Documentary Studies Program Courses  
Spring 2015

KEEP IN MIND THAT THE BELOW COURSES ARE IN ADDITION TO THE DOZENS OF OTHER COURSES THAT ARE OFFERED BY ART, JOURNALISM, HISTORY, COMMUNICATION, MUSIC, AND WOMEN'S STUDIES THAT ALSO FULFILL DOC. STUDIES REQUIREMENTS. See full list at: http://www.albany.edu/docstudies/major-minor-honors.php.

To see if a course is being offered during a specific semester, go to: http://www.albany.edu/registrar/schedule-of-classes.php.

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DOC 227 (8846) (3crs)  
Civil Rights: A Documentary Approach
Bernard, Sheila (sbernard@albany.edu)
Thu 5:45pm-8:35pm
LC 03B
*Cross-listed with HIS 227 (8835)

This course looks at the intersection of history and media as it pertains to the American civil rights movement. Focusing on the landmark archival television series Eyes on the Prize and on other, more recent documentary programs, we'll study not only the events depicted on screen but also the ways in which these events were documented (print, still and motion photography, music and more), archived, and later shaped into public media intended to entertain as well as inform. Students are expected to do a significant amount of reading and some writing in preparation for each week's class.
Prerequisite(s): Successful completion of at least one UAlbany course in U.S. history strongly recommended.

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DOC 324 (7631) (3crs)  
Introduction to Documentary Photography
VanAcker, Katherine (kvanacker@albany.edu)
Thurs 2:45pm-5:35pm
ES 108
*Cross listed with JRL 324; *Meets with HIS 530 (7943)

From Matthew Brady's Civil War photographs, to the work of photographers of the U.S. Farm Security Administration in the 1930s, and through the stunning and emotive images of contemporary social, ethnographic, scientific, and war photographers, documentary photography has experienced a long and vigorous development. In this introductory hands-on workshop, students will examine the long heritage of documentary photography as well as the practical lessons to be learned from renowned practitioners. Students will research and photograph a documentary issue as part of a project that will be sustained throughout the semester (students may choose to also incorporate video components). Students should have a working knowledge of computers and of the fundamentals of digital camera operation, and are required to have access to a digital SLR camera with a zoom lens and flash.
Prerequisite(s): restricted to Documentary Studies Program and Journalism majors and minors. Others may be admitted space permitting, and with permission from the instructor.

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This course explores the history, theory, aesthetics, and modes of the documentary film genre. Through viewing, reading about, and writing about works by documentary filmmakers past and present, students will explore the elements that contribute to the creation of informative and powerful films, with special emphasis on historically-focused films. We'll look at the techniques documentary filmmakers utilize to communicate historical ideas in cinematic form, whether for theatrical, broadcast, or non-broadcasts venues. We'll also explore issues surrounding the preservation of and access to historical audio-visual materials, such as intellectual property rights, the privatization of archives, and fair use exceptions to copyright. Students who have taken HIS 405 in past semesters may not enroll.

Prerequisite(s): Junior or senior standing and completion of at least one UAlbany course in U.S. history.

DOC 394 (8847) (3crs)   Workshop in Oral History
McCormick, Susan (smccormick@albany.edu)
Mon, Wed 2:45pm-4:05pm
SLG 024
* Cross-listed with HIS 394 (7223)

This course offers students a broad introduction to the history, theory, and practice of oral history, including the use of oral history in documentary production, public history projects, and historical research. Students will learn the skills needed for interviewing, recording, and editing oral histories while exploring the ethical, legal, social, and cultural issues that surround these practices. This class provides students with the opportunity to engage in a wide-range of community-based oral history projects; in addition to hands-on experience students will further develop their understanding through critical examination of documentary works and historical texts based heavily on oral history interviews. The skills taught in this class are especially useful for those aspiring to enter careers that emphasize interpersonal communication: journalism, communications, documentary media production, law, medicine, social work, and anthropological fieldwork.

DOC 406 (6659) (4crs)   Practicum in Historical Documentary Filmmaking
Harris, Rob (Robharris77@gmail.com)
Tues, Thurs 7:15pm-8:35pm
BBB 03
* Cross listed with HIS 406 (6658)

This is a hands-on production course. Student working in teams will make original 10-15 minute historical documentary films during the semester. Along the way they will learn each step of the production process: Research, pitching, writing treatments, pre-production, shooting, script writing, editing and post-production. The class will emphasize developing strong storytelling skills: Digging through the past to find good stories, then figuring out how to tell them both dramatically and accurately. Labs will introduce students to the camera, lighting & sound technical skills necessary to shoot professionally as well as basic editing skills. Giving and receiving criticism is an essential part of the creative process, so substantial class time will be devoted to critiquing each other’s work throughout the semester.
This course introduces students to major new directions in the practice of history on the web and the growing distinction between digital history as method and digital history as medium. Students will gain skills in web publishing, identifying avenues for public engagement, and using digital tools for historical analysis. Through a series of case studies on social networks, mapping, text analysis, and narrative, students will build a collaborative, publicly engaged historical project. Previous experience with building websites and home/outside of class use of a computer with ability to install software is welcomed but not required. Only one version of A HIS 407 may be taken for credit. Prerequisite(s): permission of instructor.

This course is required for the completion of the Major and Minor Documentary Studies. All students are expected to come into the course with skills needed to complete a substantial research-based documentary project in any one of the following forms: audio, video, digital/Web, still photography (with an “exhibit catalog”), or text. Class members will work with oversight from the course instructor as well as appropriate on-campus experts; they will receive feedback, as well, from fellow students enrolled in the course. Discussion of such topics as research, project planning, prospectus preparation, scriptwriting, media ethics, and workflow organization will assist students undertaking their research, production, and postproduction work. Supplementary advanced workshops on specific research and production topics may be offered, but – to emphasize- since this is a senior-level course, students are expected to come in with sufficient production skills in their chosen documentary format to complete their work with minimal technical assistance.

This is a course designed for students interested in engaging in documentary fieldwork and production projects through internships with on-campus and off-campus organizations, or on their own with close faculty supervision. Students should already have the specific production skills (e.g. filmmaking, photography, audio recording/editing, hypermedia authoring) necessary for the project or internship they wish to undertake. Typical projects or internship they wish to undertake. Typical projects or internships might involve mounting documentary photography exhibits, participating in documentary editing projects (including online, nonfiction journals), designing virtual museums and podcasting/video-casting websites, or working as production members on film/video or radio projects. Credit load will depend on the level of engagement and time obligations associated with the specific project undertaken by the student. This course may be repeated for a total of 6 credits. Prerequisite(s): junior or senior standing, a minimum GPA of 2.50, and permission of the instructor. S/U graded.

December 2, 2014
DOC 499 (5444) (1-4crs)  
Special Projects and Internship in Documentary Studies  
Bernard, Sheila Curran (sbernard@albany.edu)  
Arranged

This is a course designed for students interested in engaging in documentary fieldwork and production projects through internships with on-campus and off-campus organizations, or on their own with close faculty supervision. Students should already have the specific production skills (e.g. filmmaking, photography, audio recording/editing, hypermedia authoring) necessary for the project or internship they wish to undertake. Typical projects or internships might involve mounting documentary photography exhibits, participating in documentary editing projects (including online, nonfiction journals), designing virtual museums and podcasting/video-casting websites, or working as production members on film/video or radio projects. Credit load will depend on the level of engagement and time obligations associated with the specific project undertaken by the student. This course may be repeated for a total of 6 credits. Prerequisite(s): junior or senior standing, a minimum GPA of 2.50, and permission of the instructor. S/U graded.