

IDS 2935: Documentary, Identity & Media
UF Quest 1: Identities
Fall 2023

Instructor: Dr. XIAO Ying, yx241@ufl.edu

Class Meeting: Tuesday 4 (10:40-11:30am, MAT0002) & Thursday 4-5 (10:40-12:35pm, MAT0006)

Office Hours: Tuesday 9:30-10:30am (Office) & Wednesday 1:30-3:00pm (Zoom)
Pugh Hall 306, 352-392-6539

<http://languages.ufl.edu/people/faculty-alpha/ying-xiao/>



Course Description

As social media, various screens, and what the critics and scholars have called the expanded practices of “twenty-first century documentary” have permeated our lives today, the course engages and responds to the essential, challenging questions that include: What is life? What constitutes identities within society? What roles do media play in shaping and understanding us, our lives, communities around the globe, and the increasingly connected world? **(H/N)**

The course explores the history, theory, and practice of documentary film and media cultures from a transnational, multidisciplinary perspective **(H/N)**. It introduces the main concepts, terminologies, and critical approaches in film and media studies and examines the important genres, trends, and modes of documentary and audiovisual culture across different time periods, cultures, and countries (including the U.S., U.K., France, Russia, Germany, Netherlands, China, Japan, Iran, Indian, etc.) **(N)** In particular, the course focuses on the sociocultural aspects of documentary and media to investigate how they function as both an index and agent of social

change, engaging such issues as gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, and many important moments and movements of social transformation in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries (H).

Students receive training in critical thinking and effective analysis, as well as in cultivating public speaking and communication skills that enable them to discuss civil issues, sociopolitical subjects, and topics in relation to their own culture and identity and others confidently and intelligently from an open, multifaceted, and global perspective (H/N). The class provide students with foundational knowledge and opportunities of self-reflection and experiential learning. To add to our learning, students will meet guest filmmakers and speakers, conduct individual/group projects, visit museums and exhibitions, and try their own hand at crafting short videos (H).

Quest 1 and General Education Credit

- This course accomplishes the [Quest](#) and [General Education](#) objectives of the subject areas listed above. A minimum grade of C is required for Quest and General Education credit. Courses intended to satisfy Quest and General Education requirements cannot be taken S-U.
- Primary General Education Designation: Humanities (H) ([area objectives available here](#))
- Secondary General Education Designation: International (N) ([area objectives available here](#))
- Writing Requirement (WR) 4000 words

Required Readings and Works

Required:

- Bill Nichols, *Introduction to Documentary* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010).

Recommended:

- Karen Gocsik, Richard Barsam & Dave Monahan, *Writing about Movies* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2013).
- *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 17th edition, https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html?_ga=2.57771817.2025025059.1667770435-399573216.1667770435. (All the written assignments in class are referred to the style of 12 font, double-spaced, typewritten, Chicago style)

All other readings and works are available on Course Reserves, also accessible through Canvas. Class resources, announcements, assignments, documents, and modules will also be made available online at Canvas, so please check our class page on a regular basis.

While we will show some parts of the films or clips in class, class time will be mostly devoted to discussions, presentations, and related activities. Students will be responsible for viewing the films outside the classroom, on their own, as part of their course assignments. The film copies are available at the library and links will be provided if possible. Students can also make use of various digital streaming media services at your own discretion, such as Netflix, Amazon Prime, and Hulu.

Grading and Assignment

Attendance—10%

Attendance in class is mandatory and attendance will be recorded. After add/drop, starting from your *second* unexcused absence, *half a point* will be deducted from your grade for *each* unexcused absence. Since late arrivals and leaving the class meetings early (for more than ten minutes) disrupt the class, it will be counted as a *half absence* if without legitimate reasons. Heavy workloads and neglected schedules will not be considered “excused absences.” Absences will be only excused in accordance with UF policy. *Make-ups and late papers will NOT be accepted* unless mitigating circumstances are declared, which requires appropriate documentation for consideration. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found in the online catalog at:

<http://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

For an excused absence: You need to contact the office of the Dean of Students at dsocares@dso.ufl.edu by email or call 352-294-2273 to request assistance by phone. The office of the Dean of Students will alert your instructor and certify the related documentation.

