



UNSW
A U S T R A L I A

**Faculty of Arts and Social
Sciences**

School of the Arts and Media

ARTS3066

Documentary And Non Fiction Cinemas

Session 2, 2015

UNSW Course Outline

Staff Contact Details

Position	Name	Email	Availability	Location	Phone
Course Authority	George Kouvaros	g.kouvaros@unsw.edu.au	Friday 2.30—3.30 pm	Webster 206	9385 4861

School of the Arts and Media Contact Information

Room 312, level 3 Robert Webster Building

Phone: 9385 4856

Email: sam@unsw.edu.au

Website: <https://sam.arts.unsw.edu.au>

Attendance Requirements

- A student is expected to attend all class contact hours for a F2F or blended course and complete all activities for a blended or fully online course.
- A student who attends less than 80% of the classes/activities and has not submitted appropriate supporting documentation to the Course Authority to explain their absence may be awarded a final grade of UF (Unsatisfactory Fail).
- A student who arrives more than 15 minutes late may be penalised for non-attendance. If such a penalty is imposed, the student must be informed verbally at the end of class and advised in writing within 24 hours.
- If a student experiences illness, misadventure or other occurrence that makes absence from a class/activity unavoidable, or expects to be absent from a forthcoming class/activity, they should seek permission from the Course Authority, and where applicable, should be accompanied by an original or certified copy of a medical certificate or other form of appropriate evidence.
- A Course Authority may excuse a student from classes or activities for up to one month. However, they may assign additional and/or alternative tasks to ensure compliance. A Course Authority considering the granting of absence must be satisfied a student will still be able to meet the course's learning outcomes and/or volume of learning. A student seeking approval to be absent for more than one month must apply in writing to the Dean and provide all original or certified supporting documentation.
- A student who has submitted the appropriate documentation but attends less than 66% of the classes/activities will be asked by the Course Authority to apply to discontinue the course without failure rather than be awarded a final grade of UF. The final decision as to whether a student can be withdrawn without fail is made by Student Administration and Records.
- For more information about the SAM attendance protocols, see the SAM policies and guidelines webpage: <https://sam.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/policies-guidelines/>

Essential Information For SAM Students

For essential student information relating to: attendance requirements; requests for extension; review of marks; occupational health and safety; examination procedures; special consideration in the event of illness or misadventure; student equity and disability; and other essential matters, see the SAM Policies and Guidelines webpage: <https://sam.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/policies-guidelines/>

Course details

Credit Points: 6

Summary of the Course:

In this course you will develop an understanding of the major movements, production trends and scholarly debates in documentary and non fiction filmmaking. You will learn how these forms of production address crucial ethical and philosophical questions concerning the relationship between filmmakers and audiences. You will also develop skills in formulating a scenario for a documentary or non fiction creative project.

Aims of the Course:

This course aims to:

1. Provide a comprehensive examination of the history of documentary and non fiction cinemas
2. Explore the relationship between the history of documentary and non fiction filmmaking and broader ethical and philosophical questions
3. Develop skills in the planning and conceptualisation of documentary and non fiction film production

Student learning outcomes:

At the conclusion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Recognize, both conceptually and practically, key creative processes in documentary and non fiction cinemas.
2. Apply a variety of critical concepts and terms relating to the production, distribution and interpretation of documentary and non fiction cinemas.
3. Demonstrate research skills in gathering, classifying and communicating information about documentary and non fiction cinemas.
4. Apply writing skills to the analysis and communication of creative practices.
5. Position different forms of documentary and non fiction cinemas within a larger history of filmic production.

Graduate Attributes:

At the conclusion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Understand the methods of analysis specific to the discipline of film studies.
2. Exhibit a knowledge of the historical development of film as both a specific medium and as part of a constantly evolving media landscape.
3. Link creative production with theoretical and critical knowledge.
4. Understand the conceptual and organizational skills required to undertake self-directed learning.

5. Master the organizational and communication skills required for effective and creative collaborative work.
6. Skills in scholarly research as applied to and appropriate for the field of film studies.
7. Understand the role and importance of various forms of archives and information environments for research in film and media.

