Course Syllabus

HU 2632 - Fundamentals of Digital Photography

Humanities: Spring 2011

Explores the history, aesthetics, theory, and practice of photography in the digital environment. Students learn in-depth digital camera and imaging production techniques. Students provide their own digital camera, preferably a digital SLR.

Instructor Information

Instructor: Christine Garceau, PhD Candidate, RTC
Office Location: Walker 148 Walker
E-mail: cmgarceau@mtu.edu
Office Hours: TBA

Course Identification

Course Number: HU 2632
Course Name: Fundamentals of Digital Photography
Course Location: Walker Digital Media Zone classroom
Class Times: Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:35 PM to 4:50 PM

Course Description/Overview

Explores the history, aesthetics, theory, and practice of photography in the digital environment. Students learn in-depth digital camera and imaging production techniques. Students provide their own digital camera, preferably a digital SLR.

Overview of the Semester

This undergraduate level digital photography course is designed to help students explore the world of digital photography within the context of ongoing conversations on history, aesthetics, theory and practice of photography. The first half of the semester will focus on a series of guided assignments utilizing digital image capture, digital darkroom development and narrative text exercises to help explore and design at direction for each student’s self-representation within a final portfolio presentation at the end of the semester.

Students will explore concepts of image production and manipulation using Adobe Bridge and Photoshop. Image production will be based on technical constructs defined by representations of self and others within personal, peer and global spaces. Group research projects will help students examine the digital design of photographic production alongside the social, political and theoretical framing of race, class, gender, and age. Each week readings covering the technical, theoretical and historic foundations of photography will be assigned. Students will respond to these readings through questions handed out at the beginning of each week.

Subject to change at any time.
The second half of the semester will involve a deeper exploration of current and historic photographic practice through in-depth individual research as well as collaborative projects. Field trips or presentations by professional photographers may also be a part of the class during this half of the semester—times and locations will be given at a later date. Selected readings and photographic assignments will be given to help strengthen and guide students to better understand the technical and cultural construction of photographic images. Each student will be responsible for a five-minute presentation on an assigned photographer during the course of the semester.

At the end of the semester each student will develop a final portfolio which best suits her/his area of developing interested resulting from individual research. The final portfolio will include:

- Ten matted images representing the best work from the semester
- Book project (topic TBA)—finished product
- An updated resume or visual media inventory
- All reading responses from the semester
- A presentation box or portfolio case for all of the above to go into

Final Exam—will be a 2 ½ page written self-evaluation of progress during semester

The final exam will be a self-evaluation and review of the theoretical and technical material covered during the course of the semester. Guidelines for the written exam will be given later in the semester.

Failure to attend the final portfolio presentation weeks at the end of the semester will seriously compromise the final grade.

Course Resources

Course Website(s)
BLACKBOARD http://WWW.COURSES.MTU.EDU

For In-depth help with PhotoShop CS 4 go to http://www.lynda.com;
Username: to be announced
Password: to be announced in class

Required Course Texts
Eisemann, Katrin. Real World Digital Photography 3rd edition with Sean Duggan and Tim Grey
Grundberg, Andy. Crisis the Real: Writings on Photography Since 1974
Berrett, Terry. Criticizing Photographs: An Introduction to Understanding Images

► Additional articles may be made available throughout the semester from the
following:


**Special topic articles during the semester may include excerpts from the following:**

~ "In Our Glory: Photographs of Black Life", by bell hooks in *The Photography Reader*, ed by Liz Wells

~ Magic Eyes, Scenes From and Andean Girlhood, from Stories Told by Alicia and Maria Vasquez, by Wendy Ewald

~ I Dreamed I Had a Girl in My Pocket, with Stories and Photographs by the Children of Vichya, India, by Wendy Ewald.

