

INTRODUCTION TO PHOTOGRAPHY (ARTS 117-01)

Denison University, Spring 2014

W/F 1:00-2:50pm @ Bryant 309/Mulberry House

Professor: Ben Kinsley

Email: kinsleyb@denison.edu

Office: Bryant Arts Center, 401B

Office Phone: 740-587-6770

Office Hours: by appointment

The camera makes everyone a tourist in other people's reality, and eventually in one's own.

-Susan Sontag

COURSE OVERVIEW

The emphasis of this introductory photography course is to give students a strong foundational background in photography. Students will be exposed to a wide variety of technical and aesthetic concerns involved in making photographs, including: aperture, depth of field, camera handling, digital file formats, Adobe Photoshop CC, Adobe Bridge, and large-format digital printing. Beyond the acquisition of skills, the central goal is to enable you as a student to *see* differently. To this end, the class will be structured around lectures, assignments and discussion that will examine the historical and contemporary significance of the photographic image as well as technical demonstrations and critique.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Improve your conceptual and technical understanding of digital photography as a medium
- Give you hands on experience with digital tools and techniques
- Provide opportunities for experimentation, research, and group learning
- Help you see the value of experimental and non-traditional ways of image-making
- Introduce you to a plethora of works by historical and contemporary photographic artists
- Expand your notion of what art is and can be

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Come to every class prepared to learn, work, listen, watch, and participate.
- Complete all assignments on time. Students are always permitted, and encouraged, to consider re-doing assignments for which they did not receive a satisfactory grade. A re-do must be completed one week after the unsatisfactory grade. A re-do does not guarantee a higher grade, but it is impossible to receive a lower grade for such efforts.
- Participation in class, constructive response during group critiques, and discussion of relevant readings.
- Work hard + Experiment + Take risks + Have fun!

REQUIRED & RECOMMENDED MATERIALS, FEES, ETC.

- *Sketchbook or Notebook (required)*
for taking notes, research, etc.
- *USB Flash Drive (highly recommended)*
for media transfer and storage
- *Digital SLR Camera (highly recommended)*
if you don't have your own camera it is possible to reserve equipment through the department and the library. However, there are only 24 dSLR cameras available to the whole campus community, and a very high demand during Spring 2014 semester. You MUST plan ahead!
<http://denison.edu/campus/library/services/media-equipment>
- *Printing*
There is a small fee attached to printing from the large Epson printers. You must pay this bill for your final grade to be released.

BLACKBOARD

- all assigned projects and readings will be assigned and discussed in class as well as posted (along with pertinent information, deliverables, and due dates) to Blackboard.
- the class schedule will be posted to Blackboard and subject to change. All changes to the posted schedule will be announced in class.
- Grades will be posted to the Blackboard Grade Center.
- print lab hours, TA contacts, and information will be posted to Blackboard.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

This is a studio class and much of the work done in this class is done during class time. Attendance is mandatory and crucial to your success. You can miss two classes during the semester, preferably with excused absences. After this, further absences will adversely affect your final grade. Your third absence will lower your final grade by 1/3 letter grade. Every absence after that reduces your grade by another 1/3 letter. You are expected to be physically and mentally present and on time. If you know in advance that you will be unable to attend a particular class, or that you will be late, please leave advance notice with your instructor to register an excused absence. Students are responsible for all missed material. The professor will not provide notes for students for missed classes. Tardy arrivals or early departures, unless authorized by the instructor, count as ½ an absence.

CANCELLATION POLICY

If it would become necessary to cancel a class due to weather or illness, I will contact the Department Secretary who will post a note on the door, as well as alert via email if possible.

ACCOMMODATION

Any student who thinks he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately as soon as possible to discuss his or her specific needs. I rely on the Academic Support & Enrichment Center in 102 Doane to verify the need for reasonable accommodations based on documentation on file in that office.

GENERAL GRADING CRITERIA

- A Student works in an independent manner. Willing to try new approaches while working on improving skills. Contributes to classroom critiques and discussions every day. Completes in-class work and brings outside assignments to class on time. Work displays understanding of formal and conceptual/expressive aspects of each project.
- B Works in class. Finishes work and turns in assignments on time. Good understanding of art concepts. Participates in classroom discussions.
- C Completes work with mixed results. Homework and in class projects not in on time. Rarely contributes to classroom discussions.
- D Work often incomplete or missing. Little understanding of art concepts discussed in class. No significant contribution to class critiques. Problems with absences.
- F Student has missing and incomplete work, excess absenteeism, no class contribution.

PROJECT GRADING RUBRIC

Each assignment will be graded using the following rubric. You will be emailed the completed rubric, and the final grade (out of 100) will be entered into the Blackboard Grading Center.

- ___ Followed the Parameter of the Assignment (10 pts)
___ Creativity, Ambition, Risk Taking (20 pts)
___ Formal Qualities: Craft, Attention to Detail (20 pts)
___ Technical Fluency (10 pts)
___ In Class Work (Material Preparation and Efficient Use of Time) (15 pts)
___ Time Management (Outside Class Work between workdays) (15 pts)
___ Participation in Discussions and Critique (10 pts)
- _____ TOTAL (100 pts)

SEMESTER GRADE BREAKDOWN

Grades will be added to the Blackboard Grading Center throughout the semester and weighted according to the following rubric:

Projects 1-4 = 65%

- 1: Photo Walks (10%)
- 2: Photo as Process (15%)
- 3: Manipulated Reality (20%)
- 4: Alter Ego Portrait (20%)

Final Project = 25%

Photographer Presentation = 10%

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Proposed and developed by Denison students, passed unanimously by DCGA and Denison's faculty, the Code of Academic Integrity requires that instructors notify the Associate Provost of cases of academic dishonesty, and it requires that cases be heard by the Academic Integrity Board. Further, the code makes students responsible for promoting a culture of integrity on campus and acting in instances in which integrity is violated.

