**ACADEMIC UNIT:** SOCIOLOGY

**LEVEL OF STUDIES:** POSTGRADUATE

**COURSE CODE: ΓΕΠ13**

**COURSE TITLE: Media and Society – Visual Culture**

**LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION and EXAMINATIONS:** GREEK

**COURSE OFFERED TO ERASMUS STUDENTS**

**COURSE WEBSITE (URL)**

1) students-web (<https://student.cc.uoc.gr/main.asp>)

2) moodle (https://elearn.uoc.gr/course/ )

3) socmedia (http://sociology.soc.uoc.gr/socmedia/)

**Learning outcomes**

**Students who successfully complete the postgraduate seminar should be able to:**

* Get acquainted with the basic substantive features of contemporary social problems, debates and phenomena, especially in regard to media and visual culture issues
* Gain knowledge and understanding of the historical development of visual studies as a field of disciplinary inquiry
* Gain knowledge and understanding of sociological theory concerning visual culture and photography
* Be familiar with the major concepts, theories and approaches in visual sociology and visual anthropology
* Gain knowledge and understanding of key developments in contemporary photography theory
* Recognize and evaluate the differences between theories, compare and critically discuss different theoretical approaches in regard to visual culture
* Demonstrate a sociological understanding of the use of different visual media in sociology in relation to contemporary debates about representation and the visual
* Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of how different media and sociological materials connect in different ways to different questions and objects of research
* Understand the concepts of visual, gaze, signification, social construction of reality, narrative, representation, discourse, meaning, social exclusion, otherness, etc.
* To demonstrate understanding of the visual media coverage of a social issue
* To demonstrate understanding of the meaning of a visual text and visual discourse through different readings and perceptions and through specific media
* To demonstrate understanding of the visual representation of an aspect of Greek society regarding social issues
* To analyze and explain the ideological, political and cross-cultural dimensions of visual media discourse.

**General Competences**

**Students who successfully complete the postgraduate seminar will:**

* Be competent in working independently and summarise detailed and complex bodies of information concisely and accurately
* Be competent in the production of free, creative and inductive thinking
* Know how to make connections among apparently disparate forms of knowledge
* Demonstrate the ability to produce consistent, logically articulated and comprehensive pieces of academic writing
* Be competent in critical questioning certain theoretical positions and in producing new research ideas
* Be able to formulate arguments in presentations and defend them against opposing views in public
* Critically evaluate sociological analyses, including their own, in relation to research methods and appropriate theoretical issues
* Demonstrate an understanding of the difficulties of choosing the right media and sociological materials for a given research project
* Demonstrate sociological skills and be able to design, implement and write up a good quality academic or applied research to address classic and changing sociological problems in a thorough, rigorous and consistent manner
* De able to communicate clearly and present empirical research publicly in a range of contexts and using appropriate media and materials
* Be able to both work in and lead group discussions and participate in tasks involving communicative competence
* Be able to exercise critical awareness dealing with social issues, engaging specific debates, and learn to recognize the implications of knowledge claims
* Reflect on their own social and cultural background in a theoretically informed manner
* Have respect for social difference and multiculturalism
* Show social, professional and ethical responsibility and sensitivity to gender and otherness issues.

**SYLLABUS**

Visual Studies have evolved into one of the most interesting multidisciplinary fields of the decade 1990's onwardsfollowing the increased research attention to the visual dimensions of culture and social life. It is the academic field, where are discussed all issues concerning the human sight, the gaze, voyerism or scopophilic regimes, the theory of photography and moving image, the process of signification, the production and reception of images, representation etc, in short, what in we call “Visual culture”. Human experience is now more visual and visualized than ever before from the satellite picture to medical images of the interior of the human body. For most people in the modern western societies, life is mediated through television and, to a lesser extent, film. The average teenager sees only eight movies a year but watches four hours of television a day. These forms of visualization are now being challenged by interactive visual media like the Internet and virtual reality applications, where a young person can spend the entire day hooked on to a PC or a mobile screen. In this swirl of imagery, seeing is much more than believing. It is not just a part of everyday life, it is everyday life.

The aim of this course is to examine Visual Studies as an academic field that critically reflect and contribute to the dialogue that currently surrounds ‘the visual’ across the social sciences and humanities. Two dominant themes run through the topics of the course: the images and especially photography as an object of study and as a methodological tool and, secondly, the agency of images, both in society and in the research process itself.

