

GE1113: VISUAL STORYTELLING AND CULTURAL THINKING

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Visual Storytelling and Cultural Thinking

Subject Code

GE - Gateway Education

Course Number

1113

Academic Unit

School of Creative Media (SM)

College/School

School of Creative Media (SM)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

GE Area (Primary)

Area 1 - Arts and Humanities

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

As our life is increasingly dominated by visual media, the significance of “visual storytelling” is rising across different means of communication. By bringing examples of some most influential visions of the world—works from artists, photographers, and especially film and video makers, the course helps students to recognize basic rules in visual coding and visual storytelling. Another important frame of knowledge for this course is how cultural elements affect the very making of visual media. Through vigorous drawing, printing, analytical and storytelling exercises, the goal of the course is to enhance students’ capability in understanding of visual media and in visualizing their own ideas. Lectures are designed to introduce trends and methods in visual arts and how they interact with literary, aesthetic, and ideological representations. Tutorials and workshops are designed for students with little knowledge of art or media history to understand how images tell stories through active discussions, presentation on film narratives, basic drawing and storyboard exercises.

This course aims to enhance students’ knowledge of visual storytelling and is designed for students who have interests in visual arts but with no special training in visual arts or media studies. After taking this course, students are expected to recognize the visual language and storytelling in high art and popular/mass media and to express their appreciation or criticism.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Demonstrate the understanding of how images and data are perceived and processed by the left brain and the right brain, and the paradox between senses and sensibility	10	x	x	
2	Obtain the basic visual literacy by recognizing the basic visual coding in storytelling with images: lines and shapes, colours and tones, and how affinity and contrast are established through composition within a frame	25		x	x
3	Demonstrate visual storytelling rules and the techniques to visualize stories told in films and other visual forms	35		x	x
4	Recognize the mutual influences flowing between different cultures and traditions through comparative reading, viewing and reflection	30	x	x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs		Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Drawings	First two drawing exercises designed to use lines and shapes to express emotions	1, 2	1.5
2	Hand-on work	Three hand-on exercises guided through tutorials on visual coding and decoding	1, 2	1.5
3	Storytelling	In-class storytelling exercise and group presentation on films	2, 3, 4	1.5
4	Quiz	Recognize differences in cultural thinking through drawing, log-book/quiz, and the final reflection note	2, 3, 4	1.5

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

ATs		CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- " for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	First and second week tutorial in-class exercises	1	5	-	No
2	Three exercises on visual coding	2	30	-	No
3	30 minutes Group Presentation on a film	3	30	-	No
4	1 on-line reflection note on the discoveries made through the semester	4	15	-	No
5	Logbook that records the process of learning throughout the semester; or quiz that tests all important concepts introduced throughout the semester	4	20	-	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)

Assessment Task

1. In-class exercise
2. Group Presentation
3. Logbook

Criterion

Delivery quality, effort and progress

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Strong evidence of understanding of the concepts introduced in class as reflected by worksheets passed to students during tutorials; superior writings revealing original thinking; excellent group presentation that requires originality and good team work; remarkable improvement through drawing exercise through the semester

Good (B+, B, B-)

Evidence of understanding of the concepts introduced in class as reflected by worksheets passed to students during tutorials; good writing showing clarity and depth; good group presentation that requires originality and good team work; satisfying improvement through drawing exercise through the semester

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Partial evidence of understanding of the concepts introduced in class as reflected by worksheets passed to students during tutorials; writing that lack any depth; satisfactory group presentation that requires originality and good team work; partial improvement through drawing exercise through the semester

Marginal (D)

Little evidence of understanding of the concepts introduced in class as reflected by worksheets passed to students during tutorials; insufficient writing ability as revealed through on line topic discussions; disorganized group presentation; little improvement through drawing exercise through the semester

Failure (F)

No evidence of understanding of the concepts introduced in class as reflected by worksheets passed to students during tutorials; writings lack basic clarity; group presentation that reveals no originality; no improvement through drawing exercise through the semester

Additional Information for AR

All A+/A/A- grade assignment should comply with the highest performance of Discovery-oriented learning.

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

The Artist Within: Left-brain vs. Right-brain Perception
Purpose of Art: Imitation vs. Expression; Painting and Poetry in Different Traditions
Invention of Photography and Painting Trends Afterwards
Basic Visual Story Coding: Line, Shape, Colour, Tone
Japanese Manga, American Comics, or Other Forms of Story in Print
Visual Storytelling: Composition, Movement, Time
Mapping out the Story: Storyboarding Location, Character, and Time
Illustrating Characters and Their Relationship in Stories
Point of View: Objective and Subjective Visions
Plot: Mismatch, Twist and Turns, Narrative Rhythm
Levels and Layers of Narrative: Intertextuality, Intermediation, and Reflexivity

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Betty Edwards, Drawing on the Artist Within. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986.
2	Bruce Block, The Visual Story: Creating the Visual Structure of Film, TV and Digital Media. Amsterdam: Focal Press, 2008.
3	John Berger, Ways of Seeing. London: BBC Publishing, 1972.
4	John Bolton, A Brief History of Painting. New York: Carol and Graf Pub, 2004.
5	Roland Barthes, Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography. London: Vintage, 2000.
6	David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, Film Art: An Introduction. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010.
7	Michael D. Dahnke, Film Art, and Filmart: An Introduction to Aesthetics through Film. Lanham: University Press of American, 2007.

Additional Readings

Title	
1	http://www.sapergalleries.com/Picasso.html
2	http://www.dali-gallery.com/html/galleries/drawings.htm
3	http://www.drawingsofleonardo.org/
4	http://www.vggallery.com/drawings/main_az.htm

Annex (for GE courses only)

A. Please specify the Gateway Education Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) that the course is aligned to and relate them to the CILOs stated in Part II, Section 2 of this form:

Please indicate which CILO(s) is/are related to this PILO, if any (can be more than one CILOs in each PILO)

PILO 1: Demonstrate the capacity for self-directed learning

1, 2, 3, 4

PILO 2: Explain the basic methodologies and techniques of inquiry of the arts and humanities, social sciences, business, and science and technology

1, 2, 3, 4

PILO 3: Demonstrate critical thinking skills

4

PILO 5: Produce structured, well-organised and fluent text

4

PILO 8: Recognise important characteristics of their own culture(s) and at least one other culture, and their impact on global issues

4

PILO 9: Value ethical and socially responsible actions

1, 2, 3, 4

PILO 10: Demonstrate the attitude and/or ability to accomplish discovery and/or innovation

1, 2, 3, 4

B. Please select an assessment task for collecting evidence of student achievement for quality assurance purposes. Please retain at least one sample of student achievement across a period of three years.

Selected Assessment Task

On-line discussion