

## Independent Study Online Course Syllabus

**Course Number: ELA 924**

**Course Title: Documentaries and Nonfiction**

X Online       Distance Learning

**Instructor:** Elaine Reimer-Paré  
**Phone number:** 514-696-1631  
**Email:** [empare@videotron.ca](mailto:empare@videotron.ca)

**Units: 3**  
**Grade Level: 7-14**

### Course Description

This online course shows teachers how to use documentaries to help their students become better readers and interpreters of nonfiction texts. Through this course, teachers will gain strategies to help their students understand tone, perspective, author's purpose, bias, persuasion techniques, propaganda, and the fine (often blurry) line between fact and fiction. The readings and assignments in this course are aligned with Common Core Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies. The course adheres to the five core propositions of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Teaching students to "read" documentaries is one of the most effective ways to build confident, critical readers of nonfiction texts.

### Course Dates:

Self-paced; students may enroll at any time and take up to one year to complete assignments.

You have up to one year from the date of registration, and no less than three weeks (one week per credit), to complete the course.

### ***Moodle:***

This course will be delivered totally online. Moodle is a learning management system that provides students access to online resources, documents, graded assignments, quizzes, discussion forums, etc. with an easy to learn and use interface. To learn more about Moodle go to: ([http://docs.moodle.org/en/Student\\_tutorials](http://docs.moodle.org/en/Student_tutorials)). There are some student tutorials on the Center for Online Learning website at Fresno Pacific University – <http://col.fresno.edu/student>.

### ***Moodle Site Login and passwords – (or other online course access information)***

Students will need to have internet access to log onto <http://ce-connect.fresno.edu>. The username and password numbers for Moodle access will be sent to you by the university using the email address you submitted at the time of registration. The instructor will then contact you with a welcome letter and login instructions. If you need help with the username and password recovery please contact the Center for Professional Development at (800)372-5505, or (559)453-2000 during regular office hours - Mon-Fri 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

### ***Getting Help with Moodle:***

If you need help with Moodle, please contact the Center for Online Learning (COL), + by telephone 1-559-453-3460. Help by phone is available Mon-Thurs 8:00 am to 8:00pm and on Fridays from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, or by filling out a “Request Services” form at <http://col.fresno.edu/contact/request-services>. Please identify that you are with the Continuing Education/Independent Studies department.

Please remember that the instructor is not able to offer technical support. In the event that you need technical support, please contact your Internet Service Provider.

### **Course Materials**

Golden, John. *Reading in the Reel World: Teaching Documentaries and Other Nonfiction Texts*. Urbana: NCTE, 2006.

(Cost for this text is included in the materials fee; the text will be mailed to the student upon registration.)

### **Discussion Forums:**

Participation is an important expectation of this course and all online courses. Online discussions promote reflection and analysis while allowing students to appreciate and evaluate positions that others express. While students may not be engaging with the same students throughout this course, they will be expected to offer comments, questions, and replies to the discussion question whenever possible. The faculty role in the discussion forum is that of an observer and facilitator.

### **Course Requirements**

Students of this course will be required to complete all course assignments. These assignments will include developing and teaching lesson plans, writing responses to readings, contributing to the site’s forum discussions, and conducting independent research and analysis. Students must

address specific teaching standards in their lesson plans and written responses. Completed assignments should be uploaded directly onto the Moodle site.

### **National Content / Common Core State Standards**

The following **Common Core State Standards** for **English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies** (Grades 6-12) are reinforced throughout this course:

#### **College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading**

##### **Key Ideas and Details**

1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

##### **Craft and Structure**

4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

##### **Integration of Knowledge and Ideas**

7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build

---

Course Number and Title: ELA 924 Documentaries and Nonfiction

Instructor: Elaine Reimer-Pare`

Date of Revision 2/2/16

To register for courses go to <http://ce.fresno.edu/cpd> and log in

knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

### **Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity**

10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

Feel free to consult the Common Core State Standards document for English Language Arts and History/Social Studies at <http://www.corestandards.org/> . This document includes grade and subject-specific applications of these reading standards as they relate to the teaching of information text.

