



Syllabus

Course Title: On Set in Somerset!

Program and Date: London Signature, May 30th – June 17th, 2025

Academic Department: Media Production / Film and Television / Electronic Media

Instructor Name: Professor John Gibson

Instructor Email and Phone: gibsonj5@nku.edu / (859) 572-5692

**email is the preferred contact method

Get to Know Your Professor

I'm a professor of Electronic Media and Broadcasting at Northern Kentucky University. My professional background includes documentary production, feature film production, and independent short film production, and attempting world domination on the regular.

Previous travels abroad have included France and England, and I may be slightly in love with the efficiency of mass transit in Paris and London. Come with me on this journey to get some great video, meet some cool people, and most likely hear way too many Star Wars references.

Course Description

Documentary production, visits to film locations, and on-site discussions/meetings with film industry professionals and historians – students with a desire for storytelling and an interest in production will get valuable hands-on experience with this course!

As a class and in small groups, students will work together to create short documentaries, reflective videos, and learn about production in England. We'll spend time in London, beautiful Bath, and other picturesque locations in Somerset! Among planned class activities are visits to London's Cinema Museum and Warner Bros. Studios Lot, plus walking tours in the historic city of Bath and other sites of popular filming locations for *Hot Fuzz*, *Bridgerton*, *Wonka*, *28 Days Later*, and many more film and television shows.

Taking this class overseas guarantees that in addition to gaining new technical skills, you will learn about another culture—and a lot about yourself. We hope to see you *On Set in Somerset!*

Course Level and Credit Hours

Upper Division Undergraduate / Three Credit Hours



Syllabus

Prerequisite(s)

Three credit hours of undergraduate media production, OR instructor permission.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of all coursework with a passing grade and full participation in course activities, students shall be able to:

1. demonstrate that they can work in a group to produce quality documentary material.
2. demonstrate that they can successfully research a location, topic, or person related to our travels.
3. demonstrate that they can successfully research mass transit in another country and navigate the city(ies).
4. employ this navigation and research to assist the professor with creating content that can only be filmed on location, abroad.
5. create a reflective video that highlights something that they've learned about themselves, another culture, or their own community.

Required Readings and Materials

No required textbook, although students will be expected to read various articles from the web and material related to our group projects, for preparation for production. A good travel book is highly recommended, [such as this one by DK](#).

A list of required viewings and readings is located [here](#); this will be modified and added to prior to the course.

Assignments and Grades

The following are the planned assignments (and corresponding expected time commitments) for this course.

Pre Travel (30%)

Individual Research Project (Short):

Students will conduct individual research on one of the areas we are traveling to from a list of provided areas from the itinerary (by instructor). This research will be somewhat limited in scope, but should include a discussion of what makes this area historically or culturally important.

Get to Know You Survey (Very Short):

A survey to get to know students prior to travel.

Mass Transit Project (Very Short):

Students will use Google Maps and other online tools to research how to navigate the mass transit system in London. Very useful as you research the fun places you want to go!

Syllabus

Movie Response (Very Short):

Students will write two paragraphs under the appropriate Teams channel for each of the films or TV shows that were selected for this course. There will be a prompt supplied by the professor.

Individual Solo Video (Short):

Students will create a short video, reflective in tone, about themselves, their reasons for traveling, and their hopes and fears. This will be a video essay of sorts, and can be used for not only practice for documentary production and an introduction to their classmates, but also a video they could use for online fundraising for their travel expenses.

Pre-Travel Documentary Pitch (Very Short):

This will be a short, one-page pitch about the documentary you are working on. This is a group submission.

Attendance and Participation:

We will have approximately 5-6 pre-departure online meetings. Students are expected to be present, and these will be scheduled when the most students are able to participate.

Travel (40%)**Scavenger Hunt / Reflective Photos (Short):**

Students will take photos of certain subjects, themes, and assigned topics and turn them in upon return from the program.

