

**CHICAGO CENTER FOR URBAN LIFE AND CULTURE**  
**DIRECTED STUDY SEMINAR**  
**Spring 2008**

**INSTRUCTOR:** Scott E. Chesebro, Ph.D.

**CLASS MEETING:** Tuesdays; 9:30-Noon

**RESEARCH TIME:** As designated in schedule

**REQUIRED TEXT:**

*Gang Leader for a Day: A Rogue Sociologist Takes to the Streets.* New York: Penguin Press. Sudir Venkatesh. 2007

*Urban Art Chicago: A Guide to Community Murals Mosaics, and Sculptures.* Olivia Gude and Jeff Huebner. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee. 2000.

"Who Gets to Tell a Black Story," New York Times. Janny Scott. June 11, 2000

"Using Sources," The Craft of Research. Booth, Colomb and Williams. Chicago. 1995

**DIRECTED STUDY GOALS**

Through group and individual projects, the student will develop an appreciation for methods of research and a working knowledge of basic field study and research techniques involved. Each student will complete a research design which includes a Chicago-based field study. Consequently, the student will contribute to the knowledge base of the city through completion of course requirements.

**GROUP PROJECT**

In the first part of the seminar, each student will work in a group of two or three on a field study which uses a public art piece (wall mural or public sculpture) as its focus to research a Chicago community. Public art is used to capture the identity and imagination of a community. Murals are usually collaborative efforts between the artist(s) and community stakeholders. As such, murals are like snapshots of a community in real time. Communities change in Chicago and the mural may or may not represent this change and whatever new demographics and realities it brings.

Each group will choose a mural to research from the **Urban Art Chicago** text or the Chicago Public Art Group website. After visiting the community and mural, interviewing residents and the artist and researching the history and demographic changes of the community, the group will answer a set of questions that illuminate the changes of the community and the relationship of the mural to these changes. The research will be presented in a class session using pictures and data which supports the conclusions.

**INDIVIDUAL PROJECT**

In the second part of the seminar, each student will choose an individual research topic and will complete a research project based on that topic. The project must focus on an issue

within the city and be based on a topic not easily researched outside Chicago. The topic can be drawn from any major/interest area as long as it conforms to the above criteria. The individual project will be guided by a research question and implemented through a research design which will involve a field study component. The research question may come out of the student's internship placement or from other experiences in the city and from the Communities and Cultures seminar. The seminar class will be used to refine the question and assist each student in designing their project.

The student will have three weeks to finish the research, analyze the data and prepare a presentation. The presentation may take any of a variety of forms and is intended to communicate in an effective and creative way the results of the research. The individual project presentations will take place on the last seminar meeting of the semester.

### **PROJECT DESIGN**

Both research projects will consist of at least two major components: information gathering into the history and background of the chosen topic, and some form of direct, investigative engagement with the subject in the context of the city. The completed project will develop the relationship between the historical and present context using support materials appropriate to empirical research.

The medium and form of presentation may vary from the traditional research paper to alternative forms such as dramatic presentation or visual representation. Regardless of the medium, the process of presenting the findings of the research in a systematic and comprehensive fashion will form the basis of the grade for the assigned projects. A research project guide will be distributed for each of the two projects.

The team projects will be presented before the midpoint of the term and the individual projects will be presented during the last week. All support materials, which accompany the project, must be turned in to the instructor at the time of the presentation.

### **DIRECTED STUDY MEETINGS**

During the first part of the semester, class meetings will be structured around the group mural project. The second part of the class will focus on the individual research project. As students develop their individual projects, the instructor will take a more advisory role in the process and meet with the students individually. **The student is expected to initiate contact with the instructor as needed.** Scheduled progress reports will insure that the project is on track.

### **ALLOTTED RESEARCH TIME:**

Working sessions will be scheduled during class meeting time as indicated on the syllabus. Tuesday is reserved on a regular basis for research activities.

### **GRADING**

Mural Research Project	40%
Individual Research Project	60%

## **DIRECTED STUDY SCHEDULE**

- Sa 02/09**      **9:45 AM**      Leave from your apartments by van to meet Beauty Turner for her “Ghetto Tour.” You will join students from Lewis University.  
**3 PM**              Mural Tour of Pilsen’s Wall Murals.  
**Assign:** Identify three themes in the murals.
- Tu 02/12**      **9:00 AM-2 PM.** Meet at CCULC Office to leave by van for the Steppenwolf Theater Play and talk-back, “Harriet Jacobs.”  
<http://chicago.broadwayworld.com/viewcolumn.cfm?colid=23943>  
**Assign:** NYT Article: *Who Gets to tell a Black Story?* (Posted on the community zero web).  
**Class over lunch (included):** Intro to the Directed Study
- Tu 02/19**      **9:30 AM.**      Meet at CCULC for an introduction to the Mural Project; view video *Making of a Mural*.  
North Side Tour which includes lunch (\$10).
- Tu 02/26**      **Meet with group**      Choose a mural to study and visit the mural site with your group and take pictures. Use *Urban Art Chicago* or the site: [http://www.cpag.net/guide/2/2\\_pages/2.htm](http://www.cpag.net/guide/2/2_pages/2.htm) to find a mural.
- Tu 03/04**      **Meet with group**      Finish any research and prepare the presentation.
- Tu 03/11**      **9:30 AM**      Mural project group presentations. Meet at Scott's, 1371 E 55<sup>th</sup> Place. Breakfast followed by presentations, 20-30 minutes each.
- Tu 03/18**      **9:30 AM**      Introduction to Individual Research Project (IRP): The Research Question. Bring your topic ideas.  
**Read:** *Craft of Research*
- Tu 03/25**      **9:30 AM**      Meet author and Columbia University Professor, Dr. Sudir Venkatesh to discuss his new book, *Gang Leader for a Day*  
**Read:** *Gang Leader for A Day*
- Tu 04/01**      **9:30 AM**      Present IRP Plans with Background Research.  
**Assign:** Submit first draft of project proposal.
- Tu 04/08**      **9 AM-NOON** Set up 20 minute individual consultation with instructor.  
**Assign:** Submit final draft of IRP proposal.
- Tu 04/15**      Working session
- Tu 04/22**      Working session. e-mail progress report to [scotte@chicagocenter.org](mailto:scotte@chicagocenter.org)
- Tu 04/29**      Working session.
- Tu 05/06**      **12:30 PM**      Individual Project Presentations at CCULC