In addition to meeting Common Core State Standards, this course promotes the following core propositions that characterize National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs).

### **National Board for Professional Teaching Standards: Five Core Propositions (<http://www.nbpts.org/>)**

#### **Proposition 1: Teachers are Committed to Students and Their Learning**

- NBCTs are dedicated to making knowledge accessible to all students. They believe all students can learn.
- They treat students equitably. They recognize the individual differences that distinguish their students from one another and they take account for these differences in their practice.
- NBCTs understand how students develop and learn.
- They respect the cultural and family differences students bring to their classroom.
- They are concerned with their students' self-concept, their motivation and the effects of learning on peer relationships.

#### **Proposition 2: Teachers Know the Subjects They Teach and How to Teach Those Subjects to Students.**

- NBCTs have mastery over the subject(s) they teach. They have a deep understanding of the history structure and real-world applications of the subject.
- They have skill and experience in teaching it, and they are very familiar with the skills gaps and preconceptions students may bring to the subject.
- They are able to use diverse instructional strategies to teach for understanding.

#### **Proposition 3: Teachers are Responsible for Managing and Monitoring Student Learning.**

- NBCTs deliver effective instruction. They move fluently through a range of instructional techniques, keeping students motivated, engaged and focused.
- They know how to engage students to ensure a disciplined learning environment, and how to organize instruction to meet instructional goals.

- NBCTs know how to assess the progress of individual students as well as the class as a whole.
- They use multiple methods for measuring student growth and understanding, and they can clearly explain student performance to parents.

**Proposition 4: Teachers Think Systematically about Their Practice and Learn from Experience.**

- NBCTs model what it means to be an educated person—they read, they question, they create and they are willing to try new things.
- They are familiar with learning theories and instructional strategies and stay abreast of current issues in American education.
- They critically examine their practice on a regular basis to deepen knowledge, expand their repertoire of skills, and incorporate new findings into their practice.

**Proposition 5: Teachers are Members of Learning Communities.**

- NBCTs collaborate with others to improve student learning.
- They are leaders and actively know how to seek and build partnerships with community groups and businesses.
- They work with other professionals on instructional policy, curriculum development and staff development.
- They can evaluate school progress and the allocation of resources in order to meet state and local education objectives.

**Learning Objectives/Outcomes**

Students of this course will be able to

1. Implement teaching strategies that equip students to become confident, critical readers of nonfiction texts (CCSS 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10; NBPTS Props. 2, 3)
2. Identify key elements of the documentary and recognize their relevance to the teaching of nonfiction print texts (CCSS 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10; NBPTS Props. 2, 3)
3. Create innovative lesson plans that promote critical thinking and analysis through the use of documentaries and nonfiction print texts (CCSS 1-10; NBPTS Props. 1, 2, 3, 4)
4. Formulate analytical responses to course readings, current documentaries, and colleagues (NBPTS Props. 4, 5)
5. Recognize how using documentaries as a teaching tool in the classroom reinforces national teaching standards (NBPTS Prop. 5)

**Schedule of Topics and Assignments**

---

Course Number and Title: ELA 924 Documentaries and Nonfiction  
 Instructor: Elaine Reimer-Pare`  
 Date of Revision 2/2/16

To register for courses go to <http://ce.fresno.edu/cpd> and log in

1. Reflect on your experience with documentaries and nonfiction texts. Feel free to use the questions below to guide your response. (300 words)

**Documentaries:**

How have you used documentaries in your classroom? Have they served a purpose beyond providing cultural, social, and historical context for other literary texts? If you have used documentaries in the classroom, what experiences have been most meaningful for your students?

**Nonfiction Print Texts:**

How do you use non-fiction print texts in your teaching? Are you required to incorporate them into your curriculum? What struggles do your students have when reading nonfiction? In what ways would you like to see your students improve?

