

Welcome To PhotoArts 1

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Office: 7B-2200 hours: TBA or by appt.

**LECTURE: Tuesdays (T) 4-5:50pm
room 7B – 4020**

**DEMO/LAB: Monday (M) 4-6:50 am
CRIT/LAB: Wednesdays (W) 5-7:50pm
room 7B-4060**

With this class you are beginning your journey into Photography at RIT. This class may be the most difficult and time-consuming course that you have ever taken. Don't worry, you are going to love it and the pay-off is immense! This will be your favorite class – it is what you are here to do and together, we are all going to have fun doing it. We will spend our time learning to communicate our ideas visually through the investigation of the **technical, aesthetic and conceptual** aspects of photographic practice. Mastering all three elements is crucial to excelling in this class and in becoming an effective image maker.

Now for the nitty gritty... A syllabus is a contract for the course – please read below carefully:

Getting started: Two of the most important things you'll need to work on include **time management** and **having fun**. It may seem a little oxymoronic to say you need to work on having fun, but I find that students often forget why they entered a photo program – that they love to make images – and get caught up in assignments and fulfilling requirements, yet they do so without the passion that led them to pursue photography in the first place! You should be photographing all the time, whenever you can. Have your camera on you 24/7 (ok, not in the shower) and work outside of and beyond your assignments. Keep in mind that your assignments are a guide to help you explore different compositional techniques – to make you a stronger image maker. **They are not designed to limit you!** You should be consistently making more work than asked for, not just enough. I am always happy to look at other things you are exploring and one of these tangents may develop into your final project.

Time management is crucial to keep all your classes and the demands upon you within reach. It is tempting to overbook yourself. Learn how to prioritize and where to use your time most effectively (there are student services resources to help you out if this is something you have trouble with).

You absolutely cannot become a good photographer without making lots and lots of work. The only way to become good is by doing!

Attendance: This class meets 3 times a week and you are expected to be in attendance and on time for every class. Excessive absences or lateness will result in a lowered grade. Frankly, we do so much in this class that absences will result in poor performance anyway. I deeply respect those who take responsibility for themselves – you know where you need to be, be there – you are paying for it, take advantage of class and lab time. If you have other priorities, take responsibility and own up to it. An excused absence will only be given with a doctor's note, funeral program and preferably before the fact (email me, email me, email me...). Excused absences do not include being in jail or on vacation. **Please note that YOU are responsible for getting yourself caught up in any area you miss – demos and tests will not be rescheduled.**

Conduct: We're all adults here so this is a place where we play nice. Respecting the other students as well as the instructor are crucial to creating a safe and enjoyable learning environment. Unless you happen to be a doctor on call, **Cell phones, computers and electronic devices are to be turned off for the duration of class.** Paying attention, asking questions and contributing to discussions are very important. Your participation will be considered in your final grade. If you feel that you are being mistreated by any person in class, or you think that I am treating you unfairly, please see me immediately. I have an open door policy however there will always be misunderstandings between individuals and we absolutely

want to make sure that any discomfort or disagreements are handled immediately. RIT has many resources if you are having problems and this institution supports an environment free of discrimination. With that said, it is important to remember that we all have differing opinions and our classroom will be a safe forum to express them. Be prepared to hear ideas or opinions that may not fall in line with your own; to respect what others have to say and to feel comfortable expressing your own thoughts.

- ☞ If you have a disability, it is your responsibility to bring the proper documentation to my attention if you desire accommodation during class.
- ☞ I often show “difficult” imagery that may include sexually explicit nudes or images of violence. Please see me privately if this will be an issue for you and we will attempt to make accommodation.

