

Eastern Illinois University
New/Revised Course Proposal Format
(Approved by CAA on 4/3/14 and CGS on 4/15/14, Effective Fall 2014)

CGS Agenda Item: 18-61
Effective FA18

Banner/Catalog Information (Coversheet)

1. ☒ **New Course** or ☐ **Revision of Existing Course**
2. **Course prefix and number:** CMN 4775
3. **Short title:** Documentary Filmmaking
4. **Long title:** Documentary Filmmaking
5. **Hours per week:** _2_ Class _2_ Lab _3_ Credit
6. **Terms:** ☐ Fall ☐ Spring ☐ Summer ☒ On demand
7. **Initial term:** ☒ Fall ☐ Spring ☐ Summer Year: 2018
8. **Catalog course description:** This course focuses on producing longer-form, reality-based content in a variety of documentary forms. Television programs, promotional video, and independent films all utilize documentary techniques and styles to document social phenomena and to tell visual stories. Discussions, hands-on production exercises, and screenings will prepare students to ethically produce a variety of documentaries.

9. Course attributes:

General education component: _NA_____

☐ Cultural diversity ☐ Honors ☐ Writing centered ☐ Writing intensive
☐ Writing active

10. Instructional delivery

Type of Course:

☐ Lecture ☐ Lab ☒ Lecture/lab combined ☐ Independent study/research
☐ Internship ☐ Performance ☐ Practicum/clinical ☐ Other, specify: _____

Mode(s) of Delivery:

☒ Face to Face ☐ Online ☐ Study Abroad
☐ Hybrid, specify approximate amount of on-line and face-to-face instruction _____

11. Course(s) to be deleted from the catalog once this course is approved. N/A

12. Equivalent course(s):

_N/A_____

a. Are students allowed to take equivalent course(s) for credit? ☐ Yes ☐ No

13. Prerequisite(s): CMN 3050

a. Can prerequisite be taken concurrently? ☐ Yes ☒ No

b. Minimum grade required for the prerequisite course(s)? D

c. Use Banner coding to enforce prerequisite course(s)? ☒ Yes ☐ No

d. Who may waive prerequisite(s)?

☐ No one ☐ Chair ☒ Instructor ☐ Advisor ☐ Other (specify)

14. Co-requisite(s): N/A

15. Enrollment restrictions

a. Degrees, colleges, majors, levels, classes which may take the course: All

b. Degrees, colleges, majors, levels, classes which may not take the course: None

16. Repeat status: ☒ May not be repeated ☐ May be repeated once with credit

17. Enter the limit, if any, on hours which may be applied to a major or minor:

18. Grading methods: ☒ Standard ☐ CR/NC ☐ Audit ☐ ABC/NC

19. Special grading provisions:

☐ Grade for course will not count in a student's grade point average.

☐ Grade for course will not count in hours toward graduation.

☐ Grade for course will be removed from GPA if student already has credit for or is registered in:

☐ Credit hours for course will be removed from student's hours toward graduation if student already has credit for or is registered in:

20. Additional costs to students:

Supplemental Materials or Software N/A

Course Fee ☐ No ☒ Yes - \$40 Explain if yes: Fee is to upkeep production and editing equipment in the Hadwiger Multimedia Lab and allows students access to all production equipment for the semester. This includes all audio and video production equipment and peripherals (e.g., camera mounts, lenses, lights, cables, tripods, microphones, audio capture devices, headphones, boom poles, rechargeable batteries, power adaptors, chargers, cases, etc.). The fee also serves to upkeep the dedicated editing bays and studio monitors in Coleman Hall.

21. Community college transfer:

☐ A community college course may be judged equivalent.

☒ A community college may not be judged equivalent.

Note: Upper division credit (3000+) will not be granted for a community college course, even if the content is judged to be equivalent.

Rationale, Justifications, and Assurances (Part I)

1. X Course is required for the major(s) of Television & Video Production (Documentary & News Area of Specialization)

____ Course is required for the minor(s) of ____

____ Course is required for the certificate program(s) of _____

X Course is used as an elective of Television & Video Production (other Areas of Specialization), Video Production minor, Communication Studies M.A.