Rationale for the inclusion of content and teaching approach

Seminar Theme

The Essay Film: Between Experience and Expression

'The history of the essay demonstrates . . . that the essayistic is most interesting not so much in how it privileges personal expression and subjectivity but rather in how it troubles and complicates the very notion of *expressivity* and its relation to experience . . . If both verbal and visual expression commonly suggest the articulation or projection of an interior self into an exterior world, essayistic expressivity describes, more exactly, a subjection of an instrumental or expressive self to a public domain as a form of experience that continually tests and undoes the limits and capacities of that self through that experience.' Timothy Corrigan

Teaching strategies

The teaching strategy employed in this course replaces the traditional lecture-screening-tutorial model with a seminar structure in which student input plays a far more central role. Immediately after the screening, the class will reconvene in a seminar.

Assessment

Major Essay 40% (2,500 words) As this is a seminar course in which students are required to take a greater degree of responsibility for their own learning, essay topics will be formulated through a process of consultation with the course convener.

Prior to the surgeries scheduled for Wk 11, each student should prepare a research topic and essay plan to discuss with the convener. The topic must connect with the issues discussed in the seminar. Once agreement is reached regarding the viability of the topic, students will then undertake the research and writing of the essay. As well as the standard criteria regarding proper referencing, punctuation and grammar, I will be looking for students to independently frame an argument by identifying and summarizing relevant key texts and positioning their own claims within a broader field. The essay will need to do at least four things:

1. State quite clearly the central question you are trying to answer;
2. Explain why this is an important question;
3. Provide an indication of how you will go about answering the question (linking film texts and critical/theoretical texts);
4. Indicate that you have undertaken a significant degree of research covering the field of debate on the topic.

Documentary/non fiction film scenario 40% This is a creative research project in which students devise and present the scenario for an online documentary or non-fiction film. Students may elect to work solo or in pairs. The scenario will be presented initially as an in-class presentation identifying the nature of the project, the research undertaken as well as connections to other non-fiction films. The presentation should be between five and ten minutes. It is expected that you will use a variety of supporting material such as visual and aural aids. This material will then be presented online as a creative proposal featuring the style, images and historical connections relevant to the project. Presentations will be evaluated on the clarity, passion and integrity of the projects.

This is to be followed up with a written presentation outlining the documentary film project and the development process, due one week after the presentation. This should be no more than 8 to 10 pages long, and should outline your documentary film project, in four ways:

1. An explanation of the content of the film, in other words the story, the major themes, the ideas that have influenced your vision for the film;
2. A description of how you expect the film to look. Will you be using archival footage, for example? Or will the entire story be set wholly in the present? What will be the locations for the film? Will you use narration? Talking heads? In this section, you should also indicate what other films have played an influence in your vision for this project;
3. A consideration of who your expected audience is for your documentary and where you see your film's best outlet;
4. A brief statement outlining your research for this project. This may include background information on your subject, characters and/or the historical issues that inform your project.

Short essay 20% (1500 words) Students will complete a 1,500 word-analysis of a documentary or non-fiction film from a list provided by the course convener. The purpose of this assignment is two-fold: it will foster an

understanding of the principles and arguments central to the study of documentary and non-fiction cinemas; it will also provide the convener with an indication of individual strengths and weaknesses. This assignment will be used to provide students with feedback early in the course program.

Assessment task	Length	Weight	Learning outcomes assessed	Graduate attributes assessed	Due Date
Major Essay (2,500 words) (40%)	2,500 words	40%	1,2,3,4,5	1,2,4,6,7	Wk 15 Monday 9th November
Film Analysis (1,500 words) (20%)	1,500 words	20%	1,2,3,4,5	1,2,4,6,7	Wk 5 28th August
Documentary and non fiction film scenario (40%)		40%	1,2,3,4	2,3,4	Presentation Wk 10 Friday 9th October; Written submission Wk 11 Friday 23rd October

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Students are expected to put their **names** and **student numbers** on **every page** of their assignments. If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on externaltelsupport@unsw.edu.au. Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally in SAM there will no longer be any hard-copy submission; assessments must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible it will be stated on your course's moodle site with alternative submission details.

