

**English 367.03: Documentary in the U.S. Experience**  
**Winter 2012**

**Class meets:** 9:30PM – 11:18PM Mondays and Wednesdays

**Location:** Derby Hall 0048

**Instructor:** Kate Parker ([parker.651@buckeyemail.osu.edu](mailto:parker.651@buckeyemail.osu.edu))

**Course Number:** 14875

**Office hours:** Tuesday 11:30-2:30, Thompson Library (by Buckeye Bar), or by appointment

**Goals and Learning Outcomes for the General Education Curriculum**

**Category 1.A. Skills: Writing and Related Skills**

General Goal: Students build upon skills in written communication and expression, reading, critical thinking, and oral expression.

General Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Students apply basic skills in expository writing.
2. Students demonstrate critical thinking through written and oral expression.
3. Students retrieve and use written information analytically and effectively.

**Second Writing Course**

Specific Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Through critical analysis, discussion, and writing, students extend their ability to read carefully and express ideas effectively.
2. Students further develop basic skills in expository writing and oral expression.
3. Students develop skills in effective communication and in accessing and using information analytically.

**Course Description: Contested Claims to American Identity**

What does it mean to identify as “American”? How can one reconcile this common identity with the diverse population of the United States? What is at stake in claiming such an identity, and in having it recognized by others? What are the ways in which people negotiate this identity, especially within contexts of challenge or conflict? This course will explore these questions and others, as we examine texts that document contested claims to American identity. We will approach these texts with open minds and a spirit of inquiry, and our primary method for investigation will be rhetorical analysis. In other words, we will look at the stories presented in these documentary texts, and ask how they are constructed and communicated to produce certain effects on their audiences—and we will do our best to maintain our capacity to be surprised!

This is a writing-intensive course designed to foster your development as active writers and thinkers within your communities. Class readings, discussions, and writing assignments have been designed to build upon the foundation you established in English 110 in order to support more sophisticated rhetorical analysis and practice. You will have the opportunity to practice your skills of critical thinking, careful analysis and interpretation, and developing clear, compelling arguments supported by thoughtful evidence. You will each be responsible—along with other members of a small group—for leading the class discussion of one film, and in addition to a variety of short writing assignments, you will produce a 7-8 page research paper.

## Required Texts:

Please Purchase (available at OSU bookstores or online at amazon.com):

- *A Brief Guide to Writing from Readings*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, by Stephen Wilhoit (2010)
- *A.D.: New Orleans After the Deluge*, by Josh Neufeld (2009)
- *Other readings will be available on Carmen (be sure to bring these to class in whatever form works for you—printed or on your laptop)*

## Assignments and Expectations

### **Participation (10%)**

Your participation is at the core of this course. Active participation takes place both inside and outside the classroom, and includes coming to class on time, actively listening, engaging with in-class activities, contributing your views on (and most especially, questions about) the assigned readings, showing a positive attitude, collaborating appropriately, and showing respect to your classmates and to me. If there is a reason that hinders your ability to participate, please speak with me and we will work together to resolve the situation.

### **Group Teaching (15%)**

You will be responsible, with a group of 3-4 of your classmates, for leading a discussion-based lesson in a class meeting immediately following one of our film screenings. Your role as discussion leader is primarily to facilitate your peers' engagement with the film, as well as to demonstrate your own capacity for critical thinking about the texts and issues in question. You are *not* responsible for teaching the assigned reading/topic on the day of your lesson. Your lesson (including all the elements listed below) should be about 45 minutes long. I encourage you to meet with me before your turn at teaching.

Required elements for this assignment are as follows:

- Summary: This will be especially helpful to your classmates because a few days will have passed since our screening. Your summary should include, at the minimum, plot, major characters, highlighted uses/revisions of documentary convention, and key issues raised that are relevant to our conversation about identity claims in a context of diversity.
- Artifact: Your group will be responsible for bringing in something from outside the class to enrich or complicate our discussion of the film/text. This might be a brief critical essay or article about a current event, a film review, a Youtube clip, etc. Keep in mind that it should be something your classmates can read or get the gist of in the given class time.
- Discussion questions: You will need to ask questions—about the film, the issues it raises, the film in connection with the artifact, etc.—that can sustain discussion. This is harder than it sounds: be prepared to rephrase questions, to wait through awkward silence while people formulate their thoughts, or to move on to a back-up question if need be.
- Everyone in the group must have an active speaking role: It is up to you to work out how you divide your time and responsibilities (i.e., everyone contributes to each part, each person takes one task, etc.), but ultimately this needs to be a *group* presentation—rather than 4 or 5 individual ones—and all members must participate during your lesson. All group members will receive the same grade. In the event of an emergency/excused absence, notify both your group members and me as soon as possible and we will work to make alternative arrangements.

### **Short Writing Assignments (40% total)**

You will complete four separate short writing assignments before you begin work on your research paper; detailed instructions for each assignment will follow.

- Summary (10%): 1 page
- Film Review (10%): 1 page
- Rhetorical Analysis (10%): 2 pages
- Comparison (10%): 2 pages

### **Research Paper (35% total)**

Your research paper is divided into 4 parts that will be graded separately, though all 4 will build on the same project and culminate in the final paper, due at the end of the quarter. Guidelines for each part of this project will follow.