2. Rationale for proposal :

Documentary practices are everywhere in television (ex: reality television, game docs, news magazines, docusoaps), video (from corporations, non-profits, universities), and film (both short featurettes and feature length titles). Producers must understand the full palette of representational practices (and the consequences of these practices) to convert actual events in the material world into mediated narratives. This course builds upon the interview and b-roll model introducing students to the video ethnography, diary, participatory, found footage, or experimental. This course has run in the past as a special topics course (CMN 4500) and creative producers, news producers, and persuasive media producers all benefitted from learning about all of the different modes available in documenting reality. This is the type of course that differentiates the EIU production program from other programs and provides a selling point for students considering EIU for documentary and news production.

3. Justifications for (answer N/A if not applicable)

Similarity to other courses: N/A

Prerequisites: CMN 3050: Production II provides the requisite intermediary skill set in creating program objectives, applied media aesthetics, narrative composition, producing and logistics, interviewing, and post-production techniques required for success in CMN 4775.

Co-requisites: N/A

Enrollment restrictions: N/A

Writing active, intensive, centered: N/A

4. General education assurances (answer N/A if not applicable)

General education component: N/A

Curriculum: N/A

Instruction: N/A

Assessment: N/A

5. Online/Hybrid delivery justification & assurances (answer N/A if not applicable)

Online or hybrid delivery justification: N/A

Instruction: N/A

Integrity: N/A

Interaction: N/A

Model Syllabus (Part II)

Please include the following information:

1. CMN 4775: Documentary Filmmaking

2. This course focuses on producing longer-form, reality-based content in a variety of documentary forms. Television programs, promotional video, and independent films all utilize documentary techniques and styles to document social phenomena and to tell visual stories. Discussions, hands-on production exercises, and screenings will prepare students to ethically produce a variety of documentaries.

3. Learning objectives.

After completing this course, students will be able to:

- a. Understand the symbolic practices of various genres of documentary film and video. CT 1-4, WCR 5,6; SL 1; RC 1, 2 [1. Depth of content knowledge]
- b. Produce a series of short documentary videos that convey an intriguing story and are technically strong (composition, editing, lighting, audio, etc.). CT 1-6; WCR 1-7; SL 1-3, 7; QR 1; RC 1-4 [2. Effective critical thinking and problem solving; 4. Advanced scholarship through research or creative activity]
- c. Effectively tell stories in a variety of documentary modes/forms. CT 1-6; WCR 1-7; SL 1-4, 7; RC 1-4 [2. Effective critical thinking & problem solving; 3. Effective oral and written communication; 4. Advanced scholarship through research or creativity]
- d. Critique the documentary process in terms of politics, history, forms, and notions of “truth.” CT 1-6; WCR 5, 6; SL 1-3, 7; RC 1, 2 [1. Depth of content knowledge. 3. Effective oral and written communication]
- e. Refine field-interviewing and observational skills. CT 1-5; WCR 1, 5-7; SL 1-7; RC 1-4 [1. Depth of content knowledge]
- f. Develop insights into their identities as documentary producers, approaching their individual style and form with clarity, rigor, and imagination. CT 1-6; WCR 1, 2, 7; SL 1-3, 7; RC 1 [1. Depth of content knowledge. 2. Effective critical thinking and problem solving]
- g. Critique and evaluate peer projects based on communication goals and symbolic practices CT 1-6; WCR 5, 6; SL 7; RC 1 [1. Depth of content knowledge. 3. Effective oral and written communication]

4. Course content:

Kahana, J. (2016). *The Documentary Film Reader: History, Theory, Criticism*. Oxford University Press.

Supplemental readings provided through learning management system.

5. Weekly outline of content.

Week / Topics	Readings / Assignments
Week 1 Introduction to course.	Screening: <i>This American Life</i> (2009, 23 min.). READINGS DUE: “Some Ways to Think About

