

# SSA 4930-20619 (Section 3579)

## Introduction to Film and Visual Culture

### I. Course Information

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Fall 2021

Meeting Day/Time: Tuesdays Periods 3-4 (9:35am-11:30am) & Thursdays Period 3 9:35am-10:25am

Location: WEIM 1084

#### Instructor Information

- Professor Roxana Walker-Canton
- [rwalkercanton@ufl.edu](mailto:rwalkercanton@ufl.edu)
- Pugh Hall Room 331
- Office hours: Tuesdays 12pm-1pm & Thursdays 11:30am-12:30pm; and by appointment
- Phone: (352) XXX-XXXX

#### Course Description

This interactive and hands-on course is the foundational course for the Film and Visual Culture concentration in the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures. This course introduces students to the study of film and visual culture as analytical viewers and as producers. Through regular written and discussion-based assignments, students will deconstruct, analyze, and question various US and internationally produced and culturally thematic fiction and non-fiction films using film language and terminology. Students will expand their understanding of film and visual culture beyond that of a viewer through creative production of short form culturally thematic documentary films. Students will have the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of film production by applying concepts associated with pre-production, production, and post-production of documentary films. Students will conceptualize and write scripts before carrying out production plans for their documentary projects. The course aims to develop deeper curiosity about the representation of visual culture and skills to produce films and visual culture.

#### Required & Recommended Course Materials (to purchase/rent)

##### BOOKS

Bernard, Sheila Curran. *Documentary Storytelling: Creative Nonfiction on Screen*. Fourth Ed. New York: Focal Press, 2016.

Sikov, Ed. *Film Studies: An Introduction*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. New York: Columbia University Press, 2020.

##### FILMS

*Monsoon Wedding* (Mira Nair, 2001), RT: 1hr 56min; available on campus and YouTube, Vudu, Netflix, Amazon Prime Video (Rental \$3.99)

*Homegoings* (Christine Turner, 2013), RT: 51min; available streaming on campus and Vimeo (free streaming <https://vimeo.com/426527472?ref=em-share>)

*Daughters of the Dust* (Julie Dash, 1991), RT: 1hr 53min; Available on campus and Tubi (free), Amazon Prime Video, YouTube (from \$2.99), Apple TV (from \$3.99)

*Lost in Translation* (Sophia Coppola, 2003), RT: 01hr 45min; available on campus DVD and streaming and Vudu (\$3.99), YouTube (from \$3.99), Apple TV (From \$3.99), etc.

*Wasteland* (Lucy Walker, 2010), RT: 1hr 27min; PBS

*Faces Places (Visage Villages)* (Agnes Varda et JR, 2017), RT: 1hr 34min; available Tubi and Kanopy (free), Apple TV, Amazon Prime Video, YouTube, etc . \$3.99

## II. Coursework & Schedule

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### 1. List of Graded Work

Assignment	Description	Requirements	Points
Essay #1	Film Analysis and Mise-en-Scene	750 words	10
Essay #2	Film Analysis and Ideology	750 words	10
Quiz #1	Based on Readings, Lectures, Screenings, & Discussion	40 minutes	5
Quiz #2	Based on Readings, Lectures, Screenings, & Discussion	40 minutes	5
Script/Treatment Exercise	Demonstrate Conceptualization & Visual Storytelling Part 1 & 2	2 pages	10
Interview Exercise	Demonstrate Camera, Lighting, and Interviewing (Raw Footage)	3-4 minutes	5
B-Roll & Archival Footage Exercise	Demonstrate Research and Visual Storytelling	2-3 minutes	5
Soundscape Exercise	Demonstrate Aural Storytelling	2 minutes	5
Editing Exercise	Demonstrate Editing Skills	2-3 minutes sequence	5
Final Project	Demonstrate Production Skills from Pre-Production through Post-Production	Production Book & 5-7 minutes Documentary	20
Final Exam	Cumulative Exam (12/14, 5:30pm-7:30pm)	2 hours	20

