I. COURSE INFORMATION

Fall 2016
COMM 2342 - Intro. To Video Production - CRN# 13043

Text:

Book #1

Book #2

Materials:

Required
1. DSLR Canon camera with kit lens (18mm-135mm) that records audio via Shotgun mic and/or external mic input. Camera that has interchangeable lens options.
2. 16 GB or 32 GB SD/CF Card (class 10) for DSLR camera.
3. Stereo headphones with a 1/8” (mini phone) jack for audio recording/editing.
4. Camera tripod/monopod
5. Lens cleaning tissue
6. USB 3.0/Thunderbolt MAC Formatted Hard Drive (500GB minimum)
7. GDrive (15gigs) to share resources
8. Celtx Free Screenwriting software

Recommended
50mm lens f/1.8 Manual focus
85mm lens f/1.8 Manual focus
Wireless Lavaliere that can be hooked up to DSLR camera
LED mobile light package

II. INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION
Name: Ramón Villa
Office Location: Education Rm. 102C – Screenwriting Lab
Office Hours: W 1:30pm – 4:30pm or by appointment (via Blackboard)
Telephone Number: 915-747-5129 (leave message)
Email: rvilla2@utep.edu & via Blackboard email

II. COURSE CONTENT
A. Course Description:
An introduction to the history, theory, technology and production of visual communication from cameras to computers. The focus throughout the semester will be on the fundamental principles of the documentary form.

B. Course Objectives:
1. Learn basic video, audio, tripod, and natural lighting skills.
2. Breakdown the basic elements of a documentary production shoot.
3. Understand the basic principles of cinematography, audio recording, and video editing
4. Practice the interpretation of techniques and aesthetics of the documentary form.
5. Collaborate with peers to share the audio-visual storytelling process.

C. Learning Outcomes:
Demonstrate knowledge and skills in digital media preproduction and production
1. Perform competency in the preparations, processes, and practices of beginning and completing a digital media production project
2. Perform competency in a variety of digital media production environments such as in a studio and on location
3. Perform competency in using production hardware and software

D. Assigned Readings:
Book #1 - Chapter 1 - 19 from *The Digital Filmmaking Handbook 5th Ed.*
Book #2 - Chapter 1 – 3 from *Documentary Film: A very short introduction*

E. Assignments:
Attend class lectures; participate in class and online.

Blackboard
I will use Blackboard to post quizzes, grades, announcements, and other relevant information. Please look at this page everyday.

Individual and Group Pop Quizzes – Book #1
These are designed to keep you on your toes, chapter to chapter. You will take an individual quiz on the assigned chapter online and then take quiz again as a group in-class. You will engage/discuss as a team to finalize your answers. The best way to study for these quizzes is to read the chapters. Each individual quiz is worth 10 points. Each group quiz is worth 10 points. Individual Quizzes are due on Monday by 11:59pm. Group quizzes will be taken in class.
Q#1 – Chp.1 & 2
Q#2 – Chp. 3
Q#3 – Chp. 4
Q#4 – Chp. 5
Q#5 – Chp. 6
Q#6 – Chp. 7
Q#7 – Chp. 8
Q#8 – Chp. 9
Q#9 – Chp. 10
Q#10 – Chp. 11 & 12
Q#11 – Chp. 13 & 14
Q#12 – Chp. 15
Q#13 – Chp. 16
Q#14 – Chp. 17
Q#15 – Chp. 18 & 19

Late work will not be accepted.

Production Projects
As part of completing the coursework, students will produce (propose, script, shoot, and edit) eight projects and a final documentary film. The projects will require working individually and in teams (no exceptions!). Further rules will be discussed. I must approve the content and script; avoid using material containing nudity, violence, and vulgarity. Students will receive further instructions and requirements for each project. After completing each group’s project, save a H.264 movie file to
each team members’ hard drive. You will turn in movies via GDrive. The assigned projects are listed below, subject to change:

1. **About Me** (exactly 1 minute: 20 Points) – This exercise is an individual production. The purpose is to familiarize students with preproduction procedures, basic camera operations, shot composition, and basic editing. More instructions will follow.
   **Due Tues, Sept. 13th before class begins.**

   **Guidelines for team projects:**
   Two (2) to Three (3) person team based projects. Teams must choose the subject matter, location, spokesperson and/or voice talent. Follow guidelines from the book for conceptual frameworks. The purpose of these projects is to combine various techniques (scriptwriting, storyboarding, lighting, sound, and editing) needed to achieve high production value. All videos must include titled subjects (ex. John Public, Senior, Philosophy) using lower-third cards.

