Course Objectives
This course will explore the history, aesthetics, theory, and production of the nonfiction film/video from its inception through the present. The various functions of the documentary will be examined—as ethnography, as tool for social change, as political propaganda, as art, as entertainment, as parody, and as commercial enterprise. International perspectives will be considered, as will issues of form, reality, and objectivity. Major figures to be studied include Robert Flaherty, John Grierson, and Dziga Vertov from the 1920s and 1930s, the core documentarists of the 1950s and 1960s that include Frederick Wiseman, Donn Pennebaker, Richard Leacock, and the Maysles brothers, and more contemporary documentarians such as Errol Morris, Michael Moore, Agnes Varda, Ken Burns, and Marlon Riggs.

Screenings
About half the class time will be devoted to screenings. The clips and full documentaries are PRIMARY TEXTS, not just entertainment. You will be required to think—seriously and critically—about what you are seeing. In short, an active (rather than passive) viewing is required. The exams will cover the screenings, the lectures and discussions, and the readings. Additionally, the instructor may assign up to ten out-of-class viewings as requirements.

Books and Readings

Required:


Strongly Recommended:

Membership in Netflix (or possibly Blockbuster.com)


NOTE: The Internet Movie Database has not yet become a useful replacement for the Katz (et al.) book, which at over 1,500 pages and around $23 is the best book buy around. Check it out on [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).
Handouts & Website
Handouts and other required readings will be distributed to the class as the quarter progresses. Most materials will be posted on the class website: academic.csuohio.edu/kneuendorf (click on Spring 2010 --> COM 321).

Screening and Class Rules
1. Documentary screenings may last longer than our class time. Nevertheless, you are expected to see THE ENTIRE DOCUMENTARY, and may be tested especially on the beginning and the end, since these are often important parts of the material. Running times are typically listed in the course outline. Please be aware that most "lecture" days will include some clips (excerpts) from films or television programs that will be difficult to make up.

2. Each individual has a right to his/her own personal emotional response to a film or video. But remember that you are seeing these documentaries in a classroom, not in your own home, nor in a movie theater. Therefore, students who publicly impose their inappropriate responses (whispering, open comments, cheers, boos, etc.) upon the other students in the class will be penalized through point deductions and/or being dropped/expelled from the class. However, laughter is an appropriate response to comedic material, and is encouraged. Contrary to popular belief, the rustling of food wrappers is not appropriate in a co-viewing situation.

Grading
Grading is based on two exams, one research paper of moderate length (5-8 pages), three short written assignments, and various class activities (to be announced). An original documentary may substitute for the paper with special and far-in-advance approval.

The exams will be short essay in form. You will be given a list of sample exam questions prior to each exam.

The paper will require some research/library work and some viewing outside of class. The paper will be described in greater detail in a handout. You need to hand in a short proposal early in the term. The paper will require several scholarly sources and individual viewing of 2-3 documentaries. I strongly encourage "pre-writes"–given a couple days, I’ll look over early drafts of your paper and provide feedback. You may write additional drafts of the paper as often as you wish up until the due date.

This term, class activities will include a major emphasis on the Cleveland International Film Festival and the corresponding CIFF/CSU Filmmaker Panels to be held in MU 107 on the last weekend of the Festival. For the fourth year, the School of Communication is able to partner with the Cleveland International Film Festival (CIFF) in a couple of ways, including introducing the Local Heroes films that are sponsored by CSU, and CSU’s hosting of a series of panel discussions with visiting filmmakers. These panels have been a great success in past years, and are an exciting way to network with filmmakers from around the country and the world. Class members’ participation in activities related to the Cleveland International Film Festival (March 18-28) will likely include some subset or combination of: (a) Working as a blogger or vlogger at the Festival; (b) Helping staff the CIFF/CSU Filmmaker Panels on March 27-28 (to be held in MU 107); (c) shooting/editing documentary footage of the Panels or related Festival activities; (d) Serving as a researcher for the panel discussions, providing moderators with info about the films and filmmakers. Other activities are possible.