Participation—5%

Class participation is important for you to have a successful learning experience. Students are expected to accomplish the class assignments in a timely fashion, to actively engage with the course materials including readings and films, and furthermore to share and communicate their observations and reflections with others. Your grade of participation will be assessed by the quality and quantity of your contributions to the class along the following rubric. Failure to meet any of these expectations will not only impair your own education and final grades, but also the whole class performance. The instructor will schedule a conference and provide students with feedback on how to improve when your participation and/or mid-term exam fall below 70% of the possible points.

Reflection Activity—2%

There will be an entry interview/introduction (due 08/31) and an exit evaluation (due 12/05) conducted at the first week and the last week of the class. A template of discussion questions will be distributed then. This is a learning tool for you to reflect upon yourself, the progress you have made, as well as an opportunity to understand others and appreciate the varieties of cultures and identities from a multifaceted, international perspective. You will receive full credit as long as you complete the activities timely and thoughtfully.

Presentations—10%

Each student will be asked to select one article and one film from our class list to conduct TWO oral reports in class (5% each x 2). The presentation should be about 10 minutes, summarizing the key points of the article/film and relating them to our class discussions or screenings. The date of the presentation would roughly correspond to the schedule when the particular reading/film is assigned to. For each assignment, a brief written summary of the presentation (375 words each x 2) is due on the day of the oral report at the discussion board of our Canvas page. Students are also asked to engage, peer review, and comment on someone else’s post of

their presentation on Canvas. Detailed instructions for the assignments and schedules of students' sign-up presentations will be announced within the first two weeks of the semester.

Film Review (750 words, due 11/02)—15%

Students are required to submit one analytic essay in response to a film shown/discussed in class. It needs to be composed as a critical paper closely analyzing one or a couple of particular aspects from the film and using evidence and examples to the end of developing and supporting your argument. It is important that you focus on the formal elements and socio-cultural meanings of the film instead of plot descriptions. Instructions and writing assessment rubric (as follows) will be discussed and posted before the fourth week of the class. Writing assignments are created to meet the UF writing requirement objectives that include but are not limited to well-crafted paragraphs, a thesis or hypothesis, a persuasive organizational structure (e.g., introduction, body, conclusion; introduction, methods, results, discussion), well-supported claims, and appropriate and effective stylistic elements.

Mid-term Exam (10/19)—20%

The mid-term will be taken in class, closed book and closed notes. These are straightforward content questions and important themes we cover in class and addressed in your readings and viewings. Attention to our discussions and engagement with our course materials are the basis for successful accomplishments of the exam. I will provide a study guide and sample questions prior to the mid-term so you'll have an idea of what and how to study.

Final Project Proposal and References (400 words, due 11/14)—5%

Toward the end of the semester, students need to develop a final research project that critically engages and examines the aspects of documentary, media, identity, and social change. Students will be asked to draft a proposal to outline the thesis, questions, and methods along with a literature review to cite and summarize the main film texts, scholarly sources, and contexts associated with the selected topic.

Final Project (2000 words, due 12/11)—30%

Students will submit a final project at the end of the semester. The primary goal of the project is to enhance humanities learning and research and to ask you to integrate the knowledge, tools, and analytical skills from our class to explore topics and works that interest you. On the other hand, since one of the main themes and objectives of the course is to promote the development of students' global and intercultural awareness, you are encouraged to examine the particular film, cultural, and/or social phenomenon that draws on your experiences while engaging and connecting with other parts of the world. Therefore, in the final project, you would have **two options**:

A) You can write a final research paper of your own with a consultation and approval by your instructor. The final paper is an 8 page or longer research paper (no less than 7-page main text and a minimum of one-page bibliography, 2000 words, 12 font, double-spaced, Chicago style) on a specific topic that speaks to your particular interest and demonstrates your engagement with the class materials and the caliber of research and critical thinking. The paper needs to be written in an accessible academic style and will be evaluated for its clarity, coherence, research substantiality, focus of argument and effectiveness in your use of primary and secondary sources in support of your thesis in accordance with the UF writing assessment rubric

<https://undergrad.aa.ufl.edu/general-education/gen-ed-courses/structure-of-wr-courses/wr-course-guidelines/#:~:text=Writing%20Requirement%20Objectives,hastily%20written%20or%20cursor%20thoughts>). Use Chicago Manual of Style for footnotes and references.