(See additional online activities on Moodle site.)

2. Read Chapter One of John Golden's *Reading in the Reel World: Teaching Documentaries and Other Nonfiction Texts*. In Chapter One, Golden highlights seven suggestions for teaching documentaries to students (3). Choose one of these suggestions as the basis for an introductory activity/lesson plan for use in your classroom. Consider your students' experience with documentaries and nonfiction texts. Feel free to model your plan on Golden's examples and activities. Teach and assess the lesson you have developed.

**Lesson Plan Guidelines:** Please follow these guidelines for all of the lesson plans you develop for this course.

Your lesson plan does not need to be longer than one or two pages. Use a format and structure that is comfortable and practical for you, whether that means point form, outline, or short paragraphs. Make sure to adapt the concepts modeled in the text into grade-appropriate activities for your students.

**Your lesson plans should include:**

- a. Lesson's objective
- b. Common Core State Standard(s) met through the lesson
- c. Classroom context (where the lesson fits within your curriculum)
- d. Process you will follow to meet the lesson's objective
- e. Assessment of the lesson's strengths and weaknesses (after you have taught the lesson). This is your assessment of the lesson, not an explanation of how you will assess your students.

If you are unable to teach and assess these lessons in your regular classroom, please present your lessons to a substitute group. In your assessment, identify your "makeshift classroom" and

describe any adjustments you have had to make. Feel free to recruit friends, relatives, colleagues, etc., for your sample class. The students do not need to be the same age/ability level as the students in your regular classroom.

3. Read Chapter Two of Golden's text. In his introduction to Chapter Two, Golden explains that "the real point of this chapter is that since the skills students use to understand a *nonfiction print text* are nearly identical to those they use to understand a *nonfiction visual text* (documentary), we should use the inherent interest students have in film by identifying and practicing these skills first with the visual texts and then transferring those skills to print texts" (72). As you review this chapter, pay particular attention to how Golden uses documentaries to model key reading skills and strategies.

Develop a lesson that focuses on one of the reading skills Golden highlights (compare/contrast, problem/solution, cause/effect). Your lesson should invite students to practice these skills with the visual text (documentary) before transferring the skills to the nonfiction print text. Develop, teach, and assess the lesson; be sure to identify how the development of these skills meets the Common Core State Standards for your discipline.

4. Read Chapter Three and share your response. You may use the following questions to guide you as you reflect: What do you think about the way Golden reinforces the connection between documentaries and nonfiction texts in this chapter? What are some ideas or strategies from this chapter that might work with your students? What would you like to try? How would you adapt Golden's suggestions to meet the needs of your students? (400 words)

Share one of your key observations from Chapter Three in the forum (see Moodle site). Continue the discussion by responding to several of your colleagues' insights and questions.

5. Read Chapter Four. In this chapter, Golden provides detailed analysis of at least 15 documentaries. Watch one of the documentaries that he recommends. Be sure to choose a documentary that has potential to work in your classroom and that you have not seen before. After you have viewed the documentary, write a response. Your written reflection should include your personal response to the film, a critique of Golden's suggestions, and a general proposal for incorporating the film into your teaching. (500 words)

Note: If none of the documentaries discussed is appropriate for your grade level or discipline, please select a documentary of your choice for this assignment.

Share a summary of your response with colleagues in the forum (see Moodle site). Please title your forum entry with the name of the documentary you chose to critique. Scan the list of posted reviews to find creative strategies for using these films in the classroom.

6. John Golden's *Reading in the Reel World* was published in 2006. Create an annotated list of at least 10 documentaries produced since 2006 that would be appropriate to teach in your classroom. These documentaries should be ones that you have not used in the past and that would be new to most students. You do not need to watch the documentaries; rather, your annotation (approximately four sentences each) should describe the film and explain how it could be incorporated into your teaching. Please refer to the concepts Golden discusses in the text.

