

**City University of Hong Kong  
Course Syllabus**

**offered by School of Creative Media  
with effect from Semester B 2023/2024**

---

---

**Part I Course Overview**

<b>Course Title:</b>	<b>Sensory Ethnography: Critical and Creative Practices</b>
<b>Course Code:</b>	<b>SM6324</b>
<b>Course Duration:</b>	<b>One semester</b>
<b>Credit Units:</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Level:</b>	<b>P6</b>
<b>Medium of Instruction:</b>	<b>English</b>
<b>Medium of Assessment:</b>	<b>English</b>
<b>Prerequisites:</b> <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	<b>Nil</b>
<b>Precursors:</b> <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	<b>Nil</b>
<b>Equivalent Courses:</b> <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	<b>Nil</b>
<b>Exclusive Courses:</b> <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	<b>Nil</b>

## Part II Course Details

### 1. Abstract

The course explores the theories and methods of sensory ethnography through practice-led audio-visual research in relation to various topics of identities and material culture. The course also studies the intellectual history and evolution of ethnographic theory and ethnographic films as a genre. Through practice-led learning mode (the production of sound recording, photographic media, and short ethnographic film), it promotes a reflexive understanding of the critical use of media in conducting and disseminating ethnographic knowledge in a socially and artistically engaging manner.

### 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 and theoretical account of sensory and experimental ethnography and the philosophical basis of ethnographic theory		✓		
2.	Conceive their own research of everyday life based on informed views in ethnographic theory and practice			✓	
3.	Design, conduct and manage ethnography in the medium of video art or film 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 a creative artistic project with a short a statement				✓
		100%			

**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 in ethnographic theory - overview of the history of ethnographic films - rethinking conventional ethnographic registers - screening films or videos of sensory ethnography	✓	✓				
Fieldwork	Requires students to do fieldwork for their individual or group project			✓			
Logbook	Requires students to reflect upon the learning resources including both readings and films	✓	✓				
Group/individual project	Requires students to do a group or individual sensory ethnographic project		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Presentation	Requires students to present their works and reflect upon their experiences and fieldnotes during the 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		
Continuous Assessment: 100%							
Logbook	✓	✓	✓			20%	
Group or individual creative and ethnographic project producing an audiovisual work			✓	✓	✓	50%	
Final presentation	✓					30%	
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.)

Applicable to students admitted in Semester A 2022/23 and thereafter

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B)	Marginal (B-, C+, C)	Failure (F)
1. Creative Project	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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work has strong affective quality and the articulation of personal styles and signature</li> <li>- Excellent appreciation, exploration and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium</li> <li>- Work raises questions and instill insights about the process of conception, creative strategisation and production</li> <li>- Innovative exploration by combining knowledge from different disciplines (e.g. mathematics, psychology, physics, anthropology, etc.) to create an inter-disciplinary project</li> <li>- Efficient adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available with constructive adjustment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strong appreciation, exploration and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium</li> <li>- Ability to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration</li> <li>- Proper adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available and constructive feedback/ suggestions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Marginal appreciation of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium</li> <li>- Marginal ability to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration</li> <li>- Limited adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No appreciation of the aesthetics and expressive qualities of the medium</li> <li>- Fail to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration</li> <li>- Minimal adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available</li> </ul>

