

Introduction to Fieldwork

(13-17 August 2017)

Name of the Course **Introduction to Field Work**

Name of the Discipline **Graphic Design - B.Des**

Usual time of occurrence **Semester - V**

Course Category **RW**

Duration **1 Week**

Credits **2**

Invited Session: Swasti Singh Ghai

Anchor Faculty: Nanki Nath

Preamble

A range of Visual cultures co-exist in the form of objects, artifacts, symbols, forms (natural/organic/arbitrary), concepts, ideologies and paradigms. Introducing the elements of a space/field/area of study or ground (in context of meaning-making); and the crucial visual research methods: observational research, interpretive research, building a rhetoric of image, visual apparatuses (practices of seeing/reading images), etc. aims to make students aware of and sensitive towards application of these elements and research methods for an effective fieldwork. The efficacy of this fieldwork would be instrumental in designing a narrative for the selected theme in a space imbued with a rich visual culture. In this regard, the present course, 'Introduction to Fieldwork' stands as an essential pre-requisite to the forthcoming course 'Documentation of Visual Culture'.

Relevance

Documentation of Visual Cultures course is important in the context of changing societal and technological scenario. Visual approach in everyday life is changing rapidly. Documenting experience of visual media in a hybrid of texts, images, and sounds would offer students to build various perspectives of the visual culture.

Working Methodology

The working methodology for the course instructions includes modes of direct presentations, textual readings, descriptions and discourse between students and instructor(s) as part such sessions, video screenings, notes (material resources for self-study), demonstrative invited sessions by expert(s) of the fieldwork to present upcoming trend(s) and/or special skills in the craft of fieldwork required to create unique and representative document designs as an enriching commentary to elucidate the essence of varied visual cultures (traditional or modern). These invited sessions would help students develop an informed knowledge about special skills and approaches that may be required in the documenting the arts, crafts and other kinds of subjects within larger visual culture studies (traditional or modern).

Aim and Objectives

The broad objectives of the course are:

- To provide understanding of visual sensibility in connection to several aspect- personal, national, ethnic.
- To provide understanding of strategic analysis on cultural visual forms.
- To understand the Rhetoric of the Image.
- To understand comparison with popular visual culture for attention and traditional Visual cultures.
- To understand the image making in context of everyday life experiences.

Course Contents (in the making)

The foremost instructions would include introducing students to the elements and methods of understanding a field/space via the discourse of unplanned and planned walks, how to collect data, record sensorial perceptions, capture an idea behind the environment/atmosphere of the space/field: with the objective to articulate the operational aspects in conducting a field research/fieldwork. This may be followed critical reading sessions and interpreting from classic writings, for instance, trying to understand rhetoric by decoding the image in 'The Rhetoric of Image' by Roland Barthes – as an essential case study that elaborates on interpreting the meaning of 'image' ('the text' here in context of semiotics'). The varied fields/spaces of research study would 'the texts' to be seen and read from the perspectives of linguistic and visual signifiers, the codes, decoding the codes, developing encoded data for retrieval/preservation or a general appreciation to build a new knowledge construction in the domain of 'Visual Culture' by the students of Graphic Design at NID. Other visual research methods and their details of conducting ethnography, how to create 'thick descriptions' of 'the text' to communicate an 'image' (meaning-making methods), how to observe from the eye of a researcher 'as the reader of signs that create a text', etc. in form of published literature and empirical studies conducted by experts in the fields – this self-study material is recommended to students for depth readings and applications in their fieldwork of spaces and identify those new themes (with a scope of inquiry and rich value) as part of visual culture around us. The students are strongly recommended to select these themes in the spaces / fields in context of India. The orientation on popular visual culture; alongwith the underlying themes belonging to traditionally or contemporarily significant visual cultures that need to be unraveled in context of India would be valuable knowledge constructions and documentations (relevant for designers, practitioners, researchers, academicians and students alike).

Book References (in the making, available in KMC, NID)

- The handbook of visual culture / edited by Ian Heywood and Barry Sandywell
- An introduction to visual culture/ Nicholas, Mirzoeff
- Practices of looking : An introduction to visual culture/ Marita Sturken
- ART AND VISUAL CULTURE IN INDIA 1857-2007/ Sinha, Gayatri
- Museums and the interpretation of visual culture/ Eileen Hooper-Greenhill