**Topics**

* Visual Culture – Visual Studies
* Photography: The social and historical context
* Photographic art: Naturalism, pictorialism, modernism, straight photography , hyperealism, postmodern art
* Social use of photography: The photographic meaning and social institutions (archive, gaze, etc)
* Photography Theory – Visual theory :Reality and representation, Realism, Text and context. The documentary photography
* The photography as an object of analysis and as a means or method of analysis: Photography and the visual in Social Sciences. Visual Sociology, Visual Anthropology.
* Snapshots. Family shots, the invention of family memory, rituals, portraits, etc.
* Digital technology. Digital images

**TEACHING and LEARNING METHODS -** Face to face seminar

**STUDENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

Oral presentation and written assignment in Greek. In the seminar students are required to research and study in depth a particular theme within an defined subject area, present it in class, and finally, submit a term paper on the given theme at the end of the semester.

Erasmus students: Written assignment in English

***- Suggested bibliography:***

Bertelsen, L. K., Gade, R. & Sandbye, M. (επιμ.) 1999. *Symbolic Imprints: Essays on Photography and Visual Culture*. Aarhus University Press. TR624 S96 1999

Bolton, R. (ed.) 1992. *The Contest of Meaning. Critical Histories of Photography*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England MIT Press. TR642 C66 1992

Brennen, B. & Hardt, H. (επιμ.) 1999. *Picturing the Past: Media, History and Photography.* The History of Communication Series, Illinois, University of Illinois Press. TR820 P555 1999

Burgin, V. (ed.) 1982. *Thinking Photography*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan. TR642 T55 1982

Carroll, N. 1996. *Theorizing the Moving Image*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.PN1995 C358 1996

Corner, J. (ed.) 1990. *Documentary and the mass media*. London, Edward Arnold.

Devereaux, L., Hillman, R. (eds) 1995. *Fields of Vision. Essays in Film Studies, Visual Anthropology and Photography*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, California University of California Press. PN1994 F433 1995

Elkins, J. 2001. *The Domain of Images,* Cornell University Press. P93 .5 E53 1999

Elkins, J. 2007. *Photography Theory* (Art Seminar), London, Routledge. TR185 P55 2007

Evans, J. & Hall, S. (επιμ.) (1999) *Visual Culture: The Reader.* London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi, Sage, The Open University, Κωδικός: B105 I47 V58 1999.

Hall, S. (επιμ.) (1997) *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. Sage, London, Sage.HM101.R442 2003

Macdougall, D. 2005. *The Corporeal Image: Film, Ethnography, and the Senses*, Princeton University Press.

Marien, M. W. 1997. *Photography and its Critics. A Cultural History, 1839-1900,* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Mirzoeff, N. 2002 [1998]. *The Visual Culture Reader*. Second Edition London, New York Routledge. NX458 V58 2007

Mitchell, W. J. T. 1995. *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation*, University of Chicago Press. NX170 M58 1994

Mitchell, W. J. T. 2005. *What Do Pictures Want?: The Lives and Loves of Images,* Chicago, University of Chicago Press. N7565 M523 2005

Nichols, B. 1991. *Representing Reality. Issues and Concepts in Documentary,* Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indianapolis University Press. PN1995.9 D6 N54 1991

Nichols, B. 1994. *Blurred Boundaries. Questions of Meaning in Contemporary Culture.* Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indianapolis University Press. PN1995 .9 D6 N538 1994

Pfitzer, G. M. 2002. *Picturing the Past*, Smithsonian Books. TR820 P555 1999

Rose, G. ([2001] 2007) *Visual Methodologies. An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Materials, Second Edition,* London, Sage.

Sontag. S. 2004 *Regarding the Pain of Others*, London: Penguin Books. HM554 S6516 2003

Sturken, Marita, Cartwright, Lisa 2001. *Practices of Looking. An Introduction to Visual Culture*, New York, Oxford University Press. HM500 S78 2001

Tagg, J. (1988) *The Burden of Representation. Essays on Photographies and Histories,* Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press. Κωδικός: TR183 .T34 1993.

Wells, L. (ed.) 2005. *The Photography Reader*, London, New York Routledge. ΤR 145 P485 2005.

Wells, L. (ed.) 2004. *Photography: A Critical Introduction.* Third Edition London, New York Routledge. TR145 .P48 2007.

***Related academic journals:***

Journal of Visual Culture

European Journal of Communication

International Journal of Cultural Studies

New Media Society

Television & New Media

Visual Anthropology

Visual Communication.