

English 102 Section 212 - Researching and Writing About Seeing; or, Truth and

Objects in Documentary Film

Gerald Jackson, Instructor

Meeting Times: TR 2:50 - 4:05

Office Hours: Tuesday 1:30 - 2:30 & Thursday 9:00 - 11:00 Office: 323 Humanities Office Building

Description

Researching and Writing About Seeing; or, Truth and Objects in Documentary Film asks students to compose arguments tailored towards distributed audiences in digital environments, while including traditional and non-traditional compositional practices. This course focuses on visual rhetorics, particularly those associated with documentary films. The primary question of the course asks, "What does it *mean* to 'document'?" Through this course, students will read and analyze traditional scholarly texts as well as a series of documentary films. Students will be evaluated based on creativity, engagement, participation as well as competence in the English language and analytical acumen.

Carolina Core Designation

This course fulfills the Carolina Core general education outcomes in Effective and Persuasive Communication: Writing (CMW) and Information Literacy (INF).

Learning Outcomes

In English 102, you will

- Learn rhetorical concepts and terms that enable you to identify and analyze the elements of an effective argument.
- Write effective college-level papers on a variety of academic and public issues, each of which articulates a central claim (thesis), draws on credible supporting evidence, and effectively addresses opposing viewpoints.
- Do research to find, assess, and use appropriate supporting materials from the university libraries, the Internet, and other sources.
- Effectively integrate material from research into their papers via summary, paraphrase, and quotation.
- Document source materials correctly using MLA style and understand basic principles of

academic integrity.

- Work through a full range of writing processes—including invention, planning, drafting, revision, and editing—in order to produce effective college-level essays;
- Work with classmates to share ideas and critique each other's work in progress.
- Develop a clean, effective writing style, free of major errors, and adapt it to a variety of rhetorical situations.

Assignments and Scoring

1. Ten (10) short summaries corresponding to Readings done in class (10 Points Each)
2. Ten (10) Information Literacy (ILP) assignments completed in class (10 Points Each).
3. Two (2) short assignments (25 Points Each)
4. Three major Projects:
 - A Summary Essay (50 Points)
 - A Project Proposal with Annotated Bibliography (100 Points)
 - Final Project and Presentation (200 Points)

Point Total for All Assignments: 600 points

Furthermore, there will be an additional assessment of 100 points for participation, outlined in the following sections.

Course Policies

Grading: A “C” is the lowest passing grade in English 102. I grade on a 10-point scale (A=90-100; B+=88-89; B=80-87; C+=78-79; C=70-77; D+=68-69; D=60-67; F=50). I'll specify more detailed requirements in each assignment. If you have a question about a grade you receive on an assignment, please feel free to discuss it with me in my office.

Attendance: This class is grounded in workshop activities and class discussion, so it's important to attend. If you need to miss a class, please submit in advance any work due on that day and consult our class site before the next class period to catch up on what you've missed. In accordance with University policy, anyone who misses 25% of our scheduled class periods will fail the course, and anyone who misses more than 10% will receive a one-letter deduction from the course grade. Please note that the University's attendance policy does not distinguish between “excused” and “unexcused” absences. However, if an emergency forces you to miss class, I will try to work with you—if you contact me as soon as possible and make arrangements to catch up quickly on missed work. Even if you have an emergency, if you must miss more than two classes beyond the 10% absence threshold, you should consider withdrawing from the course.

Revision: You will turn in a complete, typed draft of Projects 1, 2, and 3. You will receive detailed feedback on that draft from me. You will use the feedback to revise the project and then turn in a final version, to which I'll assign a letter grade. The grade on the final version will be based partly on the quality of your revisions. You should remember from English 101 that "revising" does not mean correcting surface errors or adding a few sentences here and there; a revision is literally a "seeing again," a rewriting of the paper based on feedback from your readers. Both drafts and final versions should be carefully edited and proofread before you submit them.

