School of the Arts and Media

UNSW Arts, Design and Architecture

MDIA2013

Making Virtual Reality Documentaries

Term 1, 2022



Course Overview

Staff Contact Details

Convenors

Name	Email	Availability	Location	Phone
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School Contact Information

School of the Arts and Media

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Acknowledgement of Country

UNSW Arts, Design and Architecture Kensington and Paddington campuses are built on Aboriginal Lands. We pay our respects to the Bidjigal and Gadigal peoples who are the Custodians of these lands. We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the First Australians, whose lands, winds and waters we all now share, and pay respect to their unique values, and their continuing and enduring cultures which deepen and enrich the life of our nation and communities.



Image courtesy of the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous [UNSW's Indigenous strategy]

Course Details

Units of Credit 6

Summary of the Course

Today's documentary storytelling formats now include 360 videos, Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR). News organisations are regularly producing short VR stories across diverse topics and Not-For-Profit organisations are harnessing the power of virtual reality as 'empathy machines' to promote awareness of issues, deepen knowledge and encourage support. The VR form's popularity is underpinned by accessible viewing on YouTube platforms and smart phones as well as VR dedicated devices.

This course provides you with the practical skills in Virtual Reality (VR) documentary production that are increasingly part of the multiplatform media environment. You will develop hands-on creative approaches to VR immersive documentary storytelling from idea, script, videoing and narration and editing to final video. The course's practical elements will be supported by theoretical readings, discussion and analysis of immersive long-form documentaries and their communication and storytelling strategies.

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate practical, technical and communication skills in the production of VR documentary.
2. Apply theoretical understandings of immersive storytelling in documentary and communications to production practice.
3. Produce a VR video for a media production portfolio and / or public channel such as YouTube.
4. Critique and situate the history and theory of immersive storytelling within individual media practice.

Teaching Strategies

This course provides you with practical skills creating VR storytelling for the journalism and communication industries. During the course, you will produce a VR video through hands-on lab sessions and field work. You will have equitable access to equipment and post-production editing facilities. The practical work will be supplemented with theoretical discussion and analysis of immersive storytelling to enhance your production skills.

Assessment

All assessments must be submitted. **A UF grade may be awarded if all assessments are not submitted**.

The Robert Webster labs are available 24 / 7 to students via your student card for editing on Premiere Pro. Please ensure your card gives you access to the labs.

Assessment task	Weight	Due Date	Course Learning Outcomes Assessed
1. VR Production (Group)	30%	end of Week 5	1, 2, 3
2. VR Post-Production (Individual)	40%	end of Week 10	1, 2, 3
3. Reflection Paper (Individual)	30%	Week 11 TBA	2, 4

Assessment 1: VR Production (Group)

Submission notes: See Moodle
Due date: end of Week 5

Small group (2-4) videoing and interviews for a three to five minute VR video. Feedback provided via LMS.

This is not a Turnitin assignment

Additional details

See Moodle for more information. Students are expected to contribute equally to the group project in response to the brief.

Assessment 2: VR Post-Production (Individual)

Start date: Begin early
Assessment length: Three to five minutes or a feature length story with multimedia
Submission notes: Script no longer required. Alternative is 1500 to 2000 word story with 360 video multimedia
Due date: end of Week 10

Editing and sound post-production of three to five minute documentary VR video with narration. Submitted with narration script transcript (approx. 1000 words). Feedback provided via LMS.

This is not a Turnitin assignment

Additional details

If you require advice about editing or other technical assistance relating to your project outside the tutorial, please see the Technical Resource Centre (TRC).

All individual story ideas must be approved and be suitable for either a journalism publication or not for profit organisation.

360 camera kits supplied via the TRC loans outside tutorials. See Moodle for further information on borrowing. It is strongly encouraged to begin planning your individual project early.

Robert Webster labs are available for editing outside tutorials. It is strongly recommended to use the labs and also have a portable USB drive for back up as well as One Drive available.

Special consideration via myunsw is required for extensions.

Assessment 3: Reflection Paper (Individual)

Assessment length: 1500 words
Submission notes: see Moodle.
Due date: Week 11 TBA

1,500-word reflection. Feedback provided via LMS.

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

Additional details

Harvard Referencing or APA required.

See Moodle for further assessment information.

Attendance Requirements

Please note that lecture recordings are not available for this course. Students are strongly encouraged to attend all classes and contact the Course Authority to make alternative arrangements for classes missed.