OR

B) You may opt to develop a capstone project at Wordpress together with a partner in class. Engaging film as a critical and creative medium, students will work in small groups of pairs to analyze the selected films with related themes to compare and discuss and bring together text, image, and video to produce a web-based multimedia online project. Projects should integrate our course materials and discussions and moreover a considerable amount of independent research, with an emphasis on student-generated original analysis. Finally, each pair of students will use the knowledge acquired and multimedia tools to create an online project in a particular area of your interest. You are encouraged to produce a short video (2-3 minutes) in relation to the topic and films discussed in your project. If you decide to pursue this route, please inform the instructor of your intention as soon as possible. Further instructions or a workshop to go over the basic techniques of filmmaking and how to use Wordpress and other image can be arranged depending on the needs of the class.

Further details and specific guidelines will be distributed as the assignment comes closer. Individual appointment with the instructor to discuss the topic selection and project progress is recommended throughout the semester.

Museum Visit, Event, and Talk (due 11/30)—3%

Students must attend at least one exhibit/performance/event at the Harn Museum of Art OR a media and cultural related event/talk from the instructor’s recommended list or an event you deem appropriate and relevant. Should you decide to pursue that, you shall consult with the instructor to obtain approvals in advance of your visit. The Harn Museum of Art is open from Tuesday through Sunday with free admission and holds the Museum Nights on the second Thursday of every month: <https://harn.ufl.edu/>. To earn credits for this assignment, you need to submit: (1) the flier/poster of the exhibit/event; (2) a selfie picture at the exhibit or event to prove your attendance; and (3) a one-to-two paragraph journal (100 words) in which you briefly describe the event and your reflections in relation to the topics and materials discussed in class. Graded on completion.

Grading Scale

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

A	94 – 100%		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

Writing Assessment Rubric and Statements

	Excellent (A)	Good (B)	Adequate (C)	Poor (D)	Failing (F)
Content	Significant controlling idea or assertion supported with concrete, substantial, and relevant evidence.	Controlling idea or assertion supported with concrete and relevant evidence.	Controlling idea or assertion general, limited, or obvious; some supporting evidence is repetitious, irrelevant, or sketchy.	Controlling idea or assertion too general, superficial, or vague; evidence insufficient because obvious, aimless, or contradictory.	No discernible idea or assertion controls the random or unexplained details that make up the body of the essay.
Organization and Coherence	Order reveals a sense of necessity, symmetry, and emphasis; paragraphs focused and coherent; logical transitions reinforce the progress of the analysis or argument. Introduction engages initial interest; conclusion supports without repeating.	Order reveals a sense of necessity and emphasis; paragraphs focused and coherent; logical transitions signal changes in direction; introduction engages initial interest; conclusion supports without merely repeating.	Order apparent but not consistently maintained; paragraphs focused and for the most part coherent; transitions functional but often obvious or monotonous. Introduction or conclusion may be mechanical rather than purposeful or insightful.	Order unclear or inappropriate, failing to emphasize central idea; paragraphs jumbled or underdeveloped; transitions unclear, inaccurate, or missing. Introduction merely describes what is to follow; conclusion merely repeats content.	Order and emphasis indiscernible; typographical rather than structural; transitions unclear, inaccurate, or missing. Neither the introduction nor the conclusion satisfies any clear rhetorical purpose.
Effectiveness	Always analyzes the evidence in support of the argument. Interpretation is insightful and persuasive, and displays depth of thought.	Usually analyzes the evidence in support of the argument. Interpretation is persuasive and occasionally insightful.	Sometimes analyzes the evidence in support of the argument. Interpretation is sometimes persuasive but rarely insightful.	Rarely analyzes the evidence in support of the argument. Interpretation may be implausible.	No analysis of evidence is present. Interpretation is either absent or absurd.
Style	Sentences varied, emphatic, and purposeful; diction fresh, precise, economical, and idiomatic; tone complements the subject, conveys the authorial persona, and suits the audience.	Sentences varied, emphatic, and purposeful; diction precise and idiomatic; tone fits the subject, persona, and audience.	Sentences competent but lack emphasis and variety; diction generally correct and idiomatic; tone acceptable for the subject.	Sentences lack necessary emphasis, subordination, and purpose; diction vague or unidiomatic; tone inconsistent with or inappropriate to the subject.	Incoherent, rudimentary, or redundant sentences thwart the meaning of the essay; diction nonstandard or unidiomatic; tone indiscernible or inappropriate to the subject.

