In this interdisciplinary workshop-style course, graduate students from many disciplines will learn hands-on techniques of observing, analyzing and representing time, space, and experience in the urban realm.

Cities are physical places, but they are also assemblages of bodies and experiences; the locus of memory; and systems of interacting flows and institutions. Humans understand cities through linear narratives as well as spatial experience and representation. The way we analyze and represent these spaces and activities has important implications for the design, building, and management of cities as well as for our understanding of the history, art, and performance that occurs in urban settings.

We will examine fiction, films, drawings, children’s books, journalism, videos, maps, plans, photos, and data visualizations. We will sample techniques used in archeology, architecture, art history, art practice, city planning, ethnography, film, geography, journalism, landscape architecture, literature, and oral history to investigate and represent urban spaces. Students will carry out fieldwork and use mapmaking, GIS, drawing, interviewing, graphic design, and audio and video recording to explore three urban parks and environs over the course of the semester. Guest speakers will lead practical workshops and methodological discussions.

The course aims to give students enough experience with these methods to begin to understand their grammar, potential uses, and constraints, and to consider applications in their home discipline.