Relative marking values

85-100

High Distinction

(HD)

Outstanding work showing real mastery of the subject-matter, with a highly developed and mature ability to analyse, synthesise and apply knowledge and concepts. All objectives of the set work are covered, and work is free from errors with a very high level of technical competence in terms of structure and presentation (references, spelling, punctuation, use of language, etc.). Evidence of critical and logical reflection, original thought, and ability to tackle questions and issues not previously encountered. Ideas are expressed fluently and precisely, and backed up with appropriate empirical evidence and examples.

75-84

Distinction

(DN)

Superior work showing a high degree of mastery and a well-developed ability to analyse, synthesise and apply concepts. All major objectives are covered, and work shows a high level of technical competence and is free from all but very minor errors. Evidence of critical reflection, and of some ability to tackle issues not previously encountered. Ideas are expressed clearly, and backed up by appropriate empirical evidence and examples.

65-74

Credit

(CR)

Good work that shows a sound, thorough grasp of subject-matter, though maybe lacking the depth and breadth required for a DN mark. Good attempt at analysis and synthesis, but again more limited than DN work. Most objectives are covered. Work is generally competent technically, although there may be a few minor errors. Some evidence of critical reflection, and a willingness to tackle new issues. Ideas are expressed clearly, with minor exceptions, and are for the most part backed up by appropriate empirical evidence.

50-64

Pass

(PS)

Acceptable work showing a grasp of major elements of subject-matter, though possibly with some gaps or areas of confusion. Only basic objectives of the set work are covered. The attempt at analysis, synthesis and the application of concepts is superficial, with heavy reliance on course materials. Work may contain some errors of fact or interpretation, and technical competence in terms of structure and presentation is at a routine level only. Little evidence of critical reflection, and limited ability to tackle issues not previously encountered. Some confusion and immaturity in expression and justification of ideas.

40-49

Marginal fail

(FL)

A poor piece of work, showing some familiarity with the subject-matter of the course, but with major gaps and serious misconceptions. Only some of the basic requirements of the work set are achieved. Little or no attempt at critical analysis rather than description, and/or many errors of fact or interpretation. Difficulty in beginning to address questions and issues not previously encountered. Inability to reflect critically on arguments and viewpoints. Poor structure and presentation. The author would find it difficult to study the topic at a higher level.

30-39

Fail

(FL)

Serious gaps in knowledge of the subject matter and course materials, and many areas of confusion. Few or none of the basic requirements of the work set are achieved, and there is an inability to apply knowledge. Poor technical competence and many serious or basic errors. Inadequate expression and structure. The author would apparently not be capable of studying the topic at higher level.

<30

Poor fail

(FL)

A very bad piece of work, showing that the author has failed to engage seriously with any of the course subject matter, and/or demonstrates confusion about the requirements of the assignment.

Late Submission

PLEASE NOTE THAT THESE RULES APPLY FOR ALL COURSES IN SAM.

If your assignment is submitted after the due date, a penalty of 3% per day (including Saturday, Sunday and public holidays) will be imposed for up to 2 weeks. For example, if you are given a mark of 72 out of 100 for an essay, and your essay were handed in two days late, it would attract a penalty of 6% and the mark would be reduced to 66%. If the same essay were handed in seven days late (i.e. a penalty of 21%) it would receive a mark of 51%. If your assignment is not submitted within 2 weeks of its due date, it will receive a mark of 0. For more information on submission of late work, consult the SAM assessment protocols at

<https://sam.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/policies-guidelines/>