Grammar and Punctuation	Grammar, syntax, punctuation, and spelling adhere to the conventions of “edited American English.”	Grammar, syntax, punctuation, and spelling contain no serious deviations from the conventions of “edited American English.”	Content undercut by some deviations from the conventions of “edited American English.”	Frequent mistakes in grammar, syntax, punctuation, and spelling obscure content.	Frequent and serious mistakes in grammar, syntax, punctuation, and spelling make the content unintelligible
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Participation Rubric

	Excellent	Good	Average	Insufficient	Unsatisfactory
Knowledgeable: Shows evidence of having done the assigned work.	5	4	3	2	1
Thoughtful: Evaluates carefully issues raised in assigned work.	5	4	3	2	1
Considerate: Takes the perspective of others into account and listens attentively.	5	4	3	2	1

- The final grade will be based on each student’s individual performance and his/her fulfillment of the course requirements, as stipulated in the syllabus.
- Students are responsible for maintaining duplicated copies of all work submitted and all returned work in this course. Should the need for a review of the grade arises, it is the student’s responsibility to make available all work and documentation.
- The same course rules and expectations apply *equally* to all students—no student is entitled to special consideration or unique treatment. Other extraneous or irrelevant factors, including student’s personal desires or expectations about grades, will not be taken into account. Students should also not expect retroactive changes or other forms of grade modification.
- Students should take all assignments and other course requirements very seriously. No incomplete grades will be given, except in very exceptional circumstances, in which case the students should contact the instructor no later than a week before the last day of classes.

Class Schedule

Week 1 (08/24) Introduction and Course Overview

Summary: During the first week, we will go over the syllabus, introduce the course materials, structures, class goals and policies, as well as introducing the instructor and students and some warm-up excises.

Films: *Rain* (Joris Ivens, 1929, Netherlands, 12 mins, shown in class)

Readings:
--course syllabus

--Joris Ivens, *The Camera and I* (International Publishers, 1974), 34-40.

Week 2 (08/29-08/31) What Is Film, What Is Documentary?: Concept and Definition

Summary: What is film? What is documentary? What does a (documentary) look like? How to read and understand film and media? We begin by surveying the basic concepts, definitions, and terminologies in film and media studies, which lays the groundwork for a comprehensive and in-depth study of the important attributes and roles of documentary and media. We will also show a sampling of early films and the first films of Lumiere Brothers, French inventors and the earliest filmmakers in history who created the first number of motion pictures.

Films: early short films by Lumiere Brothers (1895, France, shown in class), *The Great Train Robbery* (Edwin S. Porter, 1903, U.S., 12 mins, shown in class)

Readings:

--Bill Nichols, "How Can We Define Documentary Film?" in *Introduction to Documentary* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 1-41.

--Ian Mundell, "Joris Ivens: Great Director Profile." *Senses of Cinema*,

<http://sensesofcinema.com/2005/great-directors/ivens/>

Hi! Self-introduction and Entry Interview Due: 08/31

Week 3 (09/05-09/07) The Origins of Documentary: International Pioneers and Traditions

Summary: How did (documentary) filmmaking get started? The first films were documentary in nature and were also called "actualities" comprising documents of real life and scenes, travelogues, and ethnographic films created by the international pioneers, shot in various locations (many of which explored the exotic lands and indigenous people), and shown around the world. This week, we will look at and discuss the best-known example of *Nanook of the North* made by Robert Flaherty, regarded as the founding father who initiated and established the documentary tradition in history.

Films: *Nanook of the North* (Robert Flaherty, 1922, U.S., 79 mins, excerpts shown in class)

Readings:

--Bill Nichols, "How Did Documentary Filmmaking Get Started?" in *Introduction to Documentary* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 120-141.

--Keith Beattie, "Men with Movie Cameras: Flaherty and Grierson," in *Documentary Screens: Nonfiction Film and Television* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 26-43.

Week 4 (09/12-09/14) Soviet Film, Montage, and European Avant-garde

Summary: By the 1930s film fledged with various techniques and styles, one of which is best known as "montage" credited to Sergei Eisenstein whose most famous works are *The Battleship of Potemkin* (1925) and *October: Ten Days that Shook the World* (1927). Several documentary traditions also emerged: the romantic/naturalist tradition, the realist/continental tradition, the newsreel tradition, the propagandist tradition. Some early filmmakers such as Joris Ivens, Walter Ruttmann, and Dziga Vertov were interested in creating visual rhythms and capturing city life and modernity through their highly experimental, formalist films, thus contributing to the formation of a particular subgenre—city symphony. Key concepts to be discussed include: montage, kino-eye, city symphony, docudrama, realism, urban modernity.