Late Papers: I don't accept late work. Period.

Paper Format and Documentation: ILPs and essays completed outside of class should be in MLA format, typed and double spaced using 12-point Times New Roman typeface, with 1" margins all around. Use MLA style to cite and properly document any outside sources you draw on in your papers. We will talk more about MLA format and citation in class.

Academic Honesty: You are bound by the university's policies on academic honesty, which bar you from presenting another person's work or ideas as your own, allowing someone to write an assignment or part of an assignment for you, or neglecting to properly acknowledge source materials. First-Year English policy also prohibits you from recycling work—that is, from turning in a paper completed in another class for credit in this class. The university takes violations of these policies seriously; penalties include failing the course and expulsion from the university. You are also responsible for reading the Academic Responsibility section of The Student's Guide to First-Year English on the English Department Website. We will learn about and discuss strategies for research and source use, citation, and documentation throughout the semester. If you have any questions about academic honesty or use of source materials, please come to me before the assignment is due.

Class Participation and Courtesy: This is a DISCLAIMER: This course requires participation. Participation in class discussions, readings, and conferences. Engagement with your peers, your instructor, the material and your writing are musts. As such, I include a participation grade. Students who do not speak in class, text in class, sleep in class, are disruptive or belligerent in class, never speak to me about their work, and those who generally are unwilling to participate in any way will have their grade affected.

The prime directive for this course is this: participate, and respect each other, respect the class, and respect your teacher. Students who come unprepared (not having read, unresponsive to direct engagement from the teacher or other students), students who want to sleep during class, students who do not participate in discussions, workshops, or conferences, and students who are directly disrespectful, disruptive, or threatening will be asked to leave, garnering an absence for the day. I am always open to differing opinions, spirited discussion, engaged debate, and so on, but I have no patience or tolerance for any of the above-listed offenses.

Readings

Texts (Provided by Instructor)

- Foucault, "[Panopticism](#)"
- Aristotle, [Rhetoric](#)
- Hawhee, "[Looking Through Aristotle's Eyes: Towards a Theory of Rhetorical Vision](#)"
- Friedrich Nietzsche, "[Truth and Lies in the Non-Moral Sense](#)"
- Hesford, "[Documenting Violence: Rhetorical Witnessing and the Spectacle of Distant Suffering](#)"
- Holmes, "[Did Newsnight Miss the Story?: A Survey of How the BBC's 'Flagship Political Current Affairs Program' Reported Genocide and War in Rwanda between April and July 1994](#)"
- Cameron, "[When Strangers Bring Cameras: The Poetics and Politics of Othered Places](#)"
- Manovich, [The Language of New Media](#)
- Godmillow, "[How Real is the Reality in Documentary Film?](#)"
- Evans, "[This Could Be a Pipe: Foucault, irrealism, and *Ceci n'est pas une pipe*](#)"
- Hocks, "[Understanding Visual Rhetoric in Digital Writign Environments](#)"
- Thompson, [Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas](#)
- Dibbel, "[A Rape in Cyberspace](#)"
- Berry, "[Faustian Economics](#)"
- Nash, "[Documentary-for-the-Other: Relationships, Ethics, and \(Observational\) Documentary](#)"
- Farrell, "[Sizing Things Up: Colloquial Reflection as Practical Wisdom](#)"
- Atkinson, "[Newsreals as Propoganda: Visual Rehtoric at the Dawn of the Cold War](#)"
- Brockriede, "[Toulmin on Argument: An Interpretation and Application](#)"

Other Media

- Magritte, "[The Treachery of the Image](#)"
- Bart Layton, *The Imposter*
- Josh Fox, *Gasland*
- Ron Fricke, *Samsara* (In Class)
- Dylan Avery, *Loose Change Final Cut*
- Leni Reifenstahl, *Triumph of the Will*
- Morgan Spurlock, *Super-Size Me* (In Class)