Extension Procedure

- A student seeking an extension should submit a SAM extension application form (found in Forms on SAM website) to the Course Authority before the due date.
- The Course Authority should respond to the request within two working days of the request.
- The Course Authority can only approve an extension of up to five days. A student requesting an extension of more than five days should complete an application for Special Consideration.
- If a student is granted an extension, failure to comply will result in a penalty. The penalty will be invoked one minute past the approved extension time.
- This procedure does not apply to assessment tasks that take place during regular class hours or any task specifically identified by the Course Authority as not subject to extension requests.
- A student who missed an assessed activity held within class contact hours should apply for Special Consideration via myUNSW.
- For more information, see the SAM extension protocols on the SAM policies and guidelines webpage: <https://sam.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/policies-guidelines/>

Special Consideration

In the case of more serious or ongoing illness or misadventure, you will need to apply for Special Consideration. For information on Special Consideration please go to this URL: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/special-consideration>

Students who are prevented from attending a substantial amount of the course may be advised to apply to withdraw without penalty. This will only be approved in the most extreme and properly documented cases.

Academic honesty and plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

- **Copying:** using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This also applies to images, art and design projects, as well as presentations where someone presents another's ideas or words without credit.
- **Inappropriate paraphrasing:** changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original structure and information without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's

ideas or words without credit. It also applies to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without referencing and a student's own analysis to bring the material together.

- **Collusion:** working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student before the due date, or for the purpose of them plagiarising at any time, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.
- **Inappropriate citation:** Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.
- **Duplication ("self-plagiarism"):** submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

Details of what plagiarism is can be found on the Learning Centre's Website Plagiarism & Academic Integrity website (<http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/academic-integrity-plagiarism>), in the myUNSW student A-Z: Guide <https://student.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism> and in Appendix A of the Student Misconduct Procedure (pdf- <https://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/policy/documents/studentmisconductprocedures.pdf>).

The Learning Centre also provides substantial education written materials, workshops, and tutorials to aid students, for example:

- Correct referencing practices;
- Paraphrasing, summarising, essay writing and time management
- Appropriate use of and attribution for a range of materials including text, images, formulae and concepts.

Individual assistance is available on request from The Learning Centre. Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study and one of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

Course schedule

Week	Topic	Screening Content
Week 2: 3-7 August	Introduction to Seminar	<i>Letter From Siberia</i> , dir. Chris Marker, 1958, 62 mins.
<p>Essential Readings:</p> <p>Timothy Corrigan, 'On Thoughts Occasioned By . . . ' and 'Of the History of the Essay Film: Vertov to Varda,' in <i>The Essay Film: From Montaigne, After Marker</i> (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 50-78;</p> <p>Brian Winston, 'Introduction: The Filmed Documentary,' in Brian Winston ed., <i>The Documentary Film Book</i>, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 1-29.</p> <p>NB. All essential readings for ARTS3066 are available on the course Moodle site.</p>		
Week 3: 10-14 August	'Almost No Boundaries' part 1: Jean Rouch	<i>La Pyramide Humaine</i> , dir. Jean Rouch, 1959, 90 mins.
<p>Essential Readings:</p> <p>Jean-Andre Fieschi, 'Slippages of Fiction', in <i>Anthropology-Cinema-Reality: The Films of Jean Rouch</i>, ed Mick Eaton (London: BFI, 1979);</p> <p>Barbara Bruni, 'Jean Rouch: Cinéma-vérité, <i>Chronicle of a Summer</i> and <i>The Human Pyramid</i>', <i>Senses of Cinema</i>, Issue 19, March-April 2002 (on-line journal);</p> <p>Joram ten Brink, '<i>La Pyramide Humaine</i>: Nadine Ballot,' in <i>Building Bridges: The Cinema of Jean Rouch</i> ed. Joram ten Brink, (London: Wallflower Press, 2007).</p>		
Week 4: 17-21 August	The Limits of Representation, part 1: Alain Resnais	<i>Night and Fog</i> , dir. Alain Resnais, 1955, 32 mins.
<p>Essential Readings:</p> <p>Emma Wilson, 'Material Remains: <i>Night and Fog</i>', <i>October</i> 112 Spring 2005.</p>		
Week 5: 24-28 August	The Limits of Knowing: Jean-Luc Godard	<i>2 or 3 Things I Know About Her</i> , dir. Jean-Luc Godard, 1967, 87 mins.
<p>Essential Readings:</p> <p>Hamish Ford, 'Two or Three Things I Know About Her,' <i>Senses of Cinema</i> 66 (February 2013) http://sensesofcinema.com/2013/cteq/two-or-three-things-i-know-about-her/;</p> <p>Amy Taubin, '<i>2 or 3 Things I Know About Her</i>. The Whole and Its Parts,' http://www.criterion.com/current/posts/1198-2-or-3-things-i-know-about-her-the-whole-and-its-parts</p>		
Week 6: 31 August - 4 September	'The Impermanence of Things' part 1: Chris Marker	<i>Sunless</i> , dir. Chris Marker, 1983, 100 mins.
<p>Essential Readings:</p> <p>André Bazin, 'Bazin on Marker,' <i>Film Comment</i> 39 no. 4 (July/August 2003) 44-45;</p> <p>Catherine Lupton, <i>Chris Marker: Memories of the Future</i> (London: Reaktion Books, 2005);</p> <p>Ross Gibson, "What do I know?' Chris Marker and the Essayist Mode of Cinema,' <i>Filmviews</i> 32 no. 134</p>		

