**Documentary Rubric (adopted from Polk County ITV)**

Importance of Topic (25 points)

While any (appropriately handled) topic is welcome, projects which focus on influential people or serious issues enjoy the most success. A well-told story about someone who has made a significant difference in the lives of others clearly appeals to many hearts, however documentaries tend to stand out when they cover an issue-oriented subject which focuses on a topic of concern to many people.

Clarity and Organization (25 points)

There is no assigned time limit, but the longer the length, the greater the chance that it will ramble or lose focus. Clarity is often achieved by keeping a topic simple. For example, the FBI would be far too broad a topic, while the hiring practices for special agents of that organization would be much more manageable. Documentary filmmakers also usually follow a specific organizational method like chronological, categorical, spatial, cause and effect, etc. Using graphics and appropriate transitions can also signal viewers that your documentary is well organized.

Comprehensiveness (25 points)

Subjects should be treated thoroughly, which reiterates the necessity for narrowing a broad topic down to a manageable focused one. In-depth research is required to achieve comprehensiveness, although much of what is filmed may actually be left on the cutting room floor. Accomplished documentary editors have honed their powers of selectivity and know that all interviews, quotes, and b-roll clips are not equal, nor required to be included in the final edited version.

The following ranges will be used when deciding points in the above sections:

21-25 points—Decidedly Superior (meets practice 80%-100 % of the time)

16-20 points—Above Average (meets practice 60%-80 % of the time)

11-15 points—Average (meets practice 40%-60% of the time)

6-10 points—Below Average (meets practice 20%-40% of the time)

1-5 points—Decidedly Inferior (meets practice 0%-20% of the time)

Technical Merit (25 points)

* Sound clarity and volume – *5 points*
* Camera work (steadiness, proper framing, creativity) – *5 points*
* Appropriate lighting and color balance – *5 points*
* Video and audio editing – *5 points*
* Graphics – *5 points*