FILM 165-601/610: Digital Still Photography for Non-majors

Spring 2019-2020

Class number: 30038/30004

MW 3:10 PM – 4:40 PM

Remote Class due to Quarantine

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Office Hours: MW 4:40 PM – 5:25 PM

COURSE OBJECTIVE

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, & manipulate photographs and critically evaluate the images. Throughout the course you will work on defining your individual aesthetic utilizing established composition and design elements. You will be introduced to best practices in workflow and visual data management through the use of Adobe Bridge, and the industry standard, Adobe Photoshop. Photoshop will be used in two stages, first as a postproduction tool in a standard photographic workflow, and then as a creative tool for compositing and collage. Every assignment will utilize a new skill towards a cumulative knowledge of professional standards in imaging. Students will be challenged to think conceptually about their own visual development while acquiring technical skills.

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, and manipulate 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. This course has an additional fee.

Prerequisites NONE

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Identify the correct settings to alter exposure

Employ knowledge choosing appropriate post workflow for processing images

Interpret images using formal compositional language

Comment on conceptual approaches to making images

Draw on research of visual artists to contextualize their own images in relation to the broader discourse of photography

Evaluate print qualities

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 Photoshop needed in the course.

Students, by reviewing external and internal work, will review and evaluate these creative works, 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, when appropriate, specialized vocabulary employed in class and readings.

Students will be able to contextualize a work of art. They will be able to do so with respect to other works of art in terms of defining its place within a broader style or genre. They will also 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 complete a minimum of 5-7 pages of writing for this course.

HOW WRITING EXPECTATIONS WILL BE MET

Students will utilize newly acquired critical tools and vocabulary to compose assessments of the work of photographers. Students 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. Students will write ten analyses of their own work utilizing the new theoretical and technical principles introduced each week. Students will write brief weekly analyses of their own in-class assignments exploring learning outcomes. Students will write text for photo-romans. 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 SYSTEM

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

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

If you plan on obtaining your own copy the version currently available is Photoshop Creative Cloud, available by monthly subscription. Student rates apply. If you choose to order for one month only, you will want to use it for your last three weeks of class and final exam week, so order it one month minus one day before your final exam date.

Supplemental instruction at LYNDA.COM available at the library or by personal subscription. DePaul students can access this for free.

TEXTBOOKS AND PRINTED RESOURCES

Required Texts:

\_\_Light and Lens: Photography in the Digital Age by Robert Hirsh

\_\_Your personal Camera Manual, find it online if you no longer have it.

Optional Texts:

\_\_Martin Evening's Photoshop for Photographers

Other Texts: Your assignments are actually texts that are part of the course. Read them thoroughly. There are also power points and notes on D2L (such as the triangle). Read them thoroughly.

Other Requirements:

\_\_Digital Camera: this should be a DSLR. IMPORTANT NOTE: THIS CAMERA REQUIREMENT IS WAIVED FOR THIS QUARTER DUE TO CORONAVIRUS. YOU MAY USE WHATEVER YOU HAVE ACCESS TO. HOWEVER, A DSLR CAMERA AS DESCRIBED IS IDEAL FOR THIS CLASS. You must make exposure adjustments. Please use the same camera all quarter. You must provide your own camera. YOU MUST BRING YOUR CAMERA TO CLASS ONCE A WEEK ON LAB DAY. (It MAY be possible to check out a camera from the equipment center on the lower level of 14 E. Jackson, but if so, you can only check it out for a few days at a time. It might behoove you to reserve the camera ahead of time. Make sure not to return the camera late or you will suffer steep fines and eventually loss of your rental privileges.) Your camera must be able to: 1.adjust f-stop; 2.adjust shutter speed; 3.adjust ISO; 4.use multiple lenses OR use a manual zoom lens (a manual zoom lens means that the glass moves as you zoom in which changes the perspective properties of the lens compressing space and creating a more shallow focal range).

\_\_Two data cards: 2 smaller are better than just 1 for your camera.

\_\_USB thumb drives – at least 8GB (they fail, have a back-up!) or External Hard Drive. Bring to every class so that you can quickly open your photos or your presentations. DO NOT LEAVE YOUR CARDS IN THE CLASSROOM COMPUTERS. REMEMBER TO TAKE THEM WITH YOU OR THEY WILL DISAPPEAR FOREVER WITH YOUR WORK ON THEM. Important Note: Create a folder on the classroom computer that you use for your work so that the screen does not become cluttered with your work. When dating your photos the best method is year followed by month followed by day.

\_\_Card reader or USB cord

\_\_THE TRIPOD REQUIREMENT IS WAIVED FOR THIS CLASS, BUT IF YOU HAVE ACCESS TO A TRIPOD THAT IS IDEAL. Tripod (available from the Equipment Center located at 14 East Jackson Lower Level 106. All equipment must be returned on time or you will be assessed a steep financial penalty by the school and your rental privileges will be revoked.) Cheap tripods can also be purchased for as little as twenty dollars. Make sure they are sturdy enough to support your camera.

