

DMA 325 “Documentary Project” Grading Criteria

Writing – the script topic has a definite focus supported by several main points with appropriate VO narration, expert testimonials, and B-roll video. The balance of VO narration and interview testimonial is “interspersed” in brief segments to help maintain audience interest.

Focus - all the shots are in sharp focus, i.e., no blurred or soft shots.

Exposure – all the shots are properly exposed, i.e., none too hot, none too dark.

White Balance – all shots have the proper color balance, i.e., no yellow cast or blue cast.

Camera Framing - framing of the image was optimum and usually delivered the "punch line" on time, rather than arriving too late, leaving prematurely, or going past the punch line.

Art Design – the video interviews have appropriate and aesthetically designed background scenery and props that fit the subject of the documentary.

Lighting – the video interviews have appropriate back light, key light, fill light, and background light for a professional “*real TV*” look. Outdoor scenes were filmed at the “*right time of the day*” for optimum quality.

Shot Selection - choice of images effectively supported and enhanced the VO narration and interviews. Had the best images for the right part of the documentary, rather than ambiguous or inappropriate shots at certain points that confuse the audience as to the point being made.

B-Roll Sequences – the cutaway shots used to illustrate points made by the narrator or interviewee consist of edited sequences that have continuity and a variety of camera angles such as master shot, reverse angle, overhead, and low angle, instead of showing just a single shot as an illustration.

Editing - overall pace of the production keeps audience interested, rather than being too slow or too fast. Good timing in delivering the appropriate shot at the right time.

Audio Level Consistency – are the audio levels of the narrator and interview testimonials always at their optimum level, or are there noticeable parts that are softer or louder?

Audio Mix - is the overall mix of the narration, interview testimonials, B-Roll ambience, and music properly balanced, or do some tracks such as the music or ambience overpower and mask the narrator or interview testimonials at times?

Title Design - titles were legible, easily readable, and aesthetically designed to render a "professional look", rather than a primitive "token effort" look. Titles were designed for optimum placement on the screen. Font style and color were appropriate for the subject in the shot.

Entertainment Value - attracts and holds the interest of the average TV audience. Good choice of topic, interview testimonials, B-roll video, and music.

Communicative Value - the documentary delivers an obvious message with well-supported main points that are easily understood by the general TV audience.