

**DePaul University**  
**Spring Quarter 2016 - 2017**  
**DC 125: Digital Still Photography for Non-Majors**  
**Section: 301**

**Class Location: Lincoln Park Campus Student Center, Room 331**  
**Class Times: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:40AM - 11:10PM**

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

Instructor: Firas Aladai

Email: faladai@cdm.depaul.edu

Office Location: Lincoln Park Campus Student Center, Room 332

Office Hours: Thursdays, 11:30AM-2:00PM

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is an introduction to the history and aesthetics of still photography and to the concept of photography as a descriptive and interpretive artistic medium. Students studying photographs in this context will discover relationships between individual photographers' choices and their own understanding of meaning. Discussions of the photos' cultural contexts and meanings will deepen their understanding of the role of still photography as a conduit for cultural values. Students will learn the fundamental concepts necessary to shoot, edit, manipulate, and print digital still photographs. Also, students will acquire the knowledge needed to analyze and critique existing work. **Students will be required to use their own digital still cameras for this course.**

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

This course is an introduction to the aesthetics of still photography and to the concept of photography as a descriptive and interpretive artistic medium. Students will learn the fundamental concepts necessary to shoot, edit, and manipulate photographs and critically evaluate the images. Throughout the course you will work on defining your individual aesthetic utilizing established composition and design elements. Every assignment will utilize a new skill to develop cumulative knowledge of professional standards in imaging. Students will be challenged to think conceptually about their own visual development while acquiring technical skills.

**LEARNING DOMAIN DESCRIPTION**

DC 125: Digital Still Photography is included in the Liberal Studies program as a course with credit in the Arts and Literature domain. Courses in the Arts and Literature domain ask students to extend their knowledge and experience of the arts by developing their critical and reflective abilities. In these courses, students interpret and analyze particular creative works, investigate the relations of form and meaning and through critical and/or

creative activity to come to experience art with greater openness, insight, and enjoyment. These courses focus on works of literature, art, theatre, or music as such, though the process of analysis may also include social and cultural issues. Students who take course in this domain choose three courses from such choices as literature, the visual arts, media arts, music, and theater. No more than two courses can be chosen from one department or program.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- Students will learn the fundamental concepts necessary to shoot, edit, manipulate, and print digital still photographs.
- Students will acquire the knowledge needed to analyze and interpret existing works of photography in terms of composition, depth, and semiotic meaning.
- Students will understand how to use their own digital still cameras, as well as the software Adobe Lightroom needed in the course.
- Students will review and evaluate works of photography, translating that knowledge into written criticism of the work.
- Students will be able to explain, in well-written prose, what a work of art is about and/or how it was produced.
- Students will be able to comment on the relationship between form and content in a work.
- Students will be able to assess the formal aspects of their subject and put those qualities into words, using specialized vocabulary employed in class and readings.
- Students will be able to contextualize a work of art with respect to other works of art, defining its place within a broader style or genre.
- Students will be able to contextualize a work of art in terms of contemporaneous aesthetic, social, or political concerns, discussing how these might shape the work's reception and how that reception might differ amongst various peoples and historical periods.

### **HOW LEARNING OUTCOMES WILL BE MET**

Students will begin understanding the technical functions of their digital cameras through experiential projects and historical image making practices through research and lecture material. They will define formal and theoretical concepts as we broach them, and apply those definitions in conversation, as well as analyze images in Chicago's cultural repositories. They will utilize newly acquired critical tools and vocabulary to compose assessments of the work of their peers. They will research and write about the work of

famous photographers of the past and present and discover a context for their own creation within the historical continuum.

### **WRITING EXPECTATIONS**

Students will be expected to write a minimum of 5-7 pages for this course.

### **HOW WRITING EXPECTATIONS WILL BE MET**

Students will take weekly photographs and write a weekly analysis of their own work utilizing the new theoretical and technical principles introduced each week. Students will research and write about the work of a famous photographer with an account on the context of the content, execution and style. Students will compose a final reflective essay articulating the visual aesthetic embodied in their portfolios utilizing elements of the artistic statements and curated exhibitions presented in class.

### **COURSE MANAGEMENT**

DePaul D2L: <https://d2l.depaul.edu>

CDM Computer Labs are available for software use outside of class:

[http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/current\\_students/pages/labs.aspx](http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/current_students/pages/labs.aspx)

CDM labs offer Photoshop on PC or Mac operating systems in Lincoln Park and Loop Campuses, or you can make arrangements to acquire the software.

We are currently using CS6 – however, if you plan on obtaining your own copy, the version currently available (by monthly subscription) is Photoshop Creative Cloud.