(Summer 1987/88) 26-30.

Week 7: 7-11 September	Diary Film: Jonas Mekas	<i>Reminiscences of a Journey to Lithuania</i> , dir. Jonas Mekas, 1971, 88 mins.
<p>Essential Readings:</p> <p>Michael Renov, 'Lost Lost Lost: Mekas as Essayist,' in <i>To Free the Cinema: Jonas Mekas and the New York Underground</i>, ed. by David E. James (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992);</p> <p>Jonas Mekas, 'The Diary Film (A Lecture on <i>Reminiscences of a Journey to Lithuania</i>) in <i>The Avant-Garde Film: A Reader of Theory and Criticism</i>, ed. P. Adamas Sitney (New York: New York University Press, 1978)</p>		
Week 8: 14-18 September	The Impermanence of Things,' part 2: Robert Frank	<i>Home Improvements</i> , dir. Robert Frank, 1985, 29 min. and <i>The Present</i> , dir. Robert Frank, 1996, 24 mins.
<p>Essential Readings:</p> <p>George Kouvaros, 'The Fire of Pain,' in <i>Awakening the Eye: Robert Frank's American Cinema</i> (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 2015).</p>		
Week 9: 21-25 September	Doco-noir: Errol Morris	<i>Thin Blue Line</i> , dir. Errol Morris, 1989, 103 mins.
<p>Essential Readings:</p> <p>Linda Williams, 'Mirrors Without Memories: Truth, History, and the New Documentary,' <i>Film Quarterly</i> 46 no. 3 (1993): 9-21.</p> <p>Charles Musser, 'The Thin Blue Line: A Radical Classic,' http://www.criterion.com/current/posts/3500-the-thin-blue-line-a-radical-classic</p>		
Week 10: 6-9 October	Presentation of Documentary Scenarios	
Week 11: 12-16 October	The Limits of Representation, part 2: Werner Herzog	<i>Grizzly Man</i> , Werner Herzog, 2005, 103 mins.
<p>Essential Readings:</p> <p>Seung-Hoon Jeong and Dudley Andrew, 'Grizzly Ghost: Herzog, Bazin and the Cinematic Animal,' <i>Screen</i> 49 no. 1 (spring 2008): 1-12.</p>		
Week 12: 19-23 October	Essay Surgeries	
Week 13: 26-30 October	'Almost No Boundaries,' part 2: Abbas Kiarostami	<i>Close-Up</i> , Abbas Kiarostami, 1990, 98 mins.
<p>Essential Readings:</p> <p>Timothy Corrigan, 'About Refractive Cinema,' in <i>The Essay Film: From Montaigne, After Marker</i>,</p> <p>Gilberto Perez, 'History Lessons,' in <i>The Material Ghost: Films and Their Medium</i> (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1998).</p>		

Course evaluation and development

CATEI