

ARTS 204 Digital Photography  
Credit: 3 Hours  
Prerequisites: None  
Fall 2009: T/H 9:30 AM – 10:45 AM  
Final Exam: W, Dec 16, 12:30 PM – 2:30 PM



Professor: Mark S. Welch  
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Office Hours: M/W/F 2-3 PM; T/H 8-9:30 AM  
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## 1. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is intended for students who are interested in applying current digital imaging technologies to fine art photography. Through the use of flat-bed scanners, digital cameras, as well as “traditional” photographic methods, students will create works of art that reflect the plurality of image-making in the digital age.

## 2. COURSE OBJECTIVES

- a. Subject-specific Outcomes
  - Identify the standard parts/features of a digital camera and explain each function
  - Apply knowledge of camera operations to create properly exposed and focused photographs
  - Apply knowledge of core concepts in photography (e.g., aperture, focal length, shutter speed) to achieve various effects (depth of field, stopped and blurred motion, etc.)
  - Identify and apply the principles of visual organization in the creation of successful photographs
  - Acquire facility with software for digital image manipulation
  - Develop a healthy disposition toward self expression (including that of others)
  - Refine aesthetic sensibilities through experience and analysis
  - Attain familiarity with the art history of photography
- b. Core Competencies Served
  - Critical and Creative Thinking
  - Communication – Visual, Written, and Oral
  - Personal, Moral, Social, and Cultural Development
  - Technology and Information Management
  - Quantitative Reasoning

## 3. COURSE MATERIALS (purchased by student)

- a. Required Text: *A Short Course in Digital Photography*, by London & Stone
- b. Required Supplies:
  - Digital camera – 3 megapixel (MP) minimum, dSLR with 5MP or greater recommended
  - USB storage (“thumb,” “jump,” or “flash” drive) – 2 GB minimum
  - Photography journal
- c. Optional Supplies:
  - Tripod
  - Camera case
  - Remote shutter trigger

## 4. CLASS FORMAT

Through lectures, demonstrations, and assignments students will be introduced to and gain facility with technical and expressive components of digital photography and digital image manipulation. The first part of the course focuses on the technical; the second on the expressive.

The course is comprised of in-class exercises, outside-class projects, quizzes, exams, and written and verbal critiques. Students should plan on spending at least as much time working out of class as in class. Project descriptions and instructions referenced in the course calendar below and other course materials are available on the Holy Cross College online course management system, Moodle (<http://moodle.hcc-nd.edu>).

## 5. CLASS POLICIES

### **Attendance Policy**

It is very important to get to class each day, to be on time, and to turn in assignments when due. Each class session builds on knowledge gained in the previous. 3 instances of tardiness = 1 absence. Students with 4 unexcused absences will fail the course, without exception. Absence on critique days will result in devaluation of that assignment by one letter grade.

In the event of an absence, the *student* is responsible for *identifying* and *completing* all assignments. Should your absence be excused (e.g. with a note from a doctor stating that you were ill), you will be allowed to make up work without penalty. Otherwise, assignments turned in late will be lowered by one letter grade for each day late. Late work that reaches a value of F will be reduced by 10% each day thereafter.

### **Student Conduct Statement**

See Student Handbook: Holy Cross College presumes a high moral character and an attitude of self-respect in its students regarding such matters as discipline, integrity, and personal behavior (Student Handbook, 2009-10: p. 33).

### **Academic Honesty Statement**

See Student Handbook: As a Catholic community, faculty, staff, and students have a moral and ethical responsibility to uphold the principle of unquestioned honesty, and refrain from any activity or behavior that would suggest academic dishonesty and lack of personal integrity. Students shall be honest in their academic work and shall support the honesty of others. They shall, moreover, guard against any appearance of dishonesty (Student Handbook, 2009-10: p. 8)

### **Statement about Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

Students with a documented disability are eligible for accommodations as specified by the Director of Student Counseling Services. Students must inform the instructor of their eligibility for accommodations at the beginning of the semester.

