

FIRST YEAR SEMINAR COURSE PROPOSAL
UNIVERSITY OF MARY WASHINGTON

Use this form to submit **FSEM 100 topics** courses for review **or any other existing course** that you wish to have designated to meet the first year seminar requirement.

COURSE NUMBER:	FSEM 100		
COURSE TITLE:	Documentary Filmmaking: Its Rhetoric and Production		
SUBMITTED BY:	Anand Rao	DATE:	9/12/2008
<i>This course proposal has the department's approval. (Put a check in the box to the right.)</i>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

NOTE: Click on the link for “first year seminar” at www.jtmorello.org/gened to see the criteria used to evaluate courses proposed to meet the first year seminar requirement. See the report entitled “General Education Curriculum as Approved by the Faculty Senate” for additional details.

COURSE DESCRIPTION. In the space below, provide a one to two sentence description of this class. The description will be entered in Banner, and will also be used in other publications about the first year seminar program (such as the “Eagle Essentials” booklet).

In this class, students will study documentary filmmaking and produce a documentary about a local social problem. The class will also discuss the use of documentaries to reflect, shape, and alter public argument and discussion.

RATIONALE. Using only the space provided in the box below, **briefly** state why this course should be approved as a first year seminar course.

Students in this course will have the opportunity to develop and employ analytical skills in the study and production of documentary film. This seminar will be discussion based, and include individual and group presentations scheduled throughout the semester. The model for the course will be to limit lecturing, instead relying upon student presentations of the readings and films, followed by discussion led by student leaders. In preparation for each presentation, students will meet with the instructor outside of class to prepare their material and question set, and instruction will be given in class to help students develop their presentation and communication skills.

Through the production of a documentary about a local social problem, the class will explore multiple means of research and information retrieval, from academic research to interviewing. Once researched, the class will develop a narrative about the social issue, drawn from the sources and materials gathered. The class will have primary editorial control over the final video product, which will be presented at the ELC Department’s Kemp Symposium for students.

SYLLABUS. Attach a course syllabus.

SUBMIT this form and attached syllabus **electronically as one document** to Warren Rochelle (wrochell@umw.edu) or Maya Mathur (mmathur@umw.edu). All submissions **must** be in electronic form.

FSEM 100: Documentary Filmmaking: Its Rhetoric and Production
Spring 2009 (adapted from syllabus used in Spring 2008)

Tuesday/Thursday
Anand Rao , Instructor
Office: 315 Combs Hall
Office hours:
Tuesday/Thursday, 10-11am
Monday, 2-3pm

114 Combs Hall
Office: 540-654-1546
E-mail: arao@umw.edu
Cell: 540-207-1465
AIM: panandrao

Texts. We will make extensive use of Representing Reality: Issues and Concepts in Documentary by Bill Nichols (Indiana University Press; 1991), available in the bookstore. Additional readings will be available on Blackboard. All non-print titles are available in the Media Library on the 2nd floor of Combs Hall.

Goals. We will study some of the methods used by documentary filmmakers to reflect, shape, and alter public argument and discussion. Building on their understanding of the rhetoric of documentary film, students will work together to produce their own short documentary about an issue of local concern.

Mechanics of the Course and Attendance Policy. As a seminar, this course is discussion based, meaning that lecturing by the instructor will be kept to a minimum, and class discussion will be optimized, in hopes of giving the student the opportunity to repeatedly practice some of the principles we learn about. As class participation is the model of class interaction, it is imperative students not miss class and that they are fully prepared for class discussion, including completing readings and watching the assigned films outside of class. Roll will be taken daily and will be factored into your class participation grade. Presentation days are of special significance, and it is expected that you will be present to act as an audience member for your classmates, even when you are not scheduled to present. Failure to attend during presentations, or failure to present, may result in the lowering of that project grade by one full letter grade. If you find that you will be missing class during a presentation day, notify the instructor immediately.

Blackboard will be used to distribute class assignments and supplemental readings, and discussion boards will be used to coordinate group work outside of class. Treat one another with respect, turn off your cell phones and be active.

Final grades will be based upon the following:

Individual Documentary Projects (5%) Your short video (you select the topic) will be presented to the class for feedback.

Leading class discussion (15%) Working with a partner, you will give a short presentation (approx 5 minutes for each of you) about the selected reading, distribute a one page handout outlining the article's main arguments, and will then lead class discussion about that topic.