- Research Proposal (5%): 1 page
- Research Paper Draft (5%): 2-3 pages
- Peer Editing (5%)
- Research Paper Final (20%): 7-8 pages

**For your reference, here is the grading scale for the course (this is OSU's standard scale):**

A	93	C+	77
A-	90	C	73
B+	87	C-	70
B	83	D+	67
B-	80	D	60

### **Course Policies**

**Attendance** is important to the success of this class and to your development as a writer. Therefore, each unexcused absence after two will result in the lowering of your final grade by a third of a grade. Excused absences, such as those for documented illness, family tragedy, religious observance, or travel for inter-collegiate athletics, will not affect your grade. *Five unexcused absences will automatically result in failure for the course.*

**Tardiness** is disruptive to the classroom environment, and prevents you from fully participating and assimilating the information and materials discussed in class. Tardiness will lower your participation grade.

**Student Work** must be completed and submitted on time. All assignments should be turned in according to the assigned due date. Late assignments will receive a third of a letter grade deduction (for example an A- would be lowered to a B+) for each day that it is late. The grade will not be affected when a graded assignment is late for reasons that would result in an excused absence. Students who know they will miss the deadline when the assignment is due must contact the instructor as soon as possible in advance of the deadline to arrange for submission of the assignment at a later time. All written work will be submitted to the appropriate Carmen dropbox before class starts on the day that work is due. Documents must be in .doc, .docx, or .rtf format. Inform me *before* the first assignment is due if you have questions about this.

**Plagiarism** is the unauthorized use of the words or ideas of another person. It is a serious academic offense that can result in referral to the Committee on Academic Misconduct and failure for the course. Please remember that at no point during our course work should the work of others be presented as your own. It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct: [http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/info\\_for\\_students/csc.asp](http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/info_for_students/csc.asp).)

**Class Cancellation Policy:** In the unlikely event that class must be canceled due to an emergency, I will contact you via email and request that a note on department letterhead be placed on the door. In addition, I will contact you as soon as possible following the cancellation to let you know what will be expected of you for our next class meeting.

### **Resources**

**The OSU Writing Center** is available to provide free, professional writing tutoring and consultation. You may set up an appointment by calling 688-4291 or by dropping by the center at 475 Mendenhall Laboratories. If you are interested in on-line writing advice, visit the OWL (On-Line Writing Lab) at [www.cstw.osu.edu](http://www.cstw.osu.edu).

**The Ombudsman of the Writing Programs**, Matthew M. Cariello, mediates conflicts between instructors and students in English 110 and 367. His office is in Denney Hall 441. His Winter 2012 office hours are Monday and Wednesday 12-3. Drop-ins welcome; appointments preferred. All conversations with the Ombudsman are confidential.

**The Office for Disability Services** offers services for students with documented disabilities. Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated; please inform me as soon as possible of your needs and I will be happy to work with you. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.

## Daily Schedule

Date	Topics/Activity	Reading Due	Writing Due
1/4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Introductions</li> </ul>		
1/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Defining our terms: rhetoric, documentary, (American) identity</li> <li>▪ Choose teaching groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Carmen</u>: selections from Aufderheide's <i>Documentary Film</i> (pgs. 1-14, 22-25, 125-127)</li> </ul>	
1/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Screening: <i>The Fog of War</i></li> <li>▪ Writing a summary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Wilhoit</u>: "Chapter 4: Summary" (pgs. 59-72)</li> </ul>	
1/16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>NO CLASS: MLK DAY</b></li> </ul>		
1/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Group 1 Teaches</li> <li>▪ Documentary conventions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Carmen</u>: selections from Nichols' <i>Introduction to Documentary</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 1 page summary</li> </ul>
1/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What makes visual texts different?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Carmen</u>: selections from Corrigan's <i>A Short Guide to Writing about Film</i> (pgs. 51-81)</li> </ul>	
1/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Screening: <i>The Letter</i></li> <li>▪ Writing a film review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Wilhoit</u>: "The Film Review as Critique" (pgs. 87-90), and "Chapter 8: Reading and Writing about Visual Texts" (pgs. 137-155)</li> </ul>	
1/30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Group 2 Teaches</li> <li>▪ Thinking more about genre</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 1 page film review</li> </ul>
2/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Screening: <i>Off the Grid</i></li> <li>▪ Doing/writing rhetorical analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Wilhoit</u>: "Chapter 7: Rhetorical Analysis" (pgs. 117-136)</li> </ul>	
2/6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Group 3 Teaches</li> <li>▪ Midterm evaluations</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 2 page rhetorical analysis</li> </ul>
2/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Screening: <i>Trouble the Water</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>A.D.: New Orleans After the Deluge</i></li> </ul>	

2/13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Group 4 Teaches</li> <li>▪ Drawing effective and meaningful comparisons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Wilhoit</u>: “Chapter 9: Informative Synthesis” (pgs. 157-177)</li> </ul>	
2/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Screening: <i>Murderball</i></li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 2 page comparison</li> </ul>
2/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Group 5 Teaches</li> <li>▪ Moving from synthesis to argument</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Wilhoit</u>: “Chapter 10: Argumentative Synthesis” (pgs. 179-224)</li> </ul>	
2/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Crafting your research proposal, finding sources</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 1 page research proposal <b>due Friday, 2/24</b></li> </ul>
2/27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Screening: <i>King of Kong</i></li> <li>▪ Q&amp;A on research papers</li> </ul>		
2/29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Peer review &amp; draft workshop</li> <li>▪ Sign up for conferences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Wilhoit</u>: review MLA guidelines and format in Chapters 12 and 13</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 2-3 page research paper draft</li> </ul>
3/5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Research paper conferences—required, in lieu of class meeting</li> </ul>		
3/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Informal research presentations</li> <li>▪ Final evaluations</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 7-8 page research paper <b>due Friday, 3/9</b></li> </ul>