

VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Course Syllabus

Dr. Ashley Stinnett

NOTE: The course syllabus that is distributed on Blackboard is the ultimate authority for this class and supersedes information posted elsewhere. The online syllabus posted to TOPNET ("schedule of classes") is only a draft

Course Information

Day: Wednesday (synchronous)
Time: 3:25 - 4:45 PM
Location: ZOOM
CRN#: 33357

GENERAL COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines multiple media platforms, including illustration, photography, film, and virtual reality, as tools and products of cross-cultural research with special emphasis on cultural representation presented through visual means. The purpose of this course is to explore visual ethnography contextualized through larger anthropological understandings of representation and research in the study and communication of human behavior and culture. Students will learn to identify visual techniques and theories as well as explore anthropological questions regarding representation and ethics regarding human subjects.

Instructor Contact Information

Email: ashley.stinnett@wku.edu
Office: ONLINE
Office Hours: Monday's 1-2PM (Zoom)
Wednesday's 2-3PM (Zoom)
or by appointment

ONLINE FORMAT

This course is designed in a split synchronous/asynchronous format, with the asynchronous portion being provided on Blackboard, and the synchronous portion conducted via Zoom.

Technology Support & Resources

WKU computer helpdesk: (270) 745-7000
Student Services webpage:
<https://www.wku.edu/its/services/students.php>

WKU Blackboard:
<https://wku.blackboard.com/>

WKU Zoom Webpage:
<https://www.wku.edu/citl/services/tools/zoom/zoom-students/zoom-students.php>

Zoom Help Center:
<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us>

It is your responsibility to make sure you have access to a reliable computer that is compatible with these platforms. Note: not all devices nor browsers are equally compatible with Blackboard and Zoom.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of the course, students will:

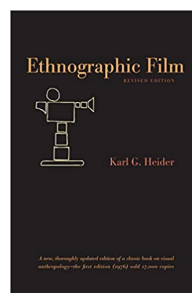
- describe the historical development and basic principles of visual anthropology
- be able to critically address complex aspects of ethics in the representation of human behaviors and cultures

- identify and describe the major genres of visual anthropology and articulate the historical development and interconnection of these genres
- identify and describe ‘basic technical competencies’ in the production of visual media
- articulate the relationship between visual media and ethnography
- conduct analysis using a variety of visual styles (visual, aural, textual, etc.)
- apply methods and concepts of visual anthropology in small-group assignments

III. COURSE MATERIALS

There are 2 required texts for this class:

1) Heider, Karl. (2006). *Ethnographic Film* (Revised Edition). Austin, TX: University of Texas Press. ISBN-13: 978-0292714588



2) Hamdy, Sherine, and Coleman Nye. (2017). *Lissa: A Story about Medical Promise, Friendship, and Revolution*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. ISBN-13: 978-1487593476



These books are available from the WKU Bookstore and from online booksellers such as Amazon.com. Any additional readings will be posted to the course Blackboard website. Consult the detailed schedule of topics for author names.

ALL other course readings can be found in PDF or URL links on the Blackboard course site.

III. Course Policies

I reserve the right to make changes to the course and syllabus as I deem necessary.

Recording the class:

Students may not record this course in any fashion for any reason. This prohibition includes but is not limited to audio recording, video recording, and transcription aids. Learning how to take good lecture notes is important. If you have a disability that prevents you from taking notes, see the “disability accommodation” section below.

Incomplete:

I absolutely will not consider granting an incomplete for the course or a withdrawal after the deadline without written documentation of serious and severe personal problem(s).

Late Work Policy:

As a rule, work will not be accepted late, except in case of documented emergency or illness. You may petition the professor in writing for an exception if you feel you have a compelling reason for turning work in late.

Academic Dishonesty:

Students are expected to adhere to the honor code and plagiarism rules of WKU. See <http://www.wku.edu/csa/policies/plagiarism.php>

Evidence of academic dishonesty may result in a failing grade for the class and will be reported to the office of student conduct.

