Ambedkar University, Delhi
Proposal for Launch of a Course
(To be approved by the Academic Council)

School/Centre proposing the course	School of Undergraduate Studies
Programme(s)	B A Honours Programmes
Course title	Digital Storytelling from the Field
Course code	SUS1EL 901
Total Credits	4 credits
Course type (core/compulsory/ elective/any other – please specify)	Elective
Level (Pre-doctoral/MA/PG Diploma /Certificate/UG)	UG Semester VI
Proposed date of launch	WS 2013
Course coordinator and team	Surajit Sarkar (Course Cordinator) + Guest faculty

1. **Does the course connect to, build on or overlap with any other courses offered in AUD?**

   i. The course builds upon the increasing use of digital methods of research and availability of pre-existing digital AV information available to researchers – from images and text to video and audio recordings.

   ii. The course will make students recognise the importance of the audio-visual production process as an social science research tool. They will learn theory and skills in recording, translating and transcribing audio visuals. In addition, they will be made aware of subtexts and power-play in the visual image and the interactins between various media forms in digital communication.

   iii. This course offered as part of SUS electives would provide an opportunity to students to envision alternative and innovative routes , like oral narratives and history, to approaching social science research in class and infurther education.

2. **Specific requirements** on the part of students who can be admitted to this course:
   (Pre-requisites; prior knowledge level; any others – please specify)

   i. Students need to be familiar with Multimedia computer use.
   ii. Knowledge of graphics (eg photoshop), audio editing or video editing (eg. Windows moviemaker) programs desirable.
   iii. No prior filmmaking expertise will be assumed and participants will be instructed in the basic techniques of camerawork, sound-recording and editing.

3. **No. of students to be admitted** (with justification if lower than usual cohort size is proposed):
   40

4. **Course scheduling** (semester; semester-long/half-semester course; workshop mode; seminar mode; any other – please specify):
   Winter Semester

5. **How does the course link with the vision of AUD?**

   Bringing Oral and non-codified knowledge and Lived Experience into the academic framework is part of the CCK mandate. Drawing upon Visual Anthropology in turn also

widens the scope of the course and makes it interdisciplinary. The course also caters to a range of readings, with a scope for exploring different genres of digital narratives – like interviews, self reflection, participant-observation. It is part of the AUD vision with which a centre like CCK has evolved in the University.

6. **How does the course link with the specific programme(s) where it is being offered?**

The course builds upon the increasing use of digital methods of research and availability of pre-existing digital AV information available to undergraduate students for their research assignments – from images and text to video and audio recordings.

7. **Course Details:**
a. *Summary*:
Every day, all around us, multimedia technology combines recorded images, sounds, and movement to bring the word-of-mouth to life. The **Digital Storytelling (DS)** course will teach this by being part storytelling workshop, part technology training, and an introduction to social science research.
The course will explore the use of observational/ ethnographic camera images, and associated editing techniques to facilitate another way of knowing. The open-ended, content-led approach to documentation, where filming forms part of the research process rather than taking place at the end of a research period, makes it different from standard documentary practice. Students presentation of their work-in-progress, will allow them to reflect critically upon the images they have created and edited and to appreciate how the learning process has been enhanced.
Course work will be a mix of classroom sessions, and field projects that take up cases for exploration. In the process, students will learn hands-on about the human and social landscape which forms the terrain for social science and humanities research. The course will help students to learn to listen, record and tell stories from memories and recollections of personal experience and shared life histories.
The course is located in the disciplinary area of Visual Anthropology and Digtal Communication.

b. *Objectives*:
i. To develop digital story telling and narrative making skills, both self generated and based on listening to others. This includes researching for the story; scripting the content; field recording and interviewing – audio and video; collecting visual content – photo, video, other images; and combining audio and visual strands in editing the final story.
ii. To develop communication skills with the subject. Important aspects of interviewing and audio recording.
iii. To prepare students with skills for handling equipment to carry out digital AV recording, editing and dissemination, both on-line and off-line.

c. *Expected learning outcomes*:

