



Hochschule für Medien  
Kommunikation und Wirtschaft  
University of Applied Sciences

**H M K W**



**HMKW University of Applied Sciences for Communication,  
Media and Management**

**Distance Learning**  
**MA Program - Master of Arts**  
**Visual and Media Anthropology**



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## About the Program

The Distance Learning M.A. Visual and Media Anthropology was originally developed and offered successfully at Freie Universität Berlin from 2008-2019. From the winter semester 2019/20, the program is being offered at HMKW Berlin, University of Applied Sciences for Media, Communication and Management.

This contemporary Master's program equips students with in-depth knowledge of visual and media anthropological themes in order to prepare them to become future leaders in the fields of digital media, artificial intelligence, the film industry, and governmental and non-governmental organizations. Distance Learning is offered via LMS Canvas and daily live-streams of classes with lectures, presentations and discussions. The program aims to develop and shape leading voices in the cultural industries, including museums and galleries, film festivals, news and social media, and other institutions involved in the production of audio-visual digital art and culture. The program is highly international with students coming from numerous continents and countries.

The professors and lecturers of the VMA program are visual anthropologists, media anthropologists and professional documentary filmmakers and photographers from diverse universities worldwide. The aim of the program is to overcome the Eurocentric, non-scientifically grounded, audio-visual documentations about non-European countries that often give the local or indigenous communities of "least," or better to say alternatively developed countries, no voice and ignore other important ethical

guidelines in documenting and interpreting cultures. Furthermore, the role of digitalization and new media for societies, especially social networks of people of color in political processes, resistance, transnational migration, questions of gender, and environmental activism and community building in indigenous communities, are important research areas of Media Anthropology.

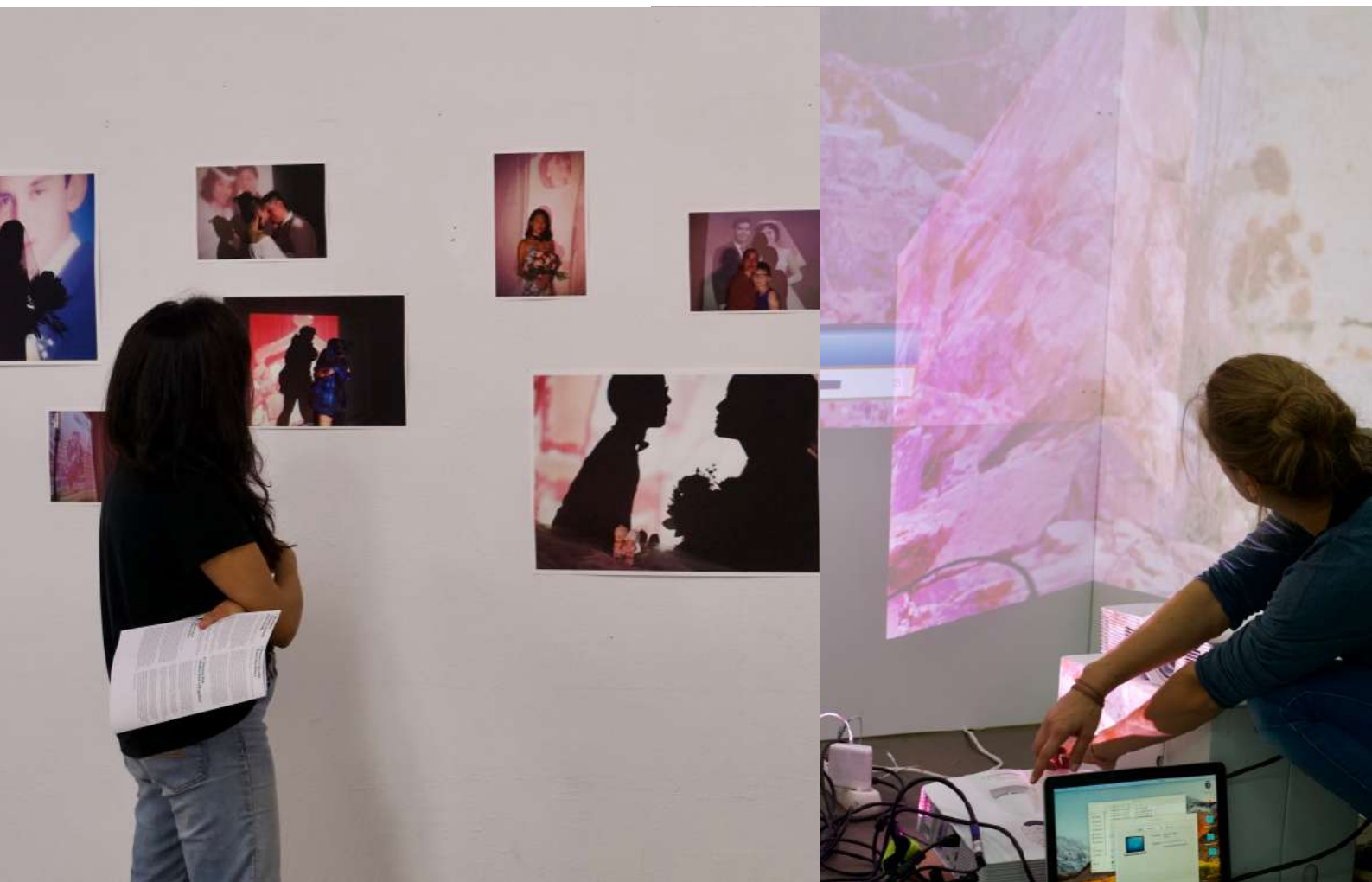
Another idea of the program is to widen the traditional concept of ethnographic research and audio-visual documentation in terms of integrating ideas of the virtual, augmented- or mixed-realities, sensual, artistic and fictional ethnographic filmmaking and photography and herewith cross the boundaries from a mere distant scientific interpretation of cultures to a participation in digital and trans-regional cultural processes.