References and Handbooks

- [OWL at Purdue](#)
- [W3 Schools](#)
- [Elements of Style Online](#)

Calendar¹

Unit 1: Visual Persuasion and Expression

Week 1

August 22

- Introductions, Syllabus, & Class Expectations
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Week 2

August 27

- *Reading*: "Truth and Lies in the Non-Moral Sense"
- *Writing Assignments*: Nietzsche Summary

Summary Assignment Announced

August 29

- *Reading*: "Truth and Lies in the Non-Moral Sense"
 - *Writing Assignments*: ILP Assignment (In Class)
-

Week 3

September 3

- *Video*: Samsara
- *Reading*: *Rhetoric*, "Looking Through Aristotle's Eyes"
- *Writing Assignment*: Hawhee/Aristotle Summary

September 5

- *Video*: Samsara
 - *Writing Assignment*: ILP Assignment (In Class)
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Week 4

September 10

- *Reading:* "The Treachery of Images", This Could Be a Pipe"
- *Writing Assignment:* Evans Summary

Short Assignment 1, Due Tuesday September 17

September 12

- *Tutorial:* Prezi and Image Narratives

Summary Essay Due

Unit 2: Narrative, Facts, and Method

Week 5

September 17

- *Reading:* "Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas" (Read up to Section 8), "Looking Through Aristotle's Eyes"
- *Video:* "Triumph of the Will"
- *Writing Assignments:* ILP Assignment (In Class)

Short Assignment 1 Due

September 19

Short Conferences

Week 6

September 24

- *Video:* *The Impostor*
- *Reading:* "Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas" (Read up to Section 8), "Looking Through Aristotle's Eyes"
- *Video:* "Triumph of the Will"
- *Writing Assignments:* ILP Assignment (In Class)

September 26

- *Video:* *The Impostor*
- *Reading:* "When Strangers Bring Cameras"
- *Writing Assignment:* Cameron Summary

Research Proposal/Annotated Bibliography Announced

Week 7

October 1

- *Reading:* "How Real is Reality in Documentary Film?", "Toulmin on Argument"
- Supplement: [Brockriede's Six Argument Characteristics](#)
- *Writing Assignment:* Nash or Brockriede Summary

Short Assignment 2, Due October 8

October 3

- *Tutorial:* HTML and Visual Design
 - *Writing Assignment:* ILP (In Class)
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Unit 3: Documentation and Political Advocacy

Week 8

October 8

- *Video:* *Gasland*
- *Reading:* "Newsreels as Propoganda"
- *Writing Assignments:* Atkinson summary, ILP Assignment (In Class)

October 10

Library Instruction

Week 9

October 15

- *Reading:* "Sizing Things Up", "Documenting Violations"
- *Writing Assignments:* Farrell/Hesford Summary, ILP Assignment (In Class)

October 17 *No Class: Fall Break*

Week 10

October 22 *Conferences*

October 24 *No Class - Conference Date*

Annotated Bibliography/Proposal Due

Week 11

October 29

- *Reading*: "Panopticism"
- *Video*: *Loose Change*
- *Writing Assignments*: Foucault Summary

October 31

- *Video*: *Loose Change*
 - *Writing Assignments*: ILP Assignment (In Class)
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Unit 4: Critiques, Questions, and Storytelling

Week 12

November 5

- *Reading*: "A Rape in Cyberspace"
- *Writing Assignments*: Dibbell Summary

November 7

- *Reading*: "Faustian Economics"
 - *Writing Assignments*: ILP (In Class)
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Week 13

November 12

Video: *Super-Size Me*

November 14

Video: *Super-Size Me* + *Writing Assignments*: ILP (In Class)

Week 14

Long/Group Conferences

Week 15

November 28 *No Class: Thanksgiving Break*

Week 16

December 3 *Project Presentations*

December 5 *Project Presentations*

Course Evaluations

Finals Week

No Class

1. Calendar is fluid and subject to change [↩](#)