2. **Public Affairs** (exactly 30 seconds: 20 points)
   **Due Tues, Sept. 20th before class begins.**

3. **Government Propaganda** (exactly 30 seconds: 20 points)
   **Due Tues., Sept. 27th before class begins.**

4. **Advocacy** (exactly 1 minute: 25 points)
   **Due Tues., Oct. 11th before class begins.**

5. **Historical** (exactly 2 minute: 35 points)
   **Due Tues., Oct. 25th before class begins.**

6. **Ethnographic** (exactly 1 minute: 30 points)
   **Due Tues., Nov. 8th before class begins.**

7. **Nature** (exactly 1 minute: 20 points)
   **Due Tues., Nov. 22nd before class begins.**

8. **News Story** (exactly 30 seconds: 30 points) – Upon arriving to class on a specified day, a topic will be assigned to each production team. They will take a camera, mic, cable, headphones, and a tripod outside of class to interview UTEP students, faculty, and/or staff about an assigned topic. Similar to a breaking news story, learning to work under a time gun and developing a sense of urgency are the goals of this exercise. Must include titled subjects (ex. John Public, Senior, Philosophy).
   **Due Tues., Nov. 29th before class begins.**

The video production projects will be graded based on these criteria: (a) implementing techniques (camera work, lighting, sound, editing, etc.), (b) originality, (c) participation, (d) cohesiveness of assigned topics and ideas, and (e) overall quality of production. All scores will be evaluated individually.
Late work will not be accepted.

**Book #1 Chapter Discussions** (100 points)
This will consist of each team member standing in front of the class discussing the assigned sections for the week. Please keep up with the reading. You will be required to take questions from other classmates for the understanding of the chapter sections.

This is NOT meant to be just a summary of the assigned reading. Rather, it should function as a guide to the pivotal issues raised in the readings and as a catalyst for generating class discussion, which may include bringing in your own relevant outside examples.

On the day you present, turn in a detailed outline of your presentation that clearly explains what you will talk about—who does what in what order, etc. Also hand in in other supplemental materials. Every group will choose a different person in the group to lead the discussion/presentation. This person will only do it once and give someone else a chance but must also be integral to the groups success. Each presentation is worth 10 points.

Late work will not be accepted.

**Book #2 Chapter Discussions** (50 points)
Same as Book #1 Chapter Discussions but each presentation is worth 5 points.

**SHORT OF THE WEEK** (10 entries - 100 points)
You will use the Short of the Week website to evaluate

**DOCUMENTARY FILMS ONLY!**

Don't evaluate

NARRATIVE, EXPERIMENTAL FILMS, MUSIC VIDEOS, etc.

This information will be shared amongst the class. DO NOT PLAGARIZE or repeat a film. The website is at: www.shortoftheweek.com and you can also download the app online for your phone.

You may NOT explore alternative sources for this Journal. You must cite the movie correctly by using the title of your film as your title so I can look for it on the website as well as attaching your name after the title.

Times New Roman 12pt.
Double Spaced.
100 words min and no more than 250.
Each response is worth 10 points.

**ENTRIES DUE FRIDAYS by 11:59pm**

**Documentary Production – UTEP International Culture Festival 2016** (100 points)
This will be an ongoing collaborative team project that will consists of three phases:

- **Pre-production** (securing interviews with participants of the festival, scripting, working closely with producers of event, etc.),
- **Production** (shooting video, recording audio, directing, etc.)
- **Post-production** (editing, mixing, titling, etc.)

Festival is from Nov. 14 – 18th
Please make arrangements to participate as the official documentary film crew

Late work will not be accepted.
Midterm Exam (50 points)
Will cover Chapter 1-10 from Book #1. **Exams will not be given on any day/time other than what is scheduled on the syllabus. No make-up exams.**

Tuesday, Oct. 4th

Final Exam (50 points)
Will cover all of Book #1 and Book #2. **Exams will not be given on any day/time other than what is scheduled on the syllabus. No make-up exams.**

Tuesday, Dec. 6th 1:00pm-3:45pm

F. Grading Scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average Grade</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>900 – 1000 points</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>800 – 899 points</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>700 – 799 points</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>600 – 699 points</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 – 599 points</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incomplete</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawn</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Evaluation:
In order to achieve a grade of “C” for this class you must keep up with all the work assigned as an individual as well as group assignments.

