School of Journalism and Mass Communication  
**University of Iowa**  
**Visual Narratives & Techniques (19-276, Eko).**  
**Fall 2012**

Instructor: Lyombe Eko  
E-Mail: leo-eko@uiowa.edu  
Office: E322 Adler Journalism Building  
Telephone: 353-1926  
Departmental Executive Officer: Professor David Perlmutter.  
Office: E301 Adler Journalism Building  
Classroom: W336 Adler Journalism Building  
Meeting times: TTH 2:00-3:15 p.m.  
Office hours: Mondays & Wednesdays. 1:00-3:00 p.m. or by appointment.

**Course Description:**
Visual communication has existed since human beings first walked on the face of the earth. Indeed, human history is a history of visual communication. Human beings are inherently visual communicators. From million-year old cave drawings and rock paintings (early visual narratives) of salient aspects of life, to hieroglyphs, and contemporary digital visual animations, human beings express themselves in visual narratives in a wide array of media forms. This course will explore the history, theory, and aesthetics of visual narratives in media storytelling. It will focus on application of “the visual” in journalistic practice and storytelling. We will explore and analyze the historical texts and contexts of visual communication in the print media (books, magazines, and newspapers), photography, film, and television, as well as convergence of these media forms on the multi-communication platform of the Internet.

The course will also cover the methodological, legal and ethical aspects of visual communication. This will involve narratological analysis—analysis of the structural elements and logics of visual narrative discourse, as well as the deployment of narrative frames in news and other media contexts. Students will learn visual communication
literacy, appreciation, and analysis, and have opportunities to be visual communicators through the production of visual communication content for the media in real space and cyberspace.

**Required Textbook:**


**Scope and Purpose:**

**The First Amendment**
Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

*Amendment I, Constitution of the United States (1791).*

**B. Universal Declaration of Human Rights**

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

*Article 19, Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948).*

The First Amendment sets forth the scope and contours of freedom of speech and expression in the United States while the United Nations’ *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* sets forth the international standard of freedom speech, freedom of opinion and freedom of expression through the media. Both instruments protect verbal, non-verb, visual and symbolic communication. We will explore case studies that demonstrate the application of the principles of freedom of expression to symbolic, and visual communication in a number of journalistic contexts at the national and international levels.
Freedom of expression in class.

Free speech is the stock-in-trade, nay; the very life-blood of communication in democratic societies. This course encourages the free expression of ideas. All students are expected to participate and express themselves. The Supreme Court of the United States has held that:

“Under the First Amendment there is no such thing as a false idea. However pernicious an opinion may seem, we depend for its correction not on the conscience of judges and juries but on the competition of other ideas.”


Simply put, all ideas are welcome. Under the First Amendment, the United States is considered a marketplace of ideas (_Abrams v. United States_, 1919). Therefore, freedom of speech means freedom for all. No idea is too controversial to be expressed in the right context. In this course, students are encouraged to freely express their ideas, even if these ideas are unpopular, unorthodox, unconventional, liberal, conservative, or offensive, provided such ideas are expressed in a civil, professional manner. Since we will be discussing some legal and ethical issues on which most people have very strong personal opinions, and over which reasonable people often disagree, students are to treat their colleagues, even those with whom they differ, with respect.

The other side of the coin of freedom is responsibility. Though Freedom of speech is very important, freedom of thought is just as crucial. The world needs more thinkers and fewer talkers. As Danish philosopher, _Søren Kierkegaard_ (1813-1855) put it: "People demand freedom of speech as a compensation for the freedom of thought which they seldom use." One of the aims of education is to help students become independent thinkers who have a thoughtful and critical attitude towards the world and towards popularly accepted ideas.

Administrative Home

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is the administrative home of this course and governs matters such as the add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and other related issues. Different colleges may have different policies. Questions may be
addressed to 120 Schaeffer Hall or see the CLAS Student Academic Handbook
[http://www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/index.shtml]

www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/
[http://www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/index.shtml]
academic_handbook/index.shtml
[http://www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/index.shtml]
].

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences Policy on Cross-Enrolment.

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences has set forth a new policy on cross enrolment. If you are a student in one college and take courses offered by another college, please bear in mind that in matters related to the application or non-application of a specific course to your degree requirements, the policies of the college in which you are enrolled will be applicable.

