GLOBAL SUMMER PROGRAMME 2027

COR2258 INFRASTRUCTURES OF EXPERIENCE IN GLOBAL ASIA

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will give you theoretical and practical perspectives on individual and collective experience in Global Asian Cities. You will learn both classic and cutting-edge theories, issues, and developments on individual and collective experience from an interdisciplinary perspective drawing from anthropology, area studies, sociology, and science and technology studies. Our case studies will adopt a regional focus on Asia, with experiential and place-based learning activities based in Singapore as a leading exemplar of Global Asia. I will use concepts and theories introduced in readings and class lectures to show how phenomena as seemingly diverse as a chatbot interface, transit network, air-conditioned shopping center, heritage site, escape room, and more can all be understood through the framework of infrastructures of experience.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be expected to actively participate in the class and interact with me and other students to deepen their understanding of the issues, to cultivate their own views, and to foster thinking about the world around them that is simultaneously innovative, creative, and critical.

PRE-REQUISITES / REQUIREMENTS / MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE COURSE(S)

There are no prerequisites for the course. Some exposure to introductory or advanced courses in geography, sociology, history, design thinking, and other related fields is helpful, but not required.

ASSESSMENT METHODS

- **Mid-term Examination** **15 pts**
- **Case Study Presentation 1** **15 pts**
  - Basic requirements (2 pts)
  - Clarity and organization (3 pts)
  - Understanding of the topic (3 pts)
  - Connection to required reading (5 pts)
  - Student evaluation (2 pts)
- **Case Study Presentation 2** **15 pts**
  - Basic requirements (2 pts)
  - Clarity and organization (3 pts)
  - Understanding of the topic (3 pts)
  - Connection to required reading (5 pts)

  - Student evaluation (2 pts)
- **Site Visit #1 Post-reflection** **5 pts**
- **Site Visit #2 Post-reflection** **5 pts**
- **Site Visit #3 Post-reflection** **5 pts**
- **Participation (Individual)** **15 pts**
- **Final Exam (Individual)** **25 pts**

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND EXPECTATIONS

The class will meet thrice a week. In some sessions, there will be a lecture. In other sessions, there will be a site visit followed by a debriefing session. Students are expected to read the required reading materials in advance. Starting from Week 4, about 60 minutes will be devoted to two student presentations of case studies covered in a previous session.

My lectures will not closely follow the required readings, though the lectures will help you deepen your understanding of the topics covered in the readings. Please see the course schedule for the reading list for each lecture or site visit.

CONSULTATIONS

Ad-hoc as required

RECOMMENDED TEXT AND READINGS

Please note that all readings are Open Access or will be provided by the instructor as a PDF for non-commercial, pedagogical use in keeping with relevant national and international copyright law.

- Biruk, C. (2024). Trans Embodiment, Fitness Wearables and the Queer Pleasures of Datafication. Body & Society, 30(1), 55–82.
- Broch, T. B., & Varma, S. (2024). Touch in Digitalized Worlds: An Introduction. Anthropology of Consciousness, 35(2), 136–149.
- Garrison, K. G. (2025, July 28). When AI Imagines a Tree: How Your Chatbot's Worldview Shapes Your Thinking [Research blog]. Stanford University Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence. https://hai.stanford.edu/news/when-ai-imagines-a-tree-how-your-chatbots-worldview-shapes-your-thinking
- Graphéine. 2020. "Stereotypography: Typical, Even Racist, Typefaces." Design blog. Graphéine Graphic Design, February 2. https://www.grapheine.com/en/graphic-design-en/stereotypography-typefaces-racist.
- Kanoi, L., Koh, V., Lim, A., Yamada, S., & Dove, M. R. (2022). 'What Is Infrastructure? What Does It Do?': Anthropological Perspectives on the Workings of Infrastructure(s). Environmental Research: Infrastructure and Sustainability, 2(1), 1–14.
- Kreuz, R. J. (2025, July 30). Too Many Em Dashes? Weird Words Like "Delves"? Spotting Text Written by ChatGPT is Still More Art Than Science [News blog]. The Conversation. https://theconversation.com/too-many-em-dashes-weird-words-like-delves-spotting-text-written-by-chatgpt-is-still-more-art-than-science-259629
- Selections from Mirvahedi, S. H. (Ed.). (2022). Linguistic Landscapes in South-East Asia: The Politics of Language and Public Signage. Routledge.
- Naruse, C. N. (2023). Becoming Global Asia: Contemporary Genres of Postcolonial Capitalism in Singapore. University of California Press.
- Rouse, R., & Holloway-Attaway, L. (2022). Troubling Games: Materials, Histories, and Speculative Future Worlds for Games Pedagogy. Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies, 28(2), 539–560.

