

# DOCUMENTARY FILM PROGRAM (DOC)

## Master of Fine Arts Master of Arts

### Overview

The Documentary Film Program offers an MFA degree through a two-year course of study and an MA through a one-year course of study. The program admits both full-time and part-time students.

The comprehensive curriculum is designed not only to equip students with the skill set needed to produce professional quality films, but also to develop a respect for the traditions of the craft, an understanding of the economic aspects of the industry, and the intellectual discipline required to translate a creative vision into film. While this is a skills intensive curriculum, it is also a plan of study that emphasizes the social awareness elements that lie at the heart of the documentary tradition. The faculty believes it is imperative to impart to students the power and responsibility documentary filmmakers have in a world increasingly dependent on the moving image to educate, inform, and affect change.

### Programs

- Documentary Film, MA (<https://bulletin.wfu.edu/graduate/programs/degree-programs/documentary-film-program/documentary-film-ma/>)
- Documentary Film, MFA (<https://bulletin.wfu.edu/graduate/programs/degree-programs/documentary-film-program/documentary-film-mfa/>)

### Courses

#### DOC 701. Internship I. (1.5 h)

Internships may be taken for 1.5 credits on a pass/fail basis when approved by faculty members. These internships provide students the opportunity for experiential learning at production houses, television networks, public television stations, and at other facilities deemed useful as well as with independent producers.

#### DOC 702. Internship II. (1.5 h)

Internships may be taken for 1.5 credits on a pass/fail basis when approved by faculty members. These internships provide students the opportunity for experiential learning at production houses, television networks, public television stations and at other facilities deemed useful as well as with independent producers.

#### DOC 703. Internship. (3 h)

Internships provide students the opportunity for experiential learning at production houses, television networks, public television stations, and at other facilities deemed useful as well as with independent producers.

#### DOC 713. Documentary Storytelling I. (3 h)

The course provides an introduction to the fundamental theory and craft of non-fiction visual storytelling and familiarizes students with concepts such as drama, structure, story development and visual style.

#### DOC 715. Cinematography and Sound. (3 h)

Through a combination of lectures, film screening and hands-on demonstrations, this course will familiarize students with the basics of documentary shooting, lighting, and sound gathering.

#### DOC 717. Fundamentals of Documentary Editing. (1.5 h)

Through a combination of lectures, film screenings, hands-on demonstrations, and assignments, this course familiarizes students with the basics of documentary editing.

#### DOC 718. Social Media and Marketing in the Creative Arts. (3 h)

Social Media and Marketing in the Creative Arts will take a deep dive on how social media is changing not just what content creators produce, but also changing the way creators engage with their audience by using social media and marketing techniques to drive attention to their work and enhance their overall brand. This course will survey how communication is continually changing, different forms of social media as well as creativity in the digital space. Through guest lectures, case studies and hands-on production - students will study each media platform, learn how it's being used and see how it can be leveraged on enhance all aspects of the creative arts. Course may be offered on campus or online.

#### DOC 722. Documentary Storytelling II. (3 h)

This course teaches students how to research, conceptualize, and develop a non-fiction story idea. Students receive instruction on effective research strategies, idea development, production planning, and proposal writing and pitching. P-DOC 713, 715, and 717.

#### DOC 724. Advanced Story Editing. (3 h)

Builds upon the storytelling skills learned in the Foundations of Story Editing course and complements the production techniques learned in Cinematography and Sound. Special emphasis will be placed on the aesthetics of editing and other post-production techniques. P-DOC 717.

#### DOC 726. Advanced Sports Storytelling. (3 h)

Advanced Sports Storytelling is a course designed to introduce students to both the theoretical and technical aspects of non-fiction sports storytelling. Students will examine both historical and contemporary examples of sports storytelling, including various styles of documentaries, branded and commercial content, social media and web-based content, and podcasts. In addition to engaging with and discussing the theoretical aspects of this content, students will also be provided with the technical principles required of sports storytelling, including cinematography, lighting, audio design, and video editing.

