SOC’s Center for Environmental Filmmaking presents:

Classroom in the Wild: Chesapeake Bay

March 9-16, 2013

One-Week Alternative Spring Break in Environmental Filmmaking with Filmmaker Danny Ledonne

For more information, contact Prof. Chris Palmer palmer@american.edu or 202-885-3408 or cell 202-716-6160

SOC’s Center for Environmental Filmmaking is excited to offer students a one-week alternative spring break program on the Chesapeake Bay to introduce them to the challenges and fun of environmental filmmaking. The program will take place March 9-16, 2013. This course will be limited to 14 students.

This week-long, non-credit class is for both first-time and experienced filmmakers and photographers who have an interest in the environment, natural history and the outdoors. Led by award-winning filmmaker and AU MFA alum Danny Ledonne, students will learn how to prepare for and organize a shoot, how to shoot the footage necessary to tell a compelling story, and how to edit a polished project with an strong environmental theme, and how to use tapeless HD cameras and supporting sound gear.

Students will produce a film as a class with students assigned to the positions of producer, director, cinematographer, sound recordist, writer and editor. Students will rotate between positions in order to collaborate on a group project. This program will serve as an enjoyable educational experience for aspiring filmmakers, photographers, and anyone interested in communicating environmental issues through digital media.
FIELD PRODUCTION LOCATION: To be announced

A different location in the Chesapeake Bay watershed is chosen each year for this field study. Previous locations have included Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge.

POST PRODUCTION LOCATION: American University

Upon completion of field production, students will return to the American University main campus for a hands-on approach to importing footage, managing media, editing together sequences, titles, color correction, sound mixing, and exporting the final projects for web and DVD.

PROGRAM INSTRUCTOR: Danny Ledonne

Danny Ledonne is a filmmaker, teacher, and graduate of American University’s MFA film/electronic media program. Working closely with the Center for Environmental Filmmaking, Ledonne has brought his passion for media production to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the District Department of the Environment, PBS, LinkTV, and many more. Ledonne has taught media production for many traditional and non-traditional academic programs, including summer enrichment courses for children and adults as well as field production work in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, the Florida Keys, and Maryland’s Locust Grove Nature Center.

Additionally, award-winning filmmaker and AU professor Sandy Cannon-Brown will be advising students on location during production. Her extensive experience producing documentaries on the Chesapeake Bay will be available from which students can learn.
CLASS INFORMATION

Credit: This is a non-credit class.

Costs: $900 program fee. All basic costs during field production will be covered - including food, lodging, and fuel costs for transportation. Students are expected to provide their own food, lodging, and transportation during pre-production and post-production sessions at American University. Production and editing equipment will be provided.

Equipment: Students will be provided with two tapeless HD camera packages, sound recorders, and Final Cut Pro editing stations.

Course listing: COMM-080-001

Prerequisites: None.

Information sessions: Professor Palmer will hold information sessions about Classroom in the Wild: Chesapeake Bay for all interested students in the fall and early spring.

How to apply if you are an AU student: Please register by going through an SOC Academic Advisor. For undergrads with last names starting A - F, contact Jessica McDermott (202-885-2079 or mcdermot@american.edu). For undergrads with last name beginning G - M, contact Jessica Ortiz Torres (jtorres@american.edu or 202-885-2088) For undergrads with last names beginning N - Z, contact Christine Frezek (202-885-2090 or frezek@american.edu). Grad students, please go to Jean McGee (202-885-2078, jmcgee@american.edu).

How to apply if you not an AU student: Please contact Professor Palmer. Classroom in the Wild: Chesapeake Bay is open to everyone. You don’t have to be a student or have any affiliation with AU. Everybody is welcome. First come, first serve.

Liability release: Students must sign a release and have proof of hospitalization insurance.

For more information, please contact:

Chris Palmer, palmer@american.edu, (202) 885-3408 or cell (202) 716-6160

Danny Ledonne, danny.ledonne@gmail.com
CLASSROOM IN THE WILD: CHESAPEAKE BAY 2013 COURSE SCHEDULE*

Saturday, March 9 – Arrive in DC
Non-local students arrive in Washington, DC no later than 6:00pm
Students/faculty meet at AU for dinner and introductions

Sunday, March 10 – Pre-Production (AU Campus)
Morning: course overview, equipment training
Afternoon: final pre-production research, scheduling
Evening: scripts, shot lists, final preparation

Monday, March 11 – Production (Field study location)
Morning: travel from Washington, DC to field study location
Afternoon: location scouts, preliminary field production
Evening: camp overnight at/near field study location

Tuesday, March 12 – Production (Field study location)
All day: field production - interview subjects, locations shooting
Evening: camp overnight at/near field study location

Wednesday, March 13 – Production (Field study location)
All day: field production - interview subjects, locations shooting
Evening: camp overnight at/near field study location

Thursday, March 14 – Production (Field study location)
Morning: wrap up field production
Afternoon: travel from field study location to Washington, DC
Evening: review footage for editing

Friday, March 15 – Post-Production (AU Campus)
Morning: editing tutorial, log footage
Afternoon: assembly edits
Evening: assembly edits

Saturday, March 16 – Post-Production (AU Campus)
Morning: rough cuts
Afternoon: fine cuts, polish, wrap post-production
Evening: Students/faculty meet at AU for dinner and farewells

Sunday, March 17 – Depart DC
Students are free to depart at their own discretion

* Documentary filmmaking almost always involves elements beyond the control of the production. This schedule is a guide that is necessarily flexible based on the specific needs of the production. Only to / from travel dates are absolute.