



AUF

*The American
University of Florence*

SYLLABUS

DIVA – DIGITAL IMAGING AND VISUAL ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF PHOTOGRAPHY

COURSE TITLE: INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

COURSE CODE: DIPHD180

3 Semester Credits

1. DESCRIPTION

This course introduces contemporary technologies for producing photographic images. Approaching the medium in its current complex and pluralistic state, students explore a variety of photographic concepts and techniques. The fundamentals of using a digital camera including manual exposure and lighting are stressed. The course also introduces seeing, thinking, and creating with a critical mind and eye in a foreign environment (Italy) to provide understanding of the construction and manipulation of photographic form and meaning. During the first half of the course assignments, lectures, readings progressively build on each other to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of camera functions (manual mode) and processing techniques. The second half of the course will focus on weaving the techniques with specific photographic concepts via assignments.

NOTE: This course is for beginners. The first half of the course will be devoted to understanding camera functions. During this period, assignments will emphasize basic camera functions in manual mode.

This course includes experiential learning hours with our Community Engagement Member Institutions (CEMI). CEMI are dynamic learning environments created to foster learning through a structured interaction with the community. In addition to regular lecture hours, students will be involved in learning by doing through real projects and integration with the local population and territory in order to remove cultural and learning barriers as well as to develop a strong likelihood for success in life. The experiential learning hours are fully supervised by instructors who track students step by step during their learning experience, monitor and advise according to student needs, and support student initiative. This unique learning model allows students to benefit from an all-encompassing educational experience based on theory and practice in real enterprises, learning of comprehensive operational processes, problem-solving, leadership, and management.

2. OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- Understand how the following elements and techniques function: F-stop; shutter speeds; ISO (gain); types of lenses; formal rules of composition.
- Demonstrate self-confidence working with people in the street.
- Display basic history of photography knowledge.
- Display knowledge of genre types of photography.
- Set up lab station correctly.

- Use basic Lightroom and Photoshop.
- Make, edit and process images (intro level).
- Collaborate and critique with peers as active participants in public dialogue and discourse.
- Acquire and develop intellectual, technical and analytical skills to make photographs that communicate.
- Display understanding of what makes a good photograph in terms of technical quality, light, composition and storytelling.
- Demonstrate effective problem-solving skills.
- File formats.

3. REQUIREMENTS

There are no prerequisites for this course.

4. METHOD

The method used will be experimental by means of Interactive lectures, workshops, on-site visits, direct interaction with subjects for assignments, participation in special projects, collective critiques, and magazine readings.

5. TEXTBOOK – FURTHER READINGS – RESOURCES

TEXTBOOK (Copy available at the university library):

- Foltz, James, Ronald P. Lovell and Fred Zwahlen. *Handbook of Photography* (sixth edition). Thompson Delmar Learning, 2005.

The textbook is mandatory for successful completion of the course.

Where applicable, additional materials, handouts and/or notes will be provided by the instructor.

FURTHER READINGS

- Ang, Tom. *Fundamentals of Photography*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2008.
- Freeman, Michael. *The Complete Guide to Digital Photography*. Silver Pixel Press, 2001.
- Modrak, Rebekah. *Reframing Photography*. Routledge, 2011.
- Webb, Alex, Rebecca Norris Webb and Teju Cole, *Street Photography and the Poetic Image: The Photography Workshop Series*. Aperture Press, 2014.

LIBRARIES IN FLORENCE

Please consult the posted schedules for official opening times of the university library. Also note that the library is for consultation only and it is not possible to borrow materials. The library is equipped with a scanner and internet access so that you may save or email a digital copy of the pages needed. Students may also utilize additional libraries and research centers within the local community:

BIBLIOTECA PALAGIO DI PARTE GUELFA

Located in Piazzetta di Parte Guelfa between Piazza della Repubblica and Ponte Vecchio. Please consult the library website for hours of operation:

http://www.biblioteche.comune.fi.it/biblioteca_palagio_di_parte_guelfa/

BIBLIOTECA DELLE OBLATE

Located in via dell'Oriuolo 26. Please consult the library website for hours of operation:

www.bibliotecadelleoblade.it

THE HAROLD ACTON LIBRARY AT THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF FLORENCE

Located in Lungarno Guicciardini 9. Please consult the library website for hours of operation. This library requires a fee-based student membership. For information: www.britishinstitute.it/en

6. FIELD LEARNING

Please consult your Official Registration for any mandatory field learning dates. Field Learning Activities cited in Official Registrations are an integral part of the course and also include an assignment that counts towards your final grade, details will be provided on the first day of class.

7. COURSE MATERIALS

A DSLR camera and a lens with a focal length of 55mm or wider is required for this course.