Reaction comments (10%) You will turn in two one-page reaction papers, responding to a reading assigned for class discussion. You may choose which readings you respond to,

though you may not respond to one for which you are leading discussion. Papers are due at the beginning of that reading's class, and will not be accepted late.

Movie Analysis and Presentation (20%) You will analyze the rhetorical effectiveness of a documentary film you select. The paper should be approx. 2-3 pages in length. You will also present that film, and your analysis, to the class.

Documentary Film Project – UMW 24/7 (30%) We will work as a class to document the University's Centennial Celebrations this semester. The class will break into smaller teams to work on different components of the project, and will then come together to unify those elements into a finished product. This project will include grades for small group work, peer assessment, as well as for work as a class on the final project.

Documentary Project Analysis (10%) – You will analyze the effectiveness of the film project, as well as look at its preparation and production.

Class participation (10%) Based upon active involvement in class discussion and participation as an audience member during presentations.

As stated in the College's Honor Constitution, "the Honor System at Mary Washington College is a deeply cherished tradition founded upon the personal integrity of each individual member of the College community. It requires that all members of this community conduct themselves honorably at all times and in all dealings with others. This shared commitment to high ethical standards creates an atmosphere of trust and respect vital to the unique sense of community which characterizes the institution." These high standards will be held in this course, and it is expected that students will follow the Honor Code on all class-related work, and will sign the pledge on all work turned in to the instructor. Detailed instructions will be given in class or on the class blog (documw.umwblogs.org), and students are reminded to keep a copy of all work handed in to the instructor.

Tentative Class Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings and Assignment
14-Jan	Course and Self Introductions	
16-Jan	Editing workshop	Meet in 349 Combs Read Video production – editing.pdf
18-Jan	Editing workshop	Meet in 349 Combs
21-Jan	Editing workshop	Meet in 349 Combs
23-Jan	What is Rhetoric?	Rhetorical Visions – What is Rhetoric.pdf
25-Jan	What is Documentary?	When is a documentary.pdf Rhetorical Visions – Documentary genre.pdf
28-Jan	What is Documentary	Nichols.pdf Documentary dilemma.pdf
30-Jan	Individual Film Presentations	
1-Feb	Individual Film Presentations	
4-Feb	UMW 24/7 Planning Session	

6-Feb	UMW 24/7 Planning Session	
8-Feb	Documentary Film Analysis Presentations	
11-Feb	Camera use workshop	
13-Feb	Ethics in Documentary	Ethical concerns.pdf
15-Feb	Editing the Documentary	First cut.pdf
18-Feb	Documentary Filming	long take in documentary.pdf interpretive camera in documentary.pdf
20-Feb	Recording Visual Reality	Rhetoric of Film – visual reality.pdf
22-Feb	Documentary and Photography	Visual communication – red cross.pdf Documentary and the contents of photography.pdf Documentary approach to photography.pdf
25-Feb	Documentary and Photography	
27-Feb	Demo UMW Documentaries	
29-Feb	Documentary Film Analysis Presentations	
3-7-Mar	Spring Break – No Class	
10-Mar	Founders Week – Planning	Planning and Troubleshooting
12-Mar	Founders Week	Update on filming- what worked, and what didn't?
*13-Mar	Great Lives Lecture	Dodd Auditorium
14-Mar	Founders Week	
17-Mar	Documentary Project	
19-Mar	Documentary Film Analysis Presentations	
21-Mar	Editing the Documentary	First cut.pdf
24-Mar	Documentary Filming	long take in documentary.pdf interpretive camera in documentary.pdf
26-Mar	Documentary Film Analysis Presentations	
28-Mar	Editing Project	
31-Mar	Video workshop	349 Combs
2-Apr	Video workshop	349 Combs
4-Apr	Video workshop	349 Combs
7-Apr	Documentary and Photography	Visual communication – red cross.pdf Documentary and the contents of photography.pdf Documentary approach to

		photography.pdf
9-Apr	Documentary and Photography continued	(divide articles with the discussant leaders on April 7 th)
11-Apr	Reality and Documentary	Reality in documentary.pdf
14-Apr	Historical Documentary	History documentary and the ruins of memory.pdf Documentary-history.pdf
16-Apr	Recording Visual Reality	Rhetoric of Film – visual reality.pdf
18-Apr	Documentary Film Analysis Presentations	
21-Apr	ELS Symposium	“UMW 24/7” Presentation
23-Apr	Race and Documentary	White filmmakers and minority subjects.pdf
25-Apr	Documentary Film Analysis Presentations	
2-May Friday Noon-2:30		Final Exam Meeting