

Visual Storytelling

Researching with Digital and Visual Materials and Creating Visual Narratives

GEOG/ANTH/MCST 394
Fall 2022 | TTh 9:40am – 11:10am
OLRI 300 | Macalester College



Instructor:

[Rupak Shrestha, PhD](#)

Pronouns: he/him/his

Office: Carnegie 110

rshresth@macalester.edu

rupak's Drop-In Hours:

T 1pm - 2:30pm | W 12pm - 1pm | Th 11:30am - 1pm

Book here: <https://calendar.app.google/27M6dBy7LnkivMhFA>

If any of these times do not work for you, please let me know.

Preceptor:

Ella Thomsen

Pronouns: she/her

ethomsen@macalester.edu

Drop-In Hours:

Mondays 12pm - 1pm (CARN 109)

Fridays 9:30am - 10:30am (on [zoom](#))



Photographs from a visual research project on "seasonal labor migration and circular turmoil"

This syllabus may be amended by announcements in class, over email, and/or on Moodle. Please check your email and Moodle announcements regularly.

Learning Objectives

There are no prerequisites for this course and no prior background knowledge in visual methods or tools are required.

- Experiment with multiple forms of visual storytelling in research
- Employ theoretical and methodological toolkits in conducting visual research
- Develop and reevaluate skills to observe, record, and analyze place-based issues and processes in the local community
- Develop visual research by centering ethics, representation, and trust in the community

Communication

Rather than an expert on visual methods or storytelling, I am a facilitator of knowledge. I am learning along with you. Sometimes this engagement with knowledge necessitates that we talk through the material and projects beyond the classroom. My and Ella's drop-in hours are exactly for those reasons. We would love for you to stop by during drop-in hours either individually or in a group, whichever works best for your learning style. Please communicate your interest in joining the drop-in hours in advance if possible.

I will update assignment details at least two weeks in advance of the deadline. I will communicate any updates and changes through class emails and announcements in Moodle.

You should contact me through email, and expect a response within 24 hours during the workweek (this does not include weekends). I tend to answer emails during weekday afternoons around drop-in hours or in the afternoon before 5pm.

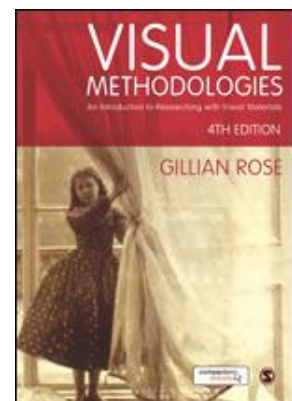
Required Texts

*Rose, Gillian. 2016. **Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to Researching with Visual Materials**. 4th Edition. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.*

This book is available through the Library for 4-hour reserves. You can check its availability here:

<https://macalester.on.worldcat.org/courseReserves/course/id/18840968>

All other readings and materials will be available on Moodle with either pdfs or permanent links to the library's page.



Grade Breakdown

Participation and Attendance	15%
Leading Class Discussion	15%
Weekly Reflections (x7)	21%
Methods Portfolio	15%
Film Response	10%
Visual Research Project	30%

The above grade totals to 106% and is inclusive of extra credit.

Please refer to the assignment guidelines on Moodle that note the assignment expectations, rubrics, and requirements in much detail.

Participation and Attendance

Attendance will be important not only for your learning, but also for our ability to build a community together and maintain a sense of connection and commitment to one another during the semester. Your presence in class matters, especially since the work that you will be doing in the course is scaffolded along multiple class-times.

You must complete the assigned readings and make detailed notes so that you are able to *participate* in class discussions. If you are on your electronic devices for reasons beyond learning purposes, you will not receive any attendance and participation points for that day. You can use electronic devices for taking notes and accessing readings while class is in session. At all other times (film screenings, etc.), electronic devices are not allowed in the classroom. Please silence your phones.

I recognize that there are unavoidable circumstances that sometimes make it impossible for you to attend class. Although I hope it isn't the case, those unavoidable circumstances may be more common given that we are *still* in the midst of a pandemic. If you will not be in class for any reason, please let me or your preceptor know in advance via email. Two excused absences for any reason are allowed. If your health, wellbeing, and practices of belonging necessitate being away from the class more than those excused absences, please let me know and I will do my best to accommodate your requests.