Documentary Production – Small Group (Medium):

While abroad, students will work on their documentary projects in small groups. For their documentaries, groups are expected to capture at least two interviews abroad related to the topic they are working on. [Here are examples of previous projects.](#)

Documentary Production – Large Group (Medium):

While abroad, students will assist Professor Gibson with capturing video and interviews for a feature length documentary on the history of abolitionism and slavery in London, that will connect to the same history in the United States. [Here is a trailer for a project that Gibson has previously directed that is thematically related.](#)

Post Travel (30%)**Individual Reflection Project (Medium):**

Upon return from traveling abroad, students will produce a 4-6 minute self-reflection piece. Click [here](#) and [here](#) for two examples of reflective videos from past programs!

Documentary Post-Production (Medium):

This will be the completion of the documentary project that was started prior to travel. All students will have a role in post-production, although roles will vary depending on experience.

****Projects may be adjusted/alterd prior to enrollment in the course.**



Syllabus

Grading Scale

The following scale will be used to compute your grade.

90 – 100% = A
80 – 89% = B
70 – 79% = C
60 – 69% = D
Below 60% = F

Onsite Learning Experiences and Activities

Onsite learning experiences in this class will likely include the following site visits. This is a tentative list, which will be replaced with a detailed daily itinerary of class meetings and field trips prior to the departure date.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A visit to the Cinema Museum in London, run by a non-profit organization.• A visit to the Docklands Museum in London (where we will conduct documentary interviews related to the Transatlantic Slave Trade and London's role in that period).• A visit to the Warner Bros. Studios Lot in London.• A visit with the Bath Film Commission in Bath, Somerset.• A walking tour in Wells, UK focused on <i>Hot Fuzz</i> (a big hit with students in the past!)• A guided walking tour led by the professor and the program director in Bath related to filming on location.• A visit to Aardman Studios in Bristol, home of <i>Wallace and Gromit</i> and other films.• A visit to Puzzlewood Forest, where <i>Dr. Who</i> and <i>The Force Awakens</i> have been filmed.• Additional site visits and activities in progress. |
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Attendance Policy

Attendance is mandatory at all scheduled activities and class meetings, as well as field trip excursions. This includes any virtual meetings before and after the onsite experience. Repeated absences, including for ill health, will require documentation to be excused.

Academic Integrity Policy

Plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty (see your campus student handbook for definitions) will not be tolerated and will result in failing assignment grades or even a course grade of F. Violations of academic honesty will be reported back to the student's home campus.
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The instructor may allow the use of generative AI for some assignments, but unless otherwise specified, direct submissions of material created by generative AI (including ChatGPT) will be considered the equivalent of plagiarism.
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Physical Expectations

The program requires walking 3-5 miles per day on uneven pavement in all kinds of weather and long periods of standing. Students must be able to carry their own bags and belongings.



Syllabus

Disability Accommodation

CCSA is committed to providing access to education abroad to the extent possible in a study abroad setting. The earlier CCSA and the faculty know the needs, the more likely we can accommodate them. At a minimum, students seeking accommodations are to contact both the CCSA office and the faculty one month in advance of the program's beginning. Students seeking such accommodation must provide CCSA with a copy of the letter on file with their own Office of Disability Services outlining what services they receive on their home campus.

Title IX Policy

Sexual misconduct (including sexual harassment, sexual assault, and any nonconsensual behavior of a sexual nature) and sexual discrimination violate CCSA policies. Students experiencing such behavior may obtain support from the Onsite Program Director or the CCSA Executive Director. To report sexual misconduct or sex discrimination, contact either of these two officers. Disclosure to faculty instructors or CCSA officers of sexual misconduct, domestic violence, dating violence, or sex discrimination occurring on the program or involving a visitor, student, or employee is not confidential under Title IX. Faculty and other CCSA employees are required to forward such reports, including names and circumstances, to the CCSA Executive Director.

Statement about Final Syllabus

Please note that all CCSA syllabi are subject to change, but every effort will be made to ensure participants receive notice of such changes in a timely manner.