**|Religious Documentary Assignment**

**Rule #1 – If at any point the video or comments in the video are offensive to the faith or portray it inaccurately; the group will immediately receive a mark of 0. We are aiming for a professional video, there should not be any bloopers or humour in this film. Your job is to portray the religion with as much accuracy as possible.**

This documentary project will be about a topic that enhances your own understanding of the world in which we live as well as contributing to your audience’s knowledge and understanding. You will conduct  "research" (fact-finding, conducting interviews, seeking out original photographs and film clips, re-creating situations and environments, manipulating texts and images) which will enable you to create a documentary that adopts an angle that is new, interesting, and refreshing to your audience.

**Here is what you will do:**

* You will conduct "research" that consists of conventional library and online research plus artifact finding, interviews, observations, original photography, film clips, etc.  This research will become the essence of your project.  Your goal is to end up with much more material than you will use in the final project.
* Your project must include “original” documented material, including one or more of the following:
  + original photographs and/or created images
  + interviews with key players in the religion you are covering;  the texts from these interviews (direct quotations and paraphrases) would be incorporated extensively into your project.
  + a significant amount of original written text generated by you.  This text should be carefully and purposefully crafted and will overlay the documentary at key spots
* The final project must be in a form that can be “distributed” to an audience – a web site, an Mp4 a CD or DVD. You may use Movie Maker, Sony Movie, or any other software for your production.
* Your project must conclude with a short WRITTEN reflection that discusses your *process* of creating this text.  This should enhance your audience’s understanding of the project as well as help my assessment of your project. This reflection need not be a part of the actual documentary, although it could be.  It can exist as a separate, reflective text.  You will receive more direction on this part of the assignment later in the assignment.
* Collaborative projects (two - three students per team) are encouraged but not required.  Except in extreme cases, both students will receive the same grades on all elements of the project. You will be given a Documentary Rubric that will be used to grade the projects.

**Choosing a Topic**

The object of this assignment is for you to learn about a topic and form a definite opinion, and then teach others why you have formulated that opinion.  Your method of teaching will be the documentary. Therefore you will choose a topic that you would like to learn more about and that you are willing to invest time and intellectual energy in.  Your topic should be “available to rhetoric;” that is, you should be able to influence thought and/or action through documenting it. Think of the theme or message of the movie

Before deciding on a topic, you should be able to answer these questions.

* *Why would this topic make a good documentary?*
* *What questions would you like this documentary to answer?*
* *Who would you interview for this documentary?*
* *What do you want the documentary to be about*

**Timeline**

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| --- | --- |
| April 13 | First screening of the movie is ready for the class |
| April 17 | Final movie is due with reflection |

**Suggested Documentary Project Topics**

If you're having trouble on what to focus on, here are some to choose from:

1. What religion do you believe in?

2. Do you believe in God or another deity?

3. When did you choose your faith?

4. What is your idea of what God looks like?

5. Is there a heaven?

6. Is there a hell?

7. What does heaven look like?

8. What does hell look like?

9. Why should someone start believing in God?

10. What should a believer do before they die?

11. Does your past play a role when joining a religion?

12. Does someone need to attend church to be spiritual?

13. What’s the difference between being spiritual and being religious?

14. Did you have to change your life before you started following a religion?

15. How often does someone need to say “amen?”

16. Should someone start attending a church if he or she doesn't believe in God?

17. Can someone believe in God but not attend church?

18. Should someone read a Bible before he or she starts believing in a religion?

19. What’s the best part of going to church?

20. What benefits can someone get from going to church?

21. What benefits does religion have?

22. Is it better for someone to follow religion on his or her own, or involve the family, too?

23. Should someone learn about other religions before deciding on one?

24. Should someone attend a religious service from multiple faiths before picking a religion?

25. What do people learn about religion in school?

26. What misconceptions are there about faith?

27. If there’s one God, why are there more than 4,000 religions?

28. What’s the difference between a pastor, priest or preacher?

29. What religious lingo should someone know before joining a religion?

30. Who are some famous people from throughout history who were religious?

31. What’s the coolest story from the Bible?

32. What’s the most influential story from the Bible?

33. Are there ways to follow faith on a smartphone?

34. Is the Bible figurative or literal?

35. Are the characters in the Bible figurative or literal?

36. What’s the main message to take away from the Bible?

37. How important is it that someone learns specific prayers?

38. What’s your favorite prayer?

39. What version of the Bible should a new believer read?

40. Why do you believe in something you can’t see?

41. What should someone do if he or she is confronted about faith?

42. Why do bad things happen to good people?

29 comments on this story

43. What’s the difference between reincarnation and resurrection?

44. Does God answer prayers?

45. What can millennials get out of religion?

46. How do you know when God is answering prayers?

47. There’s a lot of bad news on TV every day. The world is in chaos. How can there be a God?

48. What’s the best thing about being a believer?

49. How does God and religion really help you get through tough times?

50. Where does someone read religious news?

**Documentary Proposal Assignment**

You must submit a descriptive proposal for your documentary project. Proposals must include the following:

* Statement of Position including an analysis of the topic with documented support. You will also state what specific religious institution / s you plan to attend and on what tentative dates (1 page)
* General description of the project, including a list of the materials and equipment you will need and a projected timeline for data collecting (library research, filming, photographing, interviewing, etc.), producing and editing your documentary (1 page)
* Analysis of targeted audience for the project – we will talk about this in class (1 pages)