#### DOC 728. Documentary History. (3 h)

The purpose of this course is to acquaint students with the historical development of documentary film from its roots in 19th-century art forms to the present. The course will examine various styles and techniques of documentary and will analyze the contribution of the documentary as a persuasive means of communication to achieve social and political goals. This course is open to all Wake Forest University graduate students, with permission of instructor.

#### DOC 730. Sports, Culture and Society. (3 h)

Through films, case studies and discussions with sports professionals, media industry leaders and scholars we will look at how sports helps frame our common understanding of society's biggest social issues including race, gender, and human rights.

#### DOC 733. The Business of Sports Media. (3 h)

Students will get a high level understanding of the business of sports media and how the digital revolution is changing the game for content creators, leagues and teams. Through lectures, current periodicals, projects and guest speakers, students will learn to look beyond the final score and better understand the entire sports communication ecosystem.

**DOC 734. Advanced Cinematography and Sound. (3 h)**

This course provides instruction in advanced cinematography, sound, and lighting techniques.

**DOC 735. Documentary Law and Ethics. (3 h)**

Provides students with the opportunity to explore the ethical issues that can arise in documentary filmmaking. The discussion points will evolve from the in-depth examination of a select group of films and directors.

**DOC 737. Documentary Storytelling III. (3 h)**

The class focuses on advanced principles of writing, producing, directing and editing documentary films. Theoretical, aesthetic, technical and ethical aspects of the creative non-fiction storytelling process will be the focus. The class format will be a combination of theory and practice as it relates to the dramaturgical process of filmmaking. P-DOC 713, 715, 717, 722, 728, 750.

**DOC 746. Documentary Storytelling IV. (3 h)**

The course combines lectures, screenings, and exercises to build a technical and aesthetic foundation in digital post-production. Special emphasis will be placed on advanced visual storytelling techniques—including continuity, pacing, character development and dramatic structure. Students will also explore various distribution strategies and transmedia applications. P-DOC 713, 715, 717, 722, 724, 728, 735, 737, 748, 750.

**DOC 748. Creative Thesis Project. (1-9 h)**

Students will work under faculty supervision on their creative thesis projects.

**DOC 750. The Imagination Project. (3 h)**

Students will produce short films, digital study guides or E-books and/or other types of multimedia materials on important social, political, cultural and economic issues. The course, structured around digital media projects, provides opportunities for students to immerse themselves in a single topic and interact with scholars from various disciplines. The topics will vary each year. P-DOC 713, 715, 717.

**DOC 751. Professional Seminar: Teaching in Higher Education. (3 h)**

Provides an understanding of pedagogical practices and major theories of curriculum and a foundation for students interested in pursuing careers in academe.

**DOC 753. Individual Study. (1-3 h)**

For students who wish to perform independent study in a cognate area with a professor from the Documentary Film Program or another program. May be repeated for credit for a maximum of 9 hours.

**DOC 755. Professional Seminar: Entrepreneurial Filmmaking. (3 h)**

This course will provide students with the knowledge and skills to help them create their own creative arts venture and help them design and teach a course in entrepreneurship in the creative arts, particularly digital media and non-fiction filmmaking.

**DOC 764. Individual Study. (1-3 h)**

For students who wish to perform independent study in a cognate area with a professor from the Documentary Film Program or another program. May be repeated for credit for a maximum of 9 hours.

**DOC 766. Teaching Practicum. (3 h)**

Students work closely with Documentary Film program faculty during the teaching of an undergraduate course. Students participate in the design and development of course material and observe classroom and organizational aspects of teaching in an apprenticeship role.

**DOC 780. Special Topics. (1-3 h)**

Intensive study of selected topics in documentary film. Topics may be drawn from any content area of documentary studies and production. May be repeated for credit for a maximum of 6 hours.

## Faculty

Program Director Christopher Zaluski

Teaching Professor Cara Pilson

Professor of Practice Peter Gilbert

Professor of Practice Christopher Sheridan