We offer three forms of Online courses:

1.) Synchronal real-time webinar (courses and lectures) in *Zoom* via webcam and voice-chat. Students can login from wherever they are in the world via a desktop computer, laptop or mobile phone.

2.) A-synchronal self-learning courses via *LMS Canvas* with content, video lectures, films, readings and assignments which allow a wider flexibility for students.

3) Life courses with Avatars on the virtual Campus of HMKW in *Open Sim*



# Program Overview

<b>Type</b>	Distance learning (flexible e-learning in virtual classrooms, webinars and LMS Canvas)
<b>Degree</b>	Master of Arts (M.A.)
<b>Location</b>	Berlin
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Tuition fees</b>	4.020,- € per semester (16.080,- € in total for the two year's program)
<b>Duration</b>	4 semester (2 years)
<b>Start</b>	Winter term (October)

The program is a Distance learning course with five main units.

1. The distance-e-learning modules
3. An internship in a TV production company, film festival, Ethnological Museum, film archive or other related fields
4. A short film or media project
5. The Master's thesis and/ or the film/media project

This Master's program is educating both researchers with a background in Film, Photography, Social Sciences or Communication Science and media professionals. The Master's Program focuses on the relationships between culture and media in a number of areas, such as: Social Media and the meaning of digitalization for cultures and marketing; challenges in the representation of culture and gender through new media, the significance of ethnographic films and photography for Social and Cultural Anthropology, the development of media in Indigenous, Diaspora, and non-Western communities, future digital needs of Societies (AI, robotics, educational games, Essayistic documentary Film- and Photography for online magazines, broadcast and the Film Streaming Industry). The language of instruction is English. The program is highly international. The program uses a world-clock meeting planner for real-time online-classes to offer students from countries all over the world the best time to study.

## 2.1 Entry requirements

- A first university or university of applied sciences degree (Bachelor)
- A minimum of one year of work experience (internship, jobs, projects) subsequent to the completion of the undergraduate or first degree (after your BA). This work experience should be related to your first degree or to some sort of media practice.
- Proficiency in English (fluent in both written and spoken) is a must
- Participants should have basic technical skills in film, video or photography
- Participants must have adequate electronic equipment in order to deal with various multimedia materials; high-speed Internet access, a fast computer and a personal email account are compulsory. Owning a basic digital camera is recommended.

## 2.2 Ideal Candidates

**Applicants:** This program is aimed at students who have an undergraduate degree in any subject and have already have gained work experience relevant to their field of study.

**Target jobs:** Documentary filmmaking for TV and Online channels, Indigenous Media, the new media industry (education games, social media applications and mixed-reality-environments), immersive or virtual reality-technology industry, vr storytelling for educational games, film broadcast & online video industry with a focus on news coverage about cultures worldwide; anthropological questions of artificial intelligence, social analysis of robotic technology, museum and art industries (curators, artists), jobs in governmental and non-governmental organizations in the sector of sustainable development and capacity building in developing and emerging countries with a focus on media usage.

## 2.3 Tuition Fees

1. The tuition fees are 4.020 € per semester in total 16.080 € for the two years program. Students must assume additional (travel, room) costs arising from in-house periods (not mandatory) and fieldwork periods.



