

ART S138: Introduction to Digital Photography

Summer 2024 (Session B)

MW 1pm - 4:15pm

Green Hall (1156 Chapel)

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NOTE THAT THIS SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE, AS PER THE NATURE OF THIS COURSE

Office Hours

Office hours will be by appointment. This is a dedicated time that I am available to answer your questions, discuss course content, and generally be of support. I invite each of you to attend office hours at least once a semester as part of your participation in the class. There is no need to prepare anything ahead of time, but I welcome the chance to speak with you and get to know each of you a bit better.

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to the visual language of photography. Students will be introduced to the technical, historical and conceptual aspects of the medium. We will focus on gaining familiarity with digital techniques such as camera functions, image exposure, digital workflow, Adobe Bridge and Photoshop. Lectures and class discussions will provide historical context and an overview of historical and contemporary artists.

Students produce original work throughout the technical component of the class. Weekly photographic and written assignments will be given and regular critiques will be used to assess student work and progress. This course requires a high level of engagement and a commitment to learning the medium. Class time will be spent on technical lectures, technical demonstrations, artist lectures, slide lectures on historical and contemporary photography, and critiques of student work.

Course Requirements

1. Produce a minimum of 200 photographers per week. You will need to upload contact sheets by the start of class each week
2. Completing weekly photography assignments
3. Written responses looking at historical and contemporary artists
4. Participation and attendance at all critiques
5. Critical engagement with class readings and discussions

Learning Objectives

The objective of this course is to provide the student with a proficiency in the basics of digital photography. While technical aspects of digital photography will be covered, the main focus will be on making and looking at photographs.

- Students will learn the technical functions of a digital single lens reflex camera, and develop proficiency in exposure through shutter speed, aperture, and iso
- Basic knowledge of Adobe Bridge and Adobe Photoshop
- Establishing a photographic workflow
- Learning how to make a digital contact sheet
- Gaining a technical understanding of image processing an image from the Raw file to a print ready image
- Expanding a knowledge of historical and contemporary artists working in color photography

Required Materials

Digital camera: A Digital Single Lens Reflex (DSLR) or Digital Rangefinder where you can manually adjust the focus, aperture, and shutter; and shoot in RAW. If you do not have access to a DSLR camera, please speak to the instructor about alternate options. This will not hinder you from joining the class.

SD Card: At least 16 GB (approximately \$10)

Hard Drive: At least 250 GB, but larger is recommended. Must be formatted for Mac upon first use. (price can vary, approximately \$40)

Reading Requirements

Reading requirements will be given on the first day of class.

Attendance and Participation

You are allowed 0 unexcused absences during the semester. Please speak to me if you are having trouble (physical, mental health, etc.) at any point in the semester and need to miss a class. Tardiness by 30 minutes (or early departure) equals 1 absence. Class participation is an essential part of class and includes: keeping up with reading, assignments, projects, contributing meaningfully to class discussions, and active participation.

Grading

Class participation	20%
In-class assignments + Readings	10%
Weekly written responses	20%
Weekly critiques	30%
Final project	20%

Grading Explanation

- A Exceptional work that goes above and beyond the expectations and requirements set forth. Technically outstanding. Inspired growth and/or consistent excellence. Strong contribution to the class critiques and discussions. Outstanding community member.
- B Consistent high quality response to assignments. Active participation in class critique. Punctuality and appropriate community behavior.
- C Average response to class assignments. Poor attendance and/or participation.
- D Minimal competency and unsatisfactory achievement. Poor attendance, participation and punctuality.
- F Failure, no credit.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is both an assurance that others' intellectual work is treated honestly and a core principle of learning. Your learning in this course is a product of the inquiry, reflection, and work built into each assignment. For this reason, all work you submit must be your own. Language, data, and ideas drawn from other sources must be documented. You may not use ChatGPT or other AI composition software while completing assignments for this course.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging

Everyone in the classroom is expected to contribute to creating a respectful, welcoming and inclusive environment. It is my intention that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be represented in the classroom and the material shared. My goal in the classroom is to create a safe environment that fosters open and honest dialogue where students are encouraged to communicate their thoughts. Diligence in understanding how others' viewpoints may be different from their own.

Accessibility

This course is committed to being inclusive to everyone in the class. If you encounter barriers, please let me know immediately so that we can determine the best way to resolve it. If needed, we will adjust the structure of the course to better accommodate.

Course Outline

Week 1

July 1 + July 3

Monday:

- Course welcome, syllabus overview, class introductions
- Lecture: The Camera: Intro to DSLR Cameras + Basic camera settings (aperture, shutter speed, iso) and how these control exposure and depth of field. How understanding the camera as a tool (depth-of-field and motion blur) controls the way you read a picture.

Wednesday:

- Lecture: A Brief History of Photography (Part 1)
- File Types: RAW, TIFF, JPEG

Assignment: Make 200 exposures (specific shooting assignments will be assigned over the course of the session), class readings and submit a brief visual analysis paper (300 words)

Week 2

July 8 + July 10

Monday:

- Lecture: A brief history of photography (Part 2: from Color to Contemporary)
- Lab: Introduction to Bridge, Workflow Folder Saving & File Naming. Making Contact sheets. Introduction to Photoshop, importing files, making Adobe Bridge contact sheets, opening files. Adobe Camera Raw Processing, resizing
- Brief review of exposure (relationship between aperture and shutter speed)

Wednesday:

- Lab: Working in photoshop: workspace, preferences, tool palettes, file format, how to save a file, image size, resolution, resizing vs. resampling
- Editing workshop: Review your contact sheets from the past two weeks with your classmates
- Reading Discussion

Assignment: Make 200 exposures (specific shooting assignments will be assigned over the course of the session), class readings and submit a brief visual analysis paper (300 words)

Week 3

July 15 + 17

Monday:

- Lecture: The Personal
- Lab: Introduction to white balance, histogram, highlights, shadows, layers: non-destructive editing, curves, channels, info palette
- In-class workshop: Color correcting

Wednesday:

- Reading discussion
- Workshop: How to look at a photograph/Looking and analyzing photographs
- Critique

Assignment: Make 200 exposures (specific shooting assignments will be assigned over the course of the session), class readings and submit a brief visual analysis paper (300 words)

Week 4

July 22 + 24

Monday:

- Lecture: Contemporary Photographers
- Lab: Fine-tuning in Photoshop. Dodging and burning. Masking and selections. Gradient tool.

Wednesday:

- Reading discussion
- Critique

Assignment: Make new 200 exposures and put an edit together for your final critique. Use the Photoshop editing you have learned and bring those skills into practice. Select 15 of your strongest images and come prepared for final critique. Prepare a working artist statement to go along with the work.

Week 5

July 29 + 31

Monday:

- Visiting Artist: TBD
- Workshop: Writing an Artist Statement

Wednesday:

- Final Critique
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