Academic honesty, the cornerstone of teaching and learning, lays the foundation for lifelong integrity. Academic dishonesty is intellectual theft. It includes, but is not limited to, providing or receiving assistance in a manner not authorized by the instructor in the creation of work to be submitted for evaluation. This standard applies to all work ranging from daily homework assignments to major exams. Students must clearly cite any sources consulted—not only for quoted phrases but also for ideas and information that are not common knowledge. Neither ignorance nor carelessness is an acceptable defense in cases of plagiarism. It is the student's responsibility to follow the appropriate format for citations. Students should ask their instructors for assistance in determining what sorts of materials and assistance are appropriate for assignments and for guidance in citing such materials clearly.

For further information about the Code of Academic Integrity see <http://www.denison.edu/about/integrity.html>**COURSE**

PROJECTS & ASSIGNMENTS

Project 1a: Color Walk

Description

You are to embark on a journey without knowing the destination. This can be begin anywhere. You are to identify a color of interest in your environment, take a photo which captures this color (in any manner you see fit), and continue to search for, follow, and document this color until you have captured AT LEAST 36 (properly exposed) photographs. Your chosen color will create a frame through which you view your surroundings. This process may take 30 minutes, or it may take a full day.

Project 1b: Texture Walk

Description

Project 2 in the "photo walk" series. You are to identify a texture of interest in your environment, take a photo which captures this texture (in any manner you see fit), and continue to search for, follow, and document textures until you have captured AT LEAST 36 (properly exposed) photographs. This process may take 30 minutes, or it may take a full day.

Project 1c: Shadow Walk

Description

Project 3 in the "photo walk" series. You are to observe, document, and follow shadows through your environment until you have captured AT LEAST 36 (properly exposed) photographs. This process may take 30 minutes, or it may take a full day.

Project 1d: Composition Walk

Description

The fourth and final project in the "photo walk" series. In this case you are focusing your attention on composition. You are to capture 36 images that follow the Rule of Thirds.

Project 2: PHOTO AS PROCESS

Description

The word photography comes from two ancient Greek words: photo, for "light," and graph, for "drawing." Literally drawing with light. For this project you will focus on the process of creating an image as opposed to merely documenting the world around you. Experiment with the way we look at and think about photographic images. How can you use light, time, and the process of taking pictures to create an image that can only exist as a photograph? You may wish to experiment with exposure time, light sources (flash kits, laser pointers, mirrors, etc), or the physical process of snapping the shutter. This project is not about what alterations you can do after the fact (i.e. photoshop...this will come later), but rather how you can generate an image for and with your camera.

Inspiration:

Picasso light paintings, Barry Underwood, Katja Mater, Adam Fuss, Christopher Bucklow, Alison Rossiter, Hiroshi Sugimoto, Roman Signer, Corin Hewett

Project 3: MANIPULATED REALITY

Description

For this project you will create a manipulated, exaggerated, or entirely fabricated reality using your own photographs and Photoshop. The idea is to create a believable space that does not and cannot exist in the world as we know it. You will be staging and capturing your own images and using only your own sources to create the final, manipulated image. While this final image will be highly collaged, your job is to create a believable, unified space.

You must use at least 5 original photographs for this project

Inspiration:

Andreas Gursky, Gregory Crewdson, James Casebere, Jeff Wall, Thomas Demand, Lenka Clayton, Mimi Kato, Robert and Shana ParkeHarrison,

Project 4: ALTER EGO PORTRAIT

Description

Create a portrait of a human subject that goes beyond mere representation. How can you exaggerate, amplify, or fabricate identity through the staging, capturing, and enhancing of a photographic image? Consider lighting, attire, environment, staged scenarios, camera angle, framing, composition, process, etc. Who is this person? How do they perceive themselves? How are they perceived by their family? Their friends? Their enemies? Who are they in their dreams? Nightmares? Fantasies?

Inspiration:

Dawoud Bey, Cindy Sherman, Nikki S. Lee, Jason Salavon, Yasumasa Morimura, Annie Leibovitz, Candice Breitz

Research Project: Photographer PechaKucha

Description

Your are to choose one photographer from the list and prepare a 6 minute presentation for the class in the style of PechaKucha (a simple presentation format where you show 20 images, each for 20 seconds).

- Research your photographer
- Collect 20 images of their work
- Prepare a slideshow
- Prepare a short presentation where you will show us all 20 images and give us background information about the photographer, how they work, process, conceptual frameworks, etc.
- All in 5 minutes!

Artists

Raymonde April, Eugene Atget, Tina Barney, Uta Barth, Walead Beshty, Richard Billingham, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Ed Burtynsky, Sophie Calle, Julia Margaret Cameron, John Coplans, John Divola, Robert Frank, Lee Friedlander, Anna Gaskell, Lauren Greenfield, Jan Groover, Emmet Gowin, Barbara Kasten, Elad Lassry, Louise Lawler, Laura Letinsky, Philip Lorca diCorcia, An My Le, David Maisel, Robert Mapplethorpe, Mary Ellen Mark, Marilyn Minter, Shirin Neshat, Jo Spence, Doug and Mike Stern, Stephen Shore, Laurie Simmons, Lorna Simpson, Joel Sternfeld, Thomas Struth, Wolfgang Tillmans, Carrie Mae Weems, William Wegman, James Welling, Joel Peter Witkin, Sam Taylor Wood, Francesca Woodman