

## COMM 321: Communication & Film – Study Abroad in Greece

**Instructor of Record:** Dr. Linda Manning

### **Documentary Film & Sustainability**

**Dates:** May 9 - June 3, 2026

**Locations:** Athens and Crete

**Office Hours:** Dr. Manning is available in the break between morning and afternoon classes and by appointment in the evenings

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**What's App Contact:**



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### **Course Description**

One of the most powerful influences on the conduct of our everyday social lives is popular culture, particularly feature film. It serves as reflectors of our society and social prescriptions for what is “normal” in various contexts. This course will utilize feature film, scholarly readings, discussion, and writing to allow us to better understand how film both reflects and affects how we think about communication in various contexts. Course materials will vary based on the interests and expertise of the instructor, may focus on family dynamics, friendship, science, health, science fiction, and religious rhetoric. May be repeated once for credit with written permission. Partially satisfies the writing-intensive requirement. This course will focus on documentary films, issues relevant to ecological sustainability, the CNU campus and Hampton Roads community, and communication.

This intensive 4-week study abroad course explores the intersections of communication, culture, film, and sustainability within the rich heritage of Greece. Students will analyze how sustainability messages are communicated through documentaries and visual storytelling, while engaging directly with Greek culture. Activities include excursions to open-air cinemas, hands-on exploration of Greek food, sustainability practices, and scavenger hunts to familiarize students with key historical and cultural locations.

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## Required Course Materials

Selected readings from the texts below are posted to Scholar.

- Bernard, S. C. (2016). *Documentary Storytelling* (4th ed.). New York: Focal Press.
  - Corrigan, T. (2012). *A Short Guide to Writing About Film* (8th ed.). Boston: Pearson.
  - Hawken, P. (Ed.) (2017). *Drawdown: The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming*. Penguin Books.
  - Hayhoe, K. (2021). *Saving Us: A Climate Scientist's Case for Hope and Healing in a Divided World*. Atria/One Signal.
  - Johnson, A. E., & Wilkinson, K. K. (Eds.). (2020). *All We Can Save: Truth, Courage, and Solutions for the Climate Crisis*. One World.
  - McKenzie-Mohr, D. (2020). *Fostering Sustainable Behavior: An Introduction to Community-Based Social Marketing* (3rd ed.). New Society.
  - Thomas, C. G. (2014). *Greece: A Short History of a Long Story, 7,000 BCE to the Present*. Wiley, 2014.
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## Course Learning Objectives

By the end of this program, students will:

- Acquire the basic terminology necessary for writing about film
  - Analyze the role of film in communicating sustainability and cultural identity
  - Explore Greek history, culture, and food sustainability practices
  - Explore visual storytelling by creating a short film on sustainability and cultural themes observed in Greece.
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## Course Highlights

- **Excursions:**
  - Open-air cinema screenings of documentaries on Greek culture and sustainability.
  - Visits to historical landmarks, including the Acropolis and Knossos Palace.
  - Exploration of Greek food sustainability through vineyard and olive farm tours.
  - Scavenger hunts in Athens and Chania to discover cultural and historical landmarks.
- **Focus on Greek Cuisine:**
  - Guided tours of a vineyard and olive farm to understand the role of food in Greek culture and sustainability.
  - Discussions on the Mediterranean diet and its ecological implications.
- **Film Analysis:**

- Screening and analysis of Greek documentaries such as *"When Tomatoes Met Wagner"* (2019) and *"Dolphin Man"* (2017).
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## **Tentative Weekly Schedule**

### **Week 1: Athens**

**Topics:** Introduction to Greek culture and sustainability in media.

- Guided tour of the Acropolis and Parthenon.
- Scavenger hunt in Plaka to discover landmarks and cultural narratives.
- Screening at an open-air cinema (*When Tomatoes Met Wagner*).
- Class discussion on sustainability in Greek food practices.
- Cooking class through HUA

**Deliverables:**

- Journal reflection on the open-air cinema experience.
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### **Week 2: Crete (Heraklion & Rethymno)**

**Topics:** Sustainability and food practices in rural contexts.

- Visit Knossos Palace and discuss its cultural significance.
- Vineyard and olive farm tours with discussions on Greek food sustainability.
- Screening of *Dolphin Man* and group discussion.
- Discussion on the film's connection to marine conservation and Greek environmental heritage.