Must have a manual setting: ability to set ISO, aperture, and shutter speed.

Should students wish to store materials or equipment, lockers are available with a **10 Euro** deposit (given back after returning the key).

8. COURSE FEES

Course fees cover course-related field learning activities, visits, and support the instructor's teaching methodologies. Book costs are not included in the course fee. The exact amount will be communicated by the instructor on the first day of class.

In addition, students may be required to leave a **deposit** for equipment loaned to them during the session. The deposit will be returned at the end of the course, provided the equipment has been returned in the same condition it was loaned.

9. EVALUATION – GRADING SYSTEM

10% Attendance

10% Participation and improvement

10% Assignments

20% Midterm Exam, Field Learning Project (if applicable), Special/Research Project (if applicable). Inclusive of the exam and a selection of images)

25% Final Portfolio and Paper

25% Final Exam

A = 93-100 %, A- = 90-92%, B+= 87-89%, B = 83-86%, B-=80-82%, C+ = 77-79%, C=73-76%, C- =70-72%, D = 60-69%, F= 0-59%, W = Official Withdrawal, W/F = Failure to withdraw by the designated date.

10. ATTENDANCE – PARTICIPATION

Academic integrity and mutual respect between instructor and student are central to the academic policy and reflected in the attendance regulations. Student presence is mandatory and counts toward the final grade.

Absences are based on academic hours: 1 absence equals 3 lecture hours.

Two absences: 6 lecture hours, attendance and participation grade will be impacted.

Three absences: 9 lecture hours, the final grade may be lowered by one letter grade.

Four absences: 12 lecture hours, constitutes automatic failure of the course regardless of when absences are incurred.

Please note:

- The above hours refer to lecture hours. Please note that the contact / credit hour policy in the academic catalog includes additional distribution ratios according to delivery category. Ex: 1 absence equals 6 FL/SL/Lab hours or 9 EL hours.

- Hours may be distributed in different formats according to the academic course schedules.

LATE ARRIVAL AND EARLY DEPARTURE

Arriving late or departing early from class is not acceptable. Two late arrivals or early departures or a combination will result in an unexcused absence. Travel is not an exceptional circumstance.

TRAVEL (OR DELAYS DUE TO TRAVEL) IS NEVER AN EXCUSE FOR ABSENCE FROM CLASS.

It is the student's responsibility to know how many absences are incurred. If in doubt, speak with your instructor!

Participation: Satisfactory participation will be the result of contributing to class discussions by putting forth insightful and constructive questions, comments and observations. Overall effort, cooperation during group work, proper care of work space and tools, responsible behavior, and completion of assignments will be assessed. All of the above criteria also apply to Field Learning and site visits.

11. EXAMS – PAPERS – PROJECTS

The **Midterm Exam** accounts for 20% and the **Final Exam** accounts for 25% of the final course grade. The time and date of the exam cannot be changed for any reason.

Format: short-answer and essay-long questions.

The **Final Portfolio** accounts 25% of the final course grade. Students will be assessed based on technique, composition, concept, and context. Specific details will be provided by the instructor at the beginning of the course.

12. LESSONS

Lesson 1	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Course presentation. Technical history of photography. <i>NOTE 1: Bring your camera manual for next class. If you do not have your manual, you will be able to find a pdf version on line. Also, always bring your camera to class, charged, and ready.</i> <i>NOTE 2: Please consider purchasing a storage device so that you may take home your images on the last day of class. The school is not responsible for mailing any form of the work you produce in class to you.</i>
Objectives	By the end of this class students will be able to: - Display knowledge of how a camera works (History/Camera Evolution) - Set up workstation and folders as per instructed
Reading	<i>Handbook of Photography</i> , Recording Motion pp 31-47. <i>The Digital Zone System</i> pp. 95-99, pp 150-182, pp. 187-188 (pp. may vary from ebook edition to hardcopy edition, please check with your instructor).

Lesson 2	
Meet	In class

Lecture	Manual mode camera settings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Color space, customizing your DSLR - File format used for class, jpeg, RAW, DNG - Manual mode in camera light meter - Aperture: control light intensity - Shutter speed: controlling exposure length - ISO: controlling gain (or film speed) - Reciprocity: how f-stop, shutter and ISO work together
Objectives	By the end of this class students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use manual mode camera settings effectively
Assignments	Manual Mode Test For the next several assignments you will have to know how to properly set your camera to achieve a <i>normal (N) exposure</i> . Set your camera to manual mode and properly expose (N) 40 images (short) 100 images in (semester).
Reading	<i>Handbook of Photography</i> , re-read: Adjusting Exposure pp 31-35 & pp 296 – 303.

