Imaging the City focuses on the visual and aural (text, art, sound, photography, film) presentation of cities in social research and planning. The course is concerned with connections between imaging as representations of the urban condition, as insights into planning theory, and as tools for social mobilization and taking action. It seeks to bridge social science and planning theories with filmmaking techniques and methodologies for deliberative planning.

The class will consist of (1) Seminars with the instructors on weekly topics, (2) Lab discussions on the filmmaking techniques, which includes introductions to shooting and editing digital films and (3) each student independently engaged in making films. Problem-solving assistance for filmmaking will be available throughout the semester.

This course is designed for the graduate/PhD student considering the incorporation of film into their research topics. A grant will be awarded to a selected student at the end of the course to go toward the production of their thesis film project (selection will be based on Project 2 by a panel of judges).

Course Schedule

Introduction: What is the city? What are its problematics? Representations in art, photographs, film.

Part I Social Research and Film Basics
• Stories and the world through the camera lens
• Making an iMovie at Apple Store
• Representing the city in art, photography and film
• Space, Time and Sound
• Films, Identity, Place and Placemaking
• Hawaii International Film Festival – movie viewing and discussions

Part II Urban Planning, Planners and Filmmaking
• The Roles of Planners and Filmmaking
• Interactive filming as planning process
• Social Media and digital imagery
• Mini film fest with prizes for best films!

Student Assessment
• Weekly reading and class assignments
• Project 1 : space, time & sound film
• Project 2 : documentary with written film treatment

Expected outcomes
• Skills to critically interpret imaging in applied research
• Basic filmmaking technique and methodology as a planning tool
• Ability to use storytelling in urban planning for social change.
• Awareness in evaluating filmmaking devices
PLAN 740 – Imaging the City
Seminars, Labs, Exercises, Assignments & Readings

PART I – INTERPRETING THE CITY

Weeks 1- 2 (Aug 22 – Sep 3). What is the city; what are its problematics? How are they presented in visual media?

Seminar – The City (Weeks 1 & 2)
- City as utopia/dystopia
- The city in history
- The contemporary city in a global age
- How city is imaged, from flatland to multidimensionality

Lab – Interpreting the city depends on who you are
- 4 Egos: Imagination, Aesthetic, Camera, Ego
- Point of View

Exercise and assignment (Weeks 1 & 2)
- Photograph 4 sequential still images that move a character through Down Town Honolulu from the POV of, e.g., a child, a businesswoman or a houseless man. Due Week 2.
- Create your own release forms. Due Week 2.
- Project 2 introduction: Identify/determine 2 lead characters and hand in draft proposal (due Week 6) of your thesis topic representing the two opposing stakeholders and carry out interviews. Final proposal and transcribed interviews (Week 10), paper edit (Week 12), rough cut (Week 14) and final cut (Week 16).

Readings

Recommended Readings
PART II – SOCIAL RESEARCH AND FILM BASICS

Week 3 (Sep 6-10) – Stories and the World through a Camera Lens

Seminar – Research as Stories and Story-telling.
- What is a good film?
- The 3 Acts structure
- Stories and the World through a Camera Lens
- Planning research as story-telling
- Debates about the “documentary film” – what is it and what is it looking for? [different types, documentary vs. fiction]
- Ethnography vs. Planning

Lab – Basic Cinematography 1
- Embracing the lens
- How image/lighting influences emotion
- Planning your shots (storyboarding)

Assignments
- Exercise 2: use 3 different locations (as if they were 1), show a character [a child, a business woman or a houseless man] entering, traversing and exiting a space using 6 storyboards, each shot should be justifiable in terms of framing, movement, emotion [insecurity, fear, confidence] and transition. Due Week 4.
- Identify/determine 2 characters of your topic and proposal draft. Due Week 4.

Readings
Das, Trisha (2005), How To Write A Documentary Script.