ADA Accommodation:

Reasonable accommodation will be made for students with functional limitations and medically certified learning disabilities, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and University of Iowa policies. If you have a learning or functional disability that requires accommodation, please consult the University Disabilities Office and have that office send me official documentation explaining the type of reasonable accommodation needed.

Electronic Communication

University policy specifies that students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu). Faculty and students should use this account for correspondences. (Operations Manual, III.15.2. Scroll down to k.11.)

Academic Honesty

All CLAS students have, in essence, agreed to the College's Code of Academic Honesty: "I pledge to do my own academic work and to excel to the best of my abilities,
upholding the **IOWA Challenge**. I promise not to lie about my academic work, to cheat, or to steal the words or ideas of others; nor will I help fellow students to violate the Code of Academic Honesty." Any student committing academic misconduct is reported to the College and placed on disciplinary probation or may be suspended or expelled (CLAS Academic Policies Handbook). The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences’ policy on academic fraud, dishonesty, and cheating is spelled out in the Student Academic Handbook. Please consult it at [http://www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/ix.shtml](http://www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/ix.shtml).

In brief, all assignments must be the result of the independent endeavors of each student. Students who attempt to pass off other peoples’ work, including material from former students of this course, as well as material downloaded from the Internet as their own, will receive a zero for that particular assignment, and expose themselves to further academic sanctions as prescribed in University of Iowa rules and regulations pertaining to plagiarism and academic dishonesty. Some students have been known to turn in the same or very similar assignment or paper to two different courses. This is an unethical practice that is unacceptable under university rules and regulations. Turning in an assignment or paper for this course constitutes certification on your part that the paper is the result of your individual endeavors and that you have not turned in the same paper to another course for credit.

**CLAS Final Examination Policies**

The final examination schedule for each class is announced around the fifth week of the semester by the Registrar. Final exams are offered only during the official final examination period. **No exams of any kind are allowed during the last week of classes.**

All students should plan on being at the UI through the final examination period. Once the Registrar has announced the dates and times of each final exam, the complete schedule will be published on the Registrar's web site.

**Understanding and preventing Sexual Harassment**

As defined by the Supreme Court of the United States, sexual harassment is an unwanted sexual advance made towards a person of the same or opposite gender. It takes two forms:
1) Creation of a hostile work environment through sexual jokes of the same or opposite sex, display of pictures of a sexual nature, sexting (sending people unwanted indecent images through text message functions), off-color humor involving people of the same or opposite sex, groping and the like.

2) *Quid pro quo* (Latin expression meaning “this for that”) sexual harassment where a person in a position of power or authority demands sexual favors from subordinates in exchange for a good grade, promotion, salary increase, or other advantage (*Oncale v. Sundowner Offshore Services*, 523 U.S. 75 (1998)). Sexual harassment is a violation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It subverts the mission of the University of Iowa and threatens the wellbeing of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community have a responsibility to uphold this mission and to contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment should be reported immediately.

See the UI **Comprehensive Guide on Sexual Harassment** at:


for assistance, definitions, and the full University policy.

**Reacting Safely to Severe Weather**

In severe weather, class members should seek appropriate shelter immediately, leaving the classroom if necessary. The class will continue if possible when the event is over. (*Operations Manual, Part IV* [http://www.uiowa.edu/~our/opmanual/v16.htm#1614], 16. See items e, h, and i.)

**The Iowa Dozen**

This course will adhere to the general principles of journalism education set forth in the Iowa Dozen:

We learn…

–to write correctly and clearly
–to conduct research and gather information responsibly
–to edit and evaluate carefully
–to use media technologies thoughtfully
– to apply statistical concepts appropriately

We value…

– First Amendment principles for all individuals and groups
– a diverse global community
– creativity and independence
– truth, accuracy, fairness, and diversity

We explore…

– mass communication theories and concepts
– media institutions and practices
– the role of media in shaping cultures.

Class Etiquette and Student Complaints.