DS is a combination of storytelling techniques and digital affordances, with a social sciences and humanities focus.
The course introduces learners to multiple forms of digital storytelling, and outlines frameworks of understanding associated with their use.
Learning outcomes include finding and clarifying insights and emotions; identifying the 'moment' ; images, meanings, multiplicities and ways of 'seeing' a story ; explicit and implicit communication,

Shareable Outcomes include Student classwork and graded assignments that include Visual and Digital elements.

d. **Overall structure** (course organisation, rationale of organisation; outline of each module):

The course is organized in four modules:

Module 1: Storytelling and Communication – Born Digital, and pre-Digital (analog). The Social in Storytelling.

Module 2: Digital techniques, Practices and Audiovisual equipment.

Module 3: Using memory and experience – from Digital archives to Social Media - Histories of everyday lives and livelihoods as sources of intangible knowledge. Other aspects of Orality – from ethnography, literature and films.

Module 4: Developing Oral Narratives – methodologies and interpersonal processes. Co-authorship and building contributions. Ethics – privacy, consent and copyright.

Assessment methodology
   2 x classroom assignments –ungraded
   2 x Graded assignments
   1 x Final assignment / end of term exam
   (Weightage = 30% + 30% + 40%)

e. **Contents** (week wise plan with readings):

Week 01
Storytelling and communication - An introduction to storytelling. Marking out the steps in digital story telling. Creating two kinds of digital outputs – video with sound or audio with photo slide show.
Identifying and using storytelling skills. Developing a narrative on paper in visual frames (Storyboarding).

Week 02
Introduction to Digital recording and editing. Use and limitations of inexpensive recording equipment – video cameras, audio recorders, digital still cameras.

Week 03
Oral narratives – Memory and lived experience Sources of knowledge – codified and un-codified. Life histories and sources of interdisciplinary knowledge. What makes Orality important in the search for knowledge.
How does your subject perceive you? Building rapport and interviewing skills.

Week 04
Oral History, Oral history as people's lived history.
Methodologies in oral recording – communities, subjects and the interviewer. The myth of the 'neutral' interviewer – dispassionate interviewer.

Week 05

Project 01 - Storytelling from an in-campus narrative, with the campus and class-room as location and subject.

Recognising the difference between raw footage and final film, and making an edit that is aware of this.

Sequence of actions from preliminary research, interviews, associated images, identifying core details of story, creating succinct narrative to tell the story without missing main points.

Week 06

"Sharing stories": The use of oral techniques and fieldwork to unravel the experiential aspects of recollection. What makes for complete, holistic storytelling from the field. Listening to People Speak:

Week 07

Ways of seeing, perceiving and telling. The role played by recording and video taping as means to evoke empathy, interpretation and inter-subjectivity.

Interviews, showing their setting, surroundings and highlighting a common theme. Approaching the subject – methodologies of one-to-one individual, group discussions, replaying to subject for feedback.

Week 08

Orality, ethnography and literature – stories that draw on oral traditions and verbal narratives from India and the world. Some extracts from literature.

Life histories as sources of intangible knowledge and praxis. Different ways orality can be understood – as supportive, or as a threat.

Week 09

Experiences of using oral narratives in academic and non-academic work. This will be done by invited speakers . Speakers could be – historians, ecologists, folklorist, activist, health researcher, novelist/biographer, film maker.

The speaker will describe process used, the challenges, pitfalls, failures and highs. They will also explain how oral narratives are powerful for their work.

Week 10

Folklore, anthropology, history . Three aspects of recording orality – cataclysmic or life shaking event; everyday life - recollection and memory. Orality and speaking memories in and outside literature.

Week 11

Project 02 - Stories from home and family. The outcomes should have images of the neighbourhood, home and subjects surroundings. The use of family album and other historical images and sounds connected to the subject, besides talking heads.

Week 12

Viewing Ethnographic film - This week is a combination of film screening and discussion. The two films that will be shown in class are (a) Men who hunted heads , and (b) Ayodhya Gatha. Between the two, students will discover how use of oral narratives can be both democratic and empowering, or contribute to stereotyping.

