

# GE3106 Documentary and Everyday Urban Life

**Professor:** Dr. Shannon Walsh

**Course Times:** C02: 9am – 11:50 / C01: 3pm -5:50pm

**Classroom:** C02: AC2-3614 / C01: AC1-Y5-204

**Website:** <https://ge3106.wordpress.com>

## 1. Abstract

City planners and architects are not the only people who create urban space. The city is also transformed by the everyday ways people use the city. People like urban recyclers, taxi drivers, dockworkers, karaoke singers, fishermen, domestic helpers, and stock brokers, also play a part in how we understand the city and how it works. In this course, students will learn about often-invisible everyday urban processes and practices that make up life in the city through documentary video, urban studies, landscape architecture, visual arts and ethnography.

## 2. Course Aims

We are often lost in the digital world of cell phones and laptops, and we forget there is a fascinating real world all around us. *This course aims to* deepen students' awareness of the social, political and cultural processes of the city's everyday life. Students will use creative methods to connect critical analysis with their daily life experiences, while authoring interactive documentary projects in the city.

## 3. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

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

No.	CILOs
1	Critically & creatively analyze urban processes in everyday life in the city
2	Derive new perspective(s) in interpreting local urban processes
3	Develop new research skills: documentary, qualitative, archival, and ethnographic
4	Use multiple kinds of digital technology for creative discovery
5	Apply visual tools like video and photography to interpret real-world data

## 4. Type of Assessment Tasks/Activities      CILO No.      Weighting

Type of Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.	Weighting
Creative Team Project	1,2,3,4,5	20%
Creative Individual Project I	1,2,3,4,5	45%
Personal Blog/ Reflection Pieces	1,2,3,4,5	15%
Class presentation & Participation	2,4	15%

## 6. Grading of Student Achievement:

For more grading rubric, look under the 'grading' tab on our Canvas course page.

### a) Creative Projects

Grade	Definitions	Creative Team Project & Creative Solo projects
A+ A A-	Excellent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent ability in uncovering the everyday process in the city and be able to interpret the selected urban phenomenon from a fresh perspective;</li> <li>• Excellent ability to transmit ideas in visual ways with personal signature</li> <li>• Rich content, excellent ability to interpret and integrate various resources</li> </ul>
B+ B B-	Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good ability in uncovering the everyday process in the city and be able to interpret the selected urban phenomenon from a fresh perspective;</li> <li>• Good ability to transmit ideas in visual ways with personal signature</li> <li>• Adequate content, good ability to interpret and integrate various resources</li> </ul>
C+ C C-	Fair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fair ability in uncovering the everyday process in the city and be able to interpret the selected urban phenomenon from a fresh perspective;</li> <li>• Fair ability to transmit ideas in visual ways with personal signature</li> <li>• Marginal content, fair ability to interpret and integrate various resources</li> </ul>
D	Marginal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weak ability in uncovering the everyday process in the city and be able to interpret the selected urban phenomenon from a fresh perspective;</li> <li>• Weak ability to transmit ideas in visual ways with personal signature</li> <li>• Weak content, marginal ability to interpret and integrate various resources</li> </ul>
F	Fail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No ability in uncovering the everyday process in the city and not able to interpret the selected urban phenomenon;</li> <li>• No ability to transmit ideas in visual ways with personal signature</li> <li>• Inadequate content, no/irrelevant use of resources.</li> </ul>

## 6. Course Outline

### Readings:

Abass, A. (1997) *Hong Kong: Culture and the politics of Disappearance*. Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota University Press.

Álvarez, Iván Villarrea. 2015. Documenting Cityscapes: Urban Change in Contemporary Non-Fiction Film. London, New York: Wallflower Press pages 1-37

Matthews, G. (2011) Reading: “People” & “Goods” in *Ghetto at the Centre of the World*. Hong Kong University Press.

