

**First-Year Learning Community Seminar:
Personal Documentary and First-Person Media in Community**

Purchase College, State University of New York

EDG1050, CRN48816

Fall 2022, Mondays, 12:30 PM - 1:45 PM, Thursdays, 12:30 PM - 2:20 PM

Center for Media, Film, and Theatre, CMFT0065

Instructor: Prof. Joel Neville Anderson

Email: joel.anderson@purchase.edu

Office: Music Building, MUS0053

Office Hours:

- Drop-in: Mondays 2-3 PM, Thursdays 11 AM - 12 PM
- Schedule in-person or virtual times: <https://calendly.com/joelnanderson/>

Peer Mentor: Andy Rolfs

Email: lilian.rolfs@purchase.edu

Office Hours:

- Schedule in-person or virtual times: <https://calendly.com/andy-rolfs/>

Peer Mentor: Jason Kelly

Email: jason.kelly@purchase.edu

Office Hours:

- Schedule in-person or virtual times: <https://calendly.com/jason-kelly-2/>

Course Description:

The First-Year Learning Community Seminar (FYLC Seminar) provides students an opportunity to engage with faculty and peers on topics of intellectual and social significance in a small class environment. The FYLC seminar reflects the faculty member's unique area of study and interests. The FYLC Seminar promotes exploration of higher education, intellectual exchange, critical thinking, and community. This course, Personal Documentary and First-Person Media in Community, explores heterogeneous genres of personal documentary, essay film, and autobiographical or first-person media from film and video to photography. Drawing on traditions in literature, anthropology, commercial and independent filmmaking, and social justice activism and organizing, these works are opened up through texts from the disciplines of gender studies, cultural studies, disability studies, cinema and media theory, history, and critical ethnic studies. This course addresses projects that re-situate self and environment, subverting dominant practices to produce new meaning, and invites students to promote personal development while being introduced to student clubs, campus support services, and opportunities for engagement and service. Projects include both writing assignments that require the demonstration of critical thinking and reasoning, as well as creative exercises utilizing "personal media" such as simple voice recording software and digital photo capture and video recording via phones and laptops in conversation with the works addressed.

Course Goals/Student Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the semester, students will:

1. Be prepared for academic success.
2. Discover and connect with Purchase College.
3. Have been exposed to pathways toward personal development, wellbeing, and social responsibility.
4. Be ready to employ critical thinking and reasoning in a college setting.
5. Demonstrate an understanding of personal documentary and first-person media, and the significance of its use in processes of individual expression and community-building.

Reading and Viewing Assignments:

Readings will be posted on Moodle (<https://moodle.purchase.edu/>) as PDFs. Films/videos assigned for viewing outside class will be available via online streaming (using the library website or other platforms freely accessible to students), as specified by the instructor. (Whatever devices you choose to use to watch films/videos outside of class, I encourage you to do so in an environment free of distractions so you may concentrate on the creators' work.) Texts and film/video offered on a weekly basis as "Recommended" sources are optional and meant for students with a particular interest in the topic, possibly for later reference as part of future projects.

Discussion Platform:

Students will be periodically required to respond to the assigned viewing and reading material, analyzing the form and content of given cinematic works, and incorporating the historical contexts, theories, or arguments of the texts. This is not an informal film review, but an opportunity to demonstrate the modes of analysis we are learning in the course: briefly describe the work while offering your own thoughtful observations and questions. Your posts to Moodle should be informal, offering thoughtful observations and questions based on a prompt question.

First-Person Media Presentation:

Students are required to apply what they've learned about personal documentary and first-person media in community in this project, selecting media that best suits their preferred modes of expression, whether video, photo, audio, text, or another form of personal documentary or first-person media. Their presentation should include one or more media forms, and a short text reflecting on their process and connecting to class material. A detailed prompt will be distributed as well as the opportunity to choose between in-class presentation dates.