Films: *The Man with a Movie Camera* (Dziga Vertov, 1929, Soviet Union, 68 mins, excerpts shown in class)

Readings:

--Dziga Vertov, "We: Variant of a Manifesto (1922)," in *Kino-Eye: The Writings of Dziga Vertov*, ed. Annette Michelson, trans. Kevin O'Brien (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984), 5-9.

--Richard Pipes, "Culture as Propaganda," in *Russia under the Bolshevik Regime* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 282-336.

Week 5 (09/19-09/21) The British Documentary Movement

Summary: This week's readings and viewings continue to explore another pioneer and founding figure in documentary history, John Grierson, and the British documentary movement he has led. One of Grierson's main contributions was to coin the term and define documentary as "the creative treatment of actuality." Grierson was a visionary who saw mass communication and filmmaking as a powerful tool to disseminate information and address the public and established the National Film Board of Canada, one of the most influential public producers and distributors for documentaries until now. His notion of documentary as a project with a social purpose has profoundly influenced many others and later filmmakers all over the world, thereby shaping the dominant trends of documentary, journalism, and mass communication today.

Films: *Housing Problems* (John Grierson, 1935, U.K., 16 mins, shown in class), *Drifters* (John Grierson, 1929, U.K., 61 mins, excerpts shown in class)

Readings:

--Patricia Aufderheide, *Documentary Film: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 23-76.

--John Grierson, "First Principles of Documentary (1932-1934)," in *Nonfiction Film Theory and Criticism*, ed. Richard Barsam (Clarke, 1976), 19-30.

Week 6 (09/26-09/28) German Propaganda, World War II, and the Holocaust

Summary: This week students are exposed to propagandist films made by Leni Riefenstahl in Nazi Germany in comparison to government propaganda and political films of the U.S. during WWII, as seen in the *Why We Fight* series made by a famous Hollywood director Frank Capra. How have filmmakers invoked cultural forms and the common symbols and values and turned them in the service of propaganda? Are propagandist films effective? Do propagandist films have their own artistic values? We will also talk about the cinematic documentation and reflections on the Holocaust.

Films: *Why We Fight: The Battle of Russia* (Frank Capra, 1943, U.S., 83 mins, excerpts shown in class), *Triumph of the Will* (dir. Leni Riefenstahl, 1935, Germany, 114 mins, recommended)

Readings:

--David Welch, *Propaganda and the German Cinema: 1933-1945* (I.B. Tauris: London, 2001), 123-158.

--Frank Capra, *The Name Above the Title* (New York: Macmillan, 1971), 325-342.

Week 7 (10/03-10/05) Development of the Sociopolitical Documentary in the U.S. and Its Reflections on the International Affairs

Summary: Pare Lorentz was the first and foremost socio-political documentary filmmaker in the United States. His most important works, *The Plow That Broke the Plains* and *The River*, known as the New Deal films, address the pressing social problems during the Great Depression and leverage the support for the initiatives by the Roosevelt administration. Sparking a broader

movement of American documentary, Lorentz's films are also part of a larger effort to construct a national identity and public culture in the 1930s and 1940s.

Films: *The Plow That Broke the Plains* (Pare Lorentz, 1935, U.S., 25 mins, shown in class), *The River* (Pare Lorentz, 1936, U.S., 31 mins, shown in class), *Why We Fight: The Battle of China* (Frank Capra, 1944, U.S., 65 mins, excerpts shown in class), *The 400 Million* (Joris Ivens, 1939, Netherlands, 52 mins, recommended)

Readings:

--Bill Nichols, "What Makes Documentaries Engaging and Persuasive?" in *Introduction to Documentary* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 94-119.

--Bill Nichols, "How Can We Differentiate among Documentaries? Categories, Models, and the Expository and Poetic Modes of Documentary Film," in *Introduction to Documentary* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 142-171.