There will be three short written assignments (approx. 2 pages each) that correspond to various out-of-class activities and viewing. One of these will require you to attend a documentary showing at the Cleveland International Film Festival. Another will require you to view some type of “new” documentary content
online and share it with the class. A third will require you to view a documentary related to your current or future occupation. More information of each of these written assignments will be distributed in class.

Your instructor reserves the right to change assignments as may become necessary--e.g., require other small assignments (including quizzes) that may replace a portion of one of these assignments. And, you may be required to attend additional screenings at the Cleveland Cinematheque, Museum of Art, or other theaters, OR to watch assigned documentaries on video.

Each assignment is worth the following:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class activities (mainly CIFF-related)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Three Written Assignments</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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Extra Credit Opportunities

Extra credit opportunities can add points to your course grade. You may not receive more than 10 percentage points total in extra credit for the course. The nature of the extra credit will be described in detail in a handout; generally, you may gain extra credit by viewing certain approved documentaries outside of class, and completing written analyses as specified. Such documentaries may be found at libraries, from Netflix, or shown at the Cinematheque, the Cleveland Museum of Art, or elsewhere. More on this later.

Make-up Exams, Incompletes

If you must miss the exam, you should discuss the problem with Dr. N at least one class period before the exam is scheduled. In an emergency and as a last resort, you should notify School of Communication staff and/or leave a message for Dr. N (voicemail, email, note) explaining the problem. Mere notification does not automatically mean your excuse is approved, and some points will be deducted even if approval for a make-up is given.

University rules indicate that "a grade of Incomplete is given only by prior arrangement with the instructor and only when a course requirement is unfulfilled through no fault of the student." In all cases where there is a problem, talk to the instructor as soon as possible--an early good-faith effort is likely to be rewarded. After-the-fact pleas will be viewed in a much more negative light.

Attendance

Attendance will be taken near the beginning of each class period via a sign-in sheet. Three absences are allowed without penalty. Subsequent absences will result in a loss of points from the class activities portion of the grade--3% for each absence. And, you are responsible for all lecture material, documentary content, clips shown in class, handouts, announcements, changes in assignments, etc.--in short, for everything that happens in class. Dr. N will not be held responsible for repeating lecture material outside of class, and there will be no "makeup" viewing of materials viewed in class (documentaries, film clips). And, while many of the documentaries for the class are available for rental on video, or may be found on YouTube, they may be in a somewhat different form, and you are responsible for seeing each documentary as shown in class.

Cheating

Cheating in any form will not be tolerated. This includes plagiarism (copying from a source without careful
attribution), copying from another student’s assignment (all instances of identical and near-identical answers will be suspect), talking with others during an in-class exam, obtaining copies of an exam prior to the test date, etc. Please refer to the CSU student handbook for the university's official stance. If you have any questions about this subject (e.g., how to adequately attribute source in a paper), feel free to speak with me. Any student caught cheating will receive a grade of “zero” for that exam/assignment and risks failing the entire course.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE (1/20/10)
NOTE: “Docu” refers to films and television programs that fit the topic(s) of the week–some will be shown in class, some will be assigned for out-of-class viewing, and some will simply be recommended. This will be announced as the term progresses.

Week 1
Jan. 20
**Defining the Documentary; Prophet**
*Read:* Barnouw Ch. 1, “Prophet,” pp. 1-30
*Read:* Barnouw Ch. 2, “Explorer,” pp. 31-51
*Docu:* *Genius of Photography: Fixing the Shadows* (David Byrne, U.K., 2007, 45 min.)
*Docu:* Actualities by the Lumieres and others
*Docu:* *Rain (Regen)* (Joris Ivens, Netherlands, 1929, 14 min.)

Week 2
Jan. 25
**Explorer; Reporter**
*Read:* Barnouw Ch. 2, “Reporter,” pp. 51-71
*Read:* Grant & Sloniowski Ch. 1, pp. 23-39 (Rothman on Flaherty's *Nanook of the North*)
*Read:* G & S Ch. 2, pp. 40-54 (Feldman on Vertov's *The Man with the Movie Camera*)
*Read:* G & S Ch. 3, pp. 55-69 (Hershfield on Eisenstein's *Que viva Mexico!*)
*Docu:* *Nanook of the North* (Robert Flaherty, U.S., 1922, 79 min.)
*Docu:* *The Man with the Movie Camera* (Dziga Vertov, Soviet Union, 1929, 68 min.)