~ The Artist Portrait Series, by Fern Logan, Southern Illinois University Press; 1st edition (June 20, 2001)978-0809323791

~ George VanderZee, by the Chicago Art Institute Press, 2004 SBN 0-86559-210-1

~ Maggie Taylor’s Landscape of Dreams, by Amy Sanden, Peachtree Press

**Course Supplies**

- DSLR camera (digital single lens reflex capable of RAW capture with adjustable shutter speed and aperture)
- media card(s)
- DVDs, CDs or other media storage devise to archive RAW and jpeg files
- digital media printing paper
- 11 x 14 archival mat
- linen tape for matting
- portfolio for photographs

**Grading System**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LETTER GRADE</th>
<th>ACCUMULATED POINTS</th>
<th>GRADE POINTS/CREDIT</th>
<th>RATING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>935-1000 pts</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>865-935 pts</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>VERY GOOD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>795-864 pts</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>725-794 pts</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>ABOVE AVERAGE</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>665-724 pts</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD</td>
<td>597-664 pts</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>BELOW AVERAGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>540-594 pts</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Inferior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>725-794 pts</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>FAILURE</td>
</tr>
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I: Incomplete: given only when a student is unable to complete a segment of the course because of circumstances beyond the student’s control. A grade of incomplete may be given only when approved in writing by the department chair or school dean.

X: Conditional, with no grade points per credit; given only when the student is at fault in failing to complete a major segment of a course, but in the judgment of the instructor does not need to repeat

Subject at any time.
Grading Policy

Grades will be based on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Photo assignments (8 x 20 = 160), reading responses (10 x 10 = 100), book project (5 x 20) ≤ 20, and presentation (1 x 20 = 20)</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams (1 written exam = 100 and 1 final portfolio = 300)</td>
<td>400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class attendance/participation weekly critiques and conversations</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Points</td>
<td>1000</td>
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Late Assignments

Late assignments are generally not accepted. If you are traveling for an official university sanctioned activity, your assignments must be turned in before you miss class.

Course Policies

Attendance is required. Students are responsible for turning in all reading responses and photo assignments on the assigned dates. Failure to attend weekly photo critiques and discussions will jeopardize your participation grade in the class. **Missing more than three class meeting times will affect your final grade for the course.** (Each absence after three will result in a deduction of 25 points per day).

Please take some time to review the legal guidelines for photographing minor subjects and private property for your photo assignments. (www.lawyers.com) Nudes are not allowed except of yourself. E-mail me @ your convenience and I will respond at mine. Similarly, for telephone communication, please observe the 9:00 etiquette rule…don’t call before 9:00 AM in the morning or after 9:00 PM at night. For anyone unable to meet with me during my MWF office hours, Skype may be arranged by appointment.

Collaboration/Plagiarism Rules

Cell phones, Blackberries, iPods, PDAs, or any other electronic devices are not to be used in the classroom. Please make sure that you bring your camera along with the owner’s manual to class when you have questions regarding operation or technical support.

You will be assigned to work with other students during the course of the semester. Please provide communication information as soon as you know who you will be working with. (e-mail, phone, etc).

Plagiarism, the action of taking someone else’s work or ideas and claiming them as your own is a serious academic offense. In the art world, which photography is a part of, there is a long tradition of doing work in the style of other artists and photographers as a way to pay tribute or to learn new techniques. You may do work in the style of an artist or photographer as long as you recognize that person’s work anytime you share or exhibit your own work. For further information on MTU’s integrity policy, please refer to the web link below.

University Policies

Academic regulations and procedures are governed by University policy. Academic dishonesty cases will be handled in accordance the University’s policies.

If you have a disability that could affect your performance in this class or that requires an
accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act, please see me as soon as possible so that we can make appropriate arrangements. The Affirmative Action Office has asked that you be made aware of the following:

*Misconsin Tech complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. If you have a disability and need a reasonable accommodation for equal access to education or services at Michigan Tech, please call the Dean of Students Office, at 487-2212. For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department head or the Affirmative Action Office, at 487-3310

Academic Integrity: http://www.studentaffairs.mtu.edu/degul/official/policies/academic_integrity.html
Affirmative Action: http://www.mtu.edu/affirmative-action/
Disability Services: http://www.mtu.edu/affirmative-action/student-services.html/disability

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1
T 1/11
COURSE INTRODUCTION
Review of syllabus and course objectives.
Hand out reading assignment and response

TR 1/13
*Bring camera to class*
Entry Survey due. Intro to camera darkroom.
◊ 1st reading response due

Week 2
T 1/18
USING YOUR CAMERA WEEK  *Bring camera to class*
Technical review of camera, downloading files, workflow and archiving using Adobe Bridge.

Chapter 1, 2 and 3, *Real World Digital Photo*, pp 3-154.