Assignments

Leading One Class Discussion

You will choose a peer with whom you will facilitate one class period. As the discussion facilitators, both of you will engage with the visual materials and read the texts well in advance so that you can prepare discussion questions and activities for the class. Feel free to include additional visual materials. Schedule to meet with me during drop-in hours to talk about the reading materials and brainstorm your discussion/activity plans.

Weekly Reflections

(only submit 7 in total; 350 words each)

Keep a journal. While you are engaging with course materials, what are the primary takeaways from it? How are the narratives structured? What did you find interesting? This writing exercise is meant to provide you with a space to reflect on the materials for that week.

Things to consider:

- Rather than analyzing and reflection on one reading or visual material, think through how you can assemble your thoughts from all of the materials for that week
- When thinking about the materials in cohesion, what commonalities can you find? Are there places where you think the arguments and narratives disagree?
- What is challenging about this week's materials?

To incorporate flexibility into your schedule, you do not need to submit a weekly reflection every single week during the semester. You may choose any 7 weeks and submit those 7 weekly reflections on Moodle. Each Weekly Reflection should be 350 words in length. For the weeks that you are submitting, the reflections are due by 6pm on Thursdays of those weeks.

Methods Portfolio

The Methods Portfolio is a carefully curated collection (ccc) of activities that you will engage in as part of the class. Examples of these activities are Digital Ethnography, Audience Ethnography, Dérive and Psychogeography. The goal of the Methods Portfolio is to have a concrete set of methods-based activities that you can return to after completing the class - for future research, employment showcases, for your website, etc.

Film Response

This is a group assignment and you will work in groups of 2 or 3. Choose one film that we have watched in the class. The method of delivery for the response is open - you can work on a [paper](#), video record conversations, produce a [zine \(more info here\)](#), or any other creative avenues - possibilities are endless. Regardless of the method you choose, you must discuss the film in relation to other course materials.

Visual Research Project

You will develop a visual project based on a semester-long research with a community in the Twin Cities. During the course, we will conduct workshop sessions on research design, ethics, and representation to peer-review and guide ourselves through the visual research process. Although this is an individual project, you will provide continuous reviews and feedback to your peers over multiple in-class workshop sessions. Before beginning your visual research project, you should consult the topic with me during drop-in hours. To think through community-centered work, I highly suggest starting with the [Civic Engagement Center's website](#).

The [Digital Resource Center](#) is an excellent resource at Mac through which you can check-out high-quality audio-visual equipment to use in your projects.

All components of the Research Proposal are graded including the multiple iterations of the proposal and peer review work.

Grading Scale

A	93 – 100
A-	90 – 92
B+	87 – 89
B	83 – 86
B-	80 – 82
C+	77 – 79
C	73 – 76
C-	70 – 72
D+	67 – 69
D	60 – 69
F	less than 60

Late Assignments

Since we will workshop most of the submitted assignments during class time, there are no extensions on assignments. Assignments will be penalized by 10% daily for late submissions. If circumstances arise that will limit your ability to complete assignments, please communicate with me as early as possible so that I can make accommodations.

Resources and Policies

Health and Well-being

Here at Macalester, you are encouraged to make your well-being a priority throughout this semester and your career here. Investing time into taking care of yourself will help you engage more fully in your academic experience. Remember that beyond being a student, you are a human being carrying your own experiences, thoughts, emotions, and identities with you. It is important to acknowledge any stressors you may be facing, which can be mental, emotional, cultural, physical, financial, etc., and how they can have an academic impact. I encourage you to remember that sleeping, moving your body, and connecting with others can be strategies to help you be resilient at Macalester. If you are having difficulties maintaining your well-being, please don't hesitate to contact me and/or find support from other resources including the [Laurie Hamre Center for Health & Wellness](#).

The Hamre Center for Health & Wellness offers integrated [medical](#), [counseling](#), [health promotion](#), and [sexual violence prevention](#) services and programs for all students and serves as a resource supporting the entire Macalester community's effort to build a healthy campus. To schedule a counseling or medical appointment please call 651-696-6275 or email health@macalester.edu.