**Deliverables:**

- Screening report on *Dolphin Man*
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### **Week 3: Crete (Chania)**

**Topics:** Exploring food sustainability and film storytelling.

- Scavenger hunt in Chania's Old Town to identify historical and cultural sites.
- Workshop: Developing a documentary storyboard.
- Visit to an open-air cinema.

**Deliverables:**

- Revised screening report on selected film
- Draft storyboard for final project

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## Week 4: Athens

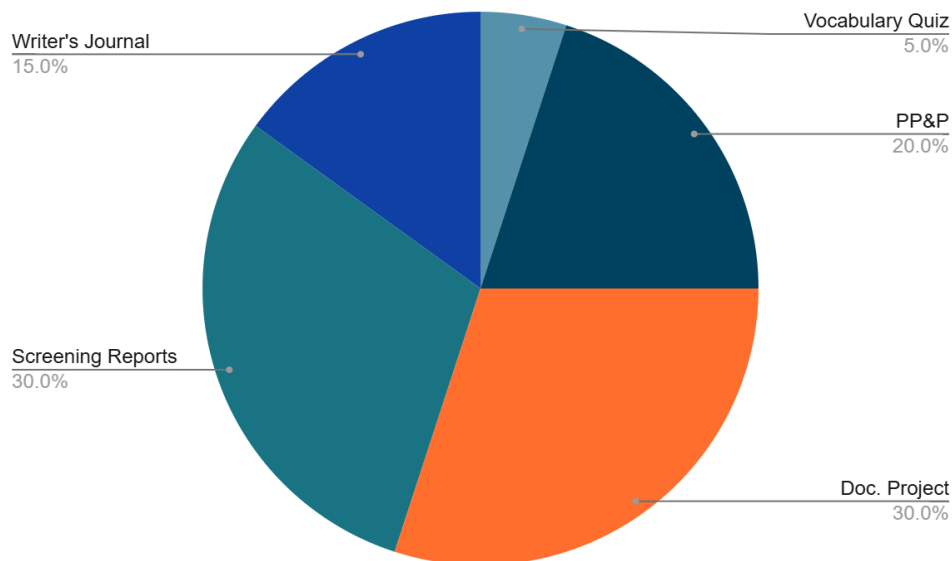
**Topics:** Final presentations and reflections.

- Final scavenger hunt to summarize cultural and sustainability takeaways.
- Screening of student-created short documentaries.
- Retrospective discussion on program learning outcomes.

**Deliverables:**

- Short documentary project
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## Assignments



- **Vocabulary Quiz (5%):** The goal of this assignment is to ensure that students have a working knowledge of Greek culture and history and the vocabulary used to discuss film. Students will take an online quiz through Scholar. Students must earn at least a B- (80%) on the quiz.
- **Participation, Preparation, and Presence (20%):** Attendance and engagement in excursions, scavenger hunts, and discussions.
- **Screening Reports (30%):** Analytical reflections on two documentaries viewed during the program. You will select one screening report to revise and resubmit.
- **Short Documentary Project (30%):** A 3-5 minute film capturing sustainability and/or cultural themes observed in Greece.

- **Writer's Journal Entries (15%):** Weekly reflections on program activities and cultural insights.

## Grading Standards

Final letter grades are based on a 100-point scale.

