City University of Hong Kong
Course Syllabus

offered by School of Creative Media
with effect from Summer Term 2017

Part I   Course Overview

Course Title:	Visual Ethnography: Critical and Creative Practices
Course Code:	SM6324
Course Duration:	One semester
Credit Units:	3
Level:	P6
Medium of Instruction:	English
Medium of Assessment:	English
Prerequisites: *(Course Code and Title)*	Nil
Precursors: *(Course Code and Title)*	Nil
Equivalent Courses: *(Course Code and Title)*	Nil
Exclusive Courses: *(Course Code and Title)*	Nil

Part II   Course Details

1. **Abstract**

    The course explores the theories and methods of visual ethnography through practice-led visual research in relation to topics of identities and material culture. The course also studies the history and evolution of ethnographic films as a genre. Through practice-led learning mode (the production of pictorial media and ethnographic video), it promotes a reflexive understanding of the critical use of media in conducting and disseminating cultural and social knowledge.

2. **Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)**
    (CILOs state what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course according to a given standard of performance.)

No.	CILOs	Weighting (if applicable)	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate)		
			A1	*A2*	*A3*
1.	Give an accessible account of the idea of visual ethnography, its varieties, and the philosophical basis of visual anthropology		√		
2.	Conceive their own research of everyday life based on informed views in cultural studies			√	
3.	Design, conduct and manage ethnography independently			√	
4.^	Deploy audio-visual tools effectively in research and be aware of the difference they make to the research process				√
5.^	Turn the findings of ethnography, the work of collecting, classification and interpretation into EITHER an elaborate written report OR a creative artistic project				√
		100%			

^ Negotiated Learning Outcome (NLO) explicitly articulating the elements of Discovery oriented learning.

A1:   *Attitude*
    Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2:   *Ability*
    Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to self-life problems.

A3:   *Accomplishments*
    Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

3. Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)
(TLAs designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs.)

TLA	Brief Description	CILO No.					Hours/week (if applicable)
		1	2	3	4	5	
Lecture	- Explain key concepts, such as visual ethnography in Anthropology, Sociology & Cultural Stuides; ethnography's assumptions, its approach and methods - visual analysis & practices - material culture - ethnographic films overview	✓	✓				
Fieldwork	-requires students to do fieldwork			✓			
Workshop	coding			✓			
Presentation	Requires students to present important ethnographic films critically	✓					
Group/individual project	To do a group or individual visual ethnographic project		✓	✓	✓	✓	

4. Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)
(ATs are designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs.)

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.						Weighting	Remarks
	1	2	3	4	5	6		
Continuous Assessment: 100%								
self reflexive essay	✓	✓	✓				10%	
Group project on photo portraits			✓	✓	✓		20%	
Group or individual project on ethnographic video			✓	✓	✓	✓	35%	
Ethnographic film presentation	✓						20%	
Participation	✓	✓	✓				15%	
Examination: 0% (duration: , if applicable)								
							100%	

5. Assessment Rubrics

(Grading of student achievements is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities with the following rubrics.)

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. Research-based Written Report/ Thesis Statement	Students should demonstrate ability to utilize primary and secondary sources, build up argument and analysis. The threshold of 'discovery' lied in a student's self initiatives to conduct additional research and to personalize theories for her/his personal daily experience.	– Excellent grasp of materials, ability to explain key concepts, assumptions, and debates, demonstrating sound knowledge of the field – Rich content, exceptional ability to integrate various resources into primary and secondary levels based on demand; – Design and conduct research which is firmly built on thorough knowledge of existing theoretical frameworks – Evaluative judgments about existing research and demonstrate application of strong critical thinking skills – Strong ability to approach a text or a theme using a variety of theories and analytical tools – Strong organization of research findings with effective organization and procedural clarity at the same time demonstrating the importance of the process – Insightful suggestion of how the research findings may lead to future research	– Firm grasp of materials, ability to explain key concepts and assumptions – Adequate content, strong ability to integrate various resources into primary and secondary levels based on demand; – Design and conduct research which is built on thorough knowledge of existing theoretical frameworks – Appropriate judgments about existing research and demonstrate application of critical thinking skills – Ability to approach a text or a theme using a variety of theories and analytical tools	– Comprehensive grasp of materials, able to explain key concepts – Adequate content, fair ability to integrate various resources into primary and secondary levels based on demand – Design and conduct research which is built on knowledge of theoretical frameworks – Appropriate judgments about existing research – Weak ability to approach a text or a theme using a variety of theories and analytical tools	– Loose grasp of materials, cannot explain key concepts – Weak content, with primary and secondary levels – Design and conduct research which is appropriate for the research objective – Marginal judgments about existing research – Poor ability to approach a text or a theme using a variety of theories and analytical tools	– Poor grasp of materials – Inadequate content, without primary and secondary levels – Fail to design and conduct research which is appropriate for the research objective – Fail to make reasonable judgments about existing research – Fail to approach a text or a theme using a variety of theories and analytical tools