Week 3
Feb. 1
**Painter**
*Read:* Barnouw Ch. 2, “Painter,” pp. 71-82
*Docu:* *Berlin, Symphony of a [Great] City* (Walter Ruttmann, Germany, 1927, 65 min.)
*Docu:* *Le Vampire* (Jean Painleve, France, 1939, 8 min.)

Week 4
Feb. 8
**Advocate**
*Read:* Barnouw Ch. 3, “Advocate,” pp. 83-139
*Read:* G & S Ch. 4, pp. 70-82 (Sobchack on Bunuel's *Las Hurdes*)
*Read:* G & S Ch. 5, pp. 83-98 (Guynn on Wright's *Song of Ceylon*)
*Read:* G & S Ch. 8, pp. 136-153 (Waugh on Ivens' *The Spanish Earth*)
*Clips:* *The Spanish Earth* (Joris Ivens, U.S., 1937); *Song of Ceylon* (Basil Wright, U.K. 1934)
*Docu:* *Las Hurdes/Land Without Bread* (Luis Bunuel, Spain, 1932, 27 min.)

Monday, Feb. 15
**President’s Day—No classes**
Week 5  
Feb. 17  
**Bugler**  
Read: Barnouw Ch. 3, “Bugler,” pp. 139-172  
Read: G & S Ch. 6, pp. 99-118 (Tomasulo on Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will*)  
Read: G & S Ch. 9, pp. 154-170 (Leach on Jennings' *Listen to Britain*)  
Clips: *The Wonderful, Horrible Life of Leni Riefenstahl* (Ray Muller, France/Germany/U.K./Belgium, 1993)  
**Docu:** *Listen to Britain* (Humphrey Jennings, Britain, 1942, 19 min.)

Week 6  
Feb. 22  
**Prosecutor**  
Read: Barnouw Ch. 3, “Prosecutor,” pp. 172-183  
Read: G & S Ch. 12, pp. 204-222 (Flitterman-Lewis on Resnais' *Night and Fog*)  
**Docu:** *Night and Fog* (Alain Resnais, France, 1955, 32 min.)

Week 7  
Mar. 1  
**Poet, Chronicler**  
Read: Barnouw Ch. 4, “Poet” and “Chronicler,” pp. 183-213  
**Docu:** *Henri Langlois: The Phantom of the Cinematheque* (Jacques Richard, France, 2004, 128 min.)

Week 8  
Mar. 8  
**Promoter**  
Read: Barnouw Ch. 4, “Promoter,” pp. 213-228  
Read: G & S Ch. 7, pp. 119-135 (Keil on *The Plow that Broke the Plains* and *The City*)  
**Docu:** *The Plow that Broke the Plains* (Pare Lorentz, U.S., 1936, 25 min.)  
**Docu:** *Harvest of Shame* (Fred Friendly, U.S., 1960, 55 min.)

**MIDTERM EXAM**  Wed., Mar. 10, in class

**SPRING BREAK**  Mar. 14-21

**CLEVELAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL**  Mar. 18-28

Week 9  
Mar. 22  
**Observer; The Rockumentary**  
Read: Barnouw Ch. 5, “Observer,” pp. 229-253  
Read: G & S Ch. 10, pp. 171-187 (Sloniowski on Franju's *Blood of the Beasts*)  
Read: G & S Ch. 13, pp. 223-237 (Hall on American Cinema Verite and *Dont Look Back*)  
Read: G & S Ch. 14, pp. 238-253 (Grant on Wiseman's *Titicut Follies*)  
**Docu:** *Blood of the Beasts* (Georges Franju, France, 1949, 20 min.)  
**Docu:** *Dont Look Back* (D. A. Pennebaker, U.S., 1967, 96 min.)  
**Docu:** *Titicut Follies* (Frederick Wiseman, U.S., 1967, 84 min.)