Grading:

Participation: 30% of final grade

Discussion Platform: 15%

Meetings with Instructor: 15%

Meetings with Peer Mentors: 15%

First-Person Media Presentation: 25%

Policies and Guidelines:

- Respecting Yourself and Others: You are expected to treat others in the class with respect. This means listening to their words and choosing your own with care. Students violating this policy will be dismissed from class.
- Preparation and Participation: Approximately two to three hours of screening material, in addition to one to two articles or book chapters will be assigned each week for students to watch and read outside class. Students are expected to review the material in detail, and come prepared to participate in discussion. Your thoughts are valuable to me and your fellow students. Students are responsible for all assignments, even if they are absent, unless otherwise discussed.
- Attendance: Your attendance at each class is mandatory. Be sure to sign the attendance sheet. A single absence will be excused without question, however repeated absences will result in a lowered letter grade: 2 will result in a B as a maximum possible grade, 3 in a C, and 4 absences will result in automatic failure of the course. Arriving to class after the start time on two occasions will be recorded as one absence. Arriving more than 20 minutes after the start time will be considered an absence. Excusing absences will require consultation with the instructor and may require documentation, such as a doctor's note following a medical visit. If you do miss class, please also check with the instructor or your peers to catch up on assignments and handouts—this will be your responsibility.
- Breaks: There will generally be a short break during class. Returning after the class resumes will count as a late arrival. Please only leave the class outside of this set break time in case of emergencies. It is not necessary to ask for the instructor's permission, but please return within five minutes, and do not leave more than once. Inform the instructor at the start of the semester if you require an accommodation.
- Email Correspondence: Please check your university email regularly for announcements and updates to the syllabus and assignments.
- Moodle: Moodle will be an important resource for this class, and students should check it regularly for announcements.
- Instructor Delay: In rare instances, the instructor may be delayed arriving to class due to an emergency. If the instructor has not arrived by the time class is scheduled to start, students must wait a minimum of thirty minutes for the instructor's arrival before leaving. In the event that the instructor will miss class entirely, students will be contacted in advance via email or a sign will be posted at the classroom.
- Food and Drinks: The Center for Media, Film, and Theatre and Music Building facilities have strict rules regarding food and drink due to the sensitivity of technology. You may eat a snack outside the building during the break, though please note there will not be time to run and purchase a snack outside the classroom building during break. Please prepare accordingly. Students violating this policy will be dismissed from class.
- Classroom Technology: Please bring a notebook and pen or pencil to class. Laptops, tablets, and mobile phones are not to be used once class has begun. Laptops or tablets may be used during class presentations.
- Notes on Zoom Usage in Case of Virtual Sessions:
 - Remain engaged during lectures and discussions conducted via the Zoom video chat platform, and keep your webcam on as much as your situation permits.

- When attending class via Zoom, please do your best to contribute to a positive and accepting learning environment. As much as possible, create a dedicated space for class time, with ample light. Find a comfortable position and physical posture, feel free to use a virtual background, and use your own best judgment regarding attire, etc.
- Be prepared to take notes, whether using a desktop app or a notebook and pen/pencil.
- Do not become distracted by other desktop windows or electronic devices. Please keep mobile phones in a separate location or ensure they are turned off.
- Please adjust how your name displays on the Zoom interface to reflect how you would like to be addressed (including for example your preferred pronouns).
- Keep track of your Zoom meeting links and passwords. It's helpful to store links in a calendar application with each class or meeting entered into the correct day/time.
- If you encounter any issues with internet connectivity or computer performance, please quit any unnecessary applications or temporarily mute your webcam.
- Please contact the instructor if you have any issues regarding access to the internet or a reliable computer in order to find a solution in coordination with Campus Technology Services (CTS): <https://www.purchase.edu/offices/cts/>
- If any difficulties arise, don't hesitate to inform the instructor in order to discuss potential accommodations. We'll figure it out together.

Academic Integrity Policy:

The Purchase College academic integrity policy explicitly forbids cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty. Plagiarism is the appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another person and the representation of them as one's own original work. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the definition of plagiarism and the acceptable methods of attribution. These are serious matters and you need to be aware of what is and is not permissible. See <https://www.purchase.edu/offices/community-standards/student-code-of-conduct/section-a-academic-integrity/index.php> and related links for more information.

Tutoring Support:

All students at Purchase College can take advantage of tutoring services in the Learning Center. These are free peer-to-peer tutoring sessions in a variety of subjects and in writing across the disciplines. I encourage you to take advantage of this service to help you excel in this class, as well as your other courses. Please visit the Learning Center website for more information: <https://www.purchase.edu/offices/learning-center/>.