Free, Urgent, Phone Counseling (Press 2) is available to Macalester students anywhere in the world, 24/7/365. Speak to a licensed mental health counselor 24 hours a day by calling Hamre Center at 651-696-6275, then press or say option 2 when prompted.

[Here is a quick and important guide](#) if you are looking to connect with the Division of Student Affairs and other departments/offices on campus. If you don't find what you're looking for, please email the Office of Student Affairs for direction and assistance.

COVID-19 Protocols

We live in uncertain times globally. As we have figured out over the past several months, this uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic has created new challenges for learning and class delivery. To mitigate some of these challenges, all members of the campus community must follow Macalester's protocols related to COVID-19. Repeated and/or serious violations of the College's health protocols can result in removal from the College.

There is a "masking period" in place continuing through the first two weeks of classes (through September 14). During this masking period, high quality (e.g. N95, KN95) masks will be expected in the classroom and all public indoor spaces on campus. For more information, please visit [Macalester College's COVID-19 Response](#) page.

Academic Integrity

You are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty in your college work; violations of academic integrity are serious offenses. Students found guilty of any form of academic dishonesty – including, for instance, forgery, cheating, and plagiarism – are subject to disciplinary action. Examples of behavior that violates this policy, as well as the process and sanctions involved, can be found on the [Academic Programs website](#).

You can learn more about how to document sources and how to avoid plagiarism from writing resources on the [MAX \(Macalester Academic Excellence Center\)](#) website and from the [Library website](#). You can make an appointment using the [Ask Us page](#) on the library website, or [meet with a librarian](#) directly.

Accessibility

I am committed to ensuring access to course content for all students, including those with disabilities. If you have a disability, please meet with me early in the semester to discuss your accommodation plans. You do not need to share with me all the details of your specific disabilities. Accommodation plans help me substantiate accommodation requests and to ensure you are meeting your learning objectives in the course. If you have not yet obtained a plan or are unsure if you have a disability that requires accommodation, please contact Disability Services: disabilityservices@macalester.edu, or call 651-696-6275. For more information, please visit the [Disability Services website](#).

Title IX Statement

Macalester is committed to providing a safe and open learning and living environment for all students, staff, and faculty. Any community member experiencing sexual harassment, sexual violence, relationship violence, or stalking, is encouraged to seek help and support.

Please be aware that as a faculty member, I need to report disclosure about sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, and stalking to the Title IX Office. The purpose of this report is to ensure that anyone experiencing harm receives the resources and support they need. I will keep this information private and it will not be shared beyond this required report.

You may also contact [Macalester's Title IX](#) Coordinator directly, to assist with supportive measures, resources, and referrals:

Phone: 651-696-6258 Email: titleixordinator@macalester.edu

File a report: [Title IX & Sexual Misconduct Report Form](#)

Religious Observance

You may wish to take part in religious observances that occur during the semester. If you have a religious observance/practice that conflicts with your participation in the course, please contact me before the end of the second week of the semester to discuss appropriate accommodations.

Netiquette

All students should be aware that their behavior impacts other people, even online. I hope that we will all strive to develop a positive and supportive environment and will be courteous to fellow students, your preceptor, and your instructor.

1. Always think before you write. In other words, without the use of nonverbals with your message, your message can be misinterpreted.
2. Make sure that you are using appropriate grammar and structure. In other words, I do not want to see anyone writing "R U" instead of "are you". There are people in the class that may not understand this type of abbreviation, not to mention it does nothing to help expand your writing and vocabulary skills. Emoticons are fine as long as they are appropriate. A smile ☺ is welcome, anything offensive is not.
3. Respect the time of others. This class is going to require you to work in groups. Learn to respect the time of others in your group and your experience will be much better. Always remember that you are not the only person with a busy schedule, be flexible. Do not procrastinate! You may be one that works best with the pressures of the deadline looming on you, but others may not be that way. The same is true for the reverse. The key to a successful group is organization, communication and a willingness to do what it takes to get it done.

More details here: <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>

Compiled by Melissa Landin, Instructor, Dept. of Communication, Inver Hills Community College, mlandin@inverhills.edu