Week 8 (10/10-10/12) French New Wave, Cinema Verité, and Direct Cinema After the War

Summary: A major trend toward realism in motion pictures and non-traditional filmmaking occurred in Italy in the late 1940s with Italian neo-realism and in France in the 1950s with the French New Wave. Some of the changes in the film industry and the development of new technology following WWII led to entirely new approaches to filmmaking. Jean Rouch called it cinema verité. In America it became known as direct cinema—the so-called "fly on the wall" or observational cinema.

Films: *Chronicle of a Summer* (Jean Rouch and Edgar Morin, 1961, France, 90 mins, excerpts shown in class), *High School* (Frederick Wiseman, 1968, U.S., 75 mins, excerpts shown in class)

Readings:

--Jean Rouch, "The Camera and Man," *Studies in Visual Communication* 1.1 (Fall 1974): 37-44.

--Keith Beattie, "The Truth of the Matter: Cinema Verite and Direct Cinema," in *Documentary Screens: Nonfiction Film and Television* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 83-104.

Week 9 (10/17-10/19) Civil Rights, Gay Rights, the Women's Movement, and Identities

Summary: This session concerns the important historical moments and sociopolitical transformations after the war and the ways how documentary and media play a crucial role in chronicling and bringing about the social changes and promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion, and speak to identities at particular junctures. Discussions are devoted to the civil rights movement, the women's movement, and the gay and counterculture movement in the States and as well as in the other parts of the world.

Films: *The Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter* (Connie Field, 1980, U.S., 65 mins, excerpts shown in class), *The Times of Harvey Milk* (Rob Epstein, 1984, U.S., 90 mins, excerpts shown in class), *Génération 68* (Simon Brook, 2008, France, 53 mins, recommended), *Period. End of Sentence* (Rayka Zehtabchi, 2018, India & U.S., 26 mins, recommended)

Readings:

--Toby Miller, "The Truth Is a Murky Path: Technologies of Citizenship and the Visual," in *Technologies of Truth: Cultural Citizenship and the Popular Media* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 182-215.

--Jo Freeman, "From Suffrage to Women's Liberation: Feminism in Twentieth Century America," in *Women: A Feminist Perspective*, edited by Jo Freeman (Mayfield: Mountain View, CA, 1995), 509-528.

Mid-term Exam in class, 10/19

Week 10 (10/24-10/26) Capitalism, Corporation, and Globalization

Summary: With the wide and accelerating flow of labor, media, technology, and transnational capital, how has globalization changed today's world? And how, then, have documentary and varied forms of media addressed and reflected upon this global phenomenon? Examples of two internationally acclaimed films, *Capitalism: A Love Story* and *American Factory*, will be closely examined.

Films: *Capitalism: A Love Story* (Michael Moore, 2009, U.S., 127 mins, excerpts shown in class), *American Factory* (Steven Bognar and Julia Reichert, 2019, U.S., 110 mins, recommended)

Readings:

--Bill Nichols. "How Can We Describe the Observational, Participatory, Reflexive, and Performative Modes of Documentary Film?" in *Introduction to Documentary* (Bloomington: Indianan University Press, 2010), 172-211.

--Bill Nichols, "How Have Documentaries Addressed Social and Political Issues?" in *Introduction to Documentary* (Bloomington: Indianan University Press, 2010), 212-252.

Week 11 (10/31-11/02) The New Chinese Documentary Movement: Independent Filmmaking for the Public Record

Summary: The New Chinese Documentary Movement began in the early 1990s with a group of independent filmmakers who hoped to reveal a raw social reality different from that presented in the official or commercial media. To do so, they turned their camera to the lower strata, subaltern groups, and people living an alternative lifestyle. The works of cinema verité and direct cinema have been identified as a major inspiration whereas they developed a new observational style of "on the spot realism" (*jishi zhuyi*).

Films: *Bumming in Beijing: The Last Dreamers* (WU Wenguang, 1990, China, 70 mins, excerpts shown in class), *Disorder* (dir. HUANG Weikai, 2008, China, 58 mins, excerpts shown in class)

Readings:

--WU Wenguang, "DV: Individual Filmmaking," trans. Cathryn Clayton, *Cinema Journal* 46.1 (Fall 2006): 136-140.

--Chris Berry and Lisa Rofel, "Alternative Archive: China's Independent Documentary Culture," in *The New Chinese Documentary Film Movement: For the Public Record*, eds. Chris Berry, LU Xinyu, and Lisa Rofel (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2010), 135-154.

