

EN 463: Movies That Matter: Global Documentary Film
Spring 2026
Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 11:30 a.m.-12:20 p.m.
107 Henry Hall

Instructor

Prof. Justin Wyble
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Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 1:00-3:00 p.m. (and at other times by appt.)
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Description

In this general education capstone course, we will study a selection of documentary films that have attempted to help us see the world anew, including several films from the Pacific region. Through our collective viewing of these non-fictional movies from around the world, we will hone our foundational skills of critical thinking, writing, oral communication, information literacy, and knowledge of beauty and creativity. We also will work to relate the messages of these films to the Marianist characteristics. Regardless of your particular program of study, this interdisciplinary course will address interests and issues across the curriculum. Our project-based learning approach will require an individual research project and a collaborative group presentation.

Required Texts

*No ebook editions will be allowed in this class. You are required to purchase, rent, or borrow the paper edition of the following book:

- Bill Nichols, *Introduction to Documentary*, 4th ed.

You will also be required to rent or purchase many of our assigned films from a streaming service. Most rentals are available for \$3.99 or less, although a few may be slightly more. If you have a Hawai'i State Library card, you may be able to watch some of our films for free via Kanopy.

You will also need the following supplies:

- notebook filler paper, college-ruled
- 1" three-ring binder
- black or blue pen
- journal

Please note that you will be expected to write in your books. Here is the CUH bookstore's policy on acceptable use of rental books:

"Can I mark up the inside of the book with a highlighter or make notes in the margins?"

Normal use of highlighting and writing is permitted. The bookstore will use the same standards for determining acceptable condition of rental textbooks that it uses for determining condition of books sold back as used books."

Course Learning Outcomes

Students who complete this course will:

- Define the elements of documentary film and the filmic terms used to discuss them.
- Watch and analyze documentary films using the elements of film.
- Situate and explain the socio-historical contexts of documentary films from around the world through the lens of global awareness.
- Describe the characteristics of the sub-genres of documentary films.

- Combine and apply interpretive skills in order to participate in class discussions and small-group presentations on documentary films.
- Write a unified, coherent, and well-developed research project about a documentary film and/or a documentary film director.
- Relate documentary films to at least one of the following Marianist characteristics:
 - Educate for Formation in Faith
 - Integral Quality Education
 - Educate in the Family Spirit
 - Service, Justice, and Peace and the Integrity of Creation
 - Adaptation and Change

General Education Learning Outcomes

- Articulate writing strategies, produce written texts, and engage diverse audiences, so as to participate creatively, collaboratively, and critically in their local communities.
- Effectively develop and deliver informative and persuasive oral communications, engaging in dialogue and discussions to support the conveyance of meaning and connection with the audience.
- Examine and evaluate diverse evidence, concepts, assumptions, and viewpoints.
- Define, identify, locate, evaluate, synthesize, and present or demonstrate relevant information.
- Apply Marianist values and integrate a global awareness through a project-based learning approach.

English Program Learning Outcomes

Students who complete this program will:

- Identify, define and apply literary critical approaches to analyze texts.
- Define, analyze and interpret texts and their cultural and historical contexts.
- Read, research, and write as a dialogic process of inquiry that includes reflection, collaboration and engagement with others.
- Formulate and construct interpretive and creative applications of texts in workshops, literary performances, and other collaborative events in local communities.
- Explain and interpret how literature and writing are vehicles for service, justice and peace.

Marianist Characteristics

Chaminade is a Marianist Institution and uses the following characteristics as a guide:

- Educate for Formation in Faith
- Integral Quality Education
- Educate in the Family Spirit
- Service, Justice, and Peace and the Integrity of Creation
- Adaptation and Change

Requirements

- Attendance = 10%
- Participation (discussions, presentations, and other in-class activities) = 10%
- Journal = 10%
- Quizzes = 10%
- In-Class Writings = 10%
- Research Project = 20%
- Mid-Term Essay Exam = 15%
- Final Essay Exam = 15%

Attendance

Absences may be excused only if you provide a note from either your doctor or your CUH coach. All other absences will be unexcused. The professor determines whether or not an absence is excused.

Late arrivals, early departures, or unauthorized breaks will be counted as unexcused tardies. Three unexcused tardies will count as one unexcused absence. Late students are responsible for seeing me after class in order to confirm that their initial absence has been changed to a tardy.

