

This “W” course fulfills one of two Writing Across the Curriculum requirements for students in the College of Arts & Sciences. For those of you taking the course simply to fulfill the WAC requirement, please keep in mind this is an upper level Sociology course and it assumes a sociological background.

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Hours: M 9:30-12, 1:30-3:30; T & R 9:30-11, W 9:30-12 & 5-5:30; other times by appt.

Texts *Ways of Seeing* - Berger
Sociology and Visual Representation - Chaplin (optional for undergrads).

Additional required readings are available in a coursepack that you can purchase at *Ditto's*. Resources will also be placed on reserve in the library.

Equipment You'll need a camera. It need not be expensive and you do not need technical expertise. You are responsible for developing your own photos. All images used must be prints (vs slides or video). If digital format is used, be sure that prints are available for in-class presentations. All images used must be prepared for this course; you cannot use photos previously taken (except for the “Opening Exercise”). Photos presented should be matted (you'll all use the same basic format – to be discussed at beginning of course).

Email You'll need email and access to the internet. Send me your address ASAP (please include your name). I will create a list that we'll use for discussions, sharing information and resources, distributing assignments, etc. You are responsible for any assignments distributed via email, so please read yours regularly. As soon as possible, familiarize yourself with the International Visual Sociology Association. Visit their website (www.visualsociology.org) and subscribe to their listserve (IVSA listserv). To subscribe to IVSA, send a message to listserv@pdomain.uwindsor.ca - do not write anything in the subject box – in the message box write: SUB IVSA yourfirstname yoursurname. Familiarize yourself with online journals.

Attendance and Participation Required. More than 2 unexcused absences will negatively impact your final grade (see grading below). Particular situations will be considered on an individual basis. This is a combined seminar and workshop. Your **active, informed** participation in discussions, presentations, and critiques is essential. An important part of this course is becoming involved in discussions of the readings and each other's photographic presentations.

IMAGE-BASED RESEARCH PROJECTS

(all dates below, except April 24, are tentative and subject to adjustment)

OPENING EXERCISE: From a magazine, newspaper, or other publication that you own, or from a photograph you shot previously, present one matted image, with caption, that highlights an aspect of the social world. Be specific about the particular sociological idea you are focussing on and indicate what sociological concept you are using to develop your focus. To be presented in class. **Due Thurs, Jan 16**

SHORT PROJECTS: The following 2 projects are designed to develop procedures and ideas for the visual analysis of social reality. All are to be presented in class on the due date. You will be expected to discuss each of the photographs and the project as a whole. Our main concern is content and

composition of photos, especially their sociological significance. There should be 4 prints/project. Prints should have neatly typed captions numbered in the order you want them to be read. This system of captions and numbering should be used in the Final Project also. 1) visually present one of the following sociological concepts: disability, ethnicity, social inequality, power, domination, equality, and 2) visually present a symbolic landscape. These will be presented in class. **Due Thurs, Jan 30**

CRITICAL ANALYSIS: Present one matted photograph, with caption, plus a 3 pg. sociologically-informed critical commentary (sociologically-informed means you must utilize/apply the ideas of at least one sociologist whose name and work should be identified in the body of your paper). These will be presented in class. **Due Tues, March 4**

FINAL PROJECT: Complete a visual sociology research project (either empirical or critical). It should include a minimum of 10 photos and at least 12 pages of text - typed, double-spaced, with appropriate bibliography in ASA style (see handout). Your project can be on any topic relevant to this course's subject matter. I encourage you to discuss your topic with me. It should include a minimum of 5-6 current sociological references.

The first version of your paper is due in class, Thurs April 10. This version is NOT a rough draft. Think of it as a final, completed paper – well organized and well argued, title page, page numbering, bibliography, carefully edited and proofread, etc. I will grade the first paper and return it with comments. **Submit the rewritten paper on the last day of class for this course, April 24 @ 11 am.** The grade on the final paper will be based on how well you address the comments on the first version. Also attach a "summary of changes sheet" that identifies the specific actions you've taken to improve the paper. I'll distribute a form that notes important points that should be covered. The two grades will be averaged to arrive at the final project grade. When you submit the final version, attach the first version so I can see how you dealt with the initial set of comments. Failure to include the first paper with my comments will cost you 25 points off the final average, so please don't forget. Unless arrangements are made in advance, papers turned in later than the specified times will suffer a grade loss of 10% per day until it is received.

Midterm Exam There will be a mid-term exam (**approx. March 13**) dealing with selected issues and problems in visual sociological research and analysis. You'll choose from a list of discussion questions. This will be given as an overnight take-home exam (due the following day, not the following class period).

Grading	Opening Exercise	5 pts
	Short projects	20 pts (2 projects/10 pts each)
	Critical analysis	15 pts
	Midterm exam	20 pts
	Final Project	60 pts

A=108-120 B=96-107 C=84-95 D=72-83 F=below72

Each unexcused absence, beyond the 2 permitted, will result in loss of 5 points from the final grade average.

Course learning outcomes:

- 1) to learn the fundamentals of qualitative sociology as a research method
- 2) to learn the approach of visual sociology as a type of qualitative sociology that produces and

interprets visual images, here specifically photographic images. to learn ways of doing and **applying** visual sociological analysis to concrete situations and issues

- 3) to learn basic compositional and critical skills related to the analysis of the images produced by others **and** those produced by **you**, the visual sociologist. technical camera skills will not be taught, though you will be encouraged to learn them
- 4) to develop *visual literacy* as a skill necessary for understanding and critiquing contemporary social life in a media oriented culture by understanding how photographs and similar images organize, structure and transform social and personal life. to identify the social forces which produce, distribute, and utilize images
- 5) to develop your writing skills, esp. your weaknesses, which you will learn to identify

The above course learning outcomes are directly related to the following BS Sociology program learning outcomes: learning the craft of sociological research and research presentation, critical thinking, cultural literacy, problem-solving, and the valuing of cultural diversity.

Tentative topics and readings: * = in your coursepack

#1 introduction to qualitative methodology and visual sociology

an example of visual sociology research: * "Tattoo Narratives: The Intersection of the Body, Self-Identity and Society" - Kosut

#2 do photos tell the truth? what do they tell?

* "Photographs within the Sociological Research Process" – Prosser & Schwartz

* "Talking about pictures: a case for photo elicitation" - Harper

#3 empirical and critical visual sociology: the photo as resource and/or topic

* "Visual evidence: *A Seventh Man*, the specified generalization, and the work of the reader" - Becker

* "In Our Glory: Photography and Black Life" - hooks

Essay #7 in *Ways of Seeing* - Berger

#4 a critical visual methodology

* "Towards a critical visual methodology" - Rose

* "Visualizing histories: experiences of space and place in photographs by Greg Staats and Jeffrey Thomas" – Walsh

* "Facing Difference" – hooks

Essay # 3 in *Ways of Seeing* – Berger

* "Representing the Black Male Body" – hooks

Essay # 1 in *Ways of Seeing* - Berger

SOCI 4373W/5373

VISUAL SOCIOLOGY

SPR 2003

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“Tattoo Narratives: The Intersection of the Body, Self-Identity and Society” - Kosut

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“In Our Glory: Photography and Black Life” - hooks

“Towards a critical visual methodology” - Rose

“Visualizing histories: experiences of space and place in photographs by Greg Staats and Jeffrey Thomas” – Walsh

“Facing Difference: The Black Female Body” – hooks

“Representing the Black Male Body” – hooks