A = Exemplary: Work that is truly exceptional, amply and forcefully showing skill, insight, and imagination

93-100% = A (4.0); 90-92% = A- (3.7)

B = Commendable: Solid work that exceeds course expectations

87-89% = B+ (3.3); 83-86% = B (3.0); 80-82% = B- (2.7)

C = Satisfactory: Generally acceptable work, meeting assignment requirements and course goals

77-79% = C+ (2.3); 73-76% = C (2.0); 70-72% = C- (1.7)

D = Deficient: Work that, while passing, falls considerably short of assignment requirements and course expectations

67-69% = D+ (1.3); 63-66% = D (1.0); 60-62% = D- (0.7)

F = Failing: Work that does not meet minimum requirements

0-59% = F (0)

## Preparation for the Program

- Pre-departure readings from course materials to understand Greek history, culture, and sustainability practices.
- Familiarity with basic film analysis terminology.
- Pre-departure quiz on general Greek culture and film terms.

## CNU, Study Abroad, and Course Policies

### Success:

I want you to succeed in this course and at CNU. I encourage you to come see me during office hours or to schedule an appointment to discuss course content or to answer questions you have. If I become concerned about your course performance, attendance, engagement, or well-being, I will speak with you first. I also may submit a referral through our Captains Care Program. The referral will be received by the Center for Academic Success as well as other departments when appropriate (Counseling Services, Office of Student Engagement). If you are an athlete, the Athletic Academic Support Coordinator will be notified. Someone will contact you to help determine

what will help you succeed. Please remember that this is a means for me to support you and help foster your success at CNU.

### **Academic Support:**

The Center for Academic Success offers free tutoring assistance for CNU students in several academic areas. Staff in the center offer individual assistance and/or workshops on various study strategies to help you perform your best in your courses. The center also houses the Alice F. Randall Writing Center. Writing consultants can help you at any stage of the writing process, from invention to development of ideas, to polishing a final draft. The Center is not a proofreading service, but consultants can help you to recognize and find grammar and punctuation errors in your work as well as aid with global tasks. Go as early in the writing process as you can and go often!

You may drop by the Center for Academic Success to request a tutor, meet with a writing consultant, pick up a schedule of workshops, or make an appointment to talk one-on-one with a University Fellow for Student Success. The Center is in the Tribble Library, second floor, room 240.

### **Disabilities:**

In order for a student to receive an accommodation for a disability, that disability must be on record in the Dean of Students' Office, 3rd Floor, David Student Union (DSU). If you believe that you have a disability, please contact Dr. Kevin Hughes, Dean of Students (594-7160) to discuss your needs. Dean Hughes will provide you with the necessary documentation to give to your professors.

### **Physical Disability Statement for Study Abroad Program in Greece:**

This course involves walking, hiking, and using public transportation in an overseas setting that may not necessarily adhere to the American Disability standards. The daily activities may demand physical requirements, which include walking up to 5 miles per day, potential visits to historical buildings that may not be ADA compliant, and the need to carry luggage from the airport to the metro and other forms of public transportation multiple times per day.

### **Honor Statement:**

Students are expected to abide by the CNU Honor Code:

"On my honor, I will maintain the highest possible standard of honesty, integrity, and personal responsibility. That means I will not lie, cheat, or steal and as a member of this academic community, I am committed to creating an environment of respect and mutual trust."

Learning takes place through individual effort, and achievement can be evaluated only based on the work a student produces independently. A student who obtains credit for work, words, and ideas that are not the product of his/her own is dishonest, and his/her behavior has an adverse influence on the standards of the University. Because of this, willful infringement of the Code for Academic Work entails severe penalties ranging from failure in course work to dismissal from the University.

### **Course Materials:**

All content created and assembled by the faculty member and used in this course is to be considered intellectual property owned by the faculty member. It is provided solely for the private use of the students currently enrolled in this course. To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not make available any of the original course content, including but not limited to lectures, discussions, videos, handouts, and/or activities, to anyone not currently enrolled in the course without the advance written permission of the instructor. This means that students may not record, download, screenshot, or in any way copy original course material for the purpose of distribution beyond this course. It is the student's responsibility to protect course material when accessing it outside of the physical classroom space. Any violation will be treated as a violation of the Honor Code and will be reported accordingly. Distribution without permission should be considered a violation of educational privacy law.