Your attendance grade (10% of your final grade) will be determined as follows:

0-3 unexcused absences = 100 points
 4 unexcused absences = 90 points
 5 unexcused absences = 80 points
 6 unexcused absences = 70 points
 7 unexcused absences = 60 points
 8 unexcused absences = 50 points
 9 or more unexcused absences = 0 points

Your attendance record may also impact other components of your overall grade. For example, in-class assignments (including discussions, quizzes, presentations, in-class writing assignments, mid-term exam, etc.) cannot be made up unless your absence is excused.

Remember, if you are absent for two consecutive weeks or more (i.e., six classes in a row), the professor may either administratively withdraw you from the class or record an "F" for your final grade if the deadline to withdraw has passed.

Policies

No electronic devices (including laptops, tablets, cell phones, ear buds/headphones, smart glasses, etc.) are allowed in class, unless approved in advance by the professor. Please keep your devices silenced and in your bag. If I see you using an unapproved electronic device during class, I will mark you absent for the day.

In-class assignments (including discussions, quizzes, presentations, in-class writing assignments, mid-term exam, etc.) cannot be made up unless your absence is excused. Work missed due to an excused absence may be completed during my office hours. The final exam cannot be made up and must be taken during the scheduled final exam period.

No late assignments will be accepted (except for work missed due to an excused absence).

Plagiarized assignments and AI-generated or AI-assisted assignments will earn zero points.

We will not be using Canvas for this in-person class. If you would like to review your grades, please see me during office hours.

I respond to emails on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays (except for university holidays).

I expect all students to treat each other and the professor with respect at all times. This includes listening carefully and speaking thoughtfully to others during our class discussions.

Credit Hour Policy

The unit of semester credit is defined as university-level credit that is awarded for the completion of coursework. One credit hour reflects the amount of work represented in the intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement for those learning outcomes. Each credit hour earned at Chaminade University should result in 45 hours of engagement. This equates to one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester, 10-week term, or equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time. Direct instructor engagement and out-of-class work result in total student engagement time of 45 hours for one credit.

The minimum 45 hours of engagement per credit hour can be satisfied in fully online, internship, or other specialized courses through several means, including (a) regular online instruction or interaction with the faculty member and fellow students and (b) academic engagement through extensive reading, research, online discussion, online quizzes or exams; instruction, collaborative group work, internships, laboratory work, practica, studio work, and preparation of papers, presentations, or other forms of assessment. This policy is in accordance with federal regulations and regional accrediting agencies.

This is a three-credit hour course requiring a minimum of 135 clock hours of student engagement, per the official CUH Credit Hour Policy. Students enrolled in this course are anticipated to spend 34 hours in class. The remaining time (101 hours) will be devoted to watching assigned documentary films (51 hours), reading assigned texts (30 hours) and the keeping of the journal (20 hours).

Schedule (subject to change)

*All readings are found in Introduction to Documentary, 4th ed., by Bill Nichols.

**Beginning Week 6, assigned films will be determined by the class in consultation with the professor.

Week 1

Read: "Introduction"

Watch: Koyaanisqatsi, Godfrey Reggio (USA 1983)

- Monday, 1/12: syllabus; introductions
- Wednesday, 1/14:
- Friday, 1/16: **In-Class Writing #1**

Week 2

Read: Ch. 1: "How Can We Define Documentary Film?"

Watch: Nominee #1: Academy Awards: Best Documentary Feature Film
Nominee #1: Academy Awards: Best Documentary Short Film

- Monday, 1/19: no class (Martin Luther King Jr. Day)
- Wednesday, 1/21: **Quiz #1**
- Friday, 1/23: **In-Class Writing #2**

Week 3

Read: Ch. 2: "What Are the Constituent Elements of Documentary Film?"

Watch: Nominee #2: Academy Awards: Best Documentary Feature Film
Nominee #2: Academy Awards: Best Documentary Short Film

- Monday, 1/26: **Quiz #2**
- Wednesday, 1/28: no 11:30 class (Founders' Day Mass)
- Friday, 1/30: **In-Class Writing #3**

Week 4

Read: Ch. 3: "What Ethical Issues Arise in Documentary Filmmaking?"