## 2.4 Technical Facilities

HMKW offers film, sound, and editing equipment for students on Campus. The program also collaborates with broadcast rental facilities in order to provide students with any additional cutting-edge-equipment they need for their productions.

# Program Structure

## Program Structure and Modules

- **First Semester:** Basic Modules (30 CP): Visual Anthropology, Media Anthropology

- **Second Semester:** Profile Modules (30 CP): Basics and Varieties of Ethnographic Film Production, Communication/Mediascapes, Applied Visual & Media Anthropology
- **Third Semester:** Project Modules (30 CP): Internship, Film- or Media Project
- **Fourth Semester:** Supervision Courses (30 CP)

The four-semester Master's program *Visual and Media Anthropology* conveys **120 ECTS Credit Points (CP)** in total, and it has the following structure:

Study field	1. Semester Core	2. Semester Profile	3. Semester Practice/Project	4. Semester Examination
Module area ECTS	Visual Anthropology 15 CP	Profile module I and II 2 * 15	Film project 15 CP	Master Thesis 30 CP
Module area ECTS	Media Anthropology 15 CP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basics &amp; Varieties of Ethnographic Film Production</li> <li>• Communication/Mediascapes</li> <li>• Applied Visual and Media Anthropology</li> </ul>	Internship 15 CP	
		Thesis Proposal		
Total ECTS	30 CP	30 CP	30CP	30 CP

**Module areas** highlighted in red comprise of three or four **Modules / Courses** or seminars (those three notions are used synonymously). Teaching sessions of modules/courses are held

- as **distance-learning sessions**, using online tools like Virtual Classrooms, Webinars, etc.
- The program offers short term (maximum of 2 weeks) non-mandatory and not guaranteed **presence/classroom-based** on Campus workshops.

The **Profile** study field encompasses three module areas consisting entirely of mandatory elective modules (all other modules are compulsory). Five of these profile electives are graded. Each student must pick at least two of these five graded modules, which must belong to two different module areas.

In total, each student must choose **5 graded modules**:

- 2 compulsory core modules (1. term): S1-1D, S1-2C, S1-1E (see below)
- 2 of the 5 graded profile electives (2. term):
- S2-2A, S2-2B, S2-2C
- S2-3A, S2-3B, S2-3C, S2-3D
- S2-1E, S2-3A, S2-3B (see below)
- 1 Thesis Proposal (2. term)



### 3.1 Modules





A comprehensive overview of all module areas and their possible modules/courses (course titles subject to change each semester. Not all classes are offered every year. All classes take place online):

<b>1. Semester</b> Winter term Oct.-Feb.	<b>2. Semester</b> Summer term April-July	<b>3. Semester</b> Winter term Oct.-Feb.	<b>4. Semester</b> Summer term April-July
<b>Core</b>	<b>Profile</b>	<b>Practice/Project</b>	<b>Examination</b>
<p><b>Visual Anthropology</b></p> <p>October – February  <b>S1-1A</b> Transcultural Film Workshop  <b>S1-1B</b> Documentary Photography            OPTIONAL GRADE</p> <p>October – February  <b>S1-1C</b> Ethnographic Films from the 19th to the 21st Century            OPTIONAL GRADE  <b>S1-1D</b> Introduction to the Theory and History of Social and Cultural Anthropology            OPTIONAL GRADE</p>	<p><b>Ethnographic Film Production</b></p> <p>April-July  <b>S2-1A</b> Filmmaking for Fieldwork  <b>S2-1B</b> Poetic Framing            OPTIONAL GRADE  <b>S2-1C</b> Qualitative Methods II</p> <p>April – July  <b>S2-1D</b> Social Media Marketing            OPTIONAL GRADE  <b>S2-1E</b> Gender and Film Studies            OPTIONAL GRADE</p>	<p><b>Film /Photography or Media Project</b></p> <p>October – February  <b>S3-1A</b> Film Projects  <b>S3-1B</b> Documentary Photography  <b>S3-1C</b> Social Media Projects  <b>S3-1D</b> Ethnographic Methods III  <b>S3-1E</b> Autoethnography</p> <p>October – February  <b>S3-1F</b>-Supervision Courses – several lecturer</p>	<p><b>MA Thesis</b></p> <p>April – July  <b>S4-1A</b> Writing the thesis</p> <p>April – July  <b>S4-1B</b> Supervision Courses – several lecturer</p>
<p><b>Media Anthropology</b></p> <p>Oct.  <b>S1-2A</b> Immersive Storytelling            OPTIONAL GRADE</p> <p>ONLINE            Novemb. – Febr.  <b>S1-2B</b> Digital Anthropology            OPTIONAL GRADE  <b>S1-2C</b> Ethnographic Methods I</p>	<p><b>Communication / Mediascapes</b></p> <p>ONLINE            April – July  <b>S2-2A</b> Virtual Environments  <b>S2-2B</b> Media Activism            OPTIONAL GRADE  <b>S2-2C</b> Essayistic Photography</p>	<p><b>Internship</b></p> <p>October – February  <b>S3-2A</b> Internship - 9 weeks (external)            OPTIONAL GRADE  <b>S3-2B</b> Artistic Practice in Transcultural Context            OPTIONAL GRADE  <b>S3-2C</b> Decolonized Images, Race and Representation            OPTIONAL GRADE  <b>S3-2D</b> Editing</p> <p>ONLINE            October – Febr.</p>	<p><b>MA Film / Photography (optional)</b></p> <p>April – July  <b>S4-2A</b> Digital Film Editing Forum  <b>S4-2B</b> Digital Photography Forum  <b>S4-2C</b> Social Media Forum</p> <p>April – July  <b>S4-2D</b> Film Composition and Dramaturgy</p>
	<p><b>Applied Visual and Media Anthropology</b></p> <p>April – July  <b>S2-3A</b> Space und Place. Theoretical Foundations and Methods for Visualization            OPTIONAL GRADE  <b>S2-3B</b> Mediascapes of Publishing            OPTIONAL GRADE  <b>S2-3C</b> Developing and pitching film ideas (LMS und Webinar)</p>		<p><b>MA exhibition project (optional)</b></p> <p><b>S4-1E</b> Curating Exhibitions  <b>S4-1F</b> Final Master exhibition preparation</p>

