance of everyone. Genuine reasons like medical concerns will be taken into consideration with proper doctor certification. Attendance will be taken
at the beginning of the class and possibly at the end. You are expected to be in your seat by the minute class starts. Three (3) absences will result in the lowering of your class grade by one letter grade. Any student absent for four (4) classes will fail the course. Two tardies or early departures count as an absence. Any student arriving late/leaving early consistently without a valid reason will be docked a letter grade. If you miss a class, it becomes your responsibility to get any notes from a classmate.

Two tardies or early departures count as an absence.
1-15 minutes late is a tardy, after 15 min it is an absence.
Leaving 15 minutes (or less) early is an early departure.
Leaving more than 15 minutes early it is an absence.
Any student arriving late/leaving early consistently without a valid reason will be docked a letter grade. If you miss a class, it becomes your responsibility to get any notes from a classmate. Do not ask me.

Incomplete:
The instructor may assign an Incomplete (I) grade only if at least 75% of the required coursework has been completed at passing quality and holding you to previously established time limits would result in unjust hardship to you. All unfinished work must be completed by the date set by the instructor. Left unchanged, an Incomplete automatically becomes an F after one year. http://registrar.iupui.edu/incomp.html

Deliverables:
You are responsible for completing each deliverable (e.g., assignment, quiz) by its deadline and submitting it by the specified method. Deadlines will be presented in class and/or supplementary documents accessible through OnCourse. Should you miss a class, you are still responsible for completing the deliverable and for finding out what was covered in class, including any new or modified deliverable. In fairness to the instructor and students who completed their work on time, a grade on a deliverable shall be reduced 25%, if it is submitted late and a further 10% for each 24-hour period it is submitted after the deadline.

Exams/quizzes:
- There could be quizzes, surprise and otherwise.
- Quizzes will happen at the beginning of class. There will be no extensions for lateness and no make-ups for absences.
• There will be no grade change unless there is a proof of mathematical miscalculation.
• Facebook Quizzes. When a student is found to be using the Internet, email or texting during class, everyone will be required to take a “Facebook Quiz.” This quiz can include questions on any topic in the world. It is not limited to motion graphics questions. It will be worth 50 points.

Class Assignments:
Assignments include short analyses of the films screened in class, milestones regarding the creation of the client videos, and peer reviews of each production.

Participation:
You earn 3 points toward your class participation grade for every class you attend. You will be docked 1 point for every tardy and 1 point for every early departure. Points missed for an absence will not be reinstated if the absence is excused.

All students are expected to participate by answering questions, asking questions and actively discussing projects during lecture. Students are expected to participate in the film shoots, and to vary the capacity in which they work. Your active participation is crucial for class morale. See further information about class participation under Grading Information.

Grading Information:
Fifty percent will be based on the grades received for the videos you have worked on, which includes the various milestones. Thirty percent of your grade will be based on your film analyses. Class participation/attendance is worth 10% and quiz/test grades make up the balance, 10%. Class participation refers to the frequency AND quality of your contributions as seen in your presentation of ideas, your contribution to discussions, your enthusiasm to participate with the hands-on aspects of production. (As well as the points discussed in the section above.)

In order to determine the level and quality of work outside of class, everyone is required to maintain and submit a logbook of the time they have dedicated to the videos produced in this course. Each entry needs to be about half a page long and relate what you and your crew did on that day, what issues were encountered and how they were overcome, and whether you feel each pulled their own weight. Also
note the time spent and the total time spent for various tasks. You will not receive a grade for your films until I receive your logbook.

I will not accept ANY assignments after 1 week following the original due date. Class ends at 5:40, you have until 5:40 the following week to submit a late assignment and still get a small amount of credit.