Lesson 3	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Exposure (Reciprocity) Lesson 1: EV & Shutter
Objectives	By the end of this class students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set up Lightroom (LR) and first work flow (importing and tagging). Apply Exposure Values - Display knowledge of shutter speed
Assignments	Effects of shutter speeds: Starting with a shutter speed of 1/500 of a second and finishing with a shutter speed of 1 second make 10 “good” images out of 30 total shots.
Reading	<i>Handbook of Photography</i> , Recording Motion pp.35-36.

Lesson 4	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Exposure (Reciprocity) Lesson 2: EV & Aperture Light Room: setting up your personal catalogue, editing using attributes (color and star ratings).
Objectives	By the end of this class students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understand the correlation between f-stop, shutter and ISO - Use Exposure Values chart - LR: setting up your personal catalogue, editing using attributes (color and star ratings)
Assignments	Return with at least 6 “good” images out of 20 shots, showing a shallow depth of field.

Reading	Grimm, Tom and Michele Grimm. <i>The Basic Book of Photography</i> . Pp. 81-87.
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Lesson 5	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Exposure (Reciprocity) Lesson 3: EV & ISO
Objectives	By the end of this class students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Add drama to their images by controlling the intensity of highlights and shadows - Open an image from LR to PS - PS: basic processing 1 (development) using adjust layer curves
Assignments	Shadows 6 “good” images out of 240 shots.
Reading	<i>Handbook of Photography</i> (recap) pp 31-pp 47.

Lesson 6	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Principles of composition: thirds, halves, symmetry, dominant lines, positive/negative space. LR basic processing.
Objectives	By the end of this class students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use LR basic processing 2 - Apply knowledge of principles of composition to their photographs
Assignments	Composition 12 “good” images out of 240 (due next lesson).
Reading	<i>Handbook of Photography</i> , Chapter 3.

Lesson 7	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Midterm Exam: Selection of images from assignments and multiple-choice test.
Reading	Over the break read: <i>Handbook of Photography</i> , Chapter 16 “A Short History of Photography”.

Lesson 8	
Lecture	Academic Break

Lesson 9	
Meet	In class

Lecture	Qualities of Light: Intensity, contrast, specularity, direction. Light Room: working with the mask brush. Discuss the work by influential street photographers (Henry Cartier Bresson, Garry Winograd, Bruce Gilden, Joel Meyerowitz).
Objectives	By the end of this class students will be able to: - Use LR: selective image exposure with mask brush - Display knowledge of key street photographers
Assignments	Street assignment Between 6 and 8 “good” photographs out of 240 shots.
Reading	<i>Handbook of Photography</i> , pp161-174.

Lesson 10	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Lens types, advantages and limitations of digital technologies. Light Room: noise, retouching, soft proof. Discussion on seeing portrait photography. The four key elements: face, pose, clothing, location, and props. Does a portrait image tell you more about the subject of the photograph or about the person who took the photography? Discuss the work by influential portrait photographers (Richard Avedon, Mary Ellen Mark, Diane Arbus).
Objectives	By the end of this class students will be able to: - Use LR: noise, retouching, soft proof - Display knowledge of key portrait photographers
Assignments	Portrait assignment Between 6 and 8 “good” photographs out of 240 shots.
Reading	<i>Handbook of Photography</i> , pp.194-199.

Lesson 11	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Digital Workflow for presenting your portfolio. We will discuss the proper method for presenting your portfolio in class and how to archive it in the university server. Discuss the work by influential portrait photographers (Cindy Sherman, Nan Golden and others).
Assignments	The Self Portrait 3 “good” images.
Reading	<i>Handbook of Photography</i> , Chapter 16.

Lesson 12	
Meet	In class

Lecture	The four elements of critique: technique, composition, concept, context. Light Room: exporting your work to take home.
Objectives	By the end of this class students will be able to: - Apply knowledge of critique to their own and others' work - Use LR: exporting your work to take home
Assignments	Light, shapes, shadows, lines, textures, angles, patterns.
Reading	Freeman, Michael. <i>The Complete Guide to Digital Photography</i> . Chapters 11-13.

Lesson 13	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Work overview and critique. NOTE: If there are less than 12 students enrolled in this class, the critique will take place on lesson 14. A substitute lesson will be assigned for this lesson.
Objectives	By the end of this class students will be able to: - Establish the progresses they have made so far and identify ways to further improve their photography skills
Assignments	Prepare your final portfolio and final paper.
Reading	Freeman, Michael. <i>The Complete Guide to Digital Photography</i> . Chapters 14-16.

Lesson 14	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Work overview and critique.
Objectives	By the end of this class students will be able to: - Present their own work
Assignments	Paper for last day of class.

Lesson 15	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Final Exam and paper due.