2. Final Presentation	This assessment will grade on content and fluency of presentation. Students should show their co-operation to conduct a well-organised presentation with their own argument and evidence from readings and notes. The threshold of ‘discovery’ lies in a student’s self initiatives to conduct additional research and to personalize theories for her/his personal daily experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rich, informative content, excellent grasp of the material with in-depth and extensive knowledge of the subject matter</li> <li>- Rigorous organization, coherent structure, and systematic exposition with a strong sense of narrative</li> <li>- Superior presentation skills: distinct pronunciation, fluent expression and appropriate diction, exact time-management</li> <li>- Critical analysis with insightful comments opening up new issues, or suggesting the ability to theorize</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adequate content with firm grasp of the material that informs the audience on a subject matter</li> <li>- Reasonable organization, balanced structure and composition</li> <li>- Good verbal communication: comprehensible pronunciation, fluent expression and diction, fair time-management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Weak content, loose grasp of the general ideas with some knowledge of the subject matter</li> <li>- Poor organization, structure and composition</li> <li>- Poor presentation skills: marginal pronunciation, expression and diction, poor time-management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inadequate content, fail to identify the general ideas with knowledge of the subject matter</li> <li>- No organization, structure or/and composition</li> <li>- Poor presentation skills: marginal pronunciation, expression and diction, minimal time-management</li> </ul>
3. Logbook/ Journal	The evidence of ‘discovery’ lies in the students’ demonstrated ability to address and approach problems in multiple perspectives, and to provide illuminating documentation of the research or problem-solving process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organization bears conceptual insight</li> <li>- Content carries illuminating details and reflects self-directed search beyond required coverage</li> <li>- Communication of distinct authorship and personality</li> <li>- Exceptional ability to address in details the conditions and limitations in the journal process</li> <li>- Self-reflexive about the process and methodology of research and the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reasonable organization;</li> <li>- Informative content with details</li> <li>- Identifies the subject, strong ability to address the conditions and limitations related</li> <li>- Include adequate notes and possible ideas of research done to formulate solutions</li> <li>- Evidence of ideation and brainstorming; Notes, drawing, developmental sketches are included</li> <li>- Account of how the solution is built,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Less than 50% of required coverage</li> <li>- Inadequate organization and content</li> <li>- Include little notes of research done to formulate solutions or documentation</li> <li>- Inadequate evidence of ideation and brainstorming;</li> <li>- Inadequate presentation of the solution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Poor grasp of materials</li> <li>- Inadequate content, without primary and secondary levels</li> <li>- Fail to design and conduct research which is appropriate for the research objective</li> <li>- Fail to make reasonable judgments about existing research</li> <li>- Fail to approach a text or a theme using a variety of theories and analytical tools</li> </ul>

		impact of circumstantial factors – Evidence of wide-range ideation and brainstorming; notes, drawing, developmental sketches are included	demonstrate ability to analysis and critique		
--	--	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------	--	--

Applicable to students admitted before Semester A 2022/23

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. Creative Project	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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Work has strong affective quality and the articulation of personal styles and signature</li> <li>– Excellent appreciation, exploration and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium</li> <li>– Work raises questions and instill insights about the process of conception, creative strategization and production</li> <li>– Innovative exploration by combining knowledge from different</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Strong appreciation, exploration and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium</li> <li>– Ability to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration</li> <li>– Proper adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available and constructive feedback/ suggestions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Basic appreciation and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium</li> <li>– Limited ability to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration</li> <li>– Adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Marginal appreciation of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium</li> <li>– Marginal ability to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration</li> <li>– Limited adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– No appreciation of the aesthetics and expressive qualities of the medium</li> <li>– Fail to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration</li> <li>– Minimal adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available</li> </ul>

		<p>disciplines (e.g. mathematics, psychology, physics, anthropology, etc.) to create an inter-disciplinary project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Efficient adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available with constructive adjustment</li> </ul>				
2. Final Presentation	<p>This assessment will grade on content and fluency of presentation. Students should show their co-operation to conduct a well-organised presentation with their own argument and evidence from readings and notes. 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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rich, informative content, excellent grasp of the material with in-depth and extensive knowledge of the subject matter</li> <li>- Rigorous organization, coherent structure, and systematic exposition with a strong sense of narrative</li> <li>- Superior presentation skills: distinct pronunciation, fluent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adequate content with firm grasp of the material that informs the audience on a subject matter</li> <li>- Reasonable organization, balanced structure and composition</li> <li>- Good verbal communication: comprehensible pronunciation, fluent expression and diction, fair time-management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adequate content with comprehensive grasp of the material demonstrating basic knowledge of the subject matter</li> <li>- Fair organization, weak structure and composition</li> <li>- Fair presentation skills: acceptable pronunciation, expression and diction, fair time-management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Weak content, loose grasp of the general ideas with some knowledge of the subject matter</li> <li>- Poor organization, structure and composition</li> <li>- Poor presentation skills: marginal pronunciation, expression and diction, poor time-management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inadequate content, fail to identify the general ideas with knowledge of the subject matter</li> <li>- No organization, structure or/and composition</li> <li>- Poor presentation skills: marginal pronunciation, expression and diction, minimal time-management</li> </ul>