Community Health During COVID-19:

To ensure that each of us has a healthy and safe learning experience, all students are required to remain informed and follow Purchase College Policy and/or any departmental, local, state, or federal laws, rules, or regulations for attending classes on campus and in a remote learning environment. Within courses that involve in-person contact, all students, faculty members, staff, and visitors are required to adhere to the expectations outlined on the College's COVID-19 website (<https://www.purchase.edu/covid-19-updates-and-plans/>). Failure to comply with requirements (e.g. wearing masks, maintaining social distancing where applicable) will result in

the request to leave the classroom for that in-person class session. Students may also be referred to the Office of Community Standards (<https://www.purchase.edu/offices/community-standards/>). Do not enter campus buildings if you test positive for or are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19. Contact your faculty and Health Services (<https://www.purchase.edu/offices/health-services/index.php>) if you need to miss class because of COVID-19 symptoms or a positive COVID-19 test result. The conservatory/school will address on a case by case basis student absences due to COVID-19, while awaiting test results, or during quarantine.

Accessibility:

It is my goal that this class be an accessible and welcoming experience for all students, including those with disabilities. You are welcome to talk to me at any point in the semester about course design concerns, but it is always best if we can talk as soon as possible about the need for any modifications. The Office of Disability Resources collaborates directly with students who identify documented disabilities to create accommodation plans, including testing accommodations, in order for students to access course content and validly demonstrate learning. For those students who may require accommodations, please call or email the Office of Disability Resources, (914) 251-6035, odr@purchase.edu, www.purchase.edu/odr.

Counseling:

Help is available at the Counseling Center on campus for difficulties with emotional wellbeing and psychological functioning. If distress is interfering in relationships, academics, work, or daily life, confidential support can be had right away. Contact the Counseling Center at (914) 251-6390 or COU.counseling.center@purchase.edu on M-F, 9 AM -5 PM. The Counseling Center's website lists after hours emergency resources for mental health crises, sexual assault or interpersonal violence emergencies (Campus Advocacy Services), self-help, and additional coping resources. <https://www.purchase.edu/counseling-center>.

Religious Accommodations:

If you require academic accommodations for a religious observance, please speak with me as soon as possible to consider a reasonable modification.

Course Schedule:

(Note: all readings/screenings should be completed *before* the class for which they are assigned, unless otherwise noted)

Week 1, Session 1 (August 29): Welcome to “Personal Documentary & First-Person Media in Community”

Class format: In-person on campus.

In-class screening: *Memory Palace* (Martine Syms and Kahlil Joseph, 2015); *Disintegration 93-96* (Miko Revereza, 2017); *It Wasn't Love* (Sadie Benning, 1992).

*** Discussing email signatures and student IDs**

Week 1, Session 2 (September 1): Welcome to “Personal Documentary & First-Person Media in Community” (continued)

Class format: In-person on campus.

In-class screening: *Embracing* (“Ni tsutsumarete,” Naomi Kawase, 1992).

Week 2, Session 1 (September 5): No class on Labor Day

Week 2, Session 2 (September 8): Between Documentation & Apparatus

Class format: In-person on campus.

Read before class: Rie Karatsu, “Questions for a Women's Cinema: Fact, Fiction and Memory in the Films of Naomi Kawase.”

Watch before class: *Birth/Mother* (“Tarachime,” Naomi Kawase, 2006); *The Mourning Forest* (“Mogari no mori,” Naomi Kawase, 2007).

* **Set up meeting with instructor to be held between September 12-16 (or 19-23 if necessary):** <https://calendly.com/joelnanderson/>

Week 3, Session 1 (September 12): First Person Political

Class format: In-person on campus.

In-class screening: *History and Memory: For Akiko and Takashige* (Rea Tajiri, 1991).

* **Alisa Lebow’s “First Person Political” essay distributed today. 500 word response due Thursday, September 22 by 9 AM via Moodle Discussion Platform.**

* **Discussing file management**

Week 3, Session 2 (September 15): First Person Political (continued)

Class format: In-person on campus.

In-class screening: *The Body Beautiful* (Ngozi Onwurah, 1991).

* **Discussing library access and content warnings**

Week 4, Session 1 (September 19): No class (Optional drop-in study/advising support session with Peer Mentors. They will be available in the lobby outside CMFT 0065 to answer questions and support your writing process for the reading response due Thursday.)

Class format: In-person on campus.

Week 4, Session 2 (September 22): Native Plant Garden

Class format: In-person on campus.

