

# LMC 3258 - LS

Documentary Film, 3 credits

Tues, Thurs | 1:30 PM - 3:25 PM |

Instructor Information

Instructor	Email	Office Hours & Location
John Thornton	John.thornton@lmc.gatech.edu	Tuesdays 10:30 AM – 11:30 AM

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

**Documentary Film** introduces students to documentary filmmaking as both a research methodology and a creative medium capable of catalyzing dialogue around social justice issues and inspiring audience action. Through the course, students will examine significant movements, styles, and trends in fact-based film, focusing on its cultural implications and formal strategies. Students will explore classic and contemporary documentaries' artistic and technical compositions to understand how filmmakers address societal challenges. The course offers multiple opportunities for hands-on production experience through workshops and in-class practical exercises. Drawing on the knowledge and skills acquired, students will culminate their learning by creating a micro-documentary as their final project.

## PREREQUISITES

Undergraduate Semester level ENGL 1102. Minimum Grade of 'C.'

## CORE IMPACTS

This is a Core IMPACTS course in the Humanities area. Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help students master course content and support their broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad, broad-orienting question:

- How do I interpret the human experience through creative, linguistic, and philosophical works?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcomes:

- Students will effectively analyze and interpret the meaning, cultural significance, and ethical implications of literary or philosophical texts or works in the visual or performing arts.

Course content, activities, and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Ethical Reasoning
- Information Literacy
- Intercultural Competence

## COURSE GOALS

This course aims to ...

- Introduce students to the principal modes of documentary filmmaking and evaluate their techniques and impact on storytelling.
- Examine how contextual factors and diverse audiences shape the message and effectiveness of documentary films.
- Guide students in creating a micro-documentary that integrates research, technical proficiency, and creative expression.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of the course ...

- Students will distinguish and critically evaluate the principle ‘modes’ of documentary making.
- Students will understand the contextual factors that shape the message in a film for a diverse audience.
- Students will discuss contemporary nonfictional content that explores Scientific Innovation, Anthropology, Progressive Social Movements, and Auto-Ethnographic exploration.
- Students will demonstrate the skills required to produce high-quality content, including story development, cinematography, editing, and audio production/post-production skills.

## REQUIRED MATERIALS

### **Textbooks**

Documentary Voice and Vision by Kelly Anderson and Martin Lucas  
Documentary Storytelling, 4th Edition by Sheila Curran Bernard

Both of the textbooks are available for free through O'Reilly Online Learning. I have created this playlist on O'Reilly Online Learning that contains all of the required texts we will examine throughout the semester. To view the playlist, you must register for an account with O'Reilly. To do this:

1. Navigate to <https://learning.oreilly.com/playlists/3092f715-c830-4265-91f5-acb0787606ef>
2. Enter your GT Email address
3. Create an account
4. Click the Documentary Course Playlist

### **Tools**

4 to 5 GB of available cloud-based storage (Google Drive, Box, or Dropbox)  
1 x Smartphone with HD video capture capabilities  
1 x [Handheld Manual Smartphone Stabilizer](#) (<\$20.00)  
1 x laptop

### **Software**

Otter Voice Meeting Notes (**Free Version**; available in the [Apple Store](#) and [Android Play Store](#))  
*DaVinci Resolve* (**Free Version**; [Download Link](#))