

Video Production II - FDMA 2996 - Section 501

Syllabus - REMOTE - Spring 2023

Instructor: André Callot

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Credit Hours

This is a 3 credit-hour course. Students are expected to work on their own and in groups to complete assignments using school-supplied resources within the timeframe outlined for each assignment. The course is remote and asynchronous, meaning that class work will be turned in through the Blackboard Learn website (learn.unm.edu) by midnight Mountain Time the night before the class in which the assignment is due.

Course Learning Objectives

An in-depth exploration of digital video production, including camera, lighting and sound production techniques for studio and field production. This class will help the filmmaker visualize and execute a video production in a real-world team environment. Each student will produce both a narrative short and a documentary short with their classmates, and work to refine these projects through group critique.

Course objectives include:

- Conceive, plan and produce a narrative video short.
- Research, shoot and edit a documentary video short.
- Work with colleagues to refine video projects through critique and revision.

Grades

Grades are based on participation in class critiques and discussions, as well as weekly assignments and two final projects (documentary and narrative). Projects that satisfy the stated requirements and which are turned in on time will receive full credit. Late projects will be docked a letter grade for each week they are late. This is a contract-based course, meaning that any assignment that is turned in that satisfies the assignment description will receive full points, and will not be graded based on "quality."

Video project assignments are to be uploaded directly to the Learn Blackboard Discussion Board to the appropriate assignment, using the Kaltura media management system. Letter grades correspond to point totals:

A: 90-100% B: 80-89% C: 70-79% D: 61-69%

Office Hours

Please email me (acallot66@unm.edu) before January 30, 2023 to schedule a one-hour consultation session to occur before February 6, 2023. We will discuss your interest in the course, your hopes for covering specific subject matter, and your access to library resources. Additional sessions are available for scheduling upon request.

I am available on Fridays between 1 PM and 4 PM for additional meetings. If you would like to meet with me but haven't scheduled a time, you can email me during this weekly period for an immediate meeting, if I am not already meeting with a student.

Class Participation

A portion of the student's final grade (defined above) will depend on the student's weekly participation in class discussions on the Blackboard Learn Discussion Board for this course. Failure to contribute significantly to the weekly forums created for each class will result in a lower final grade for the course. The student's final grade will be reduced by 1.25% for each week you fail to post responses to the prompts in the Discussion Board.

Production Assignments

The student will complete nine production assignments as described below, post to the course Discussion Board, and comment on other students' work in a timely manner.

Course Agreement

Please complete, sign and email to me a copy of the Course Agreement, available at the end of this syllabus, before the start of the second week of this course.

Course Access

This course will occur entirely on Blackboard Learn. A reliable internet connection and a computer capable of accessing the Blackboard Learn online platform are required for this course. For assigned readings provided as hyperlinks or PDF downloads, appropriate additional software for accessing class materials may also be required. Video conference appointments will be conducted on Zoom, using a webcam, a microphone and headphones. Film screenings will occur on Blackboard Learn, which may require minimum internet data speeds. Please test your internet speeds in the first week of class and report issues to me.

Privacy, Equal Access and Title IX

Please inform me of your needs regarding disability as soon as possible to ensure that your needs are met in a timely manner. In an effort to meet obligations under Title IX, UNM Faculty are considered responsible employees. This designation requires that any report made to a faculty member regarding sexual misconduct or gender discrimination must be reported to the Office of Equal Opportunity and the Title IX Coordinator. For information on accessibility at UNM-Valencia, Title IX and student privacy, please [click this link](#).

[UNM-Valencia's Equal Access Services](#)

Plagiarism

The University reserves the right to take disciplinary action, including dismissal, against any student who is found responsible for academic dishonesty. Any student who has been judged to have engaged in academic dishonesty in coursework may receive a reduced or failing grade for the work in question and/or for the course. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, dishonesty in quizzes, tests or assignments; claiming credit for work not done or done by others; hindering the academic work of other students; and misrepresenting academic or professional qualifications within or outside the University.

