

Photography I - AVT 253
Spring 2017
E-mail: pbothwel@gmu.edu
Location: Art & Design Building, L016

George Mason University
Instructor: Paul Bothwell
Office Hours: By appointment only

“What makes photography a strange invention - with unforeseeable consequences - is that its primary raw materials are light and time.”
– John Berger

Prerequisites: No previous experience in photography is necessary and no prerequisites are required for this class.

Course Description

Using a digital SLR camera, exploring photographic historical precedent, and understanding contemporary culture, this course is an introduction to the technical and aesthetic properties of photography. Students will synergize technical comprehension and creative intent to understand the camera as a tool for visual expression. Additionally, students will learn to create efficient digital workflow using basic image-editing skills and Adobe programs.

Assignments will range from reading and writing; group and individual projects; and will be broken in separate sections acutely focusing on a technical and creative aspect of photography.

Course Objectives

- Harness personal representation (Own who you are)
- Learn basic functions of a Digital SLR Camera (DSLR) including:
 - Proper exposure control and light metering
 - Aperture and Shutter speed
 - White balance
 - The use of ISO in controlling digital noise
- Gain basic understanding of digital darkroom software, and workflow
- Learn to communicate ideas visually through photographs
- Learn how to discuss your and others work verbally and give constructive feedback in group critiques.

Course Requirements and Grading

Attendance is an essential part of the course. This is an experience based class and artistic growth comes only through continued active participation. In case of an unavoidable absence, please contact me immediately (email is best). You are responsible for all missed information. Excessive tardiness or leaving early from class (more than five minutes) and/or absences (more than two classes) will result in a severely reduced or failing grade for the course regardless of performance. Open lab periods serve to provide additional work time. They do not serve as a replacement for scheduled class time and instruction.

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To be successful in this class, you must:

- Be prepared to participate fully in all aspects of the course.
- Attend class on time, regularly, stay for its entirety, and come to class prepared.
- Be committed to spending time outside of class hours to shoot and edit your photographs. This course cannot be done within the allotted class time and you must be willing to spend time out of class.
- Participate in class discussions and critique. The more you participate in the discussion or your and other's work, the easier it is to communicate your ideas. Receiving constructive criticism is critical in the artistic process.
- Follow the requirements of the assignment and complete it on time.
*NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS ACCEPTED WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL.
- Take ownership of the lab and equipment, this includes following any posted rules, cleaning up at the end of class, and returning borrowed equipment on time in the same condition it was received.
- Satisfactory completion of visual, written, and presentation assignments. These assignments are due periodically throughout the semester and represent a cross-section of the principles of photographic seeing, thinking and discussing. Solutions to visual problems will be discussed and evaluated in class critiques and grades will be based on aesthetic merit and technical competence.

Criteria for Evaluation and Grading

- Use of appropriate tools and techniques to demonstrate understanding of assignment
- Image quality of the final image
- Idea *development* and creativity / Assignment comprehension
- Risk taking, ambition, and engagement
- Participation in class discussions, projects and critiques

Grade Breakdown:

All Assignments (except your final):	50%
Final Assignment:	20%
Artist Statements / Write-Ups	20%
Participation	10%

Assignment Resubmission:

Students, after receiving feedback in critique, can turn their work in for grade reconsideration up to a week after critique. Work that is turned in late is not eligible for resubmission.

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Final Assessment

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- A--Excellent:** Work far exceeds the expectations for the assignment. Shows exceptional grasp of technique, craft, and creative expression
- B--Very Good:** Work is of a high standard that shows a firm understanding of technical considerations and individual creative expression.
- C--Average:** Meets the expectations of the assignment and shows technical competency
- D—Poor:** Does not meet the expectations of the assignment. Work is uninspired and does not show a technical understanding.
- F--Fail:** Failure to complete the assignment in the time allotted.

Course Materials and Supplies

- A fully manual DSLR camera or micro 4/3s and manual
- Card reader with USB connection
- Memory storage (memory card and external hard drive)

The Program provides some equipment such as, cameras, lenses, flashes, tripods, and other miscellaneous items for loan through the Photo Cage #L013J. Borrowed equipment is your responsibility and you are held liable for any and all costs if the equipment is damaged, lost or stolen.