### **TEXTBOOK**

*Light and Lens: Photography in Digital Age (Second Edition)* by Robert Hirsh

### **RECOMMENDED MATERIALS**

**1) Digital Camera:** This should be a DSLR. You must make exposure adjustments. Please use the same camera all quarter.

Equipment Cage: 14 E Jackson, Suite LL106

Mon-Thu: 9:00AM-10:00PM

Friday: 9:00AM-6:00PM

Phone Number: (312) 362-5733

**2) USB thumb drives or External Hard Drive:** Bring to every class so that you can quickly open your photos or your presentations and share with the instructor and your classmates.

### **LAPTOPS/CELL PHONES**

Use of cell phones in the class is prohibited. Please turn your phone off before entering class.

## **SYLLABUS MODIFICATIONS**

The instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus at any time. Students will be apprised of any changes should they occur.

## **D2L**

You will be using D2L extensively in this course. You will find links to the syllabus, course outline, video lectures, weekly assignments, etc. All lectures will be viewable through D2L.

## **GRADING**

Attendance & Participation: 20%

Weekly Photo Assignments: 20%

Midterm Exam: 15%

Photographer Profile Essay: 10%

Landscape Assignment: 10%

Final Exam: 25%

A = 100-93, A- = 92-90, B+ = 89-88, B = 87-83, B- = 82-80, C+ = 79-78, C = 77-73, C- = 72-70,  
D+ = 69-68, D = 67-63, D- = 62-60, F = 59-0

## **ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION**

Student participation in this class will be measured in two ways. First, students will write an answer to a question based on the assigned reading at the beginning of class. Second, students will receive points for actively contributing to class discussions and critique. Students must keep up with the reading to participate in class discussions.

5 points – Excellent answer, with details from the assigned reading

3 points – Acceptable answer

1 point – Inaccurate/unclear answer

0 points – Absent/no answer

## **WEEKLY PHOTO ASSIGNMENTS**

Each week (when there is not another assignment due—see below) students will be required to submit 15 photographs to D2L based on a technique or theme. Students will select 3 photographs for critique. Each of these 3 photographs must be accompanied by a paragraph describing the image, why the photographer selected the image, and the camera settings (shutter speed, f-stop, and ISO) used to achieve the image. **On select weeks, there will be critiques in which students will present their 3 images to the class.**

## **MIDTERM EXAM – Thursday, April 27**

The midterm exam will cover basic photography concepts, including rules of composition, ISO, aperture, and shutter speed.

### **PHOTOGRAPHER PROFILE ESSAY – Due on Thursday, May 11**

Students will select a photographer whose work they admire and write a 2-page paper with an overview of the photographer, his/her career, the content and visual style of his/her work, and why the student admires the photographer. **Students must follow the writing guidelines written below and posted on D2L for this assignment.**

### **LANDSCAPE ASSIGNMENT – Due on Thursday, May 25**

Students will select a specific location (no indoor shots) to create series of images (7-10 photographs) that give a full account of not only the physical space but also its feeling and essence. Students are expected to use the knowledge and skills they have learned in the course, including composition, aperture, depth of field, shutter speed, ISO settings, and so on. **For this assignment, students will present all of their photos to the class.**

### **FINAL EXAM – Thursday, June 8**

For the final exam, students will present and submit their photography portfolio. This will consist of a 1-page introduction that explains their inspiration and describes their style followed by 9 formatted pages of images presenting their body of work. Students should include at least three photography genres: portraiture, photojournalism, street photography, event photography, commercial, fine art, architecture, etc.

### **GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS**

1. Double-spaced, 1" margins, 12 point font, Times New Roman or Cambria
2. Heading containing your name, the assignment, and the due date
3. Creative title – encouraged but not required
4. Formal academic style (i.e., using academic language, not in a conversational style; no contractions, informal language, or slang)
5. In paragraph form, with each paragraph starting with a topic sentence
6. Thesis statement at the end of the introduction paragraph

### **TENTATIVE WEEKLY SCHEDULE (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)**

<b>WEEK 1</b>	T, 3/28	<i>Introductions, Review of Syllabus</i> Assignment to Groups A & B <b>For next class: Read Ch. 1</b>
	Th, 3/30	<i>History of Photography</i> The concept of critique <b>For next class: Read Ch. 2</b>