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
2. Creative Project/ Technical Project/ Portfolio	Students should demonstrate ability to utilize primary and secondary sources, execute creative ideas and projects. The threshold of 'discovery' lies in a student's proactively turning theory into praxis, to transform course material into self-owned authorship.	− Work has strong affective quality and the articulation of personal styles and signature − Excellent appreciation, exploration and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium − Work raises questions and instill insights about the process of conception, creative strategization and production − Innovative exploration by combining knowledge from different disciplines (e.g. mathematics, psychology, physics, anthropology, etc.) to create an inter-disciplinary project − Efficient adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available with constructive adjustment	− Strong appreciation, exploration and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium − Ability to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration − Proper adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available and constructive feedback/ suggestions	− Basic appreciation and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium − Limited ability to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration − Adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available	− Marginal appreciation of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium − Marginal ability to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration − Limited adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available	− No appreciation of the aesthetics and expressive qualities of the medium − Fail to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration − Minimal adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available
3. Presentation	This assessment will grade on content and fluency of presentation. Students should show their co-operation to conduct a well-organized presentation with their own argument and evidence from readings and notes.	− Rich, informative content, excellent grasp of the material with in-depth and extensive knowledge of the subject matter − Rigorous organization, coherent structure, and systematic exposition with a strong sense of narrative − Superior presentation skills: distinct pronunciation, fluent	− Adequate content with firm grasp of the material that informs the audience on a subject matter − Reasonable organization, balanced structure and composition − Good verbal communication: comprehensible	− Adequate content with comprehensive grasp of the material demonstrating basic knowledge of the subject matter − Fair organization, weak structure	− Weak content, loose grasp of the general ideas with some knowledge of the subject matter − Poor organization, structure and composition − Poor	− Inadequate content, fail to identify the general ideas with knowledge of the subject matter − No organization, structure or/and composition − Poor

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
	The threshold of 'discovery' lied in a student's self initiatives to conduct additional research and to personalize theories for her/his personal daily experience.	expression and appropriate diction, exact time-management − Critical analysis with insightful comments opening up new issues, or suggesting the ability to theorize	pronunciation, fluent expression and diction, fair time-management	and composition − Fair presentation skills: acceptable pronunciation, expression and diction, fair time-management	presentation skills: marginal pronunciation, expression and diction, poor time-management	presentation skills: marginal pronunciation, expression and diction, minimal time-management
4. Logbook/ Journal	The evidence of 'discovery' lies in the students' demonstrated ability to address and approach problems in multiple perspectives, and to provide illumining documentation of the research or problem-solving process.	− Organization bears conceptual insight − Content carries illuming details and reflects self-directed search beyond required coverage − Communication of distinct authorship and personality − Exceptional ability to address in details the conditions and limitations in the journal process − Self-reflexive about the process and methodology of research and the impact of circumstantial factors − Evidence of wide-range ideation and brainstorming; notes, drawing, developmental sketches are included	− Reasonable organization; Informative content with details − Identifies the subject, strong ability to address the conditions and limitations related − Include adequate notes and possible ideas of research done to formulate solutions − Evidence of ideation and brainstorming; Notes, drawing, developmental sketches are included − Account of how the solution is built, demonstrate ability to analysis and critique	− Reasonable organization; Adequate content − Adequate coverage − Some evidence of ideation and brainstorming; − Sufficient documentation of research process and/or presentation of solution	− Less than 50% of required coverage − Inadequate organization and content − Include little notes of research done to formulate solutions or documentation − Inadequate evidence of ideation and brainstorming; − Inadequate presentation of the solution	− No submission; OR − Minimal coverage of what is required − Marginal ability in documentation − No evidence of ideation and brainstorming;

Note: All A+/A/A- grade assignment should comply with the highest performance of Discovery-oriented learning.

