COURSE OVERVIEW

Professor: David Ray Vance  
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Office Hours: M 4-5:15 pm; [and by appointment]

Course Description: The Oxford English Dictionary defines “documentary” as:

1. Of the nature of or consisting in documents. 1802-12 BENTHAM Rat. Judic. Evid. (1827) I. 54 
   Documentary evidence. 1831 CARLYLE Sart. Res. II. iii, Various fragments of Letters and other documentary 
   scraps. 1855 MACAULAY Hist. Eng. IV. 178 They were in possession of documentary evidence which would 
   confound the guilty. 1861 M. PATTISON Ess. (89) I. 30 Going back beyond the printed annalists to original 
   and documentary authorities.

2. Affording evidence, evidential. rare. 1843 CARLYLE Past & Pr. I. iii, It is an authentic--fact, quietly 
   documentary of a whole world of such.

3. Relating to teaching or instruction. rare.1871 EARLE Philol. Tongue §52 Long before 1250 we 
   get traces of the documentary use of French. Trevisa says it was a new thing in 1349 for children to construe into 
   English in the Grammar schools.

4. Factual, realistic; applied esp. to a film or literary work, etc., based on real 
   events or circumstances, and intended primarily for instruction or record 
   purposes. Also ellipt. as n. 1926 N. Y. Sun 8 Feb. 18/1 'Moana', being a visual account of events in the daily life of 
   a Polynesian youth and his family, has documentary value. 1930 P. ROTH A Film till Now I. ii. 65 The Documentary or 
   Interest Film, including the Scientific, Cultural and Sociological Film. 1932 Cinema Q. I. I. 67 Documentary is a clumsy description, but let 
   & Cult. Films) viii. 115 §174 A deliberate documentary film must be a transcript of real life, a bit of what actually happened, under 
   approximately unrehearsed conditions. 1934 Punch 26 Dec. 720/1 Most documentary films seem to hinge upon the exposition of 
   some staple industry. 1935 R. SPOTTISWOODE Gram. of Film 288 The documentary as he defines it is still flourishing. 1936 
   Times Lit. Suppl. 25 Jan. 72/3 The documentary film, court, 'documentary'. 1941 [see ACTUALITY 4b]. 1947 J. 
   HAYWARD Prose Lit. since 1939 32 'Mass-Observation', whose intriguing 'documentaries' of the British people at work and 
   play contain the crude substance of innumerable novels, biographies, and essays. 1957 V. J. KEHOE Film & T.V. Make-Up  
   i. 17 Some producers do not like the smoothness of the face created by the use of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a 
   documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is termed a documentary effect..by the lack of make-up. They strive to achieve what is terme

In this seminar we will endeavor to locate and interrogate the “documentary” tradition in modern and contemporary poetry. Students will be asked to read a range of modern and contemporary (some might say experimental) poets with an eye for how they accommodate or otherwise incorporate various kinds of source materials into their work. We will be looking specifically at the methods of documentation these poets utilize and will consider at length why they incorporate the materials they do and to what possible effects. We will also be inquiring into how the inclusion of source materials might influence a poem’s reception as poem. Does a poet’s acknowledgment of source materials undercut or buttress the sort of subjective engagement readers often expect from poetry? To what degree can the “factual” and “realistic” enter into conversation with the subjective and lyrical? As well, we shall consider possible links between documentary poetry and documentary film with an eye for how they influence or otherwise cross-pollinate one another.

Required Texts (in the order we’ll read them)


Pound, Ezra. ABC of Reading. (New Directions, 1960) ISBN 0811201511


**Recommended Texts** (Note: students DO NOT have to purchase these texts)


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**COURSE POLICIES**

**Disability Services**

Support services, including registration assistance and equipment, are available to students with documented disabilities through the Office of Disabled Student Services (DSS), MS 2.03.19. Students are encouraged to contact that office at 458-4157 prior to starting classes to make arrangements, though they can contact the office at any time. If you need accommodation related to a disability, please make an appointment with me to discuss your needs as soon as possible.

**Scholastic Honesty**

The University of Texas at San Antonio defines “scholastic dishonesty” as including but not limited to “cheating on a test or other class work, plagiarism (the appropriation of another's work in one’s own written work offered for credit), and collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing course work offered for credit).” University policy further dictates that “Should a student be accused of scholastic dishonesty, the faculty member may initiate disciplinary proceedings.” As this is a graduate-level course, it is presumed that you are familiar with MLA format and that you understand what constitutes plagiarism, however it’s not unheard of for a graduate student to be confused about such matters. If you’re such a graduate student, please, do yourself a favor and come see me. I can help clarify what’s required.