# Course Examples

## Filmmaking for Fieldwork

Filmmaking for Fieldwork will cover the following topics

- The role of film in ethnographic research
- Legal and ethical aspects of ethnographic filmmaking
- Modes of documentary storytelling
- Collaborative and participatory methods
- Fictive narratives, sensory work and essays
- Production workflows
- Camera, sound and editing techniques
- Suggested filming kits to take to the field
- Crowdfunding, online promotion and digital distribution



## Social Media Marketing

### ABOUT THE COURSE

People nowadays share and monetize many aspects of their lives on Instagram, Facebook, TikTok or YouTube. What are the consequences of this extensive practice of sharing media content online for individuals or for whole societies? In this course these theoretical anthropological questions will be addressed and students will also learn all important practical aspects of *social media marketing* such as photography and video-storytelling for social media accounts, brand collaborations and negotiations with brands, analytics of posts, how to calculate media values per post and how to create a media-deck. Furthermore, students will gain insights into viral video licensing and the monetization of video content for social media channels such as YouTube or Facebook Creator Studio. Additionally, viral video agencies will be introduced and students will gain practical knowledge about licensing contracts and how to collaborate with those agencies. This course is not only designed for students who are interesting in blogging, but also for students who plan a professional carrier as a content creator, editor or CEO in a video agency or broadcast studio.

## Gender & Film

### ABOUT THE COURSE

*Gender & Film* will focus on a wide range of aspects including the overlooked women pioneers of Visual Anthropology and predominant gender studies with a strong focus on a theoretical, methodological, and intersectional approach to gender studies and film through the consideration of class, race, ethnicity, and sexuality. This course is meant not only as an introduction for students who would like to learn more about gender and film, but also for those who have basic knowledge related to these concepts and would like to learn more about the history, methods of visual representation, and gain a better understanding of film terminology and analyzation. We will screen a diverse number of films and discuss them as they relate to gender studies and anthropological forms of representation.

## The Berlin Tech-Startup-Ecosystem



### ABOUT THE COURSE

“If you are a startup enthusiast in Europe, then Berlin is the place to be. With a new startup being founded every 20 minutes in the city, Berlin is a breeding ground for entrepreneurs who want to change the world.” This is how Berlin is currently being promoted around the world. In this course students will investigate together with the lecturer the Berlin Startup-Ecosystem; what is an ecosystem, who are the stakeholders, where to go, how to start if you want to found a startup. A special focus of the course will be on diversity and inclusion and the key players / stakeholders in the migrant entrepreneurial sub-ecosystem. One objective of the course is to ask and together answer the

following; How can anthropologists make sure they stay up-to-date and contribute to startup culture with their toolkit and skills through a holistic approach? How can anthropologists make a place for themselves in the tech-startup ecosystem?