Browse the following links for inspiration:

Movie Review Query Engine ([www.mrqe.com](http://www.mrqe.com))  
The Internet Movie Database ([www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com))  
Documentary Films.net ([www.documentaryfilms.net](http://www.documentaryfilms.net))  
Free Documentaries Online ([www.Documentary24.com](http://www.Documentary24.com))  
Top Documentary Films ([www.topdocumentaryfilms.com](http://www.topdocumentaryfilms.com))

Look over your annotated list of documentaries and share three of your favorite findings in the forum (see Moodle site).

7. Prepare a plan for teaching a complete documentary in your classroom. Follow the model provided by Golden in Chapter Four. Your lesson plan should include a summary, rationale, previewing exercise, discussion questions, and closing questions/activities. While you should divide the film into viewing days and be aware of "things to notice," you do NOT need to include these elements with this assignment. Please choose a documentary that would be a new addition to your curriculum and one that you have not used in another teaching assignment for this course. Be sure to consider how the teaching of this documentary meets the Common Core State Standards for your discipline. You do not need to teach the lesson while taking this course; incorporate the film into your content material when appropriate.
8. Read Appendix B. Write a short reflection on the activity chart that you believe would be most useful in your classroom. In what ways would this chart help your students strengthen their nonfiction reading skills and strategies? How would you be able to use this activity with your students? With which documentary or nonfiction text would you pair this chart? (200 words)

What are some of the resources available for teachers who want to use documentaries in the classroom? In the forum, share a resource or strategy you have discovered that could enrich your teaching of nonfiction texts (see Moodle site).

9. Research copyright and fair use laws concerning the showing of documentaries in the classroom. What guidelines are teachers expected to follow? Are there specific policies

enforced by your school or school district? How do these laws apply to the ever-growing popularity of showing videos from Internet sources like YouTube? (200 words)

10. Using documentaries as a teaching tool in the classroom is an exciting and innovative way to help students develop stronger nonfiction reading skills. This forum gives you the opportunity to learn from others' experiences and to share your own observations and ideas. This assignment is two-fold:

A) Share a comment in the forum about teaching documentaries and nonfiction texts. Your post may include a lesson plan that you have created, an observation about Golden's text, a neat idea that you would like to try someday, a connection you have made between the course and something you have been doing already in your classroom, an unforgettable documentary that has inspired great classroom discussions, etc. Feel free to share from your learning experiences and to ask questions, as well, if you have them.

B) Respond to at least three of the posts that have been shared by your colleagues.

### **Evidence of Learning**

- Lesson plans implement the teaching methods and strategies promoted in the text; the plans show an understanding of how to apply nonfiction reading skills to both visual and print texts (Outcomes 1, 2, 3)
- Written reflections connect to specific ideas in the text and demonstrate critical thinking, as well as an investment of time and energy (Outcome 4)
- Analyses of documentaries demonstrate an understanding of the genre and an appreciation of its role in the teaching of nonfiction print texts (Outcomes 2, 4)
- Connections between course material and national/state standards are clear and well-documented (Outcome 5)

### **Grading Policies and Rubrics**

Grades will be determined using the following percentages:

Written Responses: 60%  
Lesson Plans: 30%  
Forum Contribution: 10%

Total scores determine the final grade:

90-100% = A  
80 - 89% = B

79 or below = no credit

- The discernment between an A or a B is at the discretion of the instructor based on the quality of work submitted (see assignment rubrics).
- Coursework falling short of a quality equaling a B or a Credit Grade will be returned with further instructions.
- All assignments must be completed in order to receive a grade. In addition, all assignments are expected to reflect the quality that teacher-training institutions require of professional educators. If completed assignments do not meet this standard, students will be notified with further instructions from the instructor.

