

COM 476: Digital Cinema Capstone
UHM Study Abroad Program in Florence, Italy
Spring Semester 2021

Credits: 3

Professor: Scott E. Schimmel

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Office Hours: TBA

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course students complete a semester long documentary film project. The first 4 weeks of class will be devoted to acquiring storytelling and technical filmmaking skills as well as project development and preproduction. Students will write a brief treatment, formulate a production plan, and pitch their ideas to the class. During this period students will also watch and respond to several classic documentaries, learning from their various approaches to storytelling. The next 4 weeks will be spent on production, where students will collect and create the assets for their films. Class time during this period will focus on advanced production topics. The final 4 weeks of class will be spent in post-production, where students learn editing techniques and shape their material into a high-quality film.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- SD card (not mini or micro), Class 10 or above, 64GB min
- External hard drive, 1TB min
- Access to computer

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course will teach you to

- Distinguish between different modes of document storytelling
- Conceptualize compelling story ideas
- Design documentary film projects using methods of Preproduction
- Choose appropriate camera techniques using methods of Production
- Structure documentary film projects using methods of Postproduction
- Collaborate in a creative team setting

STUDY ABROAD LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Demonstrate awareness of your own cultural values and biases and how these impact your ability to work with others.

2. Demonstrate knowledge of diversity with a focus on the population or topic of interest in your Study Abroad program.
3. Communicate appropriately and effectively with diverse individuals and groups.
4. Demonstrate an increased capacity to analyze issues with appreciation for disparate viewpoints.

GRADING

Attendance 15%

Participation: 10%

Viewing Responses 10%

Documentary Film: 65%

Attendance-

Attendance is mandatory. Any unexcused absence will result in a loss of 5% of your overall grade. More than three unexcused absences will result in a failing grade for the class. Excused absences require tangible proof that the absence is necessary and unavoidable, such as a doctor's note.

Excused Student Absences for Official University-Sponsored Events

Faculty members will make all reasonable attempts to accommodate student absences from class due to their participation in a university-sponsored event, such as an intercollegiate athletic competition or academic event at which the student represents his or her department or UH Manoa.

For regularly-scheduled events, students are to notify instructors within the first two weeks of the semester. For special events or tournaments, students are to notify their instructors as soon as they learn of the anticipated absence. In both cases, students who must miss class for such events will be responsible for completing all assigned work as expeditiously as possible

Participation-

Participation means showing up on time, staying through the end of class, proper attire, having a good attitude, and being respectful and interacting in discussions. "Participation" also means coming to class prepared and checking the Lulima site before each class to see relevant information and links for the next class.

A significant portion of this class is lab based. You are expected to come prepared to work on your projects during class. Leaving early will affect your participation grade with a 2% reduction for each instance.

Viewing Responses-

You will write a 250 response to the viewings assigned during the first 4 weeks of class. The response is not a film review, but a structured analysis of the aesthetics and storytelling methods used in the film. Each assignment is worth 2.5 points toward your overall grade.

Documentary Film-

Working in groups you will produce a short, 5 to 10-minute documentary. This project will be graded on creativity and technical skills including story, cinematography, audio, and editing (including revision). Work will be completed in teams of 2.

Documentary Paperwork due before shooting:

- 1) Synopsis
- 2) Research/Treatment
- 3) Full Production Plan/Schedule

Further details of this project will be provided to you on the week that work on this project is scheduled to start.

Rubric of Final Project - 65% of overall course grade broken down as follows

Pitch - 5% of overall course grade (Graded as a group)

Synopsis and Treatment 10% of overall course grade (Graded as a group)

Production Plan – 5 % of overall course grade (Graded as a group)

Production of Film - 10% of overall course grade (Graded as a group)

Outreach Materials – 5% of overall course grade (Graded Individually)

Peer Review - 5% of overall course grade (Graded Individually)

COURSE POLICIES and WISDOM

1. No cell phone use in class. Cell phones must be turned to silent. Anyone using a cell phone during class will lose participation points.

2. This course is in a Communications School, and most of you are Communication majors. I expect that you will communicate clearly and professionally via email with me and your fellow classmates. Please put the course number, COM 476, in all email correspondence.

3. This is a production class, and projects will require significant group work outside of the classroom. If you foresee any trouble with pulling your weight in group work due to a busy schedule please let me know immediately. If you fail to do so, and do not contribute to work with your assigned group, you will receive a 0 for the project.

4. Conflict is inevitable and is a healthy part of the production process. I expect you all to handle conflict maturely, with flexibility and compromise, keeping in mind that collaboration is not a dictatorship.

