



## UNSW Course Outline

# MDIA2013 Making Virtual Reality Documentaries - 2024

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## General Course Information

Course Code : MDIA2013

Year : 2024

Term : Term 1

Teaching Period : T1

Is a multi-term course? : No

Faculty : Faculty of Arts, Design and Architecture

Academic Unit : School of the Arts and Media

Delivery Mode : In Person

Delivery Format : Standard

Delivery Location : Kensington

Campus : Sydney

Study Level : Undergraduate

Units of Credit : 6

### Useful Links

[Handbook Class Timetable](#)

## Course Details & Outcomes

### Course Description

Today's documentary storytelling formats now include 360 videos, Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR). News organisations are regularly producing short VR stories across diverse topics and Not-For-Profit organisations are harnessing the power of virtual reality as 'empathy

machines' to promote awareness of issues, deepen knowledge and encourage support. The VR form's popularity is underpinned by accessible viewing on YouTube platforms and smart phones as well as VR dedicated devices.

This course provides you with the practical skills in Virtual Reality (VR) documentary production that are increasingly part of the multiplatform media environment. You will develop hands-on creative approaches to VR immersive documentary storytelling from idea, script, videoing and narration and editing to final video. The course's practical elements will be supported by theoretical readings, discussion and analysis of immersive long-form documentaries and their communication and storytelling strategies.

## **Relationship to Other Courses**

Professional Media Practices

Features Journalism

Video journalism

Interactive Storytelling

Media Interventions: Activism and Advocacy

# Course Learning Outcomes

Course Learning Outcomes
CLO1 : Demonstrate practical, technical and communication skills in the production of VR documentary.
CLO2 : Apply theoretical understandings of immersive storytelling in documentary and communications to production practice.
CLO3 : Produce a VR video for a media production portfolio and / or public channel such as YouTube.
CLO4 : Critique and situate the history and theory of immersive storytelling within individual media practice.

Course Learning Outcomes	Assessment Item
CLO1 : Demonstrate practical, technical and communication skills in the production of VR documentary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• VR Production (Group)</li><li>• VR Post-Production (Individual)</li></ul>
CLO2 : Apply theoretical understandings of immersive storytelling in documentary and communications to production practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reflection Paper (Individual)</li><li>• VR Production (Group)</li><li>• VR Post-Production (Individual)</li></ul>
CLO3 : Produce a VR video for a media production portfolio and / or public channel such as YouTube.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• VR Production (Group)</li><li>• VR Post-Production (Individual)</li></ul>
CLO4 : Critique and situate the history and theory of immersive storytelling within individual media practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reflection Paper (Individual)</li></ul>

## Learning and Teaching Technologies

Moodle - Learning Management System | Echo 360 | one drive app; Insta 360 cameras

## Learning and Teaching in this course

Refer to Moodle

## Additional Course Information

Lectures will be recorded and available for download (ECHO 360). Lecture slides are available on Moodle.

**Tutorials are not recorded.** For privacy of fellow students and intellectual property reasons, **recording of tutorials is not permitted**, including live translation apps. If you require further

English language assistance, or struggling with course content, please speak to your convenor.

**You do not need to buy a 360 camera for this course.** They are available for in class use, and borrowing after your idea is approved.

However it is the students' responsibility to borrow cameras in time for assessment completion (individual) considering camera availability. Cameras will be restricted to in class only for the first assessment to build proficiency.

Premiere pro is installed on all lab computers in Robert Webster.

**It is not recommended to edit at home, or to move your working PPro file to different computers.**

If you wish to complete your editing at home, the TRC will not assist you with problems related to a non-spec laptop or desktop or on weekends./ evenings. It is recommended to maximise your time in class to ask for help, and also during work hours at university where you can ask for help if the TRC can assist you. Check you have the specs for working with VR Premiere Pro at home before commencing using your home laptop / desktop, if you wish to use your own equipment. Special consideration will not be given to students who have attempted working with their own home laptop / desktop without first checking the specs.

Sound equipment, such as Rode mics, can also be borrowed from the TRC.