Part III   Other Information (more details can be provided separately in the teaching plan)

1.   Keyword Syllabus
(An indication of the key topics of the course.)

Social anthropology (purposes, politics, problems); anthropology and cultural studies; dialectical materialism; ethno-methodologies; objects and things; the open-ended quality of research, ethnography and history, visual ethnography and art-making, archive, collecting;
Michel Foucault's notions of archaeology and genealogy; Irving Goffman's
frame analysis,
Representing Others in Film; functions of visual ethnography; visuals in ethnography; interdisciplinary approach to the visuals in ethnography; distinctions between ethnographic film and anthropological film; historical development in visual anthropology; limitations and benefits of using photography and video in anthropological research; visual ethnography as cultural intervention; visual anthropology: the case of Maya Deren; Direct Cinema; visual ethnography and avant-garde cinema; creating subjective voices; ethics in ethnographic film
Postmodern narratives; performativity; phenomenology; experimental ethnography; auto-ethnography; theories of photography; documents and documenting; interventionist strategies

2.   Reading List
2.1   Compulsory Readings
(Compulsory readings can include books, book chapters, or journal/magazine articles. There are also collections of e-books, e-journals available from the CityU Library.)

1.	Aldridge, Michael 1995: "Scholarly Practice – Ethnographic Film and Anthropology;
2.	Beyond Ethnographic Film: Hypermedia and Scholarship," in *Visual Anthropology* vol. 7 (3). 233-5.
3.	Emerson, R.M.; R.I. Fretz and L.L. Shaw, 2001: "Participant Observation and
4.	Fieldnotes," in Paul Atkinson (eds. et al), *Handbook of Ethnography*. Sage, London.
5.	Pink, Sarah. *Visual Ethnography.*
6.	Roberts, John 2006: *Philosophizing the Everyday: revolutionary praxis and the fate of cultural theory. Pluto Press, Ann Arbor.*
7.	*Visual Anthropology Review* (a journal of the Society for Visual Anthropology; an excellent resource showing how anthropologists use videography and photography as a research method).
	Web resources for Visual Anthropology: a UR list:
8.	http://www.usc.edu/dept/elab/urlist/index.html
9.	UR-list 7: audio visual collections: http://www.usc.edu/dept/elab/urlist/ur07.htm
10.	UR-list 5: visual ethnographies: http://www.usc.edu/dept/elab/urlist/ur05.htm
11.	Library of Congress: early motion pictures on the web, 1897-1916:
12.	http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/browse/ListSome.php?format=Motion+Picture
	[basic reference on visual ethnography and visual anthropology]
13.	Biella, Peter 1994: *Codifications of Ethnography: Linear and Non-linear*. University of Southern California.
14.	Collier, John 1986: *Visual Anthropology: photography as a research method*, in John Collier, Jr., and Malcolm Collier (ed.) Revised and expanded edition. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.??? Essay or book?????
15.	Crawford, Peter Ian and David Turton (eds.) 1992: *Film as Ethnography*. Manchester University Press, New York.
16.	Jarvie, I.C. (1983). "Problem of Ethnographic Real." *Current Anthropology* 24: 313-25.
17.	MacDougall, David. (1992). "Photo Hierarchicus: Signs and Mirrors in Indian
18.	Photography." *Visual Anthropology*, vol. 5, pp. 103-129.
19.	Marshall, John. (1992). "At the Other End of the Camera." *Visual Anthropology*, Vol. 5, pp. 167-173.