It is our desire that we have an open and creative environment for our class, however the following conduct is not acceptable:

- ☞ Talking during lecture – please ask questions, however;
- ☞ Loud or disruptive behavior, disrespect to other students or the instructor;
- ☞ Sleeping;
- ☞ No eating, ever, in the LAB – I usually allow it in the classroom if it is not disruptive;
- ☞ Sexual intimidation or harassment;
- ☞ Cheating or plagiarism;
- ☞ texting

What you can expect of me: I am your leader and facilitator. You can expect a consistent level of passion about art and education. I am your biggest cheerleader and your toughest critic. It is my job to push you to do your best, to always do better. It is not important whether I like your work, so don't spend your time trying to please me. What is important is that you push yourself to discover your own vision and to develop the skills necessary to make the best, most communicative images within your ability. I don't believe in right answers – there are many ways to solve a problem. I don't pretend to have all the answers, but I do have a lot of experience and enthusiasm to help you get answers. I do believe in the adventure of endless learning – that's why I teach. My door is always open. I expect you to try your best and you can expect the same from me.

Grades: I am considered to be a hard grader, so if you want an A in this class, be prepared to work for it! “A” means consistently exceptional work, that means not just fulfilling the assignments, but really investigating your ideas, consistently trying new things and pushing yourself to work harder. On the other hand, working hard does not guarantee you an A grade. Excelling means putting it all together – technical, aesthetic and conceptual – regardless of what area you plan on concentrating in the future.

A = Excellent – you have gone well beyond the requirements of the assignment, making work that is challenging both technically and aesthetically, excellent participant in critique. Work shows exceptional creative thought.

B = Above average – you've gone beyond the requirements of the assignment, made work that is challenging either technically or aesthetically, and have been an excellent participant in crits.

C = Average – you've fulfilled the requirements of the assignment and made good work. You moderately participated in the critique.

D = Below Average – did not completely fulfill the requirements of the assignment, made work that was either technically or aesthetically inferior, moderate to poor performance in crit.

F = Failing – did not turn in work; work did not fulfill the requirements of the course.

- ☞ Your final grade will be comprised of **Assignments** (60%), **Participation & Writing assignments** (20%) and **Quizzes** (20%). There should be plenty of opportunity for you to excel in all areas. If you are having problems in any area, or are unclear about why

you received a certain grade, be sure to come see me asap so that we can get on top of the problem immediately.

Critique: One of the most important aspects of this class is the critique process. Nearly every week we will discuss each other's work. You are expected to not only be gracious in hearing critique of your work, but to also provide compelling and consistent feedback on your fellow students' work. The more you share, the more you will learn. It is important to remember that we are all in this together. It is also important to put your personal feelings aside. Critique can be difficult to hear, but this is exactly what makes us better image makers. When offering critique, try to remember that it is not about you – it is about the work on the wall. Be honest and look for both the successes and failures. In receiving criticism, remember that we learn most through our failures and when we take risks, accept that criticism is about the work and not about you. For every crit you will get a crit grade – try to improve upon it!

Assignments: You'll have lots of assignments for the quarter which we will be looking at through projection. There will be no printing in this class, so the emphasis will be on composition and understanding the camera through making properly exposed images.

- ☞ You'll be turning your work in through the server drop box. Please be attentive to the instructions for how your work should be formatted and organized.
- ☞ Your attention to the details of the assignment will form part of your grade.
- ☞ a typed project self-evaluation will be due with each project and should be included in your project folder.
- ☞ Assignments have one due date – work not turned in on the due date will receive an F. Extensions on projects will be given **only if application is made ahead of time and for a justifiable reason**. See attendance above.
- ☞ Partial work is better than no work, however missing class does not extend a due date!

Online Quizzes: Your photography text has an online study guide to assist your learning process and justify the hefty sum you paid for the tome. With each chapter assignment (you are expected to complete at least one online quiz. This quiz will be due within a week of the assigned reading and as the quizzes are open book, you will only be given credit for those with a perfect score. There are 3 quizzes for each chapter – go to **select chapter > study questions** and choose one of the exams. Once you complete, email the html version to me at sespqh@rit.edu. You are free to do as many exams as you choose (and will be given extra points in your evaluation), but you must do at least one exam per chapter within a week of the assigned reading!

http://wps.prenhall.com/hss_london_photoew_1/

Reading/writing Assignments: You will have several reading response writing assignments that are intended to help you think about photography in a social/historical context. These are due at the time of the discussion. **You are expected to be an active participant in all class discussions**. Come prepared with your thoughts and ideas to contribute. This will form part of your grade. It's an opportunity to practice your public persona skills, which will be so needed in your career!