Student Resources

For tutoring resources, information about the library, career counseling, financial aid and other student resources, please [click this link](#).

Assignment Summary:

Class Participation - Each week, 20% of final grade. Comment on discussion boards in all topics, including discussion of student work, discussion of example clips, and discussion of the week's lesson.

Narrative Pitch	- Due in Class 2 (January 23, 2023)	10% of final grade.
Narrative Pre-Production	- Due in Class 5 (February 13, 2023)	10% of final grade.
Narrative First Cut	- Due in Class 7 (February 27, 2023)	10% of final grade.
Narrative Final Cut	- Due in Class 9 (March 20, 2023)	10% of final grade.
Documentary Pitch	- Due in Class 10 (March 27, 2023)	10% of final grade.
Doc. Pre-Production	- Due in Class 12 (April 10, 2023)	10% of final grade.
Documentary First Cut	- Due in Class 14 (April 24, 2023)	10% of final grade.
Documentary Final Cut	- Due in Class 16 (May 8, 2023)	10% of final grade.

School Production Resources

Production resources for use on course assignments will be available for check-out from the UNM Valencia library, based on availability. The student will reserve production equipment ahead of time and return the equipment to the UNM Valencia library according to the return deadlines set by the library. The student will return the equipment in the condition in which it was checked out, as determined by the UNM Valencia librarian. The student will remove batteries before returning equipment. The student will replace quick-release plates on tripods before returning equipment. The student will pack camera bags, light kits and other equipment in a responsible and professional way, preventing unnecessary damage to the equipment. The student will return any media (such as SD cards and/or hard drives) that are included in the camera kit, and will backup their footage before returning equipment. Failure to respect these instructions may result in suspension or revocation of privileges as determined by the UNM Valencia librarian.

Mental Health and Counseling Services

UNM-Valencia has one part-time mental health counselor, Arturo Fierro. His hours are Wednesdays, 3pm - 6pm and he is located in the SCC (Student Community Center) Room 206. (phone # and email will be shared via Learn). He is able to see patients in-person or in Zoom (this may change to virtual only as the pandemic continues to change). He may have more hours throughout the semester, but this is the current info. I will update this via Learn if/when it changes. Also, here is a list of services available in Valencia County and around the state: <https://valencia.unm.edu/students/student-resources/index.html>

Additional Contact Information

Program Chair	-	Alexa Wheeler	-	alexa08@unm.edu
Department Chair	-	Justin Bendell	-	jbendell@unm.edu



Week One: January 18, 2023 - Writing the Narrative Short

Students will conceive a treatment for a short film. Students will consider plot vs. story, dialog vs. visuals, character, setting, writing for available resources, tempo, production values, the discursive environment of student filmmaking, personal biases.

ASSIGNMENT ONE - Students will present a treatment for a narrative short film that will be between five and ten minutes long. Students will include a brief pitch in addition to a more detailed presentation of the project. Due no later than 12:01 AM on the morning of January 23, 2023, posted through Kaltura on the course Discussion Board.

SCREENING: *Thirty-Two Short Films About Glenn Gould* (1993)

Discussion - What kinds of stories work best in films that are shorter than ten minutes?

Week Two: January 23, 2023 - Pitching Your Film

Students will learn how to communicate creative ideas effectively through a film pitch. Students will consider brevity, specificity, appeal, scope, and the incorporation of constructive criticism from other students.

ASSIGNMENT TWO - Students will prepare pre-production documents for their short. This will include a comprehensive shooting schedule, a budget, a cast and crew list, a list of locations, a finished script (incorporating the notes from other students) and a shot list and/or storyboard. Due no later than 12:01 AM on the morning of February 13, 2023, posted through Kaltura on the course Discussion Board.

SCREENING: *The Player* (1992)

Discussion - What are the advantages and disadvantages of the "logline" as a pitch?

Week Three: January 30, 2023 - Rewriting

Students will learn principles of rewriting a narrative film script. Subjects will include "show don't tell," avoiding expository dialog, starting and ending a scene in the middle, incorporating surprise and avoiding cliché.