<b>WEEK 2</b>	T, 4/4	<i>Composition</i> <b>For next Tuesday: Read Ch. 3</b>
	Th, 4/6	Presentation & Critique (in pairs)
<b>WEEK 3</b>	T, 4/11	<i>Cameras and Lenses</i> <b>For next Tuesday: Read Ch. 4</b>
	Th, 4/13	Group A Presentations & Critique
<b>WEEK 4</b>	T, 4/18	<i>Exposure and Filters</i> <b>For next Tuesday: Read Ch. 5</b>
	Th, 4/20	Group B Presentations & Critique
<b>WEEK 5</b>	T, 4/25	<i>Light &amp; Portrait</i> <b>For next Tuesday: Read Ch. 6&amp;7</b>
	Th, 4/27	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>
<b>WEEK 6</b>	T, 5/2	<i>Time, Space, and Imagination</i> Explanation of Photographer Profile Essay Assignment <b>For next Tuesday: Read Ch. 8</b>
	Th, 5/4	Group A Presentations & Critique
<b>WEEK 7</b>	T, 5/9	<i>Introduction to Lightroom</i> Screening: <i>La Jetee</i> (Chris Marker, 1962) Explanation of Landscape Assignment <b>For next Tuesday: Read Ch. 9</b>
	Th, 5/11	<b>PHOTOGRAPHER PROFILE ESSAY DUE TO D2L</b> Group B Presentations & Critique
<b>WEEK 8</b>	T, 5/16	<i>Color, Style, and POV</i> Explanation of Photography Portfolio Assignment <b>For next Tuesday: Read Ch. 10</b>
	Th, 5/18	Group A Presentations & Critique

<b>WEEK 9</b>	T, 5/23	<i>Ethics of Photography</i> <b>For next Tuesday: Read Ch. 11</b>
	TH, 5/25	<b>LANDSCAPE ASSIGNMENT DUE TO D2L</b> Group B Presentations & Critique
<b>WEEK 10</b>	T, 5/30	TBD
	TH, 6/1	Visiting the Museum of Contemporary Photography
<b>WEEK 11</b>	T, 6/6	Developing Your Portfolio
	TH, 6/8	<b>PHOTOGRAPHY PORTFOLIO ASSIGNMENT DUE</b>

### **NOTE ON REQUIREMENTS (and the syllabus in general)**

This syllabus is subject to change as necessary during the quarter. If a change occurs, it will be thoroughly addressed during class, and posted on D2L. As a member of this class, you are required to know and follow the guidelines set forth on the totality of this syllabus. These guidelines are established to ensure that all students know what is expected of them and that all students are treated equally by being held to the same standards.

### **COURSE POLICIES**

**Attendance:** Students are expected to attend each class and to remain for the duration. *Coming 15 minutes late or leaving 15 minutes early constitutes an absence for the student. The overall grade for Attendance & Participation drops one-third after any absence. Three absences for any reason, whether excused or not, may constitute failure for the course.*

**Attitude:** A professional and academic attitude is expected throughout this course. Measurable examples of non-academic or unprofessional attitude include but are not limited to: talking to others when the instructor is speaking, mocking another's opinion, cell phones ringing, emailing, texting or using the internet whether on a phone or computer. If any issues arise, a student may be asked to leave the classroom. The instructor will work with the Dean of Students Office to navigate such student issues.

**Civil Discourse:** DePaul University is a community that thrives on open discourse that challenges students, both intellectually and personally, to be Socially Responsible Leaders. It is the expectation that all dialogue in this course is civil and respectful of the dignity of each student. Any instances of disrespect or hostility can jeopardize a student's ability to be successful in the course. The professor will partner with the Dean of Students Office to assist in managing such issues.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM**

This course will be subject to the university's academic integrity policy. More information can be found at <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/>. If you have any questions, be sure to consult with your professor.

## **ACADEMIC POLICIES**

All students are required to manage their class schedules each term in accordance with the deadlines for enrolling and withdrawing as indicated in the University Academic Calendar. Information on enrollment, withdrawal, grading and incompletes can be found at: <http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/PoliciesandProcedures.aspx>

## **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential. To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact the instructor as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of class), and make sure that you have contacted the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at:

csd@depaul.edu  
Lewis Center  
25 E. Jackson Blvd. (1420)  
Phone: (312)362-8002  
Fax: (312)362-6544  
TTY: (773)325.7296

## **ONLINE COURSE EVALUATIONS**

Evaluations are a way for students to provide valuable feedback regarding their instructor and the course. Detailed feedback will enable the instructor to continuously tailor teaching methods and course content to meet the learning goals of the course and the academic needs of the students. They are a requirement of the course and are key to continue to provide you with the highest quality of teaching. The evaluations are anonymous; the instructor and administration do not track who entered what responses. A program is used to check if the student completed the evaluations, but the evaluation is completely separate from the student's identity. Since 100% participation is our goal, students are sent periodic reminders over three weeks. Students do not receive reminders once they complete the evaluation. Students complete the evaluation online in CampusConnect.

**Cell Phones/On Call:** If you bring a cell phone to class, it must be off or set to a silent mode. Should you need to answer a call during class, students must leave the room in an undistruptive manner. Out of respect to fellow students and the professor, texting is never allowable in class.



