

**FA121 Fall 2021**  
**Chronicle of a Season:**  
**Are you Happy?**



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Office Hours: by appointment

### **Course Description**

Inspired by Edgar Morin and Jean Rouch's celebrated 1960 Paris documentary *Chronicle of a Summer*, this film production workshop brings together students from throughout the Open Society University Network (OSUN) to develop a documentary on the deceptively simple question "Are you happy?" Using this device, Morin and Rouch provoked Parisians to consider how colonialism, war, capital, race and gender shaped their personal and social experiences. In our course, the question promises to expose the complexities and fault lines of contemporary life and reveal points of connection for course participants. Following Morin and Rouch, filmmakers will double as some of the project's subjects, documenting their own observations about happiness throughout the process. No prior filmmaking experience required.

### **Participating campuses and instructors**

- Jacqueline Goss, Bard (Annandale)
- Paul Festa, BCB
- Zandre Reed, American University of Central Asia (Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic)
- Gülengül Altıntaş, Kadir Has University (Istanbul)
- Laura Menchaca, Al-Quds Bard College (Beit Hanina, Jerusalem)

### **Requirements**

#### **Academic Integrity**

Bard College Berlin maintains the highest standards of academic integrity and expects students to adhere to these standards at all times. Instances in which students fail to meet the expected standards of academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section 14.3 (Academic Misconduct) in the Student Handbook.

#### **Attendance and preparation**

- The class meets in person, as of this writing, and a combination of common sense, good will, open communication, and flexibility will help us navigate exceptions. Obviously don't come to class if you feel at all ill. If you are well enough to join us virtually, Zoom in. If not, take the absence—ways to make it up are described below.
- Full attendance means having done the assigned reading, watching, and online collaborating. Failure to prepare may result in the deduction of up to 1/3 attendance credit (one hour of the 3-hour weekly block).
- Two 90-minute absences, no penalty. Each additional absence, 0.3 is deducted from the semester course grade unless excused by leave of absence from the registrar or made up as described below.
- You may make up as many as three unexcused 90-minute absences by giving a ten-minute presentation at your subsequent appearance that covers the assigned material. The presentation should cover the basics of the material along with your own take on it, and you'll answer questions from the group. This process is designed to help everyone: review is the ally of retention. Credit is awarded on a scale of 0.0 – 0.3: a score of 0.3 cancels the absence, and 0.0 leaves the penalty intact.
- Eight and a half 90-minute absences—excused, due to illness or death, made-up, or otherwise—amount to more than 30 percent of the course, and Bard does not award credit. Consult the student handbook for regulations governing periods of illness or leaves of absence.
- These policies apply equally to sessions missed during the add-drop period.
- Lateness is billed in 30-minute increments (so 5 min. late = 1/3 attendance).
- Phones powered off or, if we're using them to shoot, in airplane mode.

#### **Policy on Late Submission of Coursework**

Submissions up to 24 hours late can be downgraded up to one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept submissions that are more than 24 hours late. Where an instructor agrees to accept a late submission, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline. Thereafter, the student will

receive a failing grade for the assignment. Grades and comments will be returned to students in a timely fashion. Students are also entitled to make an appointment to discuss essay assignments and feedback during instructors' office hours.

Students receive mid- and end-of-semester grades for their work. Students are entitled to make an appointment with an instructor to discuss workshop participation, or may be asked to meet with the instructor at any stage in the semester regarding class progress.

### **Grade Breakdown**

The coursework consists of five assignments. The first four count 15 percent each toward the grade, the fifth 25, and the remaining 15 percent is determined by your contribution to l'esprit de corps (more commonly referred to as class participation).

### **Schedule**

#### **WEEK 1: Sept 1**

- READINGS and FILMS IN WEEK ONE:
  - "Toward a Definition: The Nature of the Category 'Ethnographic Film'" Ethnographic Film, Karl Heider, US 1976
  - "The Camera and Man" Studies in Visual Communication, Jean Rouch, 1974, France
  - "Why Are Ethical Issues Central to Documentary Filmmaking?" Introduction to Documentary, Bill Nichols, US 2001
  - "How Can We Define Documentary Film?" Introduction to Documentary, Bill Nichols US 2001
  - "How Can We Describe the Observational, Participatory, Reflexive, and Performative Modes of Documentary Film?"
  - Introduction to Documentary, Bill Nichols US 2001
  - "The Politics of Visual Anthropology" Cine-Ethnography Visible Evidence Volume 13, Jean Rouch with Dan Georgakas, Udayan Gupta, and Judy Janda, US 1977
  - "Jean Rouch and the Sacred Cattle" Building Bridges: The Cinema of Jean Rouch, Bernard Surugue, France, 2007
  - Chronicle of a Summer Jean Rouch and Edgar Morin, France, 1962

