

Working With 'The Real': Documentary Film History, Theory and Practice, basic

Single subject and programme course

30 credits

Working With The Real: Documentary Film History,
Theory and Practice, basic

739G31

Valid from:

Determined by
The Quality Board at the Faculty of Arts
and Sciences

Date determined
2010-11-23

Main field of study

Culture and Media Production

Course level

First cycle

Advancement level

G1X

Entry requirements

At least one year of undergraduate studies including at least one semester of media production or art education, or the equivalent level in job related work experience within media production.

English corresponding to the level of English in Swedish upper secondary education (English 6/B).

Exemption from Swedish 3/B.

Intended learning outcomes

After completion of the course the student should be able to:

- Show a completed documentary film treatment and production, based on an idea generated within a specific 'frame' provided by the teacher.
- Demonstrate basic knowledge about documentary cinema from a historical-developmental view that includes films from the beginning of cinema through to recent examples, with a focus on the artistic production within this broad historical range.
- Make use of the typologies of 'documentary modes of representation' as laid out in contemporary film theory, and apply the knowledge gained to films seen as well as films made.
- Demonstrate and apply basic knowledge of the production work-flow used in documentary film making, from the development of filmable ideas to a developed treatment and shooting script, and finally, to a completed film.
- Verify progress made through the development of a production logbook, used in conjunction with course evaluation and reflection to self-critically judge the strengths and weaknesses of a production's process.

Course content

The practical side of this course will include work on developing: film ideas from short pitches through to developed treatments; shooting scripts and production plans; different interview techniques, camera and editing styles; and finally, a (limited) focus on funding and distribution, and what to do with a finished film. Students will be provided a frame within which to develop their film idea, as with a commissioned project.

The film historical arc of this course will be broad, starting literally with the 'first films', proceeding through the development of the term 'documentary' itself, and continuing through subsequent developments in the field up to current times. Moving through different modes to genres like the compilation and essay film, the course will focus more and more toward what Michael Renov discusses in his book, *The Subject of Documentary*, as 'the turn to the subject,' or works that take into account a 'history of subjectivities' that much of documentary film and video has been invested in for the last twenty years or so. This will bring us up to contemporary periods that take up identity politics, and other cultural studies and critical theory oriented areas of production as subjects of documentary exploration.

Teaching and working methods

Teaching will consist of lecture/screenings, where students will actively contribute with oral presentations and discussion, laboratory workshop/exercises in different documentary techniques, and individual and/or group project work. Self-motivated learning, will be facilitated by careful guidance given by the instructor, guest lecturers and project advisors. Language of instruction: English

Examination

Active participation in lecture/screenings, workshops and exercises is required to pass the course. Students are required to develop a documentary film project, from pitch to final treatment, and to make a video production related to the 'commissioned' subject. A production logbook will be kept and turned in. Students will also write one short essay applying a theoretical/analytical frame to a specific film. The essays, production synopsis-treatment and logbook are to be written in English (or Swedish). A combination of self-assessment, peer-review and teacher-professional assessment will be used in grading student work.

Students failing an exam covering either the entire course or part of the course twice are entitled to have a new examiner appointed for the reexamination.

Students who have passed an examination may not retake it in order to improve their grades.

Grades

Three-grade scale, U, G, VG

Other information

Planning and implementation of a course must take its starting point in the wording of the syllabus. The course evaluation included in each course must therefore take up the question how well the course agrees with the syllabus.

The course is carried out in such a way that both men's and women's experience and knowledge is made visible and developed.

Department

Institutionen för studier av samhällsutveckling och kultur