“The maintenance of academic integrity is of fundamental importance to the University. Thus, it should be clearly understood that acts of plagiarism or any other form of cheating will not be tolerated and that

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anyone committing such acts risks punishment of a serious nature” (WKU 2015-2016 Undergraduate Catalog, p. 33).

The instructor will deal with academic dishonesty, including cheating and plagiarism, in accordance with University policy. “Students who commit any act of academic dishonesty may receive from the instructor a failing grade in that portion of the coursework in which the act is detected or a failing grade in the course without possibility of withdrawal” (p. 33-34). **The instructor will bring sanctions against any student who perpetrates academic dishonesty.** Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes cheating and plagiarism; I provide the University descriptions below.

Regarding **cheating**, “no student shall receive or give assistance not authorized by the instructor in taking an examination or in the preparation of an essay, laboratory report, problem assignment or other project that is submitted for purposes of grade determination” (p. 34). Cheating includes the use of assignments completed by other students in this class during current or previous semesters.

“To represent written work taken from another source [book, journal, web site, lecture, lab, or other source whether it is prepared by the instructor, a guest speaker, or a classmate] as one’s own is **plagiarism**. Plagiarism is a serious offense. The academic work of a student must be his/her own. One must give any author credit for source material borrowed from him/her. To lift content directly from a source without giving credit is a flagrant act. To present a borrowed passage without reference to the source after having changed a few words is also plagiarism” (p. 33).

Resolving Complaints about Grades

The first step in resolving a complaint about grades is for the student to attempt to resolve the problem directly with the course instructor. See the Student Handbook, available at <http://www.wku.edu/handbook/> for additional guidance.

Title IX Misconduct/Assault Statement

Western Kentucky University (WKU) is committed to supporting faculty, staff and students by upholding WKU’s Title IX Sexual Misconduct/Assault Policy (#0.2070) at <https://wku.edu/eoo/documents/titleix/wkutitleixpolicyandgrievanceprocedure.pdf> and the Discrimination and Harassment Policy (#0.2040) at <https://www.wku.edu/policies/docs/251.pdf>.

Under these policies, discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct based on sex/gender are prohibited. If you experience an incident of sex/gender-based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator, Andrea Anderson, 270-745-5398 or Title IX Investigators, Michael Crowe, 270-745-5429 or Joshua Hayes, 270-745-5121.

Please note that while you may report an incident of sex/gender based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct to a faculty member, WKU faculty are “Responsible Employees” of the University and **MUST** report what you share to WKU’s Title IX Coordinator or Title IX Investigator. If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you confidentiality, you may contact WKU’s Counseling and Testing Center at 270-745-3159.

ADA Accommodation Statement:

In compliance with University policy, students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact the Student Accessibility Resource Center located in Downing Student Union, 1074. SARC can be reached by phone number at 270-745-5004 [270-745-3030 TTY] or via email at sarc.connect@wku.edu. Please do not request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a faculty notification letter (FNL) from The Student Accessibility Resource Center.

Writing Center Assistance:

Writing tutors have been trained to provide helpful feedback to students at all phases of a writing project: they can help you brainstorm ideas, structure your essay, clarify your purpose, strengthen your support, and edit for clarity and correctness. But they will not revise or edit the paper for you. Please see <https://www.wku.edu/writingcenter/> for hours and more information about how to access these resources. Students may also get short writing questions answered via email; just put “Quick question” in the subject line to (writingcenter@wku.edu).

Online Behavior:

To foster a positive learning environment, please do not use your cell phones during our class time, unless it is an emergency. Additionally, while we are online, do not text, chat, play games, read the newspaper or surf the web during lecture and discussion. My expectation is for you to be taking notes, engaging with the content and with your classmates. We will have breaks throughout class, so please refrain from these behaviors during the lecture and discussion.