### **Policies Regarding Student Athletes**

Student athletes must provide the instructor with the proper documentation signed by their coach or the Athletic Director at the beginning of the semester. Students Participating in athletic events requiring them to be absent from class must inform the instructor, in writing, before the class is missed. Students are responsible for any material missed. Any assignments missed must be made up within one week of the date they were due.

### **Class Cancellation Plan**

In the event that a class is cancelled, the instructor will contact the college and have a note placed on the door and on the whiteboard. If possible, notification will be sent directly to students via email.

### **Personal Technology Policy**

Cell phones and other electronic devices must be set to off or silent mode. Calls may not be accepted during class. If you have an emergency situation and need to be available by phone, alert the professor *before* class. Personal music devices may not be played during class. Hearing the instruction of others is a frequent learning opportunity.

### **Changes to the Syllabus or Course Calendar**

The syllabus and course calendar are subject to change as deemed necessary by the instructor. Should there be any changes, they will be announced in class and published to Moodle.

## 6. GRADING CRITERIA

Project work will be evaluated along dimensions of originality, compositional quality, craftsmanship, effort, and maturity of attitude ("other considerations").

**Originality** - Does the solution benefit from risk-taking and experimentation? Is it a novel or original solution?

**Compositional Quality** - Does the solution demonstrate advanced understanding/application of principles and elements? Are they used conceptually?

**Craftsmanship** - Is the execution of the solution high quality? To what degree does the solution demonstrate an understanding of techniques and a commitment to superior execution?

**Effort/Concept Development** - Demonstrated commitment to excellence in course of assignment; attempted to fully explore problem and solution.

**Other Considerations** - In the course of the assignment, did the individual demonstrate receptivity and critical thinking skills? Was the assignment completed on time and according to the project guidelines? During lectures preparatory to the assignment, was the individual prepared for discussion?

Scores will be assessed as an un-weighted average of all assignments (assignments are equal in value). The photo journal and written critique are equal to one project, each.

The following grade scale will be used to quantify evaluations of all course work:

Grade	Description	Score	Points
A	Excellent	$\geq 97\%$	4.0
A-		$\geq 93\%$	3.67
B+		$\geq 89\%$	3.33
B	Good	$\geq 85\%$	3.0
B-		$\geq 81\%$	2.67
C+		$\geq 77\%$	2.33
C	Satisfactory	$\geq 73$	2.0
C-		$\geq 69$	1.67
D	Pass	$\geq 61$	1.0
F	Failure; No credit	$< 61$	0.0
I	Incomplete		0.0