## 2. Weekly Course Schedule (add/remove rows as needed)

Week/ Date	Activity	Topic/Assignment (Question/Subject)
<b>MODULE 1</b>		
Week 1 Aug. 23-27	Topic	Introduction & Visual Representation through Mise-en-Scene
	Summary	How do filmmakers represent culture in film? Learn how the film language of mise-en-scene creates representations of cultures. An investigation of shot, camera angle, and subject.
	Readings/Screenings	<u>Intro to Film Studies</u> , pp. 1-23/ <i>Lost in Translation</i> (Sophia Coppola, 2003)
	Assignment	Read <u>Intro to Film Studies</u> , Intro and Chapter 1. pp. 1-23; finish screening <i>Lost in Translation</i>
Week 2	Topic	Mise-en-Scene: Cinematography, Composition, and Meaning
Aug. 30- Sept.3	Summary	How does cinematography and composition create narrative? How does the camera capture and translate culture to be consumed by viewers? Learn film language related to camera movement and composition and how those concepts work to create meaning. Categorizing film by genre.
	Readings/Screenings	<u>Intro to Film Studies</u> , Chapters 2 & 3 pp.24-54 and Chapter 10 pp. 143-157/ <i>Monsoon Wedding</i> (Mira Nair, 2001)
	Assignment	Read <u>Intro to Film Studies</u> , Chapters 2 & 3; finish screening <i>Monsoon Wedding</i>
Week 3	Topic	Editing: Selecting, Connecting, Juxtaposing, and Constructing
Sept. 6-10	Summary	How are representations of culture created through editing? Learn film language related to editing and how those concepts work to create unity of ideas, aesthetic theme and ideology
	Readings/Screenings	<u>Intro to Film Studies</u> , Chapter 4 pp. 55-73 and Chapter 12 pp. 169-183/ <i>Daughters of the Dust</i> (Julie Dash, 1991)
	Assignment	Write Essay #1
Week 4	Topic	Sound: Soundscapes
Sept. 13-17	Summary	How do soundscapes help viewers understand cultures represented in film? Learn various types of sound and film terminology associated with each.
	Readings/Works	<u>Intro to Film Studies</u> , Chapter 5 (pp. 74-88)/ <i>Daughters of the Dust</i> (Julie Dash, 1991)
	Assignment	Write Essay Due Sunday, Sept. 19 <sup>th</sup>
		Study for Quiz due on Tuesday, Sept. 21 <sup>st</sup>

Week/ Date	Activity	Topic/Assignment (Question/Subject)
<b>MODULE 2</b>		CRAFTING DOCUMENTARY STORIES EXPRESSING VISUAL CULTURE
Week 5	Topic	How to produce a short documentary – Pre-Production
Sept. 20-24	Summary	What is documentary storytelling? Identify elements of the documentary. Write a documentary treatment.
	Readings/Screenings	<u>Documentary Storytelling</u> Intro and Chapters 1 & 2 pp. 1-35/ <i>Homegoings</i> (Chris Turner, 2013)
	Assignment	Quiz – Tuesday 9/21
		Treatment/Script Exercise Part 1
Week 6	Topic	Documentary Story Structure and Research and Introduction to the Camera
Sept. 27-Oct. 1	Summary	How are documentaries structured? Finding the story through research. How do you write to shoot? Documentary script format. Application of film language to production.
	Readings/Screenings	<u>Documentary Storytelling</u> Chapters 4 pp. 53-68 and Chapter 8 pp. 123-137 and
	Assignment	Treatment/Script Exercise Part 1
		Treatment/Script Exercise Part 2
Week 7	Topic	Writing Documentary Treatments and Scripts
Oct. 4-8	Summary	Identify the differences between treatments and scripts. Write a treatment and
	Readings/Screenings	<u>Documentary Storytelling</u> Chapter 10 pp. 155-162
	Assignment	Treatment/Script Exercise Part 2
Week 8	Topic	Deconstruct Documentary Film
Oct. 11-14	Summary	Deep Analysis of <i>Wasteland</i> (Lucy Walker, 2010)
	Readings/Screenings	
	Assignment	QUIZ #2
<b>MODULE 3</b>		PRODUCTION
Week 9	Topic	Shooting for Documentary Production: The Interview
Oct. 18-22	Summary	Learning effective and creative use of the camera. Learning the significance of Interview and different styles of interviewing – advantages and disadvantages
	Readings/Screenings	<u>Documentary Storytelling</u> Chapter 11 pp. 175-188