20.	Martin, R. (1997). "Looking and reflecting: Returning the gaze, re-enacting memories and imagining the future through phototherapy." In S. Hogan (ed.), *Feminist approaches to art therapy*. London, Routledge.
21.	Rose, Gillian 2001: *Visual Methodologies: an introduction to the interpretation of visual materials.* Sage publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi.
22.	West, W. Gordon 1996: "Photo-documentary and Visual Ethnography in a Postmodern Digital World: From Positivist Empiricist Pomposity towards a Critique of Photoelectric Representation" (November 30), available on-line at http://webhome.idirect.com/~gordwest/minweb/gwtexts/thdcph5.htm
	[expanded modes of ethnomethodologies and case examples]
23.	Adrian, Bonnie 2003: *Framing the Bride: globalizing beauty and romance in Taiwan's bridal industry*. University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London.
24.	Bach, Hedy 1998: *A Visual Narrative Concerning Curriculum, Girls, Photography, Etc.* (Dissertation)
25.	Ofield, Simon 2005: "Cruising the Archive," in *Journal of Visual Culture* vol. 4(3). 351-64. On-line version available at: http://vcu.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/4/3/351
26.	Spina, S.U. 1995: "Worlds together…Words apart: bridging cognition and communication for second-language learners through authentic arts-based curriculum," in *Language, Culture, and Curriculum* 8(3). 231-47.
27.	Walker, Ian ????: *City Gorged with Dreams: surrealism and documentary photography in inter-war Paris…*
	[Documentary films, ethnographic films and extended forms]
28.	Barsam, Richard M. 1986: "American Direct Cinema: the Re-presentation of Reality," in *Persistence of Vision* 3/4. 132-56.
29.	Bruzzi, Stella 2000: *New Documentary: a Critical Introduction*. Routledge, London and New York.
30.	Corner, John 2002: "Performing the Real: Documentary Diversions," in *Television &*
31.	*New Media* 3. 255-68. On-line version available at: http://tvn.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/3/3/255
32.	Deren, Maya 1960: "Cinematography: the Creative Use of Reality," in *Daedalus* winter. 150-67.
33.	Morin, Richard P. 1994: *Anthropologist's Award-winning Film Chronicles Indian Village Life*. CHECK.
	[on objects, things, and new perspectives in critical theory]
34.	Collins, Douglas 2002-3: "The Great Effects of Small Things: Insignificance with Immanence in Critical Theory," in *Anthropoetics* 8, no. 2 (fall 2002 / winter 2003) at http://www.anthropoetics.ucla.edu/ap0802/collins.htm (read August 3, 2007).
35.	Cummings, Neil (ed.) 1993: *Reading Things* (Sight Works, volume 3). Chance Books, London.
36.	_____ and Marysia Lewandowska 2000: *The Value of Things*. Birkhäuser, Switzerland; August Media, London.
37.	Latour, Bruno 1???: *From Real Politics to Politics of Things…..*
38.	Macdonald, Cynthia 2005: *Varieties of Things: foundations of contemporary metaphysics*. Blackwell Publishing, Malden, Oxford, Carlton.
39.	Plantinga, Carl (1987). "Defining Documentary: Fiction, Non-fiction, and Projected Worlds." *Persistence of Vision* 5: 44-54.
40.	Renov, Michael, ed. (1993). *Theorizing Documentar*. New York, London: Routledge.
41.	Sapir, J. David. (1994). On Fixing Ethnographic Shadows. *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 21, no. 4, pp. 867-884.
42.	Schwartz, Dona. Visual ethnography: Using photography in qualitative research. *Qualitative Sociology,* 12(2), Summer 1989.
	[theoretical thinking on everyday landscape]
43.	Fenton, Laura 2005: "Citizenship in Private Space," in *Space and Culture* 8. 180-92. Online version available at: http://sac.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/8/2/180

44.	Edensor, Tim 2003: "Defamiliarizing the Mundane Roadscape," in *Space and Culture* 6. 151-68. On-line version available at: http://sac.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/6/2/151
	[on ethnography & art-making]
45.	Aliaga, Juan Vicente; Maria de Corral; and Jose Miguel G. Cortes (eds.) 2003: *Micropolíticas: arte y cotidianidad 2001-1968* [Art and everyday life 2001-1968]; a book that accompanies the exhibition "Micropolitics, Art and Everyday Life (2001-1968)," organized by the Espai d'Art Contemporani de Castello, held from 31st January to 21st September 2003, Spain.
46.	Le Feuvre, Lisa; and Akram Zaatari (eds.) 2004: *Hashem El Madani: Studio Practices*; published to coincide with the exhibition "Hashem El Madani," at the Photographers' Gallery, October 14 to November 28, 2004. Arab Image Foundation, Beirut; Mind the Gap, Beirut; and the Photographers' Gallery, London.
47.	Ngan, Irene; and Eliza Lai (eds.) 2004: *Mapping Identities: the art and curating of Oscar Ho*; a catalogue to accompany the exhibition "Mapping Identities: the Art and Curating of Oscar Ho," the 4th of the "Hong Kong Artists in the 1980s" series, exhibited at and organized for the Para/Site Art Space, November 5 to December 5, 2004, Hong Kong
	Case Studies:
48.	(History of documentary) Maya Deren, Jean Rouch, Chris Marker, Fredrick Wiseman, Trinh Minh-ha, Yvonne Rainer etc.
49.	Wendy Ewald
50.	Jo Spence
51.	Vito Hannibal Acconci
52.	Abigail Child(?) / found footage work
53.	Zoe Leonard
54.	Tracey Emin
55.	Guatemala project + Yunnan project
56.	"Atlas Group" and Walid Raad (Beirut)
57.	Hashen El Madani Studio Practices
58.	Sophie Calle
59.	Norman Klein: *Bleeding Through* (history of Los Angeles)

2.2 Additional Readings
(Additional references for students to learn to expand their knowledge about the subject.)

1.	Nil