In-class screening: *Mothlight* (Stan Brakhage, 1963).

Watch before class: *Halving the Bones* (Ruth Ozeki, 1995).

Read before class: Alisa Lebow, “First Person Political.”

* **500 word response to Alisa Lebow’s “First Person Political” essay due today by 9 AM via Moodle Discussion Platform.**

*** Julia Erhart’s “Performing Memory: Compensation and Redress in Contemporary Feminist First-Person Documentary” essay distributed today. 500 word response due Tuesday, October 3 by 9 AM via Moodle Discussion Platform.**

Week 5, Session 1 (September 26): Participating in Campus Events

Class format: In-person on campus.

In-class screening: *In My Room* (Mati Diop, 2020).

Read before class: Mati Diop interview.

*** Campus calendar of events and personal calendar management**

September 28, 7 PM, CMFT 0065: Evening screening introduced by Ouma Amadou as part of the FMS Screening Series, featuring Atlantiques (Mati Diop, 2009) and Atlantics (Mati Diop, 2019).

Week 5, Session 2 (September 29): Counseling Center Introduction

Class format: In-person on campus.

Week 6, Session 1 (October 3): Harbor Center Introduction

Class format: In-person on campus.

*** 500 word response to Julia Erhart’s “Performing Memory: Compensation and Redress in Contemporary Feminist First-Person Documentary” essay due today by 9 AM via Moodle Discussion Platform.**

Week 6, Session 2 (October 6): Learning Center Introduction

Class format: In-person on campus.

In-class screening: *LaToya Ruby Frazier Takes on Levi’s* (2011).

Read before class: LaToya Ruby Frazier, *The Notion of Family*.

Watch before class: LaToya Ruby Frazier’s talk “Framework: Activism, Memory and the Social Landscape.”

Week 7, Session 1 (October 10): Office of Disability Resources and Center for Technology Services Introduction

Class format: In-person on campus.

Week 7, Session 2 (October 13): Multicultural Center Introduction

Class format: In-person on campus.

Week 8, Session 1 (October 17): Peer Mentor Presentation: Andy Rolfs on Personal Documentary Practice

Class format: In-person on campus.

Week 8, Session 2 (October 20): Peer Mentor Presentation: Jason Kelly on Personal Documentary History/Theory

Class format: In-person on campus.

Week 9, Session 1 (October 24): No class (Class time devoted to student meetings with Peer Mentors by appointment: Andy Rolfs [<https://calendly.com/andy-rolfs/>]; Jason Kelly [<https://calendly.com/jason-kelly-2/>]).

Week 9, Session 2 (October 27): No class (Class time devoted to student meetings with Peer Mentors by appointment: Andy Rolfs [<https://calendly.com/andy-rolfs/>]; Jason Kelly [<https://calendly.com/jason-kelly-2/>]).

Week 10, Session 1 (October 31): Personal Documentary in Community

Class format: In-person on campus.

In-class screening: Nam June Paik, Vito Acconci, and DCTV shorts.

Read before class: Joel Neville Anderson, “(Community) Video Art: DCTV’s Expanded Documentary Practice.”

Week 10, Session 2 (November 3): Advising Prep

*** Degree Progress Report navigation**

Advising Week November 7-11: Students are required to set up a meeting with the instructor

Week 11, Session 1 (November 7): No class (Class time devoted to student meetings with instructor by appointment: <https://calendly.com/joelnanderson/>)

Class format: In-person on campus.

Tuesday, November 8: Election Day: Vote!

Week 11, Session 2 (November 10): No class (Class time devoted to student meetings with instructor by appointment: <https://calendly.com/joelnanderson/>)

Class format: In-person on campus.

Week 12, Session 1 (November 14): First-Person Media Presentation

Week 12, Session 2 (November 17): First-Person Media Presentation

Week 13, Session 1 (November 21): First-Person Media Presentation

Week 13, Session 2 (November 24): No class during autumn break

Week 14, Session 1 (November 28): First-Person Media Presentation

Week 14, Session 2 (December 1): First-Person Media Presentation

Week 15, Session 1 (December 5): No class (Class time devoted to student meetings by appointment: <https://calendly.com/joelnanderson/>)

Week 15, Session 2 (December 8): No class (Class time devoted to student meetings by appointment: <https://calendly.com/joelnanderson/>)

Week 16: No class during exam week December 12-16