- Scott, J. W. (1991). The Evidence of Experience. Critical Inquiry, 17(4), 773–797.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Academic Integrity

All acts of academic dishonesty (including, but not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, facilitation of acts of academic dishonesty by others, unauthorized possession of exam questions, or tampering with the academic work of other students) are serious offences.

All work (whether oral or written) submitted for purposes of assessment must be the student's own work. Penalties for violation of the policy range from zero marks for the component assessment to expulsion, depending on the nature of the offense.

When in doubt, students should consult the instructors of the course. Details on the SMU Code of Academic Integrity may be accessed at https://smu.sharepoint.com/sites/oasis/SitePages/DOS-WKLSWC/UCSC.aspx.

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Accessibility

SMU strives to make learning experiences accessible for all. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers due to disability, please let me know immediately. You are also welcome to contact the university's accessibility services team if you have questions or concerns about academic provisions: accessibility@smu.edu.sg. Please be aware that the accessible tables in our seminar room should remain available for students who require them.

LESSON PLAN	
LESSONS	**TOPICS**
LESSON 1	Lecture #1: Introduction, What is Experience? • Scott, J. W. (1991). The Evidence of Experience. Critical Inquiry, 17(4), 773–797.
LESSON 2	Lecture #2: What is Infrastructure? Case Study #1 and #2 • Kanoi, L., Koh, V., Lim, A., Yamada, S., & Dove, M. R. (2022). 'What Is Infrastructure? What Does It Do?': Anthropological Perspectives on the Workings of Infrastructure(s). Environmental Research: Infrastructure and Sustainability, 2(1), 1–14.
LESSON 3	Lecture #3: What is Global Asia? Case Study #3 and #4 • Selections from Naruse, C. N. (2023). Becoming Global Asia: Contemporary Genres of Postcolonial Capitalism in Singapore. University of California Press.
LESSON 4	Lecture #4: Aesthetics and Access, Case Study #5 and #6, Student Case Study Presentations • Selections from Mirvahedi, S. H. (Ed.). (2022). Linguistic Landscapes in South-East Asia: The Politics of Language and Public Signage. Routledge. • Graphéine. 2020. "Stereotypography: Typical, Even Racist, Typefaces." Design blog. Graphéine Graphic Design, February 2. https://www.grapheine.com/en/graphic-design-en/stereotypography-typefaces-racist.
LESSON 5	Site Visit #1: Little India and Kampong Glam
LESSON 6	Lecture #5: Environments and Augmentation, Case Study #7 and #8, Student Case Study Presentations • Rouse, R., & Holloway-Attaway, L. (2022). Troubling Games: Materials, Histories, and Speculative Future Worlds for Games Pedagogy. Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies, 28(2), 539–560.
LESSON 7	Mid-term Examination
LESSON 8	Lecture #6: Media and Interfaces, Case Study #9 and #10, Review of mid-term • Garrison, K. G. (2025, July 28). When AI Imagines a Tree: How Your Chatbot's Worldview Shapes Your Thinking [Research blog]. Stanford University Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence. https://hai.stanford.edu/news/when-ai-imagines-a-tree-how-your-chatbots-worldview-shapes-your-thinking • Kreuz, R. J. (2025, July 30). Too Many Em Dashes? Weird Words Like "Delves"? Spotting Text Written by ChatGPT is Still More Art Than Science [News blog]. The Conversation. https://theconversation.com/too-many-em-dashes-weird-words-like-delves-spotting-text-written-by-chatgpt-is-still-more-art-than-science-259629
LESSON 9	Site Visit #2: Escape Room
LESSON 10	Lecture #8: Embodiment and Sensation, Case Study #11 and #12, Student Case Study Presentations • Biruk, C. (2024). Trans Embodiment, Fitness Wearables and the Queer Pleasures of Datafication. Body & Society, 30(1), 55–82.

	• Broch, T. B., & Varma, S. (2024). Touch in Digitalized Worlds: An Introduction. Anthropology of Consciousness, 35(2), 136–149.
LESSON 11	Site Visit #3: Heritage Site TBD
LESSON 12	Final Projects