Materials – better known as “What, I’ve got to buy all this stuff?!”

No doubt about it, this will be one of the priciest classes you have ever taken. Yep, photography is super expensive – this class is like ripping off a band-aid, it's gonna hurt, but it'll set you up for a long time. You need to buy these things, so prepare to bleed!

- ☞ **Fully manual Digital SLR**, recommended to have at least 10 megapixels. Please see the DSLR handout. Several companies do give student discounts.
- ☞ **Tripod**. I still have my first tripod and consider it the best thing I ever bought. You will want one of these immediately – get a good one suitable for your camera.

- ☞ **Hand-held light meter:** like your tripod, this is an important tool for any professional photographer. Best if you get one that can sync to flash for strobe work. Later in the quarter.
- ☞ **Storage media:** can't have too much. Mimimum 2, 2 gig cards for your camera.
- ☞ **Card reader**
- ☞ **External hard drive:** can't have too much. At minimum have a 250G travel drive – one that powers through firewire or USB2 rather than a separate a/c adaptor.
- ☞ **Small Electronic flash:** for next quarter however you might want to have this for your November break assignment. Non-dedicated, meaning you can use it off of your camera.
- ☞ **Insurance:** it is highly recommended that you have insurance for your equipment. If you are still under your parents insurance, check to see if you are covered there. If you have renter's insurance, you should be ok. You might need an additional rider for camera equipment, so check it out. **The cage has an engraver so you can put your name or code on equipment – do it yesterday!**

Text books: both of these should be in the bookstore – other readings I will provide. These books are designed to work together through your first & second years in the Photo program.

- ☞ *Photography: The Essential Way*, by London, Upton & Stone, Prentice Hall
- ☞ *The Elements of Photography*, by Angela Faris-Belt, Focal Press
- ☞ *The Adobe Photoshop Lightroom 2 Book: The Complete Guide for Photographers*, Martin Evening, Focal Press
- ☞ *Criticizing Photographs: An Introduction to Understanding Images*, by Terry Barrett

Things you will want to have:

- Lens cleaner and paper
- gray card
- Cable release with lock (or appropriate for your camera)
- Dust blower
- CDRs & DVDs for backup

Don't ever be afraid to ask questions – don't be afraid to ask for help!

Syllabus Outline

This syllabus is a work in progress, we'll change it as we need to. Make sure you are aware of what is going on week to week – it is your responsibility to come prepared to class!

Our basic schedule:

Mondays 4 - 6:50 pm (M): Demo & Lab	K-Lab 4060
Tuesdays 4 - 5:50 pm (T): lecture & discussion	classroom 4020
Wednesdays 8 - 10:50 am (W): Critique & Lab	K-Lab 4060

↓ Week #1 - September 7 – 8 – 9

M 1

Intro to class; break to set up lockers

Choose partners

Bring camera and grey card to class. Intro to camera controls, making successful digital images.

Camera/exposure basics; using a grey card.

Using drop box.

- ☞ READ: Photo: the Essential Way –chs 1, 2 & 3 – online quizzes due by T2
- ☞ DO: choose an image from the text (or from Elements of Photography) and discuss what is successful about that image. Review it from a technical and aesthetic perspective: what initially captured your eye about the photo; how is it composed; what is the imagemaker trying to communicate; how does it make you feel? Are there things you may have done differently? Perhaps you chose the image because you really don't like it – reflect on what doesn't work for you. Write a page (typed) about the image and bring to class to share on Wednesday. Attach a photocopy or scan of image to the paper.
- ☞ DO – mini assignment: make 10 photos that introduce who you are, organize them in a series that you'll present to class on Wednesday.