Watch: Nominee #3: Academy Awards: Best Documentary Feature Film
 Nominees #3: Academy Awards: Best Documentary Short Film

- Monday, 2/2: **Quiz #3**
- Wednesday, 2/4: no class (Prof. Wyble is attending an academic conference.)
- Friday, 2/6: no class (Prof. Wyble is attending an academic conference.)

Week 5

Read: Ch. 4: "What Characterizes the Voice of Documentary and Its Relation to Storytelling?"

Watch: Nominees #4 and #5: Academy Awards: Best Documentary Feature Film
 Nominees #4 and #5: Academy Awards: Best Documentary Short Film

- Monday, 2/9: **Quiz #4**
- Wednesday, 2/11:
- Friday, 2/13: **In-Class Writing #4**

Week 6

Read: Ch. 5: "What Are the Rhetorical and Poetic Contributions to Documentary?"

Watch: TBD

- Monday, 2/16: no class (Presidents' Day)
- Wednesday, 2/18: no class (Prof. Wyble is attending an academic conference.)
- Friday, 2/20:

Week 7

Read: Ch. 6: "How Did Documentary Filmmaking Get Started?"

Watch: TBD

- Monday, 2/23: **Quiz #5**
- Wednesday, 2/25:
- Friday, 2/27: **In-Class Writing #5**

Week 8

Read: Ch. 13: "How Can We Write Effectively About Documentary Films?"

Watch: TBD

- Monday, 3/2: **Quiz #6**
- Wednesday, 3/4:
- Friday, 3/6: **In-Class Writing #6**

Week 9

Read: Ch. 7: "How Has Documentary Represented the Past?"

Watch: TBD

- Monday, 3/9:
- Wednesday, 3/11: **Mid-Term Essay Exam, Part I**
- Friday, 3/13: **Journal Check #1; Mid-Term Essay Exam, Part II**

**** SPRING BREAK: Monday, 3/16, through Friday, 3/20 ****

Week 10

Read: Ch. 8: "What Are the Expository and Performative Modes of Documentary?"

Watch: TBD

- Monday, 3/23: **Quiz #7**
- Wednesday, 3/25:
- Friday, 3/27: **In-Class Writing #7**

Week 11

Read: Ch. 9: "What Are the Observational and Participatory Modes of Documentary?"

Watch: TBD

- Monday, 3/30: **Quiz #8**
- Wednesday, 4/1: **In-Class Writing #8**
- Friday, 4/3: no class (Good Friday)

Week 12

Read: Ch. 10: "What Are the Poetic and Reflexive Modes of Documentary?"

Watch: TBD

- Monday, 4/6: **Quiz #9**
- Wednesday, 4/8:
- Friday, 4/10: **In-Class Writing #9**

Week 13

Read: Ch. 11: "How Did the Nation-State Affect Documentary's Approach to Social Issues?"

Watch: TBD

- Monday, 4/13: **Quiz #10**
- Wednesday, 4/15:
- Friday, 4/17: **In-Class Writing #10**

Week 14

Read: Ch. 12: "How Have Documentaries Responded to Identity Politics and Social Issues?"

Watch: TBD

- Monday, 4/20: **Quiz #11; Research Project Due**
- Wednesday, 4/22:
- Friday, 4/24:

Week 15

Read: TBD

Watch: TBD

- Monday, 4/27:
- Wednesday, 4/29:
- Friday, 5/1: **In-Class Writing #11**

Finals Week

Tuesday, 5/5, 8:30-10:30 a.m.: **Journal Check #2; Final Essay Exam**

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is an essential aspect of all learning, scholarship, and research. It is one of the values regarded most highly by academic communities throughout the world. Violations of the principle of academic honesty are extremely serious and will not be tolerated.

Students are responsible for promoting academic honesty at Chaminade by not participating in any act of dishonesty and by reporting any incidence of academic dishonesty to an instructor or to a University official. Academic dishonesty may include theft of records or examinations, alteration of grades, and plagiarism, in addition to more obvious dishonesty.

Questions of academic dishonesty in a particular class are first reviewed by the instructor, who must make a report with recommendations to the Dean of the Academic Division. Punishment for academic dishonesty will be determined by the instructor and the Dean of Academic Division and may include an “F” grade for the work in question, an “F” grade for the course, suspension, or dismissal from the University.