#### **WEEK 2: Sept 8**

- Lecture and discussion on Rouch and ethnography, documentary form (Goss)
- Camera and microphone workshop
- Greetings to other campuses
- READINGS and FILMS IN WEEK TWO:
  - Universal Human Rights Declaration, United Nations France, 1948
  - I Remember (excerpt) Joe Brainard, US 2001
  - "The Sources of Happiness" The Art of Happiness Dalai Lama and Howard Cutler, US, 2009
  - Things I Didn't Know I Loved Nazim Hikmet Turkey 1962
  - "Idea of Power" Essay on Human Understanding John Locke, England, 1632
  - Love Encounters Pier Paolo Pasolini, Italy, 1964
  - Fifty People, One Question Virat Nagar, India, 2016

#### **WEEK 3: Sept 15**

- LECTURE (LIVE Berlin TIME): PF on interview experiments: how to make life difficult for your subject
- Interview each other in class with cameras/mics
- READINGS and FILMS in WEEK THREE
  - İçeriden Dışarıya/Inside Out, various filmmakers, Turkey, 2020
  - Le Joli Mai (Chris Marker, France, 1963)
- Assignment: Watch *The Hottest August* (Brett Story)
- Assignment: make a portrait of your city or town focusing on sound and reflective surfaces. Include one response to the question "Are You Happy" and translate it into another language spoken by the class. **Due 10/4**

WEEK 4: Sept 22

- LECTURE (LIVE Berlin TIME) Brett Story (guest) on The Hottest August
- Discuss how to find good subjects/locations
- READINGS and FILMS in WEEK 4
  - Stanley (Steve Matheson, US, 1995)
  - Interview from We Jam Econo (Tim Irwin, US, 2005)
  - The Hottest August Brett Story, US/Canada, 2019
- Assignment: Watch *Le Joli Mai* (Chris Marker)

WEEK 5: Sept 29

- Editing workshop
- READINGS and FILMS in WEEK 5
  - Hart's Location (Jacqueline Goss, US, 2016)
  - Failing Up (Jacqueline Goss, US, 2019)
- **1st ASSIGNMENT DUE**
- Assignment: People on the street interview assignment (due 10/18)

**FIRST MEET UP WITH OTHER CAMPUSES THIS WEEK**  
(BISHKEK CHOOSE TIME)

WEEK 6: Oct 6 (no class Annandale) (BCB mid-term grades due)

- LECTURE (LIVE NY TIME): ZR ON Interview techniques, focusing on sound
- Identify good interview subjects from material
- READINGS and FILMS in WEEK 6
  - News From Home Chantal Akerman, France/US, 1976
  - St Jacques Bonnie Scher Klein, Canada, 1967
- **2nd ASSIGNMENT DUE**
- Assignment: choose one interview to augment/ edit/re-visit (due 11/8)

**FALL BREAK: Oct 20**

WEEK 7: Oct 13

Assignment: Watch TBD

**SECOND MEET UP WITH ANOTHER CAMPUS THIS WEEK (NEW YORK CHOOSE TIME)**

WEEK 8: Oct 27

- READINGS and FILMS in WEEK 8
  - "Q & A: Poetics of the Documentary Film Interview" The Velvet Light Trap, Leger Grindon, US/France 2007
  - "Inventing the Interview" Building Bridges: The Cinema of Jean Rouch, Michael Uwemedimo, France, 2007
  - Portrait of Jason (Shirley Clarke, US, 1967)
- Editing workshop of person on the street interviews

WEEK 9: Nov 3

- **3rd ASSIGNMENT DUE**
- Edited interviews due/share with other campuses
- Assignment: Watch "Chronicle of a Disappearance" (Elia Sulieman)/Karl Marx City? (Petra Epperlein?)
- LECTURE (LIVE BISHKEK TIME): GA on incorporating gestures of fiction
- Assignment: Plan and Shoot a Monologue/Gestural Work (due week of 12/6)

WEEK 10: Nov 10

- Discuss “Chronicle of a Disappearance” (meet the director) (LIVE WHEN?)
- Using gestures of fiction and using within non-fiction films

THIRD MEET UP WITH ANOTHER CAMPUS THIS WEEK (BERLIN CHOOSE TIME)

WEEK 11: Nov 17

- READINGS IN WEEK 11
  - “Chronique d’une Été: Marceline Loriden Ivens” Building Bridges: The Cinema of Jean Rouch, Joram den Brink, Netherlands, 2007
  - Rouch in Reverse, Manthia Diawara, Mali/France, 1995
- Have a meal during class and document it or use props sent by other campus
- Send each other recipes to make

WEEK 12: Nov 24

- In-class workshop editing Monologues/Gestural Work/Meals/Props

WEEK 13: Dec 1

- 4th ASSIGNMENT DUE
- Monologues/Gestural Works/Meals Due—share with other campuses
- Assignment: Make a short edit drawn from ALL material as a final project

WEEK 14: Dec 8

- 5th ASSIGNMENT DUE
- Final Class Discussion

FOURTH and FINAL MEET UP WITH ALL CAMPUSES (ISTANBUL CHOOSE TIME)

**Deadlines**

Sept 29: 1st ASSIGNMENT DUE

Oct 20: 2nd ASSIGNMENT DUE:

Nov 3: 3rd ASSIGNMENT DUE

Dec 1: 4th ASSIGNMENT DUE

Dec 8: 5th ASSIGNMENT DUE