### **Scoring Rubric for *Documentaries and Nonfiction***

	<b>A 90-100 points</b>	<b>B 80-89 points</b>	<b>No Credit</b>
<b>Written Responses 60%</b>  <b>Assignments #1, #4, #5, #6, #8, #9</b>	The response is insightful and critical. It demonstrates a close reading of the text and an understanding of its ideas. The response makes specific reference to the text’s principles and connects these ideas to the classroom in practical ways.	The response reflects concepts illustrated in the text, but it does not show evidence of careful, critical analysis. The response does what is expected to “meet the requirement” and “answer the question” without much creativity or insightful reflection.	There is little evidence of effort or reflection. The response does not demonstrate attentive reading of the text or appropriate application of its ideas. Assignments do not meet the required word length or the academic expectations of a graduate-level course.
<b>Lesson Plans 30%</b>  <b>Assignments #2, #3, #7</b>	The lesson plan is modeled on Golden’s teaching strategies and reflects a clear understanding of the text’s premise. The plan is the original work of the student. It includes all required elements and is organized logically and clearly. The lesson is a creative, yet realistic plan that would help students strengthen their nonfiction reading skills.	The lesson plan reflects a limited understanding of Golden’s teaching strategies. Although it is the original work of the student, it is simply a reorganization of an existing lesson plan. It includes most of the required elements, but does not provide much development of the ideas. The lesson plan follows the guidelines, but lacks enthusiasm and creativity.	The lesson plan is not the original work of the student. It is not modeled on nor does it demonstrate an understanding of Golden’s teaching strategies. The plan is not realistic for use in the classroom and does not include the required elements. It lacks a cohesive structure and its ideas are not communicated clearly.

---

Course Number and Title: ELA 924 Documentaries and Nonfiction  
Instructor: Elaine Reimer-Pare`  
Date of Revision 2/2/16

To register for courses go to <http://ce.fresno.edu/cpd> and log in

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Forum Contribution 10%</b></p> <p><b>Assignment #10</b></p>	<p>The forum contribution is respectful and constructive. The participant shares insightful ideas and comments that contribute positively to the learning environment of the class.</p>	<p>The forum contribution is very short and does not show an investment of time or energy, but it still offers reflection. The participant “meets the requirement” by addressing the topic and responding to others.</p>	<p>The forum contribution requirement is not met. If comments are posted, they are off-topic or lack reflection.</p>
---	---	--	--

### Instructor/Student Contact

Students who register for this course will receive a welcome e-mail from the instructor with information about accessing the course’s online site. Throughout the course, the instructor is available by e-mail or directly through the Moodle course site to answer questions or provide feedback. Each assignment that is submitted online will receive a response from the instructor. The discussion forum, as well, is a place to receive feedback from the instructor, as well as from colleagues enrolled in the course.

### References

#### **Books:**

Aufderheide, Patricia. *Documentary Film: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Barnouw, Erik. *Documentary: A History of the Non-Fiction Film*. 2<sup>nd</sup> rev. edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.

Bernard, Sheila Curran. *Documentary Storytelling, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition: Creative Nonfiction on Screen*. Burlington, MA: Elsevier, 2011.

Brenton, Sam, and Reuben Cohen. *Shooting People: Adventures in Reality TV*. London: Verso, 2003.

McCreadie, Marsha. *Documentary Superstars: How Today’s Filmmakers Are Reinventing the Form*. New York: Allworth Press, 2008.

Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010.

### **Internet Sites:**

Movie Review Query Engine ([www.mrqe.com](http://www.mrqe.com))

The Internet Movie Database ([www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com))

Documentary Films.net ([www.documentaryfilms.net](http://www.documentaryfilms.net))

DocuSeek ([www.docuseek.com](http://www.docuseek.com))

Women Make Movies ([www.wmm.com](http://www.wmm.com))

Documentary Educational Resources ([www.der.org](http://www.der.org))

### **National Standards Information:**

<http://www.corestandards.org/>

<http://www.nbpts.org/>

### **Final Course Grade and Transcripts**

When all work for the course has been completed, students will need to logon to the Center for Professional Development website (<http://ce.fresno.edu/cpd>) to “Submit Grade Form”. Once the instructor fills out the grade form online, students may log back in to request their Grade Report as well as order transcripts online. Please allow at least two weeks for the final grade to be posted. For more information see the Independent Studies Policies and Procedures that were sent to you when you received your course materials, or in your online course. They are available, also at <http://ce.fresno.edu/cpd> - under General Information > CPD Policies.