I will not require you to turn on your video camera during our class, however, I encourage you to do so, if you are comfortable. I do require that your screen name reflect how you would like to be addressed, and I will require some form of photograph or image be loaded to your Zoom profile. I encourage you to be creative. Some suggestions might be a bitmoji, a selfie, an image of your favorite meal, image from a vacation, a place you’d like to travel to, your favorite pet, or something else that reflects your identity.

Notification of Objectionable Materials:

Although course content may be deemed offensive by some students, such materials are important for the learning process. Students are not excused from interacting with such materials, but they are certainly encouraged to express well-formed opinions that express those objections and their reasons for them.

IV. Determination of Course Grade and Course Assignment Overview

Your grade will be based on the following tests and assignments:

Activity	Points	%
Participation and Attendance	10	10
Reading Responses (5 total, 3 points each)	15	15
Photographic Essay Review	15	15
Film Attributes (10 total, 3 points each)	30	30
Graphic Novel Presentation	30	30
TOTAL	100	100%

Grades will be determined as	
A range	90-100%
B range	80-89%
C range	70-79%
D range	60-69%
F range	0-59%

Attendance

Class attendance is absolutely necessary. You are responsible for the assigned readings, discussion, and course materials, the highlights of which will be covered in lecture.

Participating in course and attending lectures and other course events are vital to the learning process. As such, attendance is required at all lectures and discussion section meetings. Students who miss class due to illness or emergency are required to bring documentation from their healthcare provider or other relevant, professional third parties. Failure to submit third-party documentation will result in unexcused absences.

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Please come to office hours. If for some reason you cannot come to my regular office hours, schedule another appointment. One-on-one consultation on confusing points is always helpful.

Readings

Students are expected to complete the readings by the assigned date, and to read each assignment thoroughly and critically. *Required readings* will cover concepts that are essential to your understanding of anthropology and visual anthropology. *Recommended readings* review concepts that will be covered in lecture and will be helpful to you in studying for exams and preparing your assignments.

Assignment Overview

Each assignment will be discussed in class and thorough instructions for the requirements will be posted to the course Blackboard.

Reading Response

There are 5 reading responses assigned throughout the semester, each worth 3 points. You will be provided with a list of readings to review with specific due dates. Your responses should be no less than 500 words and no more than 750 words in length and submitted to the course Blackboard site. Your responses should demonstrate familiarity with the films and course material, be well written (with no spelling or grammatical errors). Further instructions will be available on the course Blackboard site.

- Response #1
 - Read: Griffiths, Alison (2001). "Science in Spectacle" in *Wondrous Difference*
 - Due: Friday, August 27th, 2021; 11:59 PM (CST)
- Response #2
 - Read: Rony, Fatimah Tobing. (1996). Introduction. In *The Third Eye: Race, Cinema, and Ethnographic Spectacle*. Duke.
 - Due: Friday, September 3rd, 2021; 11:59 PM (CST)
- Response #3
 - Read: Mead, Margaret. Visual Anthropology in a Discipline of Words. In *Principles of Visual Anthropology*.
 - Due: Friday, October 1st, 2021; 11:59 PM (CST)
- Response #4
 - Read: Asch and Asch (2003) "Film as a research tool" in *Principles of Visual Anthropology*.
 - Due: Wednesday, October 13th, 2021; 11:59 PM (CST)
- Response #5
 - Read: Loizos, Peter (1992). Innovation in ethnographic film, 1955-85.
 - Due: Friday, October 22nd, 2021; 11:59 PM (CST)

Film Attributes

You are required to utilize the film attributes template and provide a total of 10 film reflections, each worth 3 point, for a total of 30 points. I expect each student to utilize the forms during screenings. The film attributes template is available on the Blackboard course site, as a PDF and as a Word .docx. Further instructions for the template are available via Blackboard.