## Assessments

### Assessment Structure

Assessment Item	Weight	Relevant Dates
VR Production (Group)	30%	Start Date: Not Applicable Due Date: Week 5: 11 March - 17 March
Reflection Paper (Individual)	30%	Start Date: Not Applicable Due Date: Week 8: 01 April - 07 April
VR Post-Production (Individual)	40%	Start Date: Not Applicable Due Date: Week 10: 15 April - 21 April

### Assessment Details

#### VR Production (Group)

##### Assessment Overview

Small group (2-4) videoing and interviews for a three to five minute VR video. Feedback provided via LMS.

### **Course Learning Outcomes**

- CL01 : Demonstrate practical, technical and communication skills in the production of VR documentary.
- CL02 : Apply theoretical understandings of immersive storytelling in documentary and communications to production practice.
- CL03 : Produce a VR video for a media production portfolio and / or public channel such as YouTube.

### **Detailed Assessment Description**

Refer to Moodle for Assessment Outline

### **Assessment Length**

Refer to Moodle

### **Submission notes**

See Moodle

### **Assessment information**

Refer to Moodle and instructions in tutorial.

### **Assignment submission Turnitin type**

This is not a Turnitin assignment

## **Reflection Paper (Individual)**

### **Assessment Overview**

1,500-word reflection. Feedback provided via LMS.

### **Course Learning Outcomes**

- CL02 : Apply theoretical understandings of immersive storytelling in documentary and communications to production practice.
- CL04 : Critique and situate the history and theory of immersive storytelling within individual media practice.

### **Detailed Assessment Description**

Refer to Moodle for Assessment Outline

A selection of course readings and films discussed in class must be referred to for pass grade eligibility.

### **Assessment Length**

1500 words

### **Submission notes**

see Moodle.

### **Assessment information**

Harvard Referencing or APA required for theoretical component.

See Moodle for further assessment information.

### **Assignment submission Turnitin type**

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

### **Hurdle rules**

Course readings and films discussed in class must be referred to in the essay to be eligible for a pass grade.

## **VR Post-Production (Individual)**

### **Assessment Overview**

Editing and sound post-production of three to five minute documentary VR video with narration. Submitted with narration script transcript (approx. 1000 words). Feedback provided via LMS.

### **Course Learning Outcomes**

- CL01 : Demonstrate practical, technical and communication skills in the production of VR documentary.
- CL02 : Apply theoretical understandings of immersive storytelling in documentary and communications to production practice.
- CL03 : Produce a VR video for a media production portfolio and / or public channel such as YouTube.

### **Detailed Assessment Description**

Refer to Moodle for Assessment outline.

No script required (*ignore above mention of script*).

Alternatively to documentary, a combination of a non-fiction piece of writing, accompanied by 2 small VR videos related to the story from your filming. See [Newsworthy.org.au](http://Newsworthy.org.au) for some examples.

While Premiere Pro and editing is covered in this course, it is strongly recommended for students with limited Premiere Pro experience or do not feel confident with Premiere Pro editing.

### Assessment Length

Three to Five minutes, or a feature length story with VR inserts

### Submission notes

Script no longer required. Alternative is 1500 to 2000 word story with 360 video multimedia

### Assessment information

360 camera kits supplied via the TRC loans outside tutorials. See 'prescribed resources' in this course outlined, and Moodle for further information on borrowing. It is strongly encouraged to begin planning your individual project early as cameras may not be available close to submission time due to demand.

It is strongly recommended to use the labs and also have a portable USB drive for back up, or One Drive is available.

### Assignment submission Turnitin type

This is not a Turnitin assignment

### Hurdle rules

Idea and locations approved by Tutor before borrowing cameras will be permitted.

Pitch in class (approval of idea for borrowing can be done before formal pitch in class) required to be eligible for a passing grade.

## **General Assessment Information**

All assessments must be submitted. A UF grade may be awarded if all assessments are not submitted.

The Robert Webster labs are available, including weekends and evenings, to students via your student card for editing on Premiere Pro. Please ensure your card gives you access to the labs. We do not recommend using your home laptop / desktops unless the specs have been approved by the TRC.