Week/ Date	Activity	Topic/Assignment (Question/Subject)
	Assignment	Essay #2
		Interview Exercise
Week 10	Topic	Shooting for Documentary Production: B-Roll
Oct. 25-29	Summary	Learn how to shoot needed footage to tell visual story developed in the interview research.
	Readings/Screenings	Screen Interview Exercises
	Assignment	Essay #2
		B-Roll Exercise
Week 11	Topic	Producing Audio and Editing for Documentary Production
Nov. 1-5	Summary	Learn various microphones and the effect of various types of sound used for documentary soundscapes
	Readings/Screenings	Screen B-Roll Footage; <u>Documentary Storytelling</u> Chapters 12 pp. 189-210
	Assignment	Soundscape Exercise
Week 12	Topic	Narration and Voice Over for Documentary Production
Nov. 8-12	Summary	Tell the Story or Let the Story Tell Itself – Discuss the impact of using narration, voice over and/or interview; learn how to write and perform narration and voice over and when to use them
No class 11/11	Readings/Works	<u>Documentary Storytelling</u> Chapter 13
	Assignment	Editing Exercise
Week 13	Topic	Documentary and Travel: Screening of <i>Faces Places</i>
Nov. 15-19	Summary	How to use documentary to tell stories about people and culture during travels as insider/outsider? The politics of storytelling as insider vs outsider
	Readings/Screenings	<u>Documentary Storytelling</u> Chapter 14/ <i>Faces Places (Visage Villages)</i> (Agnes Van Arman, JR, 2017)
	Assignment	Work on Final Project

Week/ Date	Activity	Topic/Assignment (Question/Subject)
Week 14	Topic	Workshops for final projects
Nov. 22-26	Summary	Students present elements of projects and receive feedback
No class 12/25	Readings/Works	Screening TBA
	Assignment	Work on Final Project
Week 15	Topic	Workshops for final projects
Nov. 29-Dec. 3	Summary	Students present elements of projects and receive feedback
	Readings/Works	
	Assignment	Work on Final Project
Week 16	Topic	Final Projects
Dec. 6-8	Summary	Screen Final Projects
	Readings/Works	
	Assignment	
Dec. 14	Final	5:30pm-7:30pm

## III. Grading

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### 1. Statement on Attendance and Participation

#### Attendance and Participation:

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

- Attendance: will be taken daily and recorded in the Canvas gradebook. You are allowed four “personal days” for the semester, after which each absence that does not meet university criteria for “excused” will result in a two-point deduction from your final grade.
- Participation: Consistent informed, thoughtful, and considerate class participation is expected and necessary to learn the concepts in the class. Participation is built into the syllabus and will be evident in the grades that you receive for your assignments.
- NOTE: If you have personal issues that prohibit you from joining freely in class discussion, e.g., shyness, language barriers, etc., see the instructor as soon as possible to discuss alternative modes of participation.

## 2. Grading Scale

For information on how UF assigns grade points, visit: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

A	94 – 100% of possible points		C	74 – 76%
A-	90 – 93%		C-	70 – 73%
B+	87 – 89%		D+	67 – 69%
B	84 – 86%		D	64 – 66%
B-	80 – 83%		D-	60 – 63%
C+	77 – 79%		E	<60

# IV. Objectives & Student Learning Outcomes

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## 1. This Course’s Objectives

- Provide instruction about key themes, terminologies, and methodologies for the discipline of film studies and documentary production
- Students will learn to identify and analyze key elements that influence thought, analysis, and critique film
- The course will approach the study of film from multiple perspectives

## 2. This Course’s Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)

- Content: Identify, describe, and explain film studies and film production terminology
- Critical Thinking: Deconstruct, analyze, and question representations of culture in films
- Communication: Develop written and oral presentation skills
- Creative Production: Apply learned concepts, produce creative project

## V. Required Policies

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### 1. Students Requiring Accommodation

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

### 2. UF Evaluations Process

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

### 3. University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

### 4. Counseling and Wellness Center

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

### 5. The Writing Studio

The writing studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the writing studio online at <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> or in 2215 Turlington Hall for one-on-one consultations and workshops.

## **6. Policy on Recordings**

Our class sessions may be audio visually recorded for students in the class to refer back to and for enrolled students who are unable to attend live. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the "chat" feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live. The chat will not be recorded or shared. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.

**7. I reserve the right to make changes in the syllabus when needed and students are responsible for any work associated with the changes.**