Film Review Due, 11/02

Week 12 (11/07-11/09) Ecocinema, Crisis Documentary, and the Path of Healing in an Interconnected World

Summary: In this weekly session, we investigate how a wide range of film and media have engaged the global environmental and ecological issues and crises of public and health emergency, manifesting a biocentric approach to nature, humanity, and modernity in this interconnected world.

Film: *The Tsunami and the Cherry Blossom* (dir. Lucy Walker, 2011, U.S. & Japan, 39 mins, shown in class), *Koyaanisqatsi* (Godfrey Reggio, 1982, U.S., 86 mins, excerpts shown in class), *Under the Dome* (Chai Jing, 2015, China, 104 mins, recommended)

Reading:

--Patricia Aufderheide, *Documentary Film: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 77-143.

--Cui, Shuqin. "Chai Jing's *Under the Dome*: A Multimedia Documentary in the Digital Age." *Journal of Chinese Cinemas* 11.1 (March 2017): 30-45.

Week 13 (11/14-11/16) DV Revolution, Documentary/Media Activism, and Social Change Around Us and the World

Summary: With the rise of digital technology and the rapid and large-scale change in the world, filmmaking has never been as portable, dynamic, and pervasive as it is today. More than ever, camera is so closely integrated with everyday life that it becomes an important tool not only to document the social reality but also to advance changes to promote a new concept of "media activism."

Film: *Fahrenheit 9/11* (Michael Moore, 2004, U.S., 122 mins, excerpts shown in class), *Ai Weiwei Never Sorry* (Alison Klayman, 2012, U.S. & China, 91 mins, excerpts shown in class)

Readings:

--Barry Natusch and Beryl Hawkins, "Mapping Nichols' Modes in Documentary Film: *Ai Weiwei: Never Sorry* and *Helvetica*," *The IAFOR Journal of Media, Communication and Film* 2.1 (Summer 2014): 103-127.

--Sergio Rizzo, "Why Less Is Still Moore: Celebrity and the Reactive Politics of *Fahrenheit 9/11*," *Film Quarterly* 59.2 (2005): 32-39.

Final Project Proposal and References Due, 11/14

Week 14 (11/21) Production, Distribution, International Film Festival, and the Crossovers

Summary: What is a good documentary film? How can documentaries find the balance between delivering sociopolitical message, producing popular films, and creating artistic pieces? Can we and how do we draw distinctions between different modes of documentaries and break down the binaries between documentary and narrative, fact and fiction, East and West, national and international?

Films: *Close-Up* (Abbas Kiarostami, 1990, Iran, 98 mins, excerpts shown in class), *24 City* (Jia Zhangke, 2008, China, 107 mins, excerpts shown in class)

Reading:

--James Blake Ewing, "Fiction Criticizing Reality: Abbas Kiarostami and the Cracked Windshield of Cinema," *Cinema Journal* 3.1 (2014): 28-46.

--Hsiu-Chuang Deppman, "Reading Docufiction: Jia Zhangke's *24 City*," *Journal of Chinese Cinemas* 8.3 (2014): 188-208.

Week 15 (11/28-11/30) Youth, Popular Culture, and Social Media in the Digital, Global Age

Summary: This session looks at how youth consume, create, and use digital space and media for social interaction and identity construction and how the ubiquitous screens and media cultures have impacted and penetrated our lives in a new era of digital globalization.

Film: *China Remix* (Dorian Carlin-Jones and Melissa Lefkowitz, U.S. & China, 2015, 29 mins, shown in class), *People's Republic of Desire* (WU Hao, 2018, China, 94 mins, excerpts shown in class), *Minding the Gap* (Bing Liu, 2018, U.S., 93 mins, recommended)

Reading:

--Bill Nichols, "How Can We Write Effectively about Documentary?" in *Introduction to Documentary* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 253-271.

--Xiao, Ying. “‘Hip Hop Is My Knife, Rap Is My Sword’: Hip Hop Network and the Changing Landscape of Image and Sound Making.” In *China in the Mix: Cinema, Sound, and Popular Culture in the Age of Globalization*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2017, 195-232.
Entry of Museum Visit/Event/Talk Due, 11/30

Week 16 (12/05) Conclusion and Final Review

Summary: During the last week, we will summarize the key themes and conceptual issues covered in the class. Students are invited to share their ideas and concerns for their final projects as well as for the class and receive feedbacks from the instructor and peers. Some of the videos and texts such as Slavoj Žižek’s *Pandemic! COVID-19 Shakes the World* will be briefly presented to provoke final thoughts about the continued role and changing landscape of film and media in the post-COVID era.