		<p>expression and appropriate diction, exact time-management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Critical analysis with insightful comments opening up new issues, or suggesting the ability to theorize</li> </ul>				
3. Logbook/ Journal	<p>The evidence of ‘discovery’ lies in the students’ demonstrated ability to address and approach problems in multiple perspectives, and to provide illuminating documentation of the research or problem-solving process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organization bears conceptual insight</li> <li>- Content carries illumining details and reflects self-directed search beyond required coverage</li> <li>- Communication of distinct authorship and personality</li> <li>- Exceptional ability to address in details the conditions and limitations in the journal process</li> <li>- Self-reflexive about the process and methodology of research and the impact of circumstantial factors</li> <li>- Evidence of wide-range ideation and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reasonable organization; Informative content with details <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identifies the subject, strong ability to address the conditions and limitations related</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Include adequate notes and possible ideas of research done to formulate solutions</li> <li>- Evidence of ideation and brainstorming; Notes, drawing, developmental sketches are included</li> <li>- Account of how the solution is built, demonstrate ability to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reasonable organization; Adequate content</li> <li>- Adequate coverage</li> <li>- Some evidence of ideation and brainstorming;</li> <li>- Sufficient documentation of research process and/or presentation of solution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Less than 50% of required coverage</li> <li>- Inadequate organization and content</li> <li>- Include little notes of research done to formulate solutions or documentation</li> <li>- Inadequate evidence of ideation and brainstorming;</li> <li>- Inadequate presentation of the solution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No submission; OR</li> <li>- Minimal coverage of what is required</li> <li>- Marginal ability in documentation</li> <li>- No evidence of ideation and brainstorming;</li> </ul>

		brainstorming; notes, drawing, developmental sketches are included	analysis and critique			
--	--	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------	--	--	--

### 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 and cultural anthropology; visual anthropology; cultural studies; sensory ethnography; visual ethnography; experimental ethnography; anthropological theory; ethnographic theory; anthropology and art; ethno-methodologies; the open-ended quality of research, ethnography and history, visual ethnography and art-making, archive, collecting; Direct Cinema; visual ethnography and avant-garde cinema; performativity; affect studies; autoethnography.

#### 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.	Abu-Lughod, L. (1991). Writing against Culture. In R. G. Fox (Ed.), <i>Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present</i> (pp. 50–59).
2.	Boellstorff, T., Nardi, B., Pearce, C., & Taylor, T. L. (2012). <i>Ethnography of Virtual Worlds: A Handbook of Method</i> . Princeton University Press.
3.	Clifford, J. (1998). <i>The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art</i> . Harvard University Press.
4.	Crawford, P., & Turton, D. (1992). <i>Film as ethnography</i> . Manchester University Press.
5.	Estalella, A., & Sánchez Criado, T. (2018). <i>Experimental Collaborations: Ethnography through Fieldwork Devices</i> . Berghahn Books.
6.	Fabian, J. (2008). <i>Ethnography as Commentary: Writing from the Virtual Archive</i> . Duke University Press.
7.	Fabian, J. (2014). Ethnography and intersubjectivity Loose ends. <i>Hau: Journal of Ethnographic Theory</i> , 4(1), 199–209. <a href="https://doi.org/10.14318/hau4.1.008">https://doi.org/10.14318/hau4.1.008</a>
8.	Falzon, M.-A. (2009). <i>Multi-Sited Ethnography Theory, Praxis and Locality in Contemporary Research</i> . Routledge.
9.	Fischer, M. M. J. (2018). <i>Anthropology in the Meantime: Experimental Ethnography, Theory, and Method for the Twenty-First Century</i> . Duke University Press.
10.	Gannon, S. (2006). The (im)possibilities of writing the self-writing: French poststructural theory and autoethnography. <i>Cultural Studies - Critical Methodologies</i> , 6(4), 474–495. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1177/1532708605285734">https://doi.org/10.1177/1532708605285734</a>
11.	Goffman, E. (1989). On Fieldwork. <i>Journal of Contemporary Ethnography</i> , 18(2), 123–132. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1177/089124189018002001">https://doi.org/10.1177/089124189018002001</a>
12.	Grimshaw, Anna., & Ravetz, Amanda. (2005). <i>Visualizing Anthropology: Experimenting with Image-Based Ethnography</i> . Intellect.
13.	Günel, G., Varma, S., & Watanabe, C. (2020). A Manifesto for Patchwork Ethnography. <i>Fieldsights</i> . <a href="https://culanth.org/fieldsights/a-manifesto-for-patchwork-ethnography">https://culanth.org/fieldsights/a-manifesto-for-patchwork-ethnography</a>
14.	Hepburn, S. J. (2016). Ethnography and Harvard's Sensory Ethnography Laboratory. <i>The Senses and Society</i> , 11(2), 232–236. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/17458927.2016.1195080">https://doi.org/10.1080/17458927.2016.1195080</a>