Sassen, Saskia. 2005. The Global City: Introducing a Concept, *Brown Journal of World Affairs*, Winter/Spring 2005, (6)2, pages 27-41

### Schedule:

September 2/15

#### **1 Introduction: Non-fiction filmmaking and the City**

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*Space, Psychogeography & Urban wandering*

**Films:** *Dark Days*, Marc Singer / *Urbanized*, Gary Hustwit

September 9/15

#### **2 Space, Places, images and meaning**

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**Reading:** Álvarez, Iván Villarrea. 2015. Documenting Cityscapes: Urban Change in Contemporary Non-Fiction Film. London, New York: Wallflower Press pages 1-37

**Films:** *My Winnipeg*, Guy Maddin / *Return to Homs*, Talal Derki

September 16/15

#### **3 Anthropology of Luxury & The Global City**

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**Reading:** Sassen, Saskia. 2005. The Global City: Introducing a Concept, *Brown Journal of World Affairs*, Winter/Spring 2005, (6)2, pages 27-41

**Films:** *Invisible City*, Pin Pin Tan / *Detropia* (2012)

September 23/15

#### **4 Field Trip #1**

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**Reading:** Abbas, Ackbar. 1997. “Building on Disappearance: Hong Kong Architecture and Colonial Space” in *Hong Kong: Culture and the Politics of Disappearance*. Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota University Press.

September 30/15

**5 Urban Self Portraits**

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**Reading:** Álvarez, Iván Villarrea. 2015. Documenting Cityscapes: Urban Change in Contemporary Non-Fiction Film. London, New York: Wallflower Press pages 103-127

**Films:** *Roger & Me*, Michael Moor / *San Soliel*, Chris Marker

October 7/15

**6 Presentations**

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**\*\*Assignment #1 due\*\***

October 14/15

**7 Field Visit # 2**

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**Reading:** Matthews, G. (2011) Reading: “People” & “Goods” in *Ghetto at the Centre of the World*

October 28/15

**8 Landscaping**

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**Reading:** Álvarez, Iván Villarrea. 2015. Documenting Cityscapes: Urban Change in Contemporary Non-Fiction Film. London, New York: Wallflower Press pages 39-102

**Films:** *Lost Book Found*, 1996, Jem Cohen / *News from Home*, Chantal Ackerman

November 4/15

**9 Field Trip #3**

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November 11/15

**10 Metafilm**

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**Reading:** Álvarez, Iván Villarrea. 2015. Documenting Cityscapes: Urban Change in Contemporary Non-Fiction Film. London, New York: Wallflower Press

**Films:** *LA Plays itself*, Thom Anderson / *London*,

November 18/15

**11 Work & Neighbourhoods**

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**Films:** *St-Henri, the 26<sup>th</sup> of August*, Shannon Walsh / *A St-henri, le 5 septembre*, Hubert Aquin / *The Pruitt-Igoe Myth*, Chad Friedrichs

November 25/15

## **12 Presentations**

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**\*\*Assignment #2 due\*\***

December 2/15

## **13 Cinema and Social Change in the City**

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**Reading:** TBA

**Films:** *The Interrupters*, Steve James and Alex Kotlowitz / *Wasteland*, Lucy Walker & Karen Harley

**\*\*Final due date for all My City blog response pieces\***

## **7. Plagiarism:**

In this course there is zero tolerance for plagiarism and discovery of plagiarism could result in failure of the course. This includes sharing work with other students or collusion with other students to submit for grading the same projects.

### **What is plagiarism?**

According to the *Cambridge Dictionaries Online*, to plagiarize is "to use another person's idea or a part of their work and pretend that it is your own". [Plagiarize. (2010). In Cambridge advanced learners dictionary. *Cambridge Dictionaries Online*. Retrieved from <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/british/plagiarize>]

So it is any act of using someone else's ideas, words, concepts, images, sounds, formulae or data without acknowledging the source, either intentionally or accidentally. It is therefore a dishonest practice of claiming credit for something you did not do.

### **How can you avoid plagiarism?**

To avoid plagiarism, one should always provide information of the sources used, i.e., you must document or cite the sources of information which you have consulted or used in writing your paper. Therefore, it is important that you keep records of all sources that you have consulted so that you will be able to provide proper citations later.

A citation refers to the basic information about an information source (e.g., a book, an article, a media resource) sufficient for identifying the source. For example, a citation for a book usually includes the author, title, publisher, and date of publication.

Read more on Library » Research Guides » Citing Sources of Information