Your grade for the class will be determined by your performance on the following assignments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 Individual quizzes</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Team quizzes</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production Projects (8)</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book #1 Chapter Discussions</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book #2 Chapter Discussions</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOTW Journal Evaluations</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documentary Production (Culture Fest)</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance/Participation</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams (2 x 50 points)</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Points Possible 1,000 points

General Grading Criteria:
The following are general guidelines for grades. These are meant only as general statements and not intended to be directly applicable for grading projects.

**A-** level work is strong conceptually, aesthetically, creatively, and technically. It adheres to guidelines and communicates strongly and clearly through the medium. The concept of the work is original and innovative and the technical execution of the idea is superior. A-level work takes creative and conceptual risks while maintaining coherence about the statement it is making.

**B-** level work achieves success in some areas but not all: originality, concept, aesthetics, creativity, and technical execution. For example, sometimes it is technically strong but conceptually weak; other times it is highly original but not technically competent. Sometimes
the work is creatively strong but has trouble holding together as a coherent piece with a particular message.

C- level work typically may have small amounts of success in technical, creative, conceptual, and aesthetic areas, but has difficulty in multiple areas.
D- level work and below fails to achieve success and competence in most areas. It is typically conceptually weak, fails to deliver an original or coherent idea, has major technical difficulties, and takes little or no creative risk.

IV. RULES, CLASSROOM POLICIES/ ETC.

Lab Time: Attendance is mandatory for lab time unless otherwise specified. The lab time provides an opportunity to apply lessons and techniques to projects. Students have access to several postproductions labs on campus: COTT 307, EDUC 102, LACIT, and Library Rm. 300.

1. Read assigned materials/pages prior to meeting for classes.
2. Attendance and participation are mandatory.
3. No chatting/texting during lecture or presentations.
4. During class or lab time, do not use the iMacs to access Facebook, emails, etc. Points will be deducted.
5. Three (3) unexcused absences before the drop date will result in an automatic drop. Three or more totaled unexcused absences after the drop deadline will result in a lowered grade. The accumulation of absences excused/unexcused will lower your grade. You are considered absent once I pick up the attendance sheet and you have not signed in or if you have departed early.

THE DROP DEADLINE IS Oct. 28th TO RECEIVE A “W” FOR THE COURSE!

Late work will not be accepted.

A. Cheating/Plagiarism:

All of your work must be original. Plagiarism is defined in Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary as; “to steal or pass off (the ideas or words off another) as one’s own; i.e., submitting someone else's work under your name or not citing the source of your information”. Cheating consists of obtaining information from someone other than the instructor during an exam, or on other assignments; or having someone else complete your assignments. The instructor and the college take cheating very seriously. At the very least a student will receive an “F” for the assignment if it has been plagiarized or if the student has cheated. The Student Code of Conduct addresses these issues. The instructor will deal with plagiarism and cheating on an individual basis. Consequences can range from receiving a failing grade on the assignment to being dropped from the course. The instructor will follow the Student Code of Conduct in dealing with these issues.

B. Attendance:

Attendance is taken at the beginning of the scheduled class time. If you are late and the attendance book is closed, you run the risk of not being counted present. If students have a documented illness or emergency they may be excused. It is the student's responsibility to attend class and be on time. Unexcused absence is defined as any absence without any valid documentation to waive your absence.

Excused absence is defined as any absence that is waived by the instructor at his own discretion.

Two (2) late/arrivals/early departures will be considered as an unexcused absence. Three (3) unexcused absences before the drop date will result in an automatic drop.

C. Drops:
The instructor reserves the right to drop any student who misses 2 class periods in a row without contacting the instructor and/or does not complete a major assignment with excessive absences (quizzes, discussions, presentations, & papers) and does not contact the instructor. The instructor will attempt to contact the student before dropping them. It is the student’s responsibility to contact the instructor if they have a problem and need to be dropped. It is also the student’s responsibility to be aware of the drop date, in order to drop the class before the withdrawal date if they so desire and to be aware of the “Six Drop Rule” and the affect that it may have on them.

D. Conduct and Grievances: See the student handbook for the proper procedures for addressing student complaints. You are expected to conduct yourself in a courteous and respectful manner. You are required to turn off and stow away all technology including cell phones and laptops, which means NO TEXTING! It is distracting for your instructor and actually, the people around you as well. Your instructor has no problem calling this to your attention and asking you to leave if your use of technology disrupts the class. If you have an emergency arises please step outside.