COURSE POLICIES

Late Work – I will not accept late work. All assignments are due on Monday before class begins. If you need a two day extension, I will grant it to you if you send me an email. I will not respond to the email, but if you have sent it to me, I will grant you an extension until the beginning of our Wednesday class. There will be no extensions granted beyond two days, because you will fall behind if you are working on old assignments.

Absences – Absences affect your participation grade. You are allowed 2 unexcused absences. After that, your participation points will be impacted, if your other work hasn't already been. If you miss a class, you will be responsible for seeking the information you missed and for watching and taking notes on the missed lectures that are taped for D2L. You may also consider visiting my office hours to ask questions. Excused absences require that you please provide some sort of documentation. Please, try to arrange your makeup work prior to the absence. Communication is the key to staying on top of your work. IF YOU MISS FOUR CLASSES YOU FAIL THE COURSE. Attendance is mandatory.

ONLINE STUDENTS:

IF YOU ARE AN ONLINE STUDENT, YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR WATCHING EACH CLASS LECTURE. OBVIOUSLY, YOU WILL NOT BE REQUIRED TO ATTEND CLASS, THOUGH YOU CAN SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT TO MEET WITH ME IN PERSON IF YOU SO DESIRE. YOU ARE ALSO REQUIRED TO COMPLETE THE IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENTS SINCE THEY CONSTITUTE YOUR PARTICIPATION GRADE IN ITS ENTIRETY. THEY FOCUS ON TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF PHOTOGRAPHY. PERFECT EACH TECHNIQUE TO THE BEST OF YOUR ABILITY. DOING SO WITHOUT TRYING TO CREATE AESTHETICALLY APPEALING PHOTOS INDICATES A LACK OF EFFORT. MAKE EACH PHOTO AS FABULOUS AS POSSIBLE. THE MORE EFFORT YOU PUT IN, THE MORE REWARDING PHOTOGRAPHY WILL BE FOR YOU.

Tardiness – Students arriving more than 15 minutes late, or leaving before class is dismissed, will be considered absent. Please be punctual. Excessive tardiness will also be penalized. You will not be allowed to leave class early. If I see you leaving, I will mark you absent for that day. If you miss four classes you are subject to failure for the class. Four instances of tardiness counts as one absence.

Socializing – If you must urgently communicate something to another student, please talk to each other in a whisper while I am lecturing. If you have a question, the entire class probably has the same question, so please feel free to raise your hand and ask it OR TYPE IT OUT IN THE ZOOM COMMENTS. There’s no such thing as a stupid question in this class. The only stupid question is an unasked question, because then a gap in knowledge hasn’t been filled in. If you were absent and are lost, it is your responsibility to watch the lectures on your own time to catch up and know what we are talking about. (The class is taped and lectures are viewable on D2L or via a link from D2L.) Stay off the social media while you're in my lecture! Post your photos during your work time, not while I'm lecturing. Phones should be silenced or off. No facebook/internet during class. You must live without facebook for 3 hours each week while you are in this class. Unless we are using the computers, the screens will always be asleep during class. I’m a stickler on this subject so make sure to abide by this rule.

Email - Please Do include a screenshot or capture if you need to show me something (Mac: Command, Shift, 4 draw a box around it and it will be on your desktop. PC: Printscreen key)

CHANGES TO SYLLABUS

This syllabus is subject to change as necessary during the quarter. If a change occurs, it will be thoroughly addressed during class, posted under Announcements in D2L and sent via email.

**GRADING**

Nine Weekly Photography Assignments (including conceptual and technical writing components) 10 points each

Favorite Photographer Essay 25 points

Photo-roman 20 points

Participation (Wednesday in-class assignments – you lose 10 points for each missing in-class assignment I discover while calculating your final grade; oral contribution) 50 points

Final Reflective Essay (articulating your visual aesthetic as embodied in your portfolio) & Photographic Portfolio 80 points

Class Participation is required. Failure to participate in discussions negatively impacts your grade. Obviously, absences affect your participation.   
  
Grading scale:   
A, B, C, D, F – increments of 10

You are expected to read the lengthy assignments thoroughly. You will not understand unless you do so. The instructions are long because they are part and parcel of your lecture, reading, and writing assignments. Peruse carefully since each summarizes core photographic principles you will be utilizing in your final reflective essays.

The assignments are designed to simultaneously exercise technical skills while expanding the critical understanding of photography and honing your personal system of visual expression. Again, the lessons in the class are cumulative, and skills discussed in reference to a previous assignment will be used again and again without special instruction. Additionally, it is expected that students participate in conversations, ask questions, and contribute willingly to our classroom experience with a positive attitude. What you put in to the class directly correlates with what you will get out of the class.

**All work handed in for the projects must have been made since the beginning of the quarter! And for this class alone! Anyone who chooses not to abide by this rule will fail the course! You may shoot additional photos throughout the term to include in your portfolio. But if the data indicates your photo was taken before the term, you will be penalized harshly.**

Week-by-week Assignments/Readings – See attached Schedule

COLLEGE POLICIES

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.

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: cdm.depaul.edu/enrollment.

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 1420, 25 East Jackson Blvd.

Phone number: (312)362-8002

Fax: (312)362-6544

TTY: (773)325.7296

Plagiarism

The university and school policy on plagiarism can be summarized as follows: Students in this course should be aware of the strong sanctions that can be imposed against someone guilty of plagiarism. If proven, a charge of plagiarism could result in an automatic F in the course and possible expulsion. The strongest of sanctions will be imposed on anyone who submits as his/her own work any assignment which has been prepared by someone else. If you have any questions or doubts about what plagiarism entails or how to properly acknowledge source materials be sure to consult the instructor.

Incomplete

An incomplete grade is given only for an exceptional reason such as a death in the family, a serious illness, etc. Any such reason must be documented. Any incomplete request must be made at least two weeks before the final, and approved by the Dean of the College of Computing and Digital Media. Any consequences resulting from a poor grade for the course will not be considered as valid reasons for such a request.

DROP DATES

The first day of class is Monday March 30th. The last day to add a class is Friday April 3rd. The last day to drop classes with no penalty is Monday April 13th. The last day to withdraw is Friday May 15th. School closed on Monday May 25th. The last class day for this class is Wednesday June 3rd. Grades posted on Friday June 19th (or earlier).

FINAL EXAM

2:30 pm – 4:45 pm on Monday June 8th.

COURSE GOALS

Students will be able to analyze the visual components of still images that combine to create an image’s emotional affect and artistic power or resonance (thus entering into a conversation with photography’s historical lineage).

Students will cultivate a critical language to articulate their experience of photography as an art form.

Students will define their own aesthetic credos and learn to consistently create aesthetic work that communicates powerfully to the audience.

Students will produce a portfolio of work that encapsulates their understanding of the photographic principles they have learned and put into practice.

Weekly Schedule listed below:

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

All assignments are detailed on D2L and due before class begins on Monday at 3:10 PM.

In alphabetical order, each student will present a powerpoint or prezi on their favorite photographer. All presentations are due on Week 3. Please begin this assignment in advance so you are not rushed. Review it regularly so that it is still fresh in your mind even if you present last near the end of the term. Online students may choose any famous photographer they wish, but Classroom students will present to the rest of the class. Therefore there cannot be two different presentations by students on the same photographer.

WEEK 1

Introduction, Orientation, Syllabus, ISO Priority

IMPORTANT INTRODUCTORY READINGS (found in D2L under content in tabs on left). You will turn in your responses to the readings to me. Your responses will be numbered as follows:

1. Readings (New York Times Sally Mann article linked on D2L) – prepare to discuss this for our next class – write one paragraph stating your feelings about the kind of photography Sally Mann engages in and whether you consider it art or exploitation.
2. Read the article on the impact of cell phones on learning and respond to its argument in three sentences.
3. Quotations – write down two questions to ask concerning the quotations. Focus on aspects of the quotations that you do not understand or that promote further thought.
4. Syllabus – review and write down any questions you have

Weekly Reading: Preface plus Chapters 1 & 2

Assignments: Prithika Project & Writing Assignment as explained above. To reiterate: For item 1 write a paragraph. For item 2 write three sentences. For item 3 write two questions. For item 4 write any questions you might have. Type it.

WEEK 2

Lens Choice

Reading: Chapter 4

Assignment: Ethnographic Study

WEEK 3

Deep, Limited, Flat, Ambiguous Space

Reading: Chapter 3

Assignment: Space

Assignment: Favorite Photographer Presentation in powerpoint or prezi submitted to the Digital Dr op Box on D2L. YOU MUST ALSO SAVE YOUR PRESENTATION ON A FLASH DRIVE OR HAVE AN EMAIL LINK THAT ALLOWS YOU TO OPEN IT TO SHARE WITH THE CLASS. We will not be opening them from D2L.

WEEK 4

Aperture

Reading: Chapter 5

Assignment: Conceptual

WEEK 5

Shutter

Reading: Chapter 7

Assignment: Totems

WEEK 6

Frames and Reflections & the Rule of Thirds

Reading: Chapter 6

Assignment: Photoshop

WEEK 7

Positive vs. Negative Space & Perspective Shifts

Reading: Chapter 8

Assignment: Album Cover

WEEK 8

Affinity and Contrast & White Balance

Reading: Chapter 10

Assignment: Halloween

WEEK 9

Silhouettes & Erasing Humanity

Reading: Chapter 11

Assignment: Muse

WEEK 10

Exposure & HDR

Reading: Chapter 12

Assignment: Photo-roman