### **Plagiarism and Academic Honesty**

All people participating in the educational process at Fresno Pacific University are expected to pursue honesty and integrity in all aspects of their academic work. Academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, will be handled according to the procedures set forth in the Fresno Pacific University Catalogue. URL <http://www.fresno.edu>.

---

Course Number and Title: ELA 924 Documentaries and Nonfiction

Instructor: Elaine Reimer-Pare`

Date of Revision 2/2/16

To register for courses go to <http://ce.fresno.edu/cpd> and log in

## CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

CE 1. Demonstrate proficient written communication by articulating a clear focus, synthesizing arguments, and utilizing standard formats in order to inform and persuade others, and present information applicable to targeted use.
CE 2. Demonstrate comprehension of content-specific knowledge and the ability to apply it in theoretical, personal, professional, or societal contexts.
CE 3. Reflect on their personal and professional growth and provide evidence of how such reflection is utilized to manage personal and professional improvement.
CE 4. Apply critical thinking competencies by generating probing questions, recognizing underlying assumptions, interpreting and evaluating relevant information, and applying their understandings to the professional setting.
CE 5. Reflect on values that inspire high standards of professional and ethical behavior as they pursue excellence in applying new learning to their chosen field.
CE 6. Identify information needed in order to fully understand a topic or task, organize that information, identify the best sources of information for a given enquiry, locate and critically evaluate sources, and accurately and effectively share that information.

## FRESNO PACIFIC UNIVERSITY STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

<b>Student Learning Outcomes Oral Communication:</b> Students will <i>exhibit</i> clear, engaging, and confident oral communication – in both individual and group settings – and will critically <i>evaluate</i> content and delivery components.
<b>Written Communication:</b> Students will <i>demonstrate</i> proficient written communication by <i>articulating</i> a clear focus, <i>synthesizing</i> arguments, and utilizing standard formats in order to <i>inform</i> and <i>persuade</i> others.
<b>Content Knowledge:</b> Students will <i>demonstrate</i> comprehension of content-specific knowledge and the ability to apply it in theoretical, personal, professional, or societal contexts.
<b>Reflection:</b> Students will <i>reflect</i> on their personal and professional growth and <i>provide evidence</i> of how such reflection is utilized to manage personal and vocational improvement.
<b>Critical Thinking:</b> Students will <i>apply</i> critical thinking competencies by <i>generating</i> probing questions, <i>recognizing</i> underlying assumptions, <i>interpreting</i> and <i>evaluating</i> relevant information, and <i>applying</i> their understandings to new situations.
<b>Moral Reasoning:</b> Students will <i>identify</i> and <i>apply</i> moral reasoning and ethical decision-making skills, and <i>articulate</i> the norms and principles underlying a Christian world-view.
<b>Service:</b> Students will <i>demonstrate</i> service and reconciliation as a way of leadership.
<b>Cultural and Global Perspective:</b> Students will <i>identify</i> personal, cultural, and global perspectives and will employ these perspectives to <i>evaluate</i> complex systems.
<b>Quantitative Reasoning:</b> Students will accurately <i>compute</i> calculations and symbolic operations and <i>explain</i> their use in a field of study.

---

Course Number and Title: ELA 924 Documentaries and Nonfiction

Instructor: Elaine Reimer-Pare`

Date of Revision 2/2/16

To register for courses go to <http://ce.fresno.edu/cpd> and log in

**Information Literacy:** Students will *identify* information needed in order to fully understand a topic or task, *explain* how that information is organized, *identify* the best sources of information for a given enquiry, *locate* and critically *evaluate* sources, and accurately and effectively *share* that information.