## Space and Place



*Papua, Indonesia / Reichel (2011)*



*Tempelhof, Berlin / Terry (2013)*

In this seminar we deal with the question of how individuals and communities perceive their environment and the meanings within it that are based on culturally distinct ideas, concepts and norms. The course is organized in three parts: first, students are provided with a foundation of contemporary theory to approach space and place questions in their own research. Second, students are then instructed in methods and techniques for gathering theoretically informed data from the field. Third,

in order to make implicit frames of reference explicit, students are offered strategies for visually representing the data in an anthropological context.

## Mediascapes of Publishing

### ABOUT THE COURSE

About the Course: The course offers students a broad overview of different possibilities to present and publish their text-based and audio-visual research data. The course will offer insights into classical fields of publishing, while additionally concentrating on popular possibilities to publish research data and final film projects for broadcast, podcasts, and film festivals. Students will learn how to pitch and publish in one of the new mass-media formats with the aim to reach not only mass audiences, but also small indie film festivals. Upon completion of the class students will be able to successfully pitch, negotiate and finalize the publishing process with publishers, TV broadcast studios and video agencies. The course will also focus on developing a research proposal and students will have the opportunity to present their initial final MA research idea and receive feedback from the lecturers.

## Distance Learning

The M.A. Visual and Media Anthropology is one of the leading Distance Learning Master programs in Visual Anthropology worldwide. Founded in 2008 the MA program employs a distinguished teaching staff and engages the latest in e-learning technologies to prepare students from around the world with both theoretical knowledge and practical skills for a successful career in visual and media anthropology and its related fields. The whole program is facilitated via e-learning.



The VMA program is using a world clock meeting planner to find the best meeting times for students and lecturers from different continents. All e-learning classes are recorded, making it possible for students who may have difficulties attending classes, to stay up to date.

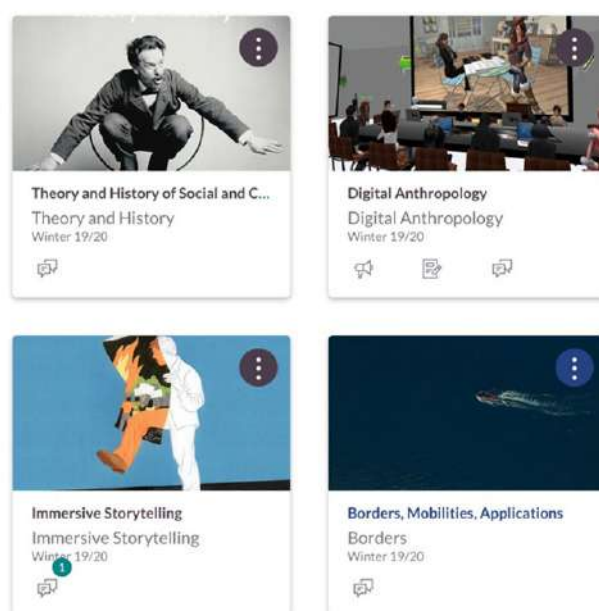
The program licensed Canvas LMS, one of the premier Learning Management Systems. On our Canvas platform students can find a course calendar, course content, readings, assignments, announcements and grades and they can upload files and communicate with each other as well as with their lecturers.

Furthermore, HMKW owns a whole island in Open Sim and a plot in Second Life with its own virtual seminar rooms for virtual classes with avatars and for ethnographic research practice in virtual environments. The program uses a combination of three different e-learning methods.

## 1. CANVAS LMS

Course content, readings, audiovisual media and assignments are presented online via one of the world-bests learning management systems LMS Canvas.

### Dashboard



## 2. Video-Conference Software

The main part of the program are daily real-time webinars for students with webcam, voice-chat and text-chat function via a video-conference software. We offer virtual classes across devices including mobile learning iOS (iPhone, iPad), Android, as well as the desktop with no client downloads for learners. Our lecturers are trained by a professional webinar and LMS trainer.

Our lecturer login daily to go live for our students! Students can actively join the discussion and give presentations online. Students are also able to watch the recordings of the daily classes. The screensharing function is used for editing classes. Students are able to discuss their video editing steps with their lecturer.



### 3. Virtual classrooms



Students and lecturer of the VMA program meet online with avatars in a virtual classroom environment for some classes. Students will become adept at navigating an avatar in a virtual environment and conducting ethnographic research online. The HMKW Berlin owns an island with a 3D building of the campus in Open Sim.

Further Information:

<https://www.hmkw.de/en/study/ma-programs/ma-visual-and-media-anthropology/>



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