E. The classroom as a safe haven: This classroom is a safe haven for all ideas. Respect not only your instructor, but also guest speakers and your peers as equals. We are all unique individuals entitled to our own opinions and beliefs. Therefore, any comments, jokes, or remarks that denigrate the worth of an individual’s physical or mental ability, physical appearance, religion, race, creed, ethnic background, sexual preference, or gender are inappropriate and detract from your effectiveness as a speaker and from your credibility as a person.

F. Disruptive Behavior
   • Walking in late to class.
   • Lack of supplemental materials.
   • Leaving electronic devices on during class.
   • Taking credit for a thought, opinion and knowledge from sources and claiming them as your own (plagiarism).
   • Chatting or talking during a presentation.
   • Using vulgarity.

V. ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

The University of Texas El Paso prides itself on its standards of academic excellence and students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, submitting work for credit that is attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, and any act that gives or attempts to give unfair advantage.

VI. CASS POLICY

If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, or by email to cass@utep.edu, or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at www.sa.utep.edu/cass. CASS Staff are the only individuals who can validate and if need be, authorize accommodations for students with disabilities.
EXTREMELY IMPORTANT:

THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURES MUST BE FOLLOWED BEFORE ANY PROJECT MAY BE SUBMITTED FOR A GRADE:

• All projects must list crew titles and names (aka credits) 5 seconds after the video.
• All projects that include subject(s) must have a signed talent release forms (TRFs) in order for subjects (people) to appear in your digital films projects.
• All digital films must be submitted via Google Drive.
• Projects must include an oral presentation presented by the student or all team members that describe the roles and the challenges faced in production and postproduction.

Video Presentations: The purpose of most content produced is to share with others and video presentations are an excellent way to showcase individual and team efforts. Video presentations of each project will occur during class time, which makes it mandatory attendance. Points will be deducted from a student’s final grade for each missed viewing. In addition to receiving praise for projects, students will be given constructive criticism by fellow peers and me.

On video presentation days: Do not be late nor power-on the iMacs!

Lab Policies:

Equipment Check in/out: Being responsible is essential to the success of a video production. Production equipment is expensive and costly to replace, so the rules will be strictly enforced. Pick up and return all video equipment (cameras, lenses, lighting, microphones, tripods, etc.) during class time. To check out equipment, you must fill out and sign a check-out sheet, which makes YOU FULLY LIABLE and RESPONSIBLE for ALL UTEP video production equipment assigned to you. All checked-out items, including accessories (adapters, cables, lens caps, etc.), MUST BE returned after each project and in the same working condition. By returning the equipment late and/or damaged, you hinder the next person from starting/working on his or her project. If this happens, you will be restricted from using UTEP equipment and will need to complete the course using your own equipment. Additionally, the student must also cover the replacement costs of the missing and/or damaged item(s). For those of you who do not pay for damaged or lost equipment will have an academic hold placed on your record until the matter is acceptably resolved.

Copyright and Fair Use:
You may find the need to use copyrighted material this semester: music, photographs, movie clips, or any other expression. For many of your uses, you need to find the copyright holder and negotiate a license. You own the copyright to the work you produce in this class. As a copyright holder yourself, you understand the importance of copyright ownership. It is your responsibility to secure music and archival footage licenses as well as artwork, location and personal releases.

For some uses, however, neither you nor anyone else needs to license copyrighted material. This is because copyright law exists to encourage and support creativity. Copyright law recognizes that creativity doesn't arise in a vacuum. As creators, we all stand on the shoulders of giants. New works of art (such as films, books, poems, paintings) all make use of what has gone before. Thus, copyright law not only protects authors with a copyright that lets them decide who can use their works, but also offers exemptions from the author's control. For filmmakers, the most important exemption is the doctrine of fair use. You can rely on fair use, where appropriate, in the film and media projects you undertake for this course. If you are making a documentary film, consult the influential Documentary Filmmakers Statement of Best Practices in Fair Use [http://www.centerforsocialmedia.org/files/pdf/fair_use_final.pdf](http://www.centerforsocialmedia.org/files/pdf/fair_use_final.pdf) which was created by a group of national filmmaker
organizations, has been endorsed by the University Film and Video Association, and is now relied on by film festivals, insurers, cablecasters, distributors and public broadcasters. Fair use also applies in the fiction film environment, but not necessarily to the same extent or in the same way.