Week 13

Drawing on documentary processes from photography and film/video. Ethics – privacy, consent and copyright. Representing / misrepresenting peoples perspectives. Difference

between researchers and journalist perspectives. Ethics of recording , informed consent and emancipatory research agendas.

Week 14
Visual methods in social science research design. issues of personal and procedural reflexivity and acknowledging diverse ways of recording, viewing, and analysing. Annotating the interview – contextualizing and dating. Translation and transcription.

Week 15
Ethnographic interviewing as part of research process. Life histories as sources of intangible knowledge and praxis. Using memory of work and livelihoods.

Week 16
Project 03- 'Lesser known' stories from a community – family to neighbourhood or a city. Carrying out background research on subject, topic and location. Identifying location contact before stepping out with a recording device.

There will be a Final end-semester essay that describes the learning process and associated theory, including technical and team matters. How far did projects carried out meet planned objectives.

Readings and other resources

Readings
Grimshaw, A. *The Ethnographer's Eye: Ways of Seeing in Modern Anthropology*, Cambridge University Press, 2001.
Lanning, Greg; *Television History Workshop, Project No 1: The Brixton Tapes*, History Workshop, No. 12 Pg 183-88; 1981 (as pdf)
Panos Institute ; *Giving voice: Implementing oral testimony projects*, Panos, London, 2003 (as pdf)
Ruby, Jay : *Being an Anthropologist without doing Anthropology. . . with Pictures*, PIEF Newsletter; 1973 (paper as pdf)
Mukherjee, Suroopa. *Surviving Bhopal: Dancing Bodies, Written Texts*, Oral Testimonials of Women in the Wake of an Industrial Disaster, Palgrave Stuidies In Oral History. N York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

Web resources

https://digitalstorytelling.coe.uh.edu/ - Educational Uses of Digtal Storytelling
https://wrd.as.uky.edu/sites/default/files/cookbook.pdf - Digital Storytelling Cookbook online
http://langwitches.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/2009/12/Digital-Storytelling-Guide-by-Silvia-Rosenthal-Tolisano.pdf - Digital Storytelling Tools
http://www.photoethnography.com/ - Karen Nakamura
http://astro.temple.edu/~ruby/ruby/ - Jay Ruby's Home page

8. **Pedagogy:**
   a. *Instructional strategies*:
      The course uses the possibility of using storytelling as a methodology for sharing information, the relative ease with which digital stories can be created and distributed, and opportunities to provide engaging opportunities for scholarship, pedagogy, cross-disciplinary discussion and community building, and distribution of work.

   b. *Special needs* (facilities, requirements in terms of software, studio, lab, clinic, library, classroom/others instructional space; any other – please specify):
      Students will be taught how to access downloadable software from the Free Software Foundation – for picture processing (GIMP), video (Avidemux) and audio (Audacity) editing.

   c. *Expertise in AUD faculty or outside*
      The course will use expertise from faculty and field researchers in CCK. A guest faculty may be invited for specific lecture.

   d. *Linkages with external agencies* (e.g., with field-based organizations, hospital; any others)
      n/a

Surajit Sarkar

Signature of Course Coordinator(s)
Note:
1. Modifications on the basis of deliberations in the Board of Studies (or Research Studies Committee in the case of research programmes) and the relevant Standing Committee (SCAP/SCPVCE/SCR) shall be incorporated and the revised proposal should be submitted to the Academic Council with due recommendations.
2. Core courses which are meant to be part of more than one programme, and are to be shared across Schools, may need to be taken through the Boards of Studies of the respective Schools. The electives shared between more than one programme should have been approved in the Board of Studies of and taken through the SCAP/SCPVCE/SCR of the primary School.
3. In certain special cases, where a course does not belong to any particular School, the proposal may be submitted through SCAP/SCPVCE/SCR to the Academic Council.

Recommendation of the School of Studies: Approved in 2nd BOS held on 9|Jan|13

Suggestions:

Signature of the Dean of the School