Film: *In the Same Breadth* (Nanfu Wang, 2021, U.S. & China, 95 mins, recommended)

Exit Evaluation Due, 12/05

Final Project Due, 12/11

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

At the end of this course, students will be expected to have achieved the Quest and General Education learning outcomes as follows:

Content: *Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories and methodologies used within the discipline(s).*

- Identify, describe, and explain the history, theories, and methodologies scholars have taken to understand documentary film and media; identify, describe, and explain the nature and function of documentary and media to address social and political issues and represent reality; identify, describe, and explain the persuasive techniques and aesthetic styles in documentary and media production. (Content SLOs for Gen Ed H & N & Q1, assessed through class participation, presentations, exam)

Critical Thinking: *Students carefully and logically analyze information from multiple perspectives and develop reasoned solutions to problems within the discipline(s).*

- Analyze and evaluate the various sociological and economic perspectives that attempt to explain social change and identity; analyze and evaluate the impact of media on society; analyze and evaluate documentary filmmaking, production, and distribution across Asia, Europe, and the United States in a global context; analyze and evaluate documentary’s intersections with technology and various forms of media such as docudrama, propaganda, activist videos, multiple screens, and digital social media (Critical Thinking SLOs for Gen Ed H & N & Q1, assessed through class participation, presentations, essays, final research project proposal and annotated bibliography, final research paper)

Communication: *Students communicate knowledge, ideas and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline(s).*

- Develop and present clear and effective responses to the films, texts, theories, and essential questions addressed in the course. Students gain understandings and are able to present their understandings of film and media texts, frame and integrate scholarly work,

and incorporate the socio-historical cultural reading in a clear and effective manner. (Communication SLOs for Gen Ed H & N & Q1, assessed through class participation, presentations, essays, final research project proposal and annotated bibliography, final research paper)

Connection: *Students connect course content with meaningful critical reflection on their intellectual, personal, and professional development at UF and beyond.*

- Develop a broad view of film and media to find the links between different genres, countries, and representations; cultivate a comparative, transnational, and interdisciplinary perspective; facilitate the students' understanding of identities and enhanced appreciation of diverse cultures and societies on a larger global scale, which can serve as constructive framework for reflecting on their own social mores, cultural norms, and intellectual development at UF and beyond. (Connection SLOs for Gen Ed H & N & Q1, assessed through class participation, presentations, essays, reflection activity, experiential learning, final research paper)

Class Policies

Attendance Policy

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/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

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.

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/>.

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 a number of 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.

Counseling and Wellness Center

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

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.

In-Class Recordings

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Important Classroom Etiquette

All cell phones and hand-held devices must be silenced and off the desk during class time. Laptops and ipads are allowed to be used for the purpose of our class only. It is important to recognize that the online classroom is in fact a classroom and we follow the same rules of respectful interaction as you would in a face-to-face course. This is especially important in a remote situation, and certain behaviors are expected when you communicate with both your

peers and your instructors. These guidelines for online behavior and interaction are known as *netiquette*. A complete version of Netiquette Guide for Online Courses is available in the files of Canvas. Be sure to read and understand the document thoroughly, which will be applied to the class.

Feedback and Communications

Please be sure that the course makes best effort to provide various forms of faculty and peer support available to students. Students are encouraged to reach out to and communicate with the instructor and classmates via emails or other appropriate measures whenever needed. The instructor will reply to emails within two business days or sooner. Constructive feedback is provided within a reasonable time of assignment completion with positive reinforcement and suggestions for improvements. It is frequently provided throughout the semester to help students progress and succeed in the course. On the other hand, students can provide valuable insight into ways to continue and enhance the success of the course, which will be incorporated in an ongoing basis to help plan instruction and assessment of student learning throughout the semester.

Campus Resources

- *U Matter, We Care*: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- *Counseling and Wellness Center*: [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- *Student Health Care Center*: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or [visit the Student Health Care Center website](#).
- *University Police Department*: [Visit UF Police Department website](#) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- *UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center*: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; [Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website](#).
- *E-learning technical support*: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
- *Career Connections Center*: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.
- *Library Support*: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
- *Teaching Center*: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
- *Writing Studio*: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.