The statement of student rights and responsibilities is set forth in the Student Academic Handbook (found at the College of Liberal Arts Web site: http://www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/ix.shtml). It includes procedures for student complaints concerning faculty actions. If you have any complaints about this course, please discuss the matter with me first. If you are not satisfied with your discussion, feel free to contact the Director of the School of Journalism.

Course Method, Assignments, and Grading.

The course is a hybrid graduate course which has theoretical, methodological and practical components. That means we will study theories of visualization, visual communication, and visual narratives in journalism and mass communication, as well as visual analysis and visual methodology. We will have a visual production component that will enable students to produce visual communication content from still photographs and video material. The aim of this approach is to enable students to understand visual narrative theory, develop competence in visual analytical methodology, and develop skills in producing visual media content.
Course Procedure and Requirements
Since this is a course on visual narratives, emphasis will be placed on visual texts and contexts. The philosophical approach is that human beings are visual creatures that have communicated and told stories visually from the beginning of time. Indeed, from the beginning of time, human beings have told stories (constructed narratives) grounded in their “myths” and cultural worldviews. All narratives, including journalistic and media narratives are therefore couched in mythic templates that tell stories, celebrate, commemorate and ritualize human experience across cultures.

Attendance and Participation in Discussion/Workshop (10%)
Class attendance is a professional expectation. If you are going to be absent, please send the instructor an e-mail to that effect. A) Each student will take turns leading a discussion of one of the readings in a given module. Students are expected to do their readings, and lead the discussion on their assigned module. The rest of the class is to demonstrate familiarity with the material. Discussion leaders are free to distribute additional material in class.

2. Reading Reports/Responses (20%)
Students will be assigned readings throughout the semester. Each student will be required to provide one page report/response for the assigned readings as stipulated in the syllabus. The format of the response is as follows: List the title and author of the article, explain the main theoretical perspective (if any), list the aim of the article and the research question(s) it addresses. Provide a specific quote that illustrates what you consider the most important point of the article. Explain why you consider this the most striking point of the article. How does the reading contribute to your understanding of myths, narratives, and visual narratives? Do you agree or disagree with the main point/findings of the article? These reading reports are designed to help students prepare the literature review for their term paper. Please print a hard copy of each reading report and turn it in when it is due.
3. **Audio Slide Show Presentations (20%).**
   
   Each student will be expected to choose a topic, research it, and produce a slide show for the class. You can choose a topic below if you wish. This is a journalistic endeavor so your slide show must tell a story.

   **Audio slide show Assignment.** Choose one of the following:
   - The Ice Storm in Iowa City/Cedar Rapids (pictures shot by L.Eko)
   - The Coralville quarry
   - The Kalona Cheese Factor.
   - Electronic Recycling or e-cycling (Iowa City landfill)
   - Recycling of Old appliances in Iowa City (Iowa City landfill).
   - Water recycling/purification in Iowa City
   - Recycling of automobiles in Iowa City (Ace Auto recyclers, IC Wrecking and Salvage).
   - Recycling at the UI Hospitals and Clinics.

4. **Final Project (50%)**

   **Multi-Media/Video Production Assignment:** This will be the final project for MA students. You can either a) develop the audio slide show you produced into a multi-media program for broadcast and the web or b) tell a multi-cultural visual narrative story using the following existing archival material:

   - **Ballet Folklorico de la Universidad de Guadalajara** (archival material, needs interview component)
   - **Russian Journalists on campus** (archival material, needs interview)
   - **East China Normal University Musical Troop visit to Iowa** (needs interview)
   - **Shanghai Chinese Acrobats** (needs interview)
   - **Ballet National du Sénégal** (needs interview)
   - **UI Steel Drum Band**

   If you prefer, you can do a multi-media magazine program such as this one: [http://video.nytimes.com/video/2012/08/19/t-magazine/100000001694098/morning-t-liya-kebede.html](http://video.nytimes.com/video/2012/08/19/t-magazine/100000001694098/morning-t-liya-kebede.html)
MA students who prefer to write the term paper rather than do the project are free to do so.