Recommended Readings

Week 4 (Sep 13-17) Visual Representations of the City and City Life

Seminar – Representing the city in film, photography and other visual arts
• From ethnography to German Expressionism
• Modern to postmodern
• Contemporary architecture and soft city

**Lab – Basic Cinematography 2 -- interview process**
• Fear and confidence of filming – being sensitive but not losing the shot
• Interview + Fly on the wall +mock interview class exercise
• Strategy (casting, release form, interview, cinema verite, transcribed interviews, follow-up)
• Interview process / editing with talking head

**Assignments**
• Project 1: film your storyboard from Exercise 2 paying attention to movement through space, sound design and the passing of time. Due Week 5&6. Must include release forms, title and credits.
  **DUE**
• Identify 2 lead characters and turn in draft proposals

**Readings**

**Recommended Readings**

**Week 5 (Sep 20-24) Time and Sound**

**Seminar – Time in Film and Sound**
• **Screening Project 1**
  • Representing history as linear, stages or conjunctures? [idea of different temporalities]
  • The question of locality and destiny
  • Contemporary global capitalism – the annihilation of space by time. Films, too – the short attention span theater.
  • Western compressed harmonics versus linear music of Asia (gamelan, the (Indian) raga and American jazz – improvisation and linearity
  • Ordering time in filmmaking (e.g., Memento)
  • Real Time vs. Screen Time
  • Rhythm/Pacing
  • Soundscapes and distracted listening

**Lab – Basic Cinematography 3 – Sound**
• Space: Frame, Time & Sound
• Sound design
• Recording sound (ambient, room tone and MOS)

**Readings**

Weeks 6 (Sep 27-Oct 1 Oct) – Films, Identity, Place and Placemaking

Seminar – Society-Space Reflexivity
■ Screening Project 1 continued
■ The power of identity
■ Placemaking and everyday forms of cosmopolitanism
■ People make places and places make people

Assignments
■ Shoot interviews, Cinema Verite, transcribe interviews & final proposal. Due Week 10.

Readings

Recommended Readings

Weeks 7-8 (October 4th – 15th) TBA & Class-break for students to continue their filmmaking

Week 9 (Oct 18-22) HIFF Week

PART III – URBAN PLANNING, PLANNERS AND FILMMAKING

Week 10 (Oct 25-29) Planning and Filmmaking

Seminar – Who and what is a planner and how is this revealed in films? [How planning has used and uses film?]
■ The master planner
■ The planner as advocate
■ The Planner as community activist
■ The political economy of planning
■ Films and communicative action
■ Filmmaking: Planning vs. Ethnography the discussion continued?

Lab
Assignments
■ Paper Edit of working script. Due Week 12.

DUE
Transcribed interviews & final proposal
HIFF write up

Readings

Recommended Readings

Week 11 (Nov 1-5) Interactive Filming as Planning Process

Seminar – The Power of Image Making
- Indigenous process / Planning process
- Working with a community
- Criteria: Evaluation and Event
- Intention and process vs. product
- Proposal [?]

Lab – Budgeting & Rights, Proposal Pitches (guest speaker?)

Assignment
- Find a youtube/vimeo piece used for social awareness. Due Week 12.

Readings

Smith, Linda T, Decolonizing Methodologies (selected pages)

Recommended Readings

Week 12 (Nov 8-12) Social Media and Digital Imagery

Seminar – Web 2.0 and social media
• The new way of mapping the world
• Activate change
• Present a youtube/vimeo piece used for social awareness

Event
• GirlFest

Assignments
• Rough cut Project 2. Due Week 14.
DUE
• Working script

Readings
Web 2.0 – Wikipedia

Week 13 (Nov 15-19)
TBA

Week 14 (Nov 22-24) – Recap and Open Session (Thanksgiving holidays from 25 Nov)

Seminar & Lab – Reviewing our work
• Proposal (perspective and audience)
• Evaluation Determination
• Building an on-going relationship
• Identifying Character and Story
• Interview
- Cinema Verité
- Transcription
- Scripting
- Editing
- Screening/organizing an event
- Evaluation

**Assignment Due:**
- Presentation of rough edit & open session

**Week 15 (Nov 29 - Dec 1)**
TBA

**Week 16 (December 6th – 10th) [December 9th last day of instruction]**
TBA

**Assignment Due:**
- Screening of Project 2 (format depends on class size. If 8 or more, we can have guest panelists and a grant, I say we have the $$$ award to top project by a panel of judges)

**Student Assessment**
1. Weekly reading and class assignments (Exercise 1 & 2)
2. Project 1: space, sound & time film
3. Project 2: documentary
4. Film write ups with 2 films

**Expected outcomes**
- Skills to critically interpret and imaging in applied research.
- Basic filmmaking technique and methodology as a planning tool
- Ability to use storytelling in urban planning for social change.
- Awareness in evaluating filmmaking devices and
- Acquire foundations of filmmaking for social research.

**Requirements.** In order to check out camera, students must pass a camera/equipment test. Assistance will be provided to learn basics early in the course. No filmmaking experience is necessary to enroll in this course. No auditors allowed.