5. This is not an acting or theater class, thus you are not allowed to act in any of your own productions. If you want to work with actors it is highly recommended that you work with experienced actors, not your friends and/or roommates. You have an opportunity in the class to create high quality work, something you can be proud of, put on your reel, submit to festivals, and even win awards with. Don't throw away that opportunity with bad acting, which is what you will most likely get if you or your buddy act in your film.

Title IX Disclosure

Title IX is a landmark federal civil rights that prohibits sex discrimination in education. Members of the UH Mānoa community, guests and visitors have the right to be free from all forms of sex/gender harassment, discrimination and misconduct, examples of which can include acts of sexual violence, sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking. All members of the campus community are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that does not infringe upon the rights of others.

To learn more about Title IX please visit the [UH Manoa Campus Title IX Website](#).

Reporting: If a student chooses to confide in a faculty member or if a faculty member observes an incident regarding an issue of sexual violence, sexual harassment, domestic and intimate partner violence, stalking, gender-based discrimination, and gender-based bullying and hazing, faculty are required by federal law to report these issues to

- Dr. Dee Uwono, UHM's Title IX Coordinator - (808) 956-2299, t9uhm@hawaii.edu

Confidentiality: If a student does not wish to formally report an incident to a faculty member, but wishes to speak to someone confidentially about any of the behaviors listed above, the student can speak to the confidential space counselors on campus:

- Counseling and Student Development Center - (808) 956-7927, uhmcsdc@hawaii.edu

If you have experienced or observed discrimination or harassment you may make a formal complaint by contacting the Title IX Coordinator, Dr. Dee Uwono, UHM's Title IX Coordinator - (808) 956-2299, t9uhm@hawaii.edu.

Kokua Program

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (Title II) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973-section 504 and 508, individuals with disabilities have protections against discrimination and are assured access to programs, services and activities. For more information see "Americans with Disabilities Act" and "Rehabilitation Act of 1973 – Section 504 or Section 508".

Students must self-identify to the DSSO and complete the intake process before receiving reasonable accommodations for the first time. Students must formally request specific academic adjustments/auxiliary aids, provided as accommodations, and substantiate that request with supporting documentation. To ensure the prompt and effective provision of accommodations, students should contact the DSSO as early as possible.

Visit the [Kokua Program Website](#) for more information.

Right to Resolve Academic Grievances

Any student who believes that a faculty member has acted improperly or in a manner otherwise inconsistent with the faculty member's responsibilities or the student's customary academic expectations, may initiate action to achieve a remedy. Read more about the policy in the college catalog, or on the UHM Office of Student Affairs website under [Academic Grievance Procedures](#).

Systemwide Student Conduct Code

To support a positive and safe learning environment, all students are required to adhere to the [student conduct code](#).

The student conduct code includes acts of academic dishonesty. Acts of dishonesty, include but are not limited to the following:

1. Cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty.
2. Furnishing false information to any UH official, faculty member, or office.
3. Forgery, alteration, or misuse of any UH document, record, or form of identification.

Alleged violations of the student conduct code are taken seriously and may be reported to administration for investigation and disciplinary action.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

(May change to accommodate guest presenters & student needs)

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Week	Discussion	Lab	Homework
Week 1 Course Introduction Online	Course Intro	-	Write response to assigned films
Week 2 - Story Online	Intro to Documentary Storytelling	-	Write response to assigned films
Week 3 - Camera 1 In person Class Starts Teams formed	Intro to Camera	Hands on with Camera	Begin Pre-Production Write response to assigned films
Week 4 - Sound and Lighting	Intro to Sound and Lighting	Hands on with Sound and Lighting	Pre-Production Write response to assigned films
Week 5 - Pitching <i>Pre-Production Docs Due</i>	Pitch Projects	Interview Refresh	Begin Production
Week 6 - Interviewing	The Interview	Practice Interviewing	Continue Production
Week 7 - Camera 2	Advanced Camera and Shooting Observational Footage	Practice Observational Footage	Continue Production
Week 8 - Editing 1	Intro to Editing: Media Management, Basic Cutting, Stringouts	Editing on Project	Continue Production
Week 9 - Editing 2	Intermediate Editing: Stringout to Rough Cut	Editing on Project	Edit Rough Cut
Week 10 - Editing 3 <i>Rough Cut Due</i>	Advanced Editing: Graphics, Titles, Sound In Class Rough Cut Review	Editing on Project	Edit Fine Cut

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Week	Discussion	Lab	Homework
Week 11 - Apr 9: <i>Fine Cut Due</i>	In Class Fine Cut Review	Editing on Project	Post Production
Week 12 <i>Final Cut Due</i>	Screen Final Projects	Screen Final Projects	-