TR 1/20
NO CLASS  (NFS trip with Karla Kitalong)

Subject to any change.
**Week 3**  
**T 1/25**  
**FREE STYLE WEEK**  
Bring your camera to class  
Technical review of camera, downloading files, workflow and archiving using Adobe Bridge. Intro to importing images into PhotoShop CS4.  
◊ 2nd reading response due  
  
Chapter 8 and 9, *Real World Digital Photo*, pp 357-389  
“Building a Digital Darkroom”, and “Working in a Digital Darkroom”  


◊ 3rd reading response due  
◊ 1st assignment due:  
5 original images (one of the images will be projected for class)  
Each image in RAW, PSD and converted JPEG files on CD or DVD  
Include name and assignment info on DVD with sharpie. (One of your images will be projected during class critique)  

Review Chapter 1 *Criticizing Photographs: An Introduction to Understanding Photographs*, pp. 1-14, “About An Criticism”

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**Week 4**  
**T 2/1**  
**F-STOP WEEK**  
Bring your camera to class  
Begin review of image manipulation through aperture opening. Lecture followed by demonstration.  


◊ 4th reading response due  
◊ 2nd photography assignment due: 5 original untouched RAW, PSD and converted JPEG files on CD or DVD (one of your images will be projected during class critique)  

Review Chapter 2 *Criticizing Photographs: An Introduction to*
Understanding photographs, pp. 16-36, “Describing Photographs: What do I See?”

**Week 5**

**T 2/8**

**SHUTTER SPEED WEEK** Bring your camera to class

Begin review of image manipulation using shutter speed. Lecture followed by demonstration.

Chapter 10 Real World Digital Photo, pp 401-512, Review Chapter 6, RWDF

*Crisis of the Real*, 136-147, “Robert Cumming, Conflationist,” “Jan Groover: Consciousness as Content”, and “The Photograph as Art Object.”


**TR 2/10**

**NO CLASS** WINTER CARIVAL BEGINS

**Week 6**

**T 2/15**

**OUTPUT AND HARD-COPY WEEK**

- 5th reading response due
- 3rd photo assignment due: 5 original RAW, FSD and JPEG files on CD or DVD. (One of your images will be projected during class critique).


**TR 2/17**

Technical review and lab, downloading, converting and printing.  
**BRING INKJET PAPER TO CLASS**  
as you will print at least one image during lab time.

**Week 7**

**T 2/22**

**PORTRAIT AND LIGHT AS A SUBJECT WEEK**

Lecture followed by demonstration on portrait photography and lighting.


**TR 2/24**

◊ 7th reading response due  
◊ 4th photo assignment due: one matted print (minimum 8x10 inch image in 11x14 inch mat) Critique and Discussion

**Week 8**

**T 3/1**  
**STYLE WEEK: Photographing in the Style of Another Photographer**  
Lecture and discussion

Pages 106 to 126 in *Criticizing Photographs*, (Photographs and Contexts).

**TR 3/3**

◊ 8th reading response due  
◊ 5th photo assignment due: one matted print. Critique and Discussion.

**SPRING BREAK MARCH 13 TO 20**

**Week 9**

**T 3/15**  
**PRESENTATION WEEK: 5 minute presentation** on assigned photographer


Chapter 6, *Criticizing Photographs*, “Judging Photographs,” pp 127-152.

Readings for Maggie Taylor, Jerry Uelsmann and Bea Nettles

**TR 317**

Presentations continue

**Week 10**

**T 3/22**  
**CREATIVE PROCESS WEEK**  
Lecture followed by demonstration of creative and alternative digital imaging processes.


Subject at any time.

8
9th reading response due
6th photo assignment due, one matted print. Critique and discussion.

Week 11
T 3/29
SOCIAL/POLITICAL ACTION WEEK
Lecture followed by discussion of documentary photography.

Chapter 8, in Criticizing Photographs, “Writing and Talking About Photographs,” pp 209-263


7th photo assignment due, one matted print. Critique and discussion

Week 12
M 11/15
BOOK AND FINAL PORTFOLIO PRODUCTION WEEK

10th and final reading response due

F 11/19
8th and final print due-open topic. No critique. Open Lab

Week 13
T 4/5
FINAL PORTFOLIO WEEK—PART 1

TR 4/7
Portfolio presentations continue

Week 14
T 4/12
FINAL PORTFOLIO WEEK—PART 2

TR 4/14
Portfolio presentations continue

Week 15
FINAL EXAM—TBA

Subject at any time.