## 7. COURSE CALENDAR

Date	Topic	Reading – London and Stone	Assignments	
25-Aug	T	Course Introduction/The Camera	<b>NOTE: additional articles are posted on Moodle!</b>	
27-Aug	H	Aperture and Shutter Speed* Art History of Photography: <i>Technical History (to Daguerreotypes)</i>	3-27 – The Camera, Aperture, Shutter Speed 172-5 – Technical History of Photography 1 Scan 204-16 – Troubleshooting Images	Self Portrait; Establish Accounts
1-Sep	T	Organization and Storage	Your camera’s manual; 77, 79, 82-5 123-7	First Exposures (PID 1)
3-Sep	H	The Lens - Focal Length Art History of Photography: <i>Technical History (to Kodachrome)</i>	28-39 – Lenses 176-9 – Technical History of Photography 2	
8-Sep	T	The Lens - Focus and Depth of Field	40-51 – Focus and Depth of Field	Equivalency Exposure Drill
10-Sep	H	Exam 1		
15-Sep	T	Review Exam 1	52-5 – Digital Sensors, Resolution	Lens Focal Length (PID 2)
17-Sep	H	Critique: Self Portraits, First Exposures	56-7 – Color, White Balance	
22-Sep	T	Recapitulation: Lenses Critique: Lens Focal Length	60-73 – Exposure	The Blues (PID 11) <u>or</u> In the Red (PID 20)
24-Sep	H	Recapitulation: Equivalent Exposures	128-37 – Lighting	
29-Sep	T	Critique: In the Red/The Blues Art History of Photography: <i>Technical History (to the Digital Age)</i> Exposure and Lighting	138-9 – Lighting Portraits 160-3 – Portraits 202 – Technical History of Photography 3	Lighting Situations (PID 3) <u>and</u> A Portrait (PID 8)
1-Oct	H	Exposure and Lighting (cont.) Seeing Like a Camera – The Frame Writing About Art	58-9 – Histograms 140-5 – Lighting 148-9 – The Frame 170-1 – Responding to Photographs	
6-Oct	T	Critique: Lighting Situations/A Portrait Art History of Photography: <i>Functional History (Portraits, Social Change)</i> Responding to Photographs	180-1 – Early Portraits 158-9 – Photographing for Meaning 186-7 – Photography and Social Change	The Cutting Edge (PID 4) 7PM lecture at the Snite
8-Oct	H	Visual Elements of Photography	171 (revisited) – Visual Elements	
13-Oct	T	Critique: The Cutting Edge Art History of Photography: <i>Functional History (Documentation, Photojournalism)</i> Preview for Exam 2	183 – Early Images of War 185 – The Photograph as Document 188-91 – Photojournalism	Paper Due: Review of THIN
15-Oct	H	Exam 2		
20-Oct	T	<b>FALL BREAK</b>		
22-Oct	H	<b>FALL BREAK</b>		
27-Oct	T	Seeing Like a Camera – Motion Review Exam 2	154-5 – Time and Motion	
29-Oct	H	Seeing Like a Camera – Figure and Ground**	150-1 – The Background 152-3 – Depth of Field 156-7 – Depth in a Picture	Showing Motion (PID 7) <u>and</u> In Motion (PID 24) Submit 1 image for each (2 total) to the group pool.
3-Nov	T	Critique: In Motion Art History of Photography: <i>Functional History (Travel, Experimental, Time/Motion)</i>	164-9 – Landscapes, Cityscapes, Interiors 182 – Early Travel Photography 184 – Time and Motion in Early Photography	Using the Background (PID 5)
5-Nov	H	Art History of Photography: <i>Photography as Art (up to 1980)</i>	192-7 – Art History of Photography through the Modern Era	
10-Nov	T	Critique: Using the Background The Digital Darkroom – Introduction to Online Tools and Photoshop	87-9 – Getting Started	Abstraction (PID 9)
12-Nov	H	Perspective Image Editing – Resizing, Adjusting	55 – Resolution	

Date	Topic	Reading – London and Stone	Assignments
	Brightness, Contrast, and Color		
17-Nov	T Critique: Abstraction Image Editing – Making Selections	94-5 – Selections	Get Down! (PID 22)
19-Nov	H Image Editing – Brush Tools, Cloning, Healing, Patching	98-101 – Retouching, Sharpening	
24-Nov	T Art History of Photography: <i>Photography as Art (1980 to Today)</i> Image Editing – Layers, Curves, Adjustment Layers	106-7 – Ethics and Digital Imaging 198-9 – 1980's to Today 200-1 – Image Manipulation 92-3 – Curves 96 – Layers	
26-Nov	H <b>THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY</b>		
1-Dec	T Image Editing – Masks, Layer Masks, Channels	80-1 – Channels 97 – Filters	
3-Dec	H Image Editing – Filters, Compositing, Montage	102-3 – Compositing	Adjusted Image (be sure to turn in the original (named “Adjusted Image – Original”) and the altered (named “Adjusted Image – Altered”) images.
8-Dec	T Printing and Display	109-21 – Printing and Mounting	
10-Dec	H Printing and Display†		Song Titles (PID 14) One Exemplary Photograph (printed and overmatted) Photojournals Due
16-Dec	W Final Critique: Song Titles and Mounted Print		<i>Attendance is mandatory</i>

\*Last Day to Drop/Add is 8/31

\*\*Last Day to Withdraw with a W is 10/30

†Last Day to Withdraw is 12/11