

George Mason University School of Art
Spring 2019 / AVT 354 – Digital Photography II
Class meets Mondays/Wednesdays from 4:30-7:10pm

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Office hours: by appointment on M/W, 3:45-4:30pm

Syllabus, course content, and schedule all subject to change

Course Description

A computer-intensive class in which students create digital images from the viewpoint of a photographic artist. Emphasis on digital photo techniques, including making digital negatives, concept development, and visual aesthetics. Offered by School of Art. May not be repeated for credit.

In this class, we will investigate and shape our individual ways of seeing through what we choose to include (and exclude) within a frame. Through photographing weekly, in class demonstrations, slide lectures, and critique, students will engage in the problems of digital photographic production and seeing.

The course will provide students with a comprehensive understanding of digital photography workflow with the end goal of producing high-quality inkjet prints. Students will begin by learning about tonal adjustments, masks, and color correcting using curve layers, then moving into color and monotone corrections, and finally Camera Raw workflow for digitally captured files. After covering technical issues of the medium through demonstrations and individual exercises both in class and as assignments, students will apply those techniques to their own photographic work produced for this class. Students are expected to present at 4-6 new 8.5x11 inch inkjet prints every week. By the end of this course, students will have the following four things: 1) a working knowledge of digital workflow in Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Camera Raw; 2) a working ability to adjust and manage digitally captured files in color and monotone; 3) the ability to produce high-quality prints; 4) an in-progress body of photographic work existing as inkjet prints.

Additional note: readings are posted to the blackboard. General communications and announcements are made via email. Write by GMU email only with any questions.

Goals

- To have a thorough understanding and command of camera exposure: aperture, shutter, ISO and how these elements affect photographic description
- To make at least 50 new exposures weekly
- To produce at least 4 inkjet prints every week for critique
- To produce a body of work of 12-15 inkjet prints by the end of this course
- To articulate, both in writing and verbally, how and why visual information affects you in your own work and the work of others
- To have a working technical skill set that includes:
 - Adjusting files in Photoshop and Camera Raw
 - Curve adjustments: color correction, contrast
 - Masking and selections
 - Sharpening

- Digital camera capture
- Importing files into Camera Raw and manage files as smart objects
- Camera Raw/smart object workflow
- Lightroom workflow
- Compositing files
- Up-sampling files to produce large prints

Grading

Grades in this course are by participation, attendance, and assignments. You will earn and lose points in the following scenarios:

- If you attend class you receive **+100 points** per meeting
- If you are absent (up to two times) from regular class for *any* reason you receive **0 points**
- If you are absent *more than* two times from regular class for *any* reason you will receive **-100 points** per missed class
- Contact sheets are worth **+100 points** and are due at 4:30pm on Wednesdays (except for the first exercise)
 - o If you submit them after the due date/time, you receive **+50 points**
 - o **0 points** if they are not submitted by 5/6 at 4:30pm
- Writing assignments are due at 9am on the day of class so I can read and comment before class for **+100 points**
 - o **+50 points** if the writing assignments are submitted late
 - o **0 points** if they are not submitted by 5/6 at 4:30pm
- If you attend critique and show 4 prints you receive **+200 points**. There is no extra credit for more than 4 prints
- If you attend critique and show 1-3 prints, you receive **+50 points** per print
- If you attend critique but *do not* show prints you receive **+0 points**
- If you do not show prints one week (present or absent) then the following week present *at least* 8 prints (4 prints for the crit you missed AND 4 additional prints for the current crit) you receive **+400 points**
- If you are absent and/or do not show new work for two rounds of critique in *any* order you receive **-200 points**
- If you miss and/or do not show new work in *any* order for a third time **-100 points** per critique (example: -200 for the two missed crits, then -100 for the third missed crit = -300 total points)
- If you participate in the final critiques on both days and send in files you receive **+500 points**
- If you do not submit files by the due date you receive **-150 points**
- If you show new work for your final critique but are absent for the other crit day you receive **+250 points**
- If you are absent for your final critique you will receive **-1500 points**

Eighteen (18) regular class meetings:	1800 possible points
Eight (8) critiques (on Wednesdays):	1600 possible points
Twelve (12) contact sheets (due on Wednesdays):	1200 possible points
Two (2) drafts of statements due:	200 possible points
Two (2) final critique days:	500 possible points

5300 possible points

At the midterm and end of the semester, I add up all the points you have earned, and then convert to a percent (ex: 5300/5300 = 100% = A). I use the following percentages to calculate grades:

93-100% = A
90-92% = A-
87-89% = B+
84-86% = B
80-83% = B-
77-79% = C+
75-77% = C
70-74% = C-
66-69% = D
00-65% = F

On Critique

Definition - Criticism [krit-uh-siz-uh m]

1. The act of passing judgment as to the merits of anything.
2. The act of passing severe judgment; censure; faultfinding.
3. The act or art of analyzing and evaluating or judging the quality of a literary or artistic work, musical performance, art exhibit, dramatic production, etc.
4. A critical comment, article, or essay; critique
5. Any of various methods of studying texts or documents for the purpose of dating or reconstructing them evaluating their authenticity, analyzing their content or style, etc.

Dictionary.com

Critique in this class is timed for 10 minutes per student. All students are expected to participate when reviewing the work of their peers. In this class, we aim to analyze and read the visual facts contained within each photographic frame. When making comments about photographs, it is important to explain why. Please do not simply state "I like your photographs." Instead, say "I like your photographs because..." When giving negative comments, please suggest solutions. Offer different ways to solve problems occurring in the photographs. The aim of weekly critique is to discuss how we make pictures, refine our technical choices, and delve deeper into each person's photographic way of seeing.

Weekly review of student work allows each student to clarify their thoughts (visually and verbally) in a predictable format without surprises. Students learn to control and navigate critique in a formalized structure. Furthermore, it allows for a distinctly privileged discussion among the class where we approach each other's work from a position of knowing and seeing the work develop and change week after week. We are here to talk about, make, and take pictures.

Open Lab

Class meetings qualified as "open lab" are not optional. Please use the time to edit new pictures and/or work on files for critique. You may not use the time to photograph.

The printers are available outside of class when Joshua Sackett, the photo lab manager, is in his office L-013. His hours are: Mondays: 9AM - 5PM / Tuesdays: 9AM - 5PM / Wednesdays: 9AM - 1PM / Thursdays: 9AM - 4PM / Fridays: 12PM - 5PM

There is a 24-hour open lab on the 3rd floor of the School of Art building in the open space near the main office. The building is unlocked between 6am and midnight, so you must be in the building by 11:59pm to use the computers between 12:01am and 5:59am. There are no inkjet printers available in this area.

Materials

- 500GB (1 TB suggested) external hard drive plus *optional* back-up drive. Suggested brands: Seagate, G Drive, WD, all for Mac (not PC/Windows).
- At least one (1) box of 50-sheets of 8.5x11 inch luster paper from SoA print. Approximately \