

JRN 408 Section 2 Environmental Film Making Course Syllabus Fall Semester 2002

Instructors: Jim Jabara and Jim Detjen
Class Meeting: Tuesdays and Thursdays Aug. 27 to Dec. 5, 2002
Time/Place: 3 to 4:50 p.m. Class meets in CCAS 242 on Tuesdays and CCAS 169 on Thursdays. Some classes will meet in the studios of Our Small Planet, 301 M.A.C. Avenue in East Lansing.
Office hours: Jim Jabara 1:30 to 3 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays; Jim Detjen 1 to 3 p.m. and 5 to 6 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays or by appointment.
Telephone: 351-1660 (Jim Jabara) and 353-9479 (Jim Detjen)
E-mail: save@oursmallplanet.com (Jabara) and Detjen@msu.edu (Detjen)

Course Objective: This course is intended to help students learn basic skills in Environmental Filmmaking. Students will develop their analytical skills through watching films and engaging in discussions of contemporary issues in electronic media as they relate to bringing an environmental story to the screen. Students will learn strategies for finding an environmental story suitable for video production and in researching, writing and developing it. They will also learn some basic techniques in the use of camera, lighting, sound and editing equipment. Students will work in four teams of three students each and each team will create a short video (three to five minutes) on an environmental topic suitable for broadcast.

Prerequisite: JRN 300 or permission by the instructors. The maximum number of students who may enroll in this course is 12.

Textbook: Handouts will be provided by the instructors.

Equipment: Students will supply videotapes for the cameras. Digital cameras and other lighting, sound and editing equipment will be supplied by Our Small Planet Productions. Students will be able to check out and use the equipment they need to produce their video productions.

Methods/Format:

- A. Lectures and class discussions
- B. Written Assignments
- C. Producing an environmental video

Attendance Required: All students are expected to attend all class sessions. Students will be treated as professional colleagues. If you are unable to attend a class you must notify the instructors and team members 24 hours in advance of your absence. Do not let your team members down.

Assignments: Students' final grades will be based upon the following: (A) Developing three short treatments. Each one should be a one-page memo proposing a video project. One should deal with a wildlife issue, another should deal with a land-use issue and the third may deal with an environmental subject of your choice. Due Sept. 12. (15% of your grade); (B) Write a three to four page memo which includes your video project's production schedule, people who will be interviewed and filmed, budget and the locations of your filming. Due Oct. 1. (15% of your grade); (C) Produce a three to five minute video on an environmental issue that is suitable for broadcast. Due Nov. 26. (60% of final grade); (D) Class attendance, participation and in-class assignments. (10% of your grade). All video projects will be evaluated on the basis of their format, clarity (grammar, syntax and visuals), depth and accuracy. The video projects will be

shown, critiqued and discussed during the final week of this class. Because this is the first time this course is being offered, there may be modifications in the class assignments and the class schedule, if needed.

Schedule: During the first five weeks of class students will usually meet in the classrooms in the Communication Arts Building. During the next five weeks students will be primarily out in the field, interviewing and shooting video. During the last third of the class students will be editing their videos, usually working in the studios of Our Small Planet Productions, 301 M.A.C., East Lansing.

Communications: The course syllabus, policies, readings, assignments and announcements will be placed on the web at <http://blackboard.msu.edu> . Please check this site regularly. In addition, messages of class speakers, changes in assignments, etc. will be sent out via e-mail.

Instructors' backgrounds: **Jim Jabara** has been producing award-winning films on wildlife and environmental topics for more than a decade. He earned his bachelor's degree in environmental education from Michigan State University. His videos and documentaries have been distributed and shown by National Geographic, Animal Planet, Discovery Channel, PBS, CNN, BBC, TV Ontario, RAI-Italy, WDR-Germany, NOS-Netherlands, B-sky in Europe and on French and Australian television. He has traveled around the world photographing Asian elephants, jackals, bears, tigers, rhinos, crocodiles and other wildlife. He has won numerous awards at the Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival and the International Wildlife Film Festival in Missoula, Montana. He has lectured at the University of Michigan, Michigan State University, the Society of Environmental Journalists' national conference and elsewhere.

Jim Detjen is a journalism professor and director of the Knight Center for Environmental Journalism at Michigan State University. He spent 21 years as a newspaper reporter and editor, specializing in environmental and science topics. He has worked for the Poughkeepsie (N.Y.) Journal, the Louisville (Ky.) Courier-Journal and the Philadelphia Inquirer. He has won more than 50 state, national and international journalism awards for his reporting and writing. He has traveled around the world in pursuit of environmental stories and has visited more than 45 nations and all seven continents. He earned a bachelor's degree from Rensselaer Polytechnic institute in Troy, N.Y. and a master's degree in journalism from Columbia University. He was the founding president of the Society of Environmental Journalists and served as the president of the International Federation of Environmental Journalists from 1994 to 2000.

University Policies:

Plagiarism: Students are expected to do their own work on all assignments. Students who cheat, fabricate or plagiarize will receive a 0.0 on the assignment and may fail this course. Plagiarism is defined as presenting another person's work or ideas as one's own. For additional information about this policy check the General Procedures and Regulations section of the MSU Academic Programs publication.

Accommodations for Disabilities: If you are a student with a disability who requires reasonable accommodations, please call the OPHS Disability Resource Center at 353-9642 (voice) or 355-1293 (TTY).

Drops and Adds: The last day to add this course is the end of the first week of classes. The last day to drop this course with a 100 percent refund and no grade reported is Sept. 19, 2002. The last day to drop this course with no refund and no grade reported is Oct. 15. You should immediately make a copy of your amended schedule to verify you have added or dropped this course.

Observing a Major Religious Holiday: You may make up course work missed to observe a major religious holiday only if you make arrangements in advance with the instructor.

Participation in a Required Activity: To make up course work missed to participate in a required activity for another course or a university-sanctioned event, you must provide the instructor with adequate advanced notice and a written authorization from the faculty member of the other course or from a university administrator.