**CIFF/CSU FILMMAKERS PANELS**  Mar. 27-28
Week 10

Techniques
Mar. 29 ->
Clips: From the works of Ken Burns
Docu: Selected works by Norman McLaren
Docu: *Koyaanisqatsi* (Godfrey Reggio, U.S., 1983, 87 min.)
Docu: *A Brief History of Errol Morris* (Kevin Macdonald, U.S., 2000, 48 min.)

Week 11

Catalyst
Ap. 5 ->
Read: Barnouw Ch. 5, "Catalyst," pp. 253-262
Read: G & S Ch. 11, pp. 188-203 (Scheinman on Rouch's *Les Maitres Fous*)
Read: G & S Ch. 17, pp. 286-301 (Ruoff on *An American Family*)
Read: G & S Ch. 23, pp. 379-396 (Williams on Morris' *The Thin Blue Line*)
Docu: *Les Maitres Fous* (Jean Rouch, France/Niger, 1955, 36 min.)
Docu: *The Thin Blue Line* (Errol Morris, U.S., 1988, 103 min.)

Week 12

Guerrilla
Ap. 12 ->
Read: Barnouw Ch. 5, "Guerrilla," pp. 262-294
Read: G & S Ch. 15, pp. 254-268 (Stam on The Hour of the Furnaces)
Read: G & S Ch. 16, pp. 269-285 (Testa on Brakhage's *The Act of Seeing with One's Own Eyes*)
Read: G & S Ch. 22, pp. 360-378 (MacDonald on Watkins' *The Journey*)
Docu: *The Act of Seeing with One’s Own Eyes* (Stan Brakhage, U.S., 1971, 32 min.)

Week 13

Movement
Ap. 19 ->
Read: Barnouw Ch. 6, "Movement," pp. 295-350
Read: G & S Ch. 18, pp. 302-317 (Nicks on Rubbo's *Daisy: The Story of a Facelift*)
Read: G & S Ch. 20, pp. 333-343 (Fischer on McElwee's *Sherman's March*)
Read: G & S Ch. 21, pp. 344-359 (Russell on Viola's *I Do Not Know What It Is I Am Like*)
Read: G & S Ch. 24, pp. 397-415 (Bernstein on Moore's *Roger & Me*)
Read: G & S Ch. 25, pp. 416-428 (Petty on Riggs' *Tongues Untied*)
Read: G & S Ch. 26, pp. 429-445 (Flinn on Livingston's *Paris is Burning*)
Read: G & S Ch. 27, pp. 446-462 (Lesage on *Finding Christa*)
Docu: A Michael Moore film, TBA

Week 14

Documentary, found humor, parody and the "mockumentary"
Ap. 26 ->
Read: G & S Ch. 19, pp. 318-332 (Plantinga on Reiner's *This is Spinal Tap*)
Clips: From the works of Robert Benchley
Docu: *This is Spinal Tap* or other mockumentary
Docu: *Uncle Ernie's True Adventure Trail* (Ernie Culp, U.S., 1980’s, 10 min.)
Docu: *In Heaven There is No Beer?* (Les Blank, U.S., 1984, 51 min.)

Week 15

Reality Television; Alternative Modes; Online User-Generated Content (UGC)
May 3 -> **Clips**: MTV's *Real World*, other “reality,” “unreality” and perhaps “surreality” television
**Clips**: The Gleaners and I (Agnes Varda, France, 2000); The Beaches of Agnes (Agnes Varda, France, 2008)
**Docu**: Online short documentaries, TBA

Week 16
**Screening, Extra Credit**: TBA

May 10 ->

**FINAL EXAM** Wed., May 12, 1:00-3:00 pm

**COM 321 Assignment Schedule**

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<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<td>Week 2</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Online Documentary Written Assignment due 2/10</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Paper Proposal due 2/17</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>MIDTERM EXAM on 3/10</td>
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<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
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<td>Cleveland International Film Festival 3/18 through 3/28; CSU/CIFF Panels 3/27 &amp; 3/28</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td>CIFF Documentary Written Assignment due 3/31</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
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<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Career-related Documentary Written Assignment due 4/21</td>
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<td>Week 14</td>
<td>Paper final draft due 4/28</td>
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<td>Week 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 16</td>
<td>FINAL EXAM on 5/12 at 1:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extra Credit Viewing Analyses due at Final Exam</td>
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