Refer to the recording policy - no recordings in tutorials permitted. Lectures are recorded.

## Grading Basis

Standard

## Requirements to pass course

All assessments must be attempted.

# Course Schedule

Teaching Week/Module	Activity Type	Content
Week 1 : 12 February - 18 February	Lecture	It is important to come to your tutorials. All filming will be done in class time and on campus for the first assessment. Exceptions to borrow a camera is only with approval by your tutor. Refer to your tutorial and assesment outline. LECTURE: INTRO TO 360 / VR Documentaries and the course Readings and Films: Refer to Moodle Studio: Refer to Moodle
Week 2 : 19 February - 25 February	Seminar	LECTURE Perspectives and Audience Readings: Refer to Moodle Studio Refer to Moodle.
Week 3 : 26 February - 3 March	Lecture	Lecture: Immersion and Presence. What does it mean for the VR director, and the audience? Readings and Films: Refer to Moodle. Studio Refer to Moodle.
Week 4 : 4 March - 10 March	Lecture	Lecture: Embodiment, Degrees of Freedom, Agency (Part 1) Readings: Refer to Moodle Studio: Refer to Moodle
Week 5 : 11 March - 17 March	Lecture	Lecture sound as narrative and audience guide Readings and Films: Refer to Moodle Studio: Refer to Moodle
Week 6 : 18 March - 24 March	Reading	This is UNSW's Flex Week.
Week 7 : 25 March - 31 March	Lecture	Lecture: VR and Emotions Readings and Films: Refer to Moodle Studio: Refer to Moodle.
Week 8 : 1 April - 7 April	Lecture	Lecture: Witnessing and Testimony Readings: Refer to Moodle Studio Refer to Moodle
Week 9 : 8 April - 14 April	Lecture	Lecture: Ethics and 'Dark Tourism' VR Readings: Refer to Moodle Studio: Refer to Moodle
Week 10 : 15 April - 21 April	Lecture	Lecture: The life and death of the Metaverse - VR and immersive technology futures Readings and films: Refer to Moodle Studio Refer to Moodle

## Attendance Requirements

SAM attendance guidelines.



Students are expected to be regular and punctual in attendance at all classes for the School of the Arts & Media (SAM) courses in which they are enrolled.

Students who do not meet attendance expectations run the risk of failing a course. No additional or special consideration will be provided if a student misses out on essential course information and materials, or misses an assessment task/deadline, due to unexplained absences or an unapproved lack of attendance.

A student may be advised by the Course Convenor to withdraw from the course if significant learning activities are missed. Alternatively, a student may be required to undertake supplementary class(es) or task(s) as prescribed by the Course Convenor.

If assessment tasks have been missed, the student should apply for [Special Consideration](#), accompanied by appropriate documentation.

## Course Resources

### Prescribed Resources

#### TEXTBOOK

Available via the UNSW bookshop, including ebook orders

[\*Immersive Journalism as Storytelling: ethics, production and design\*](#). Oxon: Routledge.

<https://www.bookshop.unsw.edu.au/details.cgi?ITEMNO=9780367713300>

Additional readings and films available via Moodle.

Additional readings and films are available on Moodle via the green jigsaw Library Link. You are expected to engage with both readings and viewings

Oculus Headsets: in class

Insta 360 cameras - available for group work in class only. Borrowing permitted once your idea for your individual documentary has been approved, including locations by your tutor.

Premiere Pro available in the labs. Labs are open on weekends and evening access with your swipe UNSW card. Please ensure it works.

Filming and Editing:

The Insta 360 One X app (Apple and Google Play) is required to film and record with the cameras. Please download this by Week 1, or in class Week 1 onto your smart phone.

## Recommended Resources

Please see Moodle for recommended editing resources and VR production links.

You do not need to buy a camera for this course However it is your responsibility to borrow cameras in time for assessment completion (individual) considering camera availability. Cameras will be restricted to in class only for the first assessment to build proficiency.

ADOBE Premiere Pro is installed on all Webster labs.