**For a more detailed list of required materials refer to "Equipment Checklist" on Blackboard.*

This fulfills a Mason Core Arts Requirement

Mason courses in the film making, visual and performing arts stress generative, inquiry based learning through direct aesthetic and creative experience in the studio environment. Art history courses address the intrinsic relationship of personal and cultural creativity, and the manifestation of aesthetics, visual culture and visual narrative within historical contexts.

Learning Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete a course in the Arts category must meet the first learning outcome and a minimum of two of the remaining four learning outcomes:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between artistic process, and a work's underlying concept, and where appropriate, contexts associated with the work.
2. Identify and analyze the formal elements of a particular art form using vocabulary and critique appropriate to that form.
3. Analyze cultural productions using standards appropriate to the form, as well as the works cultural significance and context.
4. Analyze and interpret the content of material or performance culture through its social, historical, and personal contexts.

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5. Engage in generative artistic processes, including conception, creation, and ongoing critical analysis.

University and School of Art Policies

In accordance with George Mason University policy, turn off all beepers, cellular telephones and other wireless communication devices at the start of class. The instructor of the class will keep his/her cell phone active to assure receipt of any Mason Alerts in a timely fashion; or in the event that the instructor does not have a cell phone, he/she will designate one student to keep a cell phone active to receive such alerts.

Commitment to Diversity

This class will be conducted as an intentionally inclusive community that celebrates diversity and welcomes the participation in the life of the university of faculty, staff and students who reflect the diversity of our plural society. All may feel free to speak and to be heard without fear that the content of the opinions they express will bias the evaluation of their academic performance or hinder their opportunities for participation in class activities. In turn, all are expected to be respectful of each other without regard to race, class, linguistic background, religion, political beliefs, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, veteran's status, or physical ability.

Statement on Ethics in Teaching and Practicing Art and Design

As professionals responsible for the education of undergraduate and graduate art and design students, the faculty of the School of Art adheres to the ethical standards and practices incorporated in the professional Code of Ethics of our national accreditation organization, The National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD).

Open Studio Hours

SOA teaching studios are open to students for extended periods of time mornings, evenings and weekends whenever classes are not in progress. Policies, procedures and schedules for studio use are established by the SOA studio faculty and are posted in the studios.

ArtsBus

Dates for Spring 2017:

February 18

March 25

April 15

ArtsBus Credit:

* Each student must have up to 5 AVT 300/Artsbus credits before graduation. For credit to appear on your transcript you must enroll in AVT 300. This also applies

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to anyone who intends to travel to New York independently, or do the DC Alternate Assignment.

* If you plan/need to go on multiple ArtsBus trips during a semester and need them towards your total requirement, you must enroll in multiple sections of AVT 300. Please go to the ArtsBus website: <http://artsbus.gmu.edu> "Student Information" for additional, very important information regarding ArtsBus policy.

* Non-AVT majors taking art classes do not need Artsbus credit BUT may need to go on the Artsbus for a class assignment. You can either sign up for AVT 300 or buy a ticket for the bus trip at the Center of the Arts. Alternate trips must be approved by the instructor of the course that is requiring an ArtsBus trip.

Visual Voices Lecture Series

Dates for Spring 2017:

January 26

February 9

March 9

March 23

March 30

Visual Voices is a year-long series of lectures by artists, art historians and others about contemporary art and art practice. Visual Voices lectures are held on Thursday evenings from 7:20- 9:00 p.m. in Harris Theater:

<http://soa.gmu.edu/visualvoices/>

Important Deadlines

January 1 Day of Week	Sunday
Martin Luther King Day (no classes)	Mon Jan 16
First day of classes; last day to submit Domicile Reclassification Application; Payment Due Date; full semester waitlists removed	Mon Jan 23
Last day to add classes—all individualized section forms due	Mon Jan 30
Last day to drop with no tuition penalty	Mon Jan 30
Last day to drop with a 33% tuition penalty	Mon Feb 13
Final Drop Deadline (67% tuition penalty)	Fri Feb 24
Immunization Record Deadline	Wed Mar 1
Midterm progress reporting period (100-200 level classes)—grades available via Patriot Web	Mon Feb 20 – Fri Mar 24
Selective Withdrawal Period (undergraduate students only)	Mon Feb 27 – Fri Mar 31
Spring Break	Mon Mar 13 – Sun Mar 19
Incomplete work from Fall 2016 due to Instructor	Fri March 31
Incomplete grade changes from Fall 2016 due to Registrar	Fri April 7
Dissertation/Thesis Deadline	Fri May 5
Last day of classes	Sat May 6
Reading Days Reading days provide students with additional study time for final examinations. Faculty may schedule optional study	Mon May 8 – Tue May 9