For the most up to date information, please refer to the Academic Honesty Policy on the Chaminade University Catalog website.

Plagiarized assignments and AI-generated or AI-assisted assignments will earn zero points.

Title IX and Nondiscrimination Statement

Chaminade University of Honolulu is committed to providing a learning, working and living environment that promotes the dignity of all people, inclusivity and mutual respect and is free of all forms of sex discrimination and gender-based violence, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. As a member of the University faculty, I am required to immediately report any incident of sex discrimination or gender-based violence to the campus Title IX Coordinator. For pregnant and parenting students, I am also obligated to provide you with similar resources for support and protections available to you. My goal is to make sure that you are aware of the range of options available to you and have access to the resources and support you need.

Nondiscrimination Policy & Notice of Nondiscrimination

Chaminade University of Honolulu does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX and its regulations, including in admission and employment. Inquiries about Title IX may be referred to the University’s Title IX Coordinator, the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights, or both and contact information may be found at the Chaminade University Title IX Office Contact Information and Confidential Resources website. On-campus Confidential Resources may also be found here at CAMPUS CONFIDENTIAL RESOURCES.

The University’s Nondiscrimination Policy and Grievance Procedures can be located on the University webpage at: <https://chaminade.edu/compliance/title-ix-nondiscrimination-policies-procedures/>.

To report information about conduct that may constitute sex discrimination or make a complaint of sex discrimination under Title IX, please refer to the Campus Incident Report form. Chaminade University of Honolulu prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates. The NOTICE of NONDISCRIMINATION can be found here: Notice of Nondiscrimination.

CUH Alert Emergency Notification

To get the latest emergency communication from Chaminade University, students’ cell numbers will be connected to Chaminade’s emergency notification text system. When you log in to the Chaminade portal, you will be asked to provide some emergency contact information. If you provide a cellphone number, you will receive a text from our emergency notification system asking you to confirm your number. You must respond to that message to complete your registration and get emergency notifications on your phone.

Assessment of Student Work

With the goal of continuing to improve the quality of educational services offered to students, Chaminade University conducts assessments of student achievement of course, program, and institutional learning outcomes. Student work is used anonymously as the basis of these assessments, and the work you do in this course may be used in these assessment efforts.

Student with Disabilities Statement

Chaminade University of Honolulu offers accommodations for all actively enrolled students with disabilities in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and the ADA Amendments Act (2008).

Students are responsible for contacting Kokua Ike: Center for Student Learning to schedule an appointment. Verification of their disability will be requested through appropriate documentation and once received it will take up to approximately 2-3 weeks to review them. Appropriate paperwork will be completed by the student before notification will be sent out to their instructors. Accommodation paperwork will not be automatically sent out to instructors each semester, as the student is responsible to notify Kokua Ike via email at ada@chaminade.edu each semester if changes or notifications are needed.

Kōkua 'Ike: Tutoring & Learning Services

Chaminade is proud to offer free, one-on-one tutoring and writing assistance to all students. Tutoring and writing help is available on campus at Kōkua 'Ike: Center for Student Learning in a variety of subjects (including, but are not limited to biology, chemistry, math, nursing, English, etc.) from trained Peer and Professional Tutors. Please check Kōkua 'Ike's website for the latest times, list of drop-in hours, and information on scheduling an appointment. Free online tutoring is also available via TutorMe. Tutor Me can be accessed 24/7 from your Canvas account. Simply click on Account > TutorMe. For more information, please contact Kōkua 'Ike at tutoring@chaminade.edu or 808-739-8305.

Hazing Prevention Resources and Athlete Helpline

Assists athletes, parents, coaches, and any allies interested in ensuring physical and mental safety for sports communities by offering confidential emotional support, crisis intervention, informational athlete-focused resources, and guidance related to concerns about any type of abuse—*including hazing*.

Chaminade University's Hazing Policy: <https://catalog.chaminade.edu/studenthandbook/codeofconduct>

<https://hazingpreventionnetwork.org/athlete-helpline/>

<https://hazingpreventionnetwork.org/how-to-report-hazing/>

Basic Needs Resources: <https://chaminade.edu/basic-needs/>