Please see Moodle for other resources, such as Adobe VR editing guides and other helpful links.

Students can see previous student work on [Newsworthy.org.au](https://www.newsworthy.org.au) and the course's youtube site: [360 Journalism](#)

## Additional Costs

For equity reasons, all resources are supplied by the school. However, we recommend for optimal use of the cameras that you have a smart phone (Android or Apple) as it works as the camera's 'remote' or you work with a student who does. Please see your tutor if you do not have a smart phone.

## Course Evaluation and Development

Students have requested more help with basic editing and sound on Premiere Pro if they do not have a film background. This is being addressed with additional workshops and online 'how to videos' throughout the term. There is also helpful links on Moodle.

## Staff Details

Position	Name	Email	Location	Phone	Availability	Equitable Learning Services Contact	Primary Contact
Convenor	David Curzon		via email		via email and in class	Yes	Yes
Administrator	Kerrie Davies		Room 311C Robert Webster		via email / appointment	No	No

# Other Useful Information

## Academic Information

Due to evolving advice by NSW Health, students must check for updated information regarding online learning for all Arts, Design and Architecture courses this term (via Moodle or course information provided).

Please see: <https://www.unsw.edu.au/arts-design-architecture/student-life/resources-support/protocols-guidelines> for essential student information relating to:

- UNSW and Faculty policies and procedures;
- Student Support Services;
- Dean's List;
- review of results;
- credit transfer;
- cross-institutional study and exchange;
- examination information;
- enrolment information;
- Special Consideration in the event of illness or misadventure;
- student equity and disability;

And other essential academic information.

## 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 includes copying materials, ideas or concepts from a book, article, report or other written document, presentation, composition, artwork, design, drawing, circuitry, computer program or software, website, internet, other electronic resource, or another person's assignment without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Inappropriate paraphrasing: Changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original information, structure and/or progression of ideas of the original without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit and to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without appropriate referencing.

- Collusion: Working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student for the purpose of them plagiarising, 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.

The UNSW Academic Skills support offers resources and individual consultations. Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study. 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. UNSW Library has the ELISE tool available to assist you with your study at UNSW. ELISE is designed to introduce new students to studying at UNSW, but it can also be a great refresher during your study.

Completing the ELISE tutorial and quiz will enable you to:

- analyse topics, plan responses and organise research for academic writing and other assessment tasks
- effectively and efficiently find appropriate information sources and evaluate relevance to your needs
- use and manage information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- better manage your time
- understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UNSW
- be aware of plagiarism, copyright, UNSW Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy
- be aware of the standards of behaviour expected of everyone in the UNSW community
- locate services and information about UNSW and UNSW Library

### **Use of AI for assessments**

As AI applications continue to develop, and technology rapidly progresses around us, we remain committed to our values around academic integrity at UNSW. Where the use of AI tools, such as ChatGPT, has been permitted by your course convener, they must be properly credited and your submissions must be substantially your own work.

In cases where the use of AI has been prohibited, please respect this and be aware that where unauthorised use is detected, penalties will apply.

## Submission of Assessment Tasks

### Turnitin Submission

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on [externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au](mailto:externalteltsupport@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, assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, alternative submission details will be stated on your course's Moodle site. For information on how to submit assignments online via Moodle: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/how-submit-assignment-moodle>

### Late Submission Penalty

UNSW has a standard late submission penalty of:

- 5% per calendar day,
- for all assessments where a penalty applies,
- capped at five calendar days (120 hours) from the assessment deadline, after which a student cannot submit an assessment, and
- no permitted variation.

Students are expected to manage their time to meet deadlines and to request [Special Consideration](#) as early as possible before the deadline. Support with [Time Management is available here](#).

## School Contact Information

### School of the Arts and Media

**Location:** Room 312, Level 3 Robert Webster Building

**Opening Hours:** Monday -Friday, 9am - 5 pm

**Email:** sam@unsw.edu.au

**Phone:** +612 9385 4856

**web:** <https://www.unsw.edu.au/arts-design-architecture/our-schools/arts-media>