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sessions, but regular classes or exams may not be held.	
Exam Period (beginning at 7:30 a.m.)	Wed May 10 – Wed May 17
Commencement and Degree Conferral Date	May 20

Once the add and drop deadlines have passed, instructors do not have the authority to approve requests from students to add or drop/withdraw late. Requests for late adds (up until the last day of classes) must be made by the student in the SOA office (or the office of the department offering the course), and generally are only approved in the case of a documented university error (such as a problem with financial aid being processed) , LATE ADD fee will apply. Requests for non-selective withdrawals and retroactive adds (adds after the last day of classes) must be approved by the academic dean of the college in which the student's major is located. For AVT majors, that is the CVPA Office of Academic Affairs, Performing Arts Building A407.

Students with Disabilities and Learning Differences

If you have a diagnosed disability or learning difference and you need academic accommodations, please inform me at the beginning of the semester and contact the Disabilities Resource Center (SUB I room 234, 703-993-2474). You must provide me with a faculty contact sheet from that office outlining the accommodations needed for your disability or learning difference. All academic accommodations must be arranged in advance through the DRC.

Official Communications via GMU E-Mail

Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.

Attendance Policies

Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register. In-class participation is important not only to the individual student, but also to the class as a whole. Because class participation may be a factor in grading, instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of nonparticipation. Students who miss an exam with an acceptable excuse may be penalized according to the individual instructor's grading policy, as stated in the course syllabus.

Honor Code

Students in this class are bound by the Honor Code, as stated in the George Mason University Catalog. The honor code requires that the work you do as an

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individual be the product of your own individual synthesis or integration of ideas. (This does not prohibit collaborative work when it is approved by your instructor.) As a faculty member, I have an obligation to refer the names of students who may have violated the Honor Code to the Student Honor Council, which treats such cases very seriously. No grade is important enough to justify cheating, for which there are serious consequences that will follow you for the rest of your life. If you feel unusual pressure about your grade in this or any other course, please talk to me or to a member of the GMU Counseling Center staff.

Using someone else's words or ideas without giving them credit is plagiarism, a very serious Honor Code offense. It is very important to understand how to prevent committing plagiarism when using material from a source. If you wish to quote verbatim, you must use the exact words and punctuation just as the passage appears in the original and must use quotation marks and page numbers in your citation. If you want to paraphrase or summarize ideas from a source, you must put the ideas into your own words, and you must cite the source, using the APA or MLA format. (For assistance with documentation, I recommend Diana Hacker, *A Writer's Reference*.) The exception to this rule is information termed general knowledge—information that is widely known and stated in a number of sources. Determining what is general knowledge can be complicated, so the wise course is, "When in doubt, cite."

Be especially careful when using the Internet for research. Not all Internet sources are equally reliable; some are just plain wrong. Also, since you can download text, it becomes very easy to inadvertently plagiarize. If you use an Internet source, you must cite the exact URL in your paper and include with it the last date that you successfully accessed the site.

Writing Center

Students who are in need of intensive help with grammar, structure or mechanics in their writing should make use of the services of Writing Center, located in Robinson A116 (703-993-1200). The services of the Writing Center are available by appointment, online and, occasionally, on a walk-in basis.

The Collaborative Learning Hub Located in Johnson Center 311 (703-993-3141), the lab offers in-person one-on-one support for the Adobe Creative Suite, Microsoft Office, Blackboard, and a variety of other software. Dual monitor PCs make the lab ideal for collaborating on group projects, Macs are also available; as well as a digital recording space, collaborative tables, and a SMART Board. Free workshops are also available (Adobe and Microsoft) through Training and Certification; visit ittraining.gmu.edu to see the schedule of workshops and to sign up.

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