**Classroom Conduct:**

Many of us will undoubtedly have divergent interests, approaches, ideologies, politics, academic experience, personal backgrounds, and more. The success of this class requires we engage
your responsibility as a participant in this class to show your classmates due respect and consideration. The following policy is drawn from the Provost’s statement on “Civility in the Classroom”: “Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. To assure all students have the opportunity to gain from time spent in class, students are prohibited from engaging in any form of distraction. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result, minimally, in a request to leave class.” This policy is equally applicable for any virtual, on-line class discussions that may take place on Blackboard.

**Attendance:**
As this is a graduate seminar, students are expected to attend each and every class, to come to class prepared, and to turn in assignments on time. A student’s final grade shall be docked no less than one full letter grade should they miss more than one class or turn in any assignment late and not have a persuasive, documented reason for doing so. The professor shall be the final arbiter of what constitutes a viable reason in such cases. Coming to class unprepared will also adversely affect a student’s grade. Students unable to attend classes on particular days because of sincerely held religious beliefs shall, without penalty, be excused from such classes and be given meaningful opportunity to make up examinations, graded activities or assignments provided the instructor is notified of their needs within the first two weeks of the term.

**Assignments & Grade Distribution:**

- **Discussion Leader (10%)**: Each student will take responsibility for leading discussion on one of the texts we discuss this term. As “Discussion Director” they will be expected to introduce any key concepts and/or outside resources necessary to understanding how the given text functions. It is also the Discussion Director’s responsibility to propose useful lines of inquiry and to, in effect, direct the class discussion. This assignment will include a 2-3pp written component consisting of a brief summary of the director’s goals and insights and a brief self-assessment of their performance after the fact.

- **Response Papers (10%)**: Students will be expected to provide a brief critical response to each of the texts assigned for class, (usually 1-2pp).

- **Critical Review (15%)**: Students will be asked to write one 5-6pp critical review in preparation for their Final Paper. This essay will summarize and evaluate scholarly/critical arguments relevant to the student’s inquiry.

- **Oral Presentation (25%)**: From the onset of the semester, students will begin to formulate possible research ideas. Around mid-term they will be asked to formulate an abstract specifying an area of inquiry they propose to pursue in earnest. They will submit this abstract following standard professional dictates concerning conference proposals and they will then present the findings of their research to the class in a formal, 20 minute presentation of the sort one might give at an academic conference. The presentation will be followed by a 5-10 minute Q&A.

- **Final Paper (40%)**: Each student will develop their Oral Presentation into a full-fledged research paper (15-18pp). Like the oral presentation, these papers will be graded on the originality and complexity of the argument, on the coherence of the argument, and on the degree to which the argument is persuasively developed and supported. All papers should be submitted in proper MLA format.

For the purposes of determining grades on individual assignments and for overall course grades, I shall use the following scale: 90-100 A; 80-89 B; 70-79 C; 60-69 D; ≤59 F.

**Disclaimer**
As the instructor for this course, I reserve the right to amend or revise this syllabus in any manner I deem beneficial for the class.
# Tentative Schedule

**English 5933 – Poets and their Sources (Vance, Spring 2009)**

## August

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<tr>
<th>29</th>
<th>Introductions – Ourselves, the Course, Documentary</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Assignment: 1) Post Self-Introduction; 2) E-mail Contact Info</td>
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## September

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<th>5</th>
<th>Labor Day Holiday</th>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Eliot – <em>Waste Land</em> (+packet)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pound – Selected <em>Cantos</em></td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>and selected <em>ABC of Reading</em></td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>Raukysers – <em>Book of the Dead</em> (+packet)</td>
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## October

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<th>3</th>
<th>Wright – <em>Twelve Million Black Voices</em></th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reznikoff – <em>Testimony</em> (packet)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Williams – <em>Paterson</em> (+packet)</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Olson – Selected <em>Maximus Poems</em> (+packet)</td>
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<td>Howe – <em>The Nonconformist's Memorial</em></td>
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<td>Ondaatje – <em>Collected Works of Billy the Kid</em></td>
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<td>Philip – <em>Zong</em></td>
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<td>Cha – <em>Dictee</em></td>
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<td>Collins – <em>Blue Front</em></td>
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<td><em>Abstract Due</em></td>
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## November

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<th>Sand – <em>Remember To Wave</em></th>
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<td>Kim – <em>Commons</em></td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES</td>
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<td><em>Brief Critical Review Due</em></td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
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<td>Presentations</td>
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## December

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<th>Final Paper Workshop</th>
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<td><strong>Final Exam Period:</strong> Monday, December 12th, 5pm-7pm</td>
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<td>Final Paper Due</td>
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= 2pp Response Due (Turned in via WebCT by 7pm the previous day)
= Discussion-Leader