Week / Topics	Readings / Assignments
Introduction to documentary. Why make a documentary?	Documentary.” “How Can We Define Documentary Film?”
Week 2 What is meant by representation and “truth” within documentary? Documentary “truth” and representation.	READINGS DUE: “ <i>Documentary Theory and the Issue of Representation</i> ” “ <i>Documentary Language.</i> ” Screening: “ <i>Nanook of the North.</i> ” (1922, 79 min.) Critique/Discussion. READING DUE: “ <i>Defining your Artistic Identity.</i> ”
Week 3 How to conduct a documentary field interview/oral history interview? Field Interviewing. In-class interviewing exercise and shooting.	READINGS DUE: “ <i>Conducting and Shooting Interviews</i> ” “ <i>A Dramaturgical Look at Interviewing.</i> ”
Week 4 Screening & critique. In-class editing exercise Comparing histories in timeline Sources and perspectives	DUE: Oral History Video. (Screening, critique and discussion.)
Week 5 What is diary/reflexive filmmaking in terms of documentary? Diary Screening: Various “diary” shorts/excerpts/student examples. Critique/Discussion. Reflexive Filmmaking	READINGS DUE: “ <i>Autoethnography: Journeys of the Self</i> ” “ <i>Developing Your Story Ideas.</i> ” Screening: <i>Hip-Hop: Beyond Rhythm and Beats (Documentary, 2006, 60 min).</i> (Film Critique and Discussion.)
Week 6 What is meant by participatory or collaborative documentary filmmaking? Participatory/Collaborative Filmmaking	Screening: “ <i>The War Tapes</i> ” (2006, 97 min.). READINGS DUE: “ <i>Unreasonable Doubt: Using Video Documentary to Promote Justice</i> ” “ <i>Proposing and Pitching a Short Documentary.</i> ”
Week 7 What is meant by Observational/ Cinéma-Vérité and/or direct cinema? Cinéma-Vérité	Screening: “ <i>Titicut Follies</i> ” (1967, 84 min.). (Screening and Critique.) READING DUE: “ <i>Direct Cinema and Cinéma Vérité, 1960-1970</i> ” “ <i>Fact and Truth.</i> ” DUE: Final Project Proposal Presentations
Week 8 Observational Project Screening/Critique	Screening: <i>Cocksucker Blues</i> (1972, 93 min.).

Week / Topics	Readings / Assignments
	<p>READING DUE: “<i>Sounds Real: Music and Documentary</i>”</p> <p>DUE: Observational/Cinéma-Vérité Video.</p>
<p>Week 9 What is meant by experimental documentary/ethnography? Experimental Documentary/Ethnography.</p>	<p>Screening: Orson Welles - <i>F for Fake</i> (1975, 88 min.).</p> <p>READINGS DUE: “<i>Introduction to Experimental Ethnography.</i>”</p> <p>“<i>Video and Resistance: Against Documentaries.</i>”</p>
<p>Week 10 Found Footage Video & media archives Creative commons Usage rights</p>	<p>Screening: Tracey Moffatt - “<i>Artist</i>” (1999)</p> <p>READINGS DUE: “<i>Ecstatic Ethnography: Filming Possession Rituals</i>” “<i>Archival Apocalypse: Found Footage as Ethnography</i>”</p>
<p>Week 11 Screening of the Experimental Documentary Project Documentary storytelling/narrative structure</p>	<p>DUE: Experimental Documentary Project.</p> <p>Screening: “<i>Hearts and Minds</i>” (1974)</p> <p>READINGS DUE: “<i>Story Basics</i>” “<i>Finding the Story</i>” “<i>Story Structure.</i>” “<i>Editing the Documentary.</i>”</p>
<p>Week 12 Essential Documentaries Part 1 Social structures History in retrospect</p>	<p>Screening: “<i>Hoop Dreams</i>” (1994)</p>
<p>Week 13 Essential Documentaries Part 2 Understanding place and space</p>	<p>Screening: “<i>Encounters at the End of the World</i>” (2007)</p> <p>In-class spatial exposition exercise</p>
<p>Week 14 In-class editing/screening and critique of works in progress</p>	<p>Due: Finished assembly edit and artist statement for final project.</p>
<p>Week 15 Screening and critique of the Final Projects</p>	<p>DUE: Final Project. Screening/Project Critique.</p>
<p>Week 16 Going public</p>	<p>Departmental screening of final projects.</p>

6. Assignments and evaluation, including weights for final course grade.

Short Video Projects (3 videos at 15% each = 45%)

These three short documentaries will demonstrate your knowledge of the concepts discussed in class and will allow the development of your own artistic style. The projects entail the observational/ cinéma vérité video, oral history video, and experimental documentary.