SCREENING: *Barton Fink* (1991)

Discussion - What are the advantages and disadvantages of brutal rewrites?

Week Four: February 6, 2023 - Pre-Production Documentation

Students will learn the fundamentals of pre-production documentation, including shooting schedule, budget, cast and crew list, list of locations, rehearsal, shot list and/or storyboard.

NARRATIVE FIRST CUT: Students will present a first cut of their narrative short, between five and ten minutes long. Due no later than 12:01 AM on the morning of February 27, 2023, posted through Kaltura on the course Discussion Board.

SCREENING: *Living in Oblivion* (1995)

Discussion - To what extent can a film production be planned, and to what extent must it be improvised?

Week Five: February 13, 2023 - Location Shooting

Students will learn to implement techniques for shooting on location. Subjects will include establishing call times, providing breaks and food, adjusting your schedule on the fly, accounting for weather, transporting cast and crew to and from a location, negotiating with property management of a location, accounting for environmental noise, and making a location look like a specific place through set dressing.

SCREENING: *Hearts of Darkness: A Filmmaker's Apocalypse* (1991)

Discussion - What are the emotional consequences of the stress of filmmaking? What can a director do to mitigate them?

Week Six: February 20, 2023 - Editing

Students will learn to implement high-level editing concepts, and produce a first cut of their narrative short to professional standards of image and sound. Students will color correct footage, sync audio, mix audio, and post their first cuts the following week using the Kaltura media management system on Blackboard Learn.

NARRATIVE FINAL CUT - Students will incorporate notes and reshoots into a final cut of their film. Due no later than 12:01 AM on the morning of March 20, 2023, uploaded via Kaltura to the course Discussion Board.

SCREENING: *Wag the Dog* (1997)

Discussion - How can reality be constructed through editing, and what does that say about film as compared to reality?

Week Seven: February 27, 2023 - Reshoots

Students will learn how to determine what footage is necessary in reshoots. Subjects will include identifying bad audio, recognizing when a particular angle would improve a sequence, determining the potential for improving a performance, maintaining continuity and finding creative ways to accommodate cast schedules (using stand-ins). Class will discuss first cuts of student work and provide constructive feedback.

SCREENING: *Point Break* (1991)

Discussion - What are the limits of "coverage" vs. having a moment-by-moment visual breakdown of a sequence in mind before shooting?

Week Eight: March 6, 2023 - Second Round of Editing

Students will learn to brutally eliminate weak sections of a project, use techniques to account for deficiencies in existing assets, and finalize the edit. Subjects will include voiceover, simple animation, concepts of title graphic design, use of music, ADR, finalizing sound design, and exporting/distribution.

SCREENING: *Broadcast News* (1987)

Discussion - How much can be achieved in editing, and how much should you expect to achieve in shooting?

Week Nine: March 20, 2023 (Week of March 13 is Spring Break) - Research

Students will learn principles of documentary research. Subjects will include conducting initial interviews, acquiring archival footage, documenting a live event, academic research techniques, formulating a pitch, and consideration of perspective and biases.

ASSIGNMENT THREE: Students will conceive of a ten-minute documentary video project and pitch it to the class. Due no later than 12:01 AM on the morning of March 27, 2023.

SCREENING: *The Thin Blue Line* (1988), *The War Room* (1993)

Discussion - What is "truth," and what access do we have to truth claims as filmmakers and as documentarians?

Week Ten: March 27, 2023 - Documentary Pitch

Students will pitch their documentary video projects to the class. Students will contribute constructive feedback to their classmates. Students will incorporate notes and feedback into their documentary production plans.

ASSIGNMENT FOUR: Students will produce pre-production documents for their documentary production, including a shooting schedule, an outline of the film, a list of interview subjects, a narration script, a budget, a post-production timeline and a list of production collaborators and crew. Due no later than 12:01 AM on the morning of April 10, 2023.

SCREENING: *The Celluloid Closet* (1995), *American Dream* (1990)

Discussion - How do archival footage, interview footage and live production footage interact with each other in the concept phase of a documentary?