Course Schedule

View class timetable

Timetable

Date	Type	Content
O Week: 7 February - 11 February	Reading	O Week is a great time to familiarise yourself with the course and join ARC societies and clubs if you are new to UNSW.
Week 1: 14 February - 18 February	Lecture	VR storytelling and Intro to the Course *Refer to Moodle for readings / viewing.*
	Tut-Lab	Introduction to the VR 360 cameras and group work arrangement. Brief for group work stories (set topic)
Week 2: 21 February - 25 February	Lecture	Not for Profit storytelling and the 'empathy machine' *Refer to Moodle for readings / viewing.*
	Tut-Lab	Group film workshop and story pitch in response to brief *It is recommended you start your individual project early. Ideas must be approved.*
Week 3: 28 February - 4 March	Lecture	360 video: the ultimate truth machine? *Refer to Moodle for readings / viewing.*
	Tut-Lab	Group film workshop *Individual project pitching. Ideas must be*

		approved.
Week 4: 7 March - 11 March	Lecture	Embodiment and Virtual Reality or Guest Lecture (TBC) *Refer to Moodle for readings / viewing.*
	Tut-Lab	Group film workshop
Week 5: 14 March - 18 March	Lecture	Editing Immersive Storytelling and incorporating 2D elements *Refer to Moodle for readings / viewing.*
	Tut-Lab	Group work film project
Week 6: 21 March - 25 March	Reading	Reading Week. Use this week to work on your individual project.
Week 7: 28 March - 1 April	Lecture	Ethics and Immersive Storytelling or guest lecture (TBC) *Refer to Moodle for readings / viewing.* *Some lectures will shift due to availability of guests (TBC)*
	Tutorial	Individual film and story workshop
Week 8: 4 April - 8 April	Lecture	TBC. Some lectures may shift due to guest lecture interview for group work and industry VR guest. *Refer to Moodle for readings / viewing.*
	Tut-Lab	Individual Story Workshop.
Week 9: 11 April - 15 April	Lecture	TBC - some lectures may shift due to availability of guests *Refer to Moodle for readings / viewing.*
	Tut-Lab	Individual Workshop
Week 10: 18 April - 22 April	Lecture	Review of key topics for final assessment. *Refer to Moodle for readings / viewing.*
	Tut-Lab	Individual workshop and reflection

Resources

Prescribed Resources

Textbook

Bosworth, M., and Sarah, L. (2019). *Crafting Stories for Virtual Reality.* NY / Oxon: Routledge, available via UNSW bookshop that also offers eBook purchases.

Additional readings available via Moodle Library Link (the green jigsaw icon)

Recommended films available on YouTube and students can be supplied with a cardboard headset for personal use.

Occulus headsets : subject to TRC availability.

Filming and Editing:

360 cameras, audio equipment, editing Premiere Pro via the Labs and TRC.

The Insta 360 One X app (Apple and Google Play) is required to film and record with the cameras.

The Ricoh Theta app are required to film and record with Ricoh cameras.

The Insta 360 One X studio and Ricoh Theta apps can be downloaded on your personal laptop / desktop, however it is recommended you edit on the same desktop computer in the lab for consistency. It is recommended that if planning on editing off campus, that you check your laptop / desktop's specs with the TRC to ensure it is suitable for use with VR editing.

Each group will be assigned the same camera.

Individual borrowing is available throughout the course.

Recommended Resources

Please see Moodle for recommended editing resources and VR production links.

YouTube app installed on a smart phone is recommended.

Please see Moodle for other resources, such as Adobe VR editing guides and other helpful links.

Students can see previous student work on Newsworthy.org.au and the course's youtube site: 360 Journalism

Course Evaluation and Development

This is the second year the course has run in Term 1. We welcome your feedback throughout as well as formally at the end of the course.

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Turnitin Submission

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au . Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally, assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, it will be stated on your course's Moodle site with alternative submission details.

For information on how to submit assignments online via Moodle: https://student.unsw.edu.au/how-submit-assignment-moodle

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

Copying: Using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This includes copying materials, ideas or concepts from a book, article, report or other written document, presentation, composition, artwork, design, drawing, circuitry, computer program or software, website, internet, other electronic resource, or another person's assignment without appropriate acknowledgement.

Inappropriate paraphrasing: Changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original information, structure and/or progression of ideas of the original without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit and to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without appropriate referencing.

Collusion: Working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student for the purpose of them plagiarising, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.

Inappropriate citation: Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.

Duplication ("self-plagiarism"): Submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

Correct referencing practices

The UNSW Academic Skills support offers resources and individual consultations. Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study. One of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

UNSW Library has the ELISE tool available to assist you with your study at UNSW. ELISE is designed to introduce new students to studying at UNSW but it can also be a great refresher during your study. Completing the ELISE tutorial and quiz will enable you to:

- analyse topics, plan responses and organise research for academic writing and other assessment tasks
- effectively and efficiently find appropriate information sources and evaluate relevance to your needs
- use and manage information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- better manage your time
- understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UNSW
- be aware of plagiarism, copyright, UNSW Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy
- be aware of the standards of behaviour expected of everyone in the UNSW community
- locate services and information about UNSW and UNSW Library

Academic Information

Due to evolving advice by NSW Health, students must check for updated information regarding online learning for all Arts, Design and Architecture courses this term (via Moodle or course information provided.)

For essential student information relating to:

- requests for extension;
- late submissions guidelines;
- review of marks;
- UNSW Health and Safety policies;
- examination procedures;
- special consideration in the event of illness or misadventure;
- student equity and disability;
- and other essential academic information, see

https://www.unsw.edu.au/arts-design-architecture/student-life/resources-support/protocols-guidelines

Image Credit

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