T1

Watch first half of “Visions of Light”

Discuss use of light in imagemaking, making exposures Assignment 1 – Let there Be Light!

- ☞ DO: Shoot 75-100 images investigating your partner as subject emphasizing the exploration of light and shadow – edit to 10 images for presentation in class.

W1

Review images from text. Review mini assignment

- ☞ READ: for M2 – Elements of Photography ch 1
- ☞ READ: Intro chapter on Lightroom (ch 1-2)

↓ Week #2 - September 14 – 15 - 16

M2

Subject – Content - Form

Aperture and shutter speed.

Digital Capture – about the camera – **Lightroom intro**

- ☞ READ: Photography ch 4, Elements of Photography ch 2
- ☞ DO: complete and submit online quiz – due T3

T2

Discuss what it means to criticize a photograph (reference Criticizing a Photograph 1 & 2)

Assignment 2 – Depth and Motion

- ☞ READ: “Understanding a Photograph” & “Before Photography”
- ☞ DO: compare/contrast assignment – bring for M3

W2

Crit Let there Be Light

- ☞ READ: Photography ch 14 – complete & submit online quiz due W3
- ☞ READ: Lightroom ch 3, ch 6, pgs 261-279))

↴ Week #3 - September 21 – 22 - 23

M3

File format, resolution, digital control, making slide shows, using Lightroom
Discuss “Understanding Photo” & “Before Photo”

- ☞ READ: Photography ch 7, Elements of Photography ch 3
- ☞ DO online quiz, due T4

T3

Point of View and Juxtaposition as compositional tools; Power of photographer
Watch American Photography 20th Century part 1

- ☞ READ: Criticizing Photographs chs 3&4 – study guide for W5

W3

Crit Depth & Motion

- ☞ Assignment: Preposition/POV
- ☞ READ: Lightroom ch 4

↴ Week #4 - September 28 – 29 – 30

W4

Computer skills – adjusting the image – Lightroom image processing

- ☞ Assignment: Edgenomics
- ☞ READ: Photography ch 8, DO online quiz, due T5

T4

Visual Design & Framing elements
“American Photography in the 20th Century” part 2

W4

Crit Preposition/POV

- ☞ READ: Photography ch 18 –
- ☞ DO: complete and submit online quiz

↴ Week #5 - October 5 – 6 - 7

M5

Color Management & Basic color theory
midterm quiz
Discuss reading CP 3&4

T5

Assignment: Speaking in color / Different kinds of light
Watch second half of “Visions of Light”

- ☞ READ: Photography ch 5 & 11, DO online quizzes, due T6

W5

Crit Edgenomics

- ☞ Assignment: create a slide show of others work: contemporary/ historical/ inspirational
- ☞ READ: Photography ch 15, DO online quiz, due W6

↴ Week #6 - October 12 – 13 - 14

M6

Digital skills – workflow – Adobe Camera Raw
individual meetings midterm

T6

Abstraction: color/ light / line / shape / texture

- ☞ Assignment: Abstraction

- ☞ READ: Read C&P ch 5&6
- ☞ DO: complete and submit online quizzes

W6

Crit Speaking in Color

└ Week #7 - October 19 – 20 – 21

M7

Editing & Sequencing – introduction of final project, LAB

T7

Watch “American Photography and the 20th Century” part 3

- ☞ READ: Power of Photography
- ☞ DO: write short paper on important photograph – due T9

W7

Crit Abstraction

└ Week #8 - October 26 – 27 – 28

M8

Individual meetings to confirm final project, Work in Progress

T8

Managing and archiving images

W8

Presentations

└ Week #9 - November 2 – 3 - 4

M9

Review of color theory

Work in Progress Lab

T9

Discuss & reflect on 20th – 21st century photography

Review Power of Photography images

W9

Presentations

└ Week #10 - November 9 – 10 - 11

M10

Individual meetings as necessary, Work in progress

T10

Assignment for break

Overview of quarter

W10

Final Crit on projects

↳ **Finals week: Final Exam, Individual meetings, pick up projects** → Freedom ↵