##### 2.2 Additional Readings

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

1.	Hine, C. (2015). <i>Ethnography for the Internet: Embedded, Embodied and Everyday</i> . Bloomsbury.
2.	Hjorth, L., & Sharp, K. (2014). The art of ethnography: The aesthetics or ethics of participation? <i>Visual Studies</i> , 29(2), 128–135. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/1472586X.2014.887261">https://doi.org/10.1080/1472586X.2014.887261</a>
3.	Hsu, W. F. (2017). A Performative Digital Ethnography: Data, Design, and Speculation. In L. Hjorth, H. Horst, A. Galloway, & G. Bell (Eds.), <i>A Performative Digital Ethnography</i> (pp. 40–50). Routledge.

4.	Kazubowski-Houston, M., & Auslander, M. (2021). <i>In Search of Lost Futures: Anthropological Explorations in Multimodality, Deep Interdisciplinarity, and Autoethnography</i> . Palgrave Macmillan.
5.	Lee, S. Y. (2021). Now as a Liminal Space, Writing as a Patchwork: Autoethnographic Reflections on the Self in the Middle of the Pandemic. <i>Qualitative Inquiry</i> , 27(7), 773–777. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800420960181">https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800420960181</a>
6.	Messeri, L. (2016). <i>Placing Outer Space: An Earthly Ethnography of Other World</i> . Duke University Press.
7.	Nardi, B. A. (2015). When Fieldnotes Seem to Write Themsevels: Ethnography Online. In R. Sanjek & S. W. Tratner (Eds.), <i>eFieldnotes: The Makings of Anthropology in the Digital World</i> (pp. 192–209). University of Pennsylvania Press.
8.	Navaro-Yashin, Y. (2009). Affective spaces, melancholic objects: Ruination and the production of anthropological knowledge. <i>Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute</i> , 15(1), 1–18.
9.	Pandian, A. (2019). <i>A Possible Anthropology: Methods for Uneasy Times</i> . Duke University Press.
10.	Pink, S. (2001). <i>Doing Visual Ethnography</i> . Sage Publications.
11.	Pink, S. (2009). <i>Doing Sensory Ethnography</i> . Sage.
12.	Pink, S., Horst, H., John, P., Hjorth, L., Lewis, T., & Tacchi, J. (2016). <i>Digital Ethnography: Principles and Practice</i> . Sage Publications.
13.	Pink, S., & Howes, D. (2010). Debate section. <i>Social Anthropology/Anthropologie Sociale</i> , 18(3), 331–340. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-8676.2010.00119.x">https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-8676.2010.00119.x</a>
14.	Pink, S., & Morgan, J. (2013). Short-term ethnography: Intense routes to knowing. <i>Symbolic Interaction</i> , 36(3), 351–361. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1002/symb.66">https://doi.org/10.1002/symb.66</a>
15.	Rinehart, R. E. (2012). Antipodean performativity: Contemporary ethnography across the disciplines. <i>Cultural Studies - Critical Methodologies</i> , 12(1), 3–7. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1177/1532708611430478">https://doi.org/10.1177/1532708611430478</a>
16.	Russell, C. (1999). <i>Experimental Ethnography: The Work of Film in the Age of Video</i> . Duke University Press.
17.	Scheffer, T. (2007). Event and Process: An Exercise in Analytical Ethnography. <i>Human Studies</i> , 30(3), 167–197.
18.	Schneider, J. (2002). Reflexive/Diffractive Ethnography. <i>Cultural Studies H Cntical Methodologies</i> , 2(4), 460–482.
19.	Skoggard, I., & Waterston, A. (2015). Introduction: Toward an Anthropology of Affect and Evocative Ethnography. <i>Anthropology of Consciousness</i> , 26(2), 109–120. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1111/anoc.12041">https://doi.org/10.1111/anoc.12041</a>