Week Eleven: April 3, 2023 - Reformulating

Students will incorporate peer feedback into their pre-production planning before submitting their pre-production documents in week twelve's class.

DOCUMENTARY FIRST CUT: Students will shoot and edit a first cut of a ten-minute documentary video. Due no later than 12:01 AM on the morning of April 24, 2023.

SCREENING: *Paris is Burning* (1990), *Madonna: Truth or Dare* (1991)

Discussion - In what way do documentary filmmakers exploit and/or harm their subjects, and what can be done to mitigate that?

Week Twelve: April 10, 2023 - Documentary Pre-Production

Students will learn to implement documentary pre-production techniques, including obtaining release forms from interview subjects, how to prepare for an interview, location scouting, and obtaining rights to archival footage.

SCREENING: *Hoop Dreams* (1994), *Level Five* (1997)

Discussion - What level of preparation is sufficient for a project that, by definition, is exploratory and investigative by nature?

Week Thirteen: April 17, 2023 - Documentary Production

Students will learn to implement documentary production techniques, such as lighting and sound for interviews, confirming details obtained from an interview, shooting handheld on location, and securing footage.

SCREENING: One Day in the Life of Andrei Arsenevich (1987), Crumb (1994)

Discussion - What is an interview, how do you know what questions to ask, and why are interviews such an important part of many documentaries?

Week Fourteen: April 24, 2023 - Documentary Editing

Students will screen and discuss first cuts of their documentaries. Students will learn documentary editing techniques such as pulling selects and assembling a paper edit from timecode. Students will screen and discuss first cuts of their documentaries.

DOCUMENTARY FINAL CUT: Students will incorporate feedback from their peers, shoot additional footage, and produce a final version of their ten-minute documentary. Due no later than 12:01 AM on the morning of May 8, 2023.

SCREENING: Public Housing (1997)

Discussion - How do you determine when you have enough assets to call your documentary finished?

Week Fifteen: May 1, 2023 - Documentary Re-shoots

Students will learn how to complete their documentary through shooting and editing additional footage, recording and incorporating voiceover, and adding graphics and titles.

SCREENING: 35 Up (1991), Frantz Fanon: Black Skin, White Mask (1995)

Discussion - What does documentary have to learn from narrative, and vice versa?

Week Sixteen: May 8, 2023 - Final Projects Due

Final documentary projects will be screened and discussed, in addition to any late work.



COURSE AGREEMENT

I, the undersigned, commit to fulfill the expectations of this course as laid out in this syllabus, specifically regarding these requirements:

1. I will participate each week in the course Discussion Board in Blackboard Learn, providing constructive criticism of my fellow students' completed assignments. I will interact in a meaningful way with my fellow students while demonstrating respect and courtesy. I will demonstrate my understanding of each week's lesson by commenting meaningfully on the week's film discussion, in a timely manner.
2. I will complete each week's production assignment on time, with an eye toward the week's lesson and a progression over the semester toward refinement of my personal understanding of digital media production as a discipline. I will post on the Discussion Board with any relevant thoughts or questions that arise through my completion of the week's assignment.
3. I will complete my final narrative and documentary projects and turn them in before the deadline, having acknowledged here that I am aware before the course begins that these assignments constitute a combined 20% of my grade and have a deadline of May 8, 2023. My final projects will reflect the skills and concepts I learn as I progress through this course.
4. I will meet one-on-one with the course instructor before February 6, 2023 to discuss my goals for the course, my potential concepts for my final project, and my ability to use school resources to successfully fulfill my obligations outlined in the points above.
5. I will note at the bottom of this agreement the name of the director of the film from week fourteen's screening, along with one additional film that he made (my choice), which I will watch and describe in the course Discussion Board in the context of one of our weekly lessons.

If at any point during this semester I become aware of conditions in my life that make any of these requirements difficult or impossible to fulfill, I pledge to contact my instructor through email (acallot66@unm.edu) to discuss what mitigations may be enacted to provide for my continued success in my education at the University of New Mexico.

Full Name

UNM ID

DATE