

San José State University
Department of Anthropology
Multimedia Anthropology, ANTH 173, Spring, 2017

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Dr. Ana Pitchon
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Office Hours:	M/W 3:00 – 4:30 and by appointment
Class Days/Time:	M/W 10:30-11:45
Classroom:	Clark Hall 204

Course Description

This course is a survey of anthropological approaches to the study of visual and symbolic communication. We will discuss the use of images to document, describe and analyze human behavior, as well as the multiple modes of producing visual ethnographies. Media examined include film, photography, digital images, websites, and forms of social media. Students will develop a digital ethnographic project based on original research.

Course Format

This course requires the use of computers, word processing software, cameras and other audio and video recording devices, the internet and web design software.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of the anthropological theories and approaches to the study of visual communication and its applications.
- Display a mastery of key concerns in anthropological research, including cultural representation, cultural relativism, and ethics.
- Demonstrate a beginning competence in the technologies and software applications used in creating visual/digital ethnographies.
- Produce a visual/digital ethnography from original fieldwork.

Required Texts

Marcus Banks and David Zeitlyn (2015). Visual Methods in Social Research. 2nd edition. Sage Publications.

Natalie Underberg and Elayne Zorn (2013). Digital Ethnography. University of Texas Press.

Recommended Websites

<http://societyforvisualanthropology.org/>
<http://www.camchap.org>
<http://ethnographymatters.net/methods/>
<http://www.digital-ethnography.net/>
<http://mediatedcultures.net/category/62/>
<http://www.becominghuman.org/>
<http://isbellandes.library.cornell.edu/>
<http://storycenter.org/>
<http://www.digitalhimalaya.com/>
<http://digitalethnography.dm.ucf.edu/pv/home.html>
<http://www.understandingrace.org/home.html>
<http://www.knightarts.org/random-acts-of-culture>
www.photovoice.org
<http://mediatedcultures.net/category/presentations/>

Library Liaison

Silke Higgins is our department's library liaison and she can be contacted at silke.higgins@sjsu.edu. She is a graduate of our program and knows the department very well.

Course Requirements and Assignments

The final project for this course will consist of a photo essay group project. More details will be provided as the semester progresses.

[University Policy S06-4](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S06-4.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S06-4.pdf>) states that "There shall be an appropriate final examination or evaluation at the scheduled time in every course, unless the course is on the official List of Courses in which a final is optional."

For the following assignments, in order to receive credit, you *must* refer to the readings in your discussion.

It is up to you to decide what to reference, but you must think critically about the assigned readings and reference them in your analysis. Make sure to cite appropriately! You will not receive credit for any assignment that does not refer to at least one of the assigned readings, though I encourage you to use more to aid in your critique and/or analysis.

Representing Others (20 points): Find an individual related to your final project. Capture a day in the life of that person. You will take field notes and photographs as appropriate (you will not be graded on the photographs). Optional video and/or audio recordings can be acquired at this time for later use. Be aware of framing – look for details that describe the person and setting through imagery, and without words.

Your assignment is to write about the experience, including typing your field notes into a synthesized story, and analysis of your findings and experience. In addition, discuss problems you encountered and how you would remedy them in the future. This should be three pages, double-spaced, Times or Times New Roman font, with one-inch margins all around.

Interviews (10 points each): Conduct four interviews with individuals representative of the project theme. These will be accomplished during different times of the semester. If permitted, use video and/or audio in addition to photography. You **must** include at least five photographs in each interview (these do not have to be

of people – remember that material culture and the setting is equally important!). You are encouraged with all of your interviews to incorporate landscape, environment and people into your discussion and your visual and audio supplements. You will turn in transcribed field notes, including additional analysis and perspective. Visual material can be uploaded to Canvas in the Assignments section. Each interview should be two pages, double-spaced, Times or Times New Roman font, with one-inch margins all around (NOT including transcribed notes).

Photo Essay / Video Proposal (10 points): This is a proposal of your photo essay or video. It should contain information about your final project, including a thesis statement, your approach to gathering data, and an annotated bibliography of at least **six** sources to support your thesis.

Final Photo Essay / Video Presentation (40 points): This is the final culminating assignment of the semester.

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus

NOTE that [University policy F15-12](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F69-24.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F69-24.pdf> states that “Students should attend all meetings of their classes, not only because they are responsible for material discussed therein, but because active participation is frequently essential to insure maximum benefit for all members of the class. Attendance per se shall not be used as a criterion for grading.”

Grading Policy

A: 95-100	A: Reserved for exceptional scholarship and understanding that reaches beyond minimum course requirements.
A-: 90-94	B: Excellent above average work that exceeds minimum course requirements.
B+: 86-89	C: Satisfactory completion of course requirements.
B: 82-85	D: Fails to address course requirements satisfactorily.
B-: 78-81	
C+: 74-77	
C: 70-73	
C-: 67-69	
D: 60-66	
F:0-59	

In the calculation of the final grade of borderline cases, improvement and dynamic class participation will be decisive factors. I consider all students equally capable of successfully completing the requirements for this class with an above average grade, which does not mean you will receive a B for mediocre work.

Come to class prepared. Read the assignments carefully and take notes in class. Write down any questions you might have about the readings and raise them in class. Do not hesitate to participate actively in class and engage other students or the instructor in class discussions. Pose questions, make comments and **think critically!**

All assignments are due on the specified due dates. Late assignments will only be considered in the event of compelling evidence as to why you have missed class and were unable to submit the assignment.

Note that “All students have the right, within a reasonable time, to know their academic scores, to review their grade-dependent work, and to be provided with explanations for the determination of their course grades.” See [University Policy F13-1](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13-1.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13-1.pdf> for more details.

Classroom Protocol

This class is a mixture of lecture, seminar and in-class group activities. Students are expected to be present and prepared for class discussions. This means that you have completed the assigned readings, taken notes and thought critically about the material, with comments and questions noted. Sloppy work will not be taken seriously.

Attendance:

Arrive on time and be in attendance for the entire class period. Class lectures cover important information not found in assigned readings. If you arrive late for class, please move to your seat without disturbing other class members. Frequent absences and late arrivals will result in poor performance and grades. The use of electronic devices such as cell phones and tablets will not be tolerated. Video recording is strictly prohibited.

Laptop computers and tablets:

Laptop computers and tablets may be used in class only for note-taking.

A student who is doing non-class related activities on his or her computer is not only hurting his or her own education, but possibly the educational experience of many others in the class: research has shown that a game or a picture on a laptop distracts not only the student using the computer but also those students nearby (Yamamoto 2007, Fried 2008). Therefore the use of laptops for non-class activity (e.g. email, games, web-surfing) is prohibited. Students using their laptop for non-class activity will be asked to turn off their laptop and leave the class. In addition, the use of cell phones in class will result in the student being asked to leave.

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo>

Course Number / Title, Semester, Course Schedule

List the agenda for the semester including when and where the final exam will be held. Indicate the schedule is subject to change with fair notice and how the notice will be made available.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	1-30	Introduction to the course and materials overview
1	2-1	History of visual data use in social science
2	2-6	The place of visual methodologies in research <i>Read: U & Z Chapter 1; B & Z chapter 1</i>
2	2-8	Film and critique
3	2-13	The place of visual methodologies in research

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
		<i>B & Z chapter 2</i>
3	2-15	Film and critique - N!ai the Story of a !Kung Woman
4	2-20	Approaches to studying the visual <i>Read: U & Z Chapter 3</i>
4	2-22	Discussion and planning of final photo essays/videos
5	2-27	Approaches to studying the visual <i>B & Z chapter 3</i>
5	3-1	Film and critique
6	3-6	Representing others <i>Read: U & Z Chapter 2</i>
6	3-8	<i>Film: Nanook of the North</i>
7	3-13	Visual methods and field research <i>B & Z chapter 4</i> Representing others project analysis due
7	3-15	Peer reviews of representing others
8	3-20	Visual methods and field research <i>B & Z chapter 5</i> Interview 1 due
8	3-22	Peer reviews of interviews
9	3-27	SPRING BREAK
9	3-29	SPRING BREAK
10	4-3	Cultural heritage <i>Read: U & Z Chapter 6</i>
10	4-5	Video game design – group exercise
11	4-10	NO CLASS
11	4-12	Interview 2 due Peer reviews of interviews
12	4-17	Ethnographic film <i>Read: U & Z Chapter 5</i>
12	4-19	Film and critique – <i>Forest of Bliss</i>
13	4-24	Presenting visual research <i>Read: U & Z Chapter 4</i>
13	4-26	Film and critique
14	5-1	Images and social research <i>B & Z chapter 6</i>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
14	5-3	Film and critique
15	5-8	Ethics
15	5-10	Putting it all together – individual work day in-class/peer reviews
16	5-15	Putting it all together – individual work day in-class/peer reviews
Final Exam	5-19	9:45-12:00 Final photo essays / videos presented