Photographic Essay Review

You will select a photographic essay from a list I provide and write a critical review of the essay. Your response should be no less than 1000 words and no more than 1500 words in length and submitted to the course Blackboard site. The instructions for the essay will be available via Blackboard.

Graphic Novel Presentation

You will record a presentation addressing the required graphic novel textbook. The instructions for the presentation will be available via Blackboard.

Important Due Dates

Reading Response #1	<i>Friday, August 27th, 2021; 11:59 PM (CST)</i>
Reading Response #2	<i>Friday, September 3rd, 2021; 11:59 PM (CST)</i>
Reading Response #3	<i>Friday, October 1st, 2021; 11:59 PM (CST)</i>
Reading Response #4	<i>Wednesday, October 13th, 2021; 11:59 PM (CST)</i>
Reading Response #5	<i>Friday, October 22nd, 2021; 11:59 PM (CST)</i>
Film Attributes #1	<i>Wednesday, September 8th, 2021; 3:00 PM (CST)</i>
Film Attributes #2	<i>Wednesday, September 22nd, 2021; 3:00 PM (CST)</i>
Film Attributes #3	<i>Wednesday, September 29th, 2021; 3:00 PM (CST)</i>
Film Attributes #4	<i>Wednesday, October 6th, 2021; 3:00 PM (CST)</i>
Film Attributes #5	<i>Wednesday, October 13th, 2021; 3:00 PM (CST)</i>
Film Attributes #6	<i>Wednesday, October 20th, 2021; 3:00 PM (CST)</i>
Film Attributes #7	<i>Wednesday, October 27th, 2021; 3:00 PM (CST)</i>
Film Attributes #8	<i>Wednesday, November 3rd, 2021; 3:00 PM (CST)</i>
Film Attributes #9	<i>Wednesday, November 10th, 2021; 3:00 PM (CST)</i>
Film Attributes #10	<i>Wednesday, November 17th, 2021; 3:00 PM (CST)</i>
Photo Essay Review	<i>Friday, September 24th 2021; 11:59 PM (CST)</i>
Graphic Novel Presentation	<i>Wednesday December 8st 2021; 5:00 PM (CST)</i>

SCHEDULE

Topics	Readings	Assignments
WEEK 1		
Introduction to Visual Anthropology	Recommended Screening: <i>King Kong (1933)</i> Required Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heider, Karl G. (2006). Chapter 1. <i>Ethnographic Film</i>. Griffiths, Alison (2001) "Science in Spectacle" in <i>Wondrous Difference</i> Recommended Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early Film, Edvard Muybridge: Animated Images NPR Muybridge, Edvard. "The Man Who Made Pictures Move" NPR Article. 	<i>Familiarize yourself with the course site, Zoom, and the Syllabus</i> Reading Response #1 Due Friday 11:59PM (CST)
WEEK 2		
Foundations	Recommended Screening: <i>Grass: A Nations Battle for Life</i> Required Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heider, Karl G. (2006). Chapter 2, <i>Ethnographic Film</i>. Rony, Fatimah Tobing. (1996). Introduction. In <i>The Third Eye: Race, Cinema, and Ethnographic Spectacle</i>. Duke 	Reading Response #2 Due Friday 11:59PM (CST)
WEEK 3		
Foundations	Screening: <i>Nanook of the North</i> Required Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heider, Karl G. (2006) Chapter 3. <i>Ethnographic Film</i>. 	<i>Nanook of the North</i> Film Attributes #1

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rony, Fatimah Tobing. (1996). <i>Taxidermy and Romantic Ethnography: Robert Flaherty's Nanook of the North</i>. Duke Press. <p>Recommended Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ruby, Jay (2000) "The Aggie must come first: Robert Flaherty's place in ethnographic film history"• Barsam, Richard (1995) Chapter 3 in <i>Non-Fiction Film</i>, pgs 42-57.	Due Wednesday 3:00 PM (CST)
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