Other Examples:


Philanthropy:

4. Term Paper. (Due Nov. 15th): Each PhD student is required to write a 20-25-page term paper on any topic visual communication, visual narrative or narrative framing. Choose a topic from the list above. If you prefer to choose a different topic, please clear it with the instructor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visual Images/Narratives</th>
<th>Issue Area Focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. South Park Mohammed bear suit controversy</td>
<td>Freedom of expression/parody, satire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The Nike/Puma Shoe controversy</td>
<td>Mythic narratives,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The Narrative of a specific magazine cover:</td>
<td>Narratives of novelty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Breast feeding mother (Time)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Obama as “First Gay President” (Newsweek)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. LeBron James &amp; Vogue, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Images of War</td>
<td>Mythic narratives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Images of The Olympic Games</td>
<td>Heroic myths/tragic heroes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Journalistic manipulation of news images</td>
<td>Visual ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The Obama Hope poster</td>
<td>Mythic narratives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. AP Obama pictures</td>
<td>Mythic sanctification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Images of Gaddafi</td>
<td>The Anti-Hero</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Abstract of the paper: Due Nov. 1st, 2012. Before you write the term paper, you are required to research the topic and write a **one-page abstract** of what your term paper will be about. Your abstract must contain a creative title, and must indicate
what the aim of your paper will be. Your reading responses should provide the bulk of your literature review. I want to see evidence that you have done some preliminary research and that your topic is original and viable.

All term papers are required to follow the following outline:
1. Have a descriptive Title (on a separate title page).
2. Introduction (Present the topic, state its significance, define terms, what theoretical perspective are you going to be using?).
3. Theoretical perspective.
4. Literature Review (Summarize what has been written about your topic & theory).
5. Aim of the paper and statement of the research question (What is the aim or objective of the study? What do you intend to do?)
6. Methodological issues: What is the method of your study?.
7. Body of paper (Data analysis). Do what you said you were going to do.
   Findings/analysis/results
8. Conclusion (a recapitulation of what your research questions were, what you found, and the significance of your findings).
9. References (Use APA style).

Grading: Papers will be graded according to the following criteria:
Importance/significance of topic
Clearly stated aim/research questions
Proper use of an organizing theoretical framework.
Findings based on evidence in the data
Quality of writing, style, grammar, etc.

Please note that I or incomplete grades will be given only in extreme cases that satisfy University of Iowa rules and regulations pertaining to emergencies.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wk</th>
<th>Discussion Topics</th>
<th>Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>National Visual Narratives: From Greek and Roman Nationalism to American Exceptionalism</td>
<td>Lule, The Mythological Role of Journalism. Howells and Negreiros, Chapter 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Code</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aisle-16874483</td>
<td>2. Erin Andrews: ESPN</td>
<td>Howells and Negreiros, Chapter 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>News values and Visual Narratives</td>
<td><em>Schwalbe, Silcock &amp; Keith, Visual Framing of the Early Weeks of the U.S.-Led Invasion of Iraq: Applying the Master War Narrative to Electronic and Print Images.</em>&lt;br&gt;Howells and Negreiros, Chapter 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Producing Visual Narratives: In Class: Intro to Audio Slideshow</td>
<td>Reading: Howells and Negreiros, Chapter 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Producing Visual Narrative Content. In Class: Software training Before Class: Please watch: video tutorial for Final Cut Pro X. In class: Intro to Final cut</td>
<td>Reading: Howells and Negreiros, Chapters 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Each reading (Due: 10/11)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Methodological approaches:</td>
<td>Bounegru and Forceville, Metaphors in editorial cartoons representing the global financial crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assignment: Write one-page reaction paper on this reading (Due 10/23)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Exemplars**

**Photo Slideshow narratives:**
1. Reuters Photojournalism
2. The Beating Heart of Romance Writing (Business Day).
http://www.nytimes.com/slideshow/2012/08/19/business/BACKDROP.html#1
Drive-In Theatres: http://www.nytimes.com/slideshow/2012/08/19/business/Drive-IN.html#1

B. Video Narratives:

Journalistic Mythic Templates
Survival
1. The (Rape) survivor and Journalism (ethics): Bridget Kelly Story of a Survival (ABC).

2. Heroism Acts of Valor: Aurora Shooting

3. Generosity/Philanthropy

4. Innovation: Multiple Exposure cameras (Reuters:
http://blogs.reuters.com/photographers-blog/2012/08/01/multiple-exposures-digital-era/)