Final Project (35%)

This entails a 7-8 minute documentary video on a topic of your choosing. The style of documentary is open ended (however, “mockumentary” filmmaking is not allowed). You can interview friends or family for the final project, however, you should strongly consider embracing the broader community and larger social issues. Consider working with community based organizations, community groups, etc. This project must be completed in pairs, although it must be clearly articulated who did what. In the end, this project must have a strong story and it must be visually interesting. The final project can build upon an earlier video assignment in the course or it can be a completely new project.

Final Project Proposal/Pitch (5%)

You will create a one-page final project proposal and this project will be pitched to the class. This project must be approved before shooting begins.

Participation/Attendance (15%)

Attendance is absolutely vital for success in this course due to the hands on nature of documentary production. This includes frequent in-class micro productions and simulating documentary methods.

For Graduate-level credit:

To receive graduate-level credit for the course, students must complete all of the above projects (at the same point level) but also include research-driven supplemental reports along with all four of their video projects. For each of the short-form video project (Observational / cinéma vérité video, oral history video, experimental documentary) graduate students will provide a three page report mapping the classic theoretical underpinnings of the movements as well as contemporary thoughts on the movement. Each report will require multiple academic sources as well as references to multiple works from the genre as examples. For their final project, graduate students will write a five to seven page prospectus and artist goals statement. In a manner that mirrors the prospectus for the creative thesis in the Communication Studies M.A., students will detail the communication phenomenon they wish to document and provide a current synopsis of scholarship on the phenomenon. They will cite multiple academic sources to map the current conversation as well as multiple video, televisual, and filmic works in order to situate their final project. These added projects promote investment into the academic field of television, video, and film and will yield at least 15 pages of written content supported by multiple academic articles and external viewings.

7. Grading scale.

90%-100%	= A
80% - 89.9%	= B
70% - 79.9%	= C
60% - 69.9%	= D
0 – 59.9%	= F

8. Correlation of undergraduate [U] and graduate [G] learning objectives to assignments and evaluation.

Learning Objectives	Short Documentaries (cinéma vérité, oral history & experimental) 45%	Long-form documentary 35%	Final proposal / pitch 5%	Attendance 15%
Understand the symbolic practices of various genres of documentary film and video. CT 1-4, WCR 5,6; SL 1; RC 1, 2 [Depth of content knowledge]	U G	U G	U G	U G
Produce a series of short documentary videos that convey an intriguing story and are technically strong (composition, editing, lighting, audio, etc.). CT 1-6; WCR 1-7; SL 1-3, 7; QR 1; RC 1-4 [2. Effective critical thinking and problem solving; 4. Advanced scholarship through research or creative activity]	U G	G	G	
Effectively tell stories in a variety of documentary modes/forms. CT 1-6; WCR 1-7; SL 1-4, 7; RC 1-4 [2. Effective critical thinking & problem solving; 3. Effective oral and written communication; 4. Advanced scholarship through research or creativity]	U G	U G	U G	
Critique the documentary process in terms of politics, history, forms, and notions of “truth.” CT 1-6; WCR 5, 6; SL 1-3, 7; RC 1, 2 [1. Depth of content knowledge. 3. Effective oral and written communication]	U G	U G	U G	U G
Refine field-interviewing and observational skills. CT 1-5; WCR 1, 5-7; SL 1-7; RC 1-4 [1. Depth of content knowledge]	U G	U G		U
Develop insights into their identities as documentary producers, approaching their individual style and form with clarity, rigor, and imagination. CT 1-6; WCR 1, 2, 7; SL 1-3, 7; RC 1 [1. Depth of content knowledge. 2. Effective critical thinking and problem solving]	U G	U G	U G	U G
Critique and evaluate peer projects based on communication goals and symbolic practices CT 1-6; WCR 5, 6; SL 7; RC 1 [1. Depth of content knowledge. 3. Effective oral and written communication]	U G	U G	U G	U G

Date approved by the department or school: 01/22/2018

Date approved by the college curriculum committee: 02/21/2018

Date approved by the Honors Council (*if this is an honors course*): NA

Date approved by CAA: 03/08/2018 CGS: