

Photography - Course Syllabus

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Classroom participation

Each student is required to participate daily in class discussions, lectures and critiques. A great deal of information will be presented during the next several weeks. It is particularly important to be present for the demonstrations of camera and darkroom usage as you must complete your assignments, but will not be allowed to use them unless you are there for the demonstrations and have passed the quizzes. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain copies of the lecture notes, and to catch up before the end of the week when a class is missed. Excessive absences will result in the failure of the course as you will not be able to complete assignments and quizzes if you are not in class. Please let me know if you are having difficulties, I will work with you.

Critiques

You will be expected to participate in class by being in class, being vocal during discussions and being active in presenting work and criticizing work. It is expected that everyone talk at least once about each person's work during critiques or what ever subject matter is being presented. A strong discussion is comprised of varied viewpoints and tolerance for each other's opinions. A useful critiques will investigate both the strength's and weaknesses of an individual's work. Again, you will be evaluated on the quality of your participation.

Critiquing means that we talk about both the successes and failures in work. We will always attempt to constructively criticize work, however, you should try not to take anyone's comments personally. Critiquing in class is about trying to help you become a more successful photographer, not a better person!

Lack of participation can often mean the difference between an A and B student.

Grades

This is a basic photography course. My goal is to teach you how to shoot a camera, get images and use a darkroom. This could be an easy "A" for you if you come to class, participate and take notes in lecture and critiques, turn in assignments as instructed and on the due date, participate in tests and quizzes and try your best. I'm not necessarily going to grade on creativity at this point.

Photography is fun, but this is high school so you will be expected to earn your grade by completing the class requirements..

I grade according to individual effort and how well the requirements have been fulfilled. Here is an approximate breakdown of the guidelines I use:

Participation and notebook: 25%

Tests: 25%

Assignments: 25%

Final Project: 25%

If you have concerns or questions about your grades, please email or visit with me outside of class.

Materials & Expenses

Binder

Notebook paper

Pen/pencil

Black and white 35 mm film -HFAA will supply the film for this class. 1 roll of film per assignments unless otherwise approved.

35mm SLR camera - HFAA does have some cameras for students to check out, but they are few and you will have limited time to use them. If you would like to purchase a camera, you can find inexpensive 35mm SLR's on-line and at pawn shops. If you are going to buy one, please let me know and I will help you as much as possible with choosing the camera and price. You **will not** be able to use a digital camera during this course.

What you can expect from me:

My goal is to help guide you through your discovery of the photographic process and to help you to establish a firm grasp on that technique. I will be here for you to bounce your ideas off of, to lead critiques and to promote a high level of conversation regarding class work. However, I don't presume to have all the answers you will need. I am a touchstone, someone to help guide you to the next step, someone who is enthusiastic in her own work and terrifically enthusiastic about photography and art. Don't try to please me, try to please yourself. If you follow your own fascination, your enthusiasm for your subject will be infectious. As your teacher, I will be looking to see how you push yourself to look at the world in creative ways. I am here to challenge you, and in that regard I am honest and hard, but ultimately, I want the best for all my students and will try to provide individual as well as group guidance.

Obviously, one course cannot be all things to all people, so you might have some disgruntlement or some concerns with the process. Please remember that I am always happy to deal with issues that might come up for you - send emails, talk to me between classes - ask questions and be vocal - you will make yourself visible and will learn much more.

Assignments

I expect assignments to be done on time. We will be looking and talking about work on a weekly basis once we start shooting and if work is not brought to class, you will miss the benefit of a class evaluation. If for some reason you are not able to completely finish work, I will expect the "work in progress" to be brought in. NEVER miss a critique for lack of work - I expect everyone to turn something in on the due date. For every assignment, I expect you to discuss the following a paragraph of self-evaluation that should help you to prepare for class critique. Within this summary you should address the following issues:

- what settings did you use to shoot the piece ;
- what were the lighting conditions;
- what are the strengths of the project;
- what could you have worked harder at;
- what changes would you make if doing it again.

I will ask to see contact sheets, but you should be bringing them to me as well. Bring all your negatives and contacts, and come prepared to print every class once we get into the darkroom. We have a small darkroom and will have to rotate usage of the printers. Make sure that you have your work with you at all times so that you can work when darkroom space is available

For the time being, we will not be shooting. Throughout the next month, I will be going over the very basics of photography, cameras, darkrooms and photographic elements. At the end of each section, you will have a quiz. Before we start checking out camera and shooting, we will have a test to assure that each person is knowledgeable enough to use the cameras and the darkroom. If you do not pass the test with a "C", you will continue to study in class until you do pass it, upon which you can join the rest of the class with the shooting assignments. The assignments will take two weeks each to shoot and print and are as follows:

- #1 Sunny 16 Rule
- #2 Artificial Lighting (not using a flash)
- #3 Composition
- #4 Great Depth of Field
- #5 Shallow Depth of Field
- #6 Action
- #7 Portrait
- #8 Photo Essay

I will give you more information on the assignments once we complete the basic lectures.

Final Project

You will create a photo essay consisting of 5 images that demonstrate your capabilities using the camera and darkroom techniques we have learned this semester. Your 5 images must explain how to do something such as planting a garden or riding a skateboard. You will also produce and present a statement describing self evaluation of progress made in class.

The entire assignment must be shot on one roll of film, processed by you.

All images must be printed 5x7 in size and to the best of your ability. They should be free of dust and spots, free of water spots and scratches.

They should be printed using filters with an attempt to bring out the most appropriate contrast level for the individual image.

The finished images will be mounted on black posterboard. Negatives and statement will be turned in with mounted images.

A good way to go about this is to look at what you have done and evaluate what you might be most interested in to focus on to explore further. This also gives you the opportunity to demonstrate your accomplishment with the camera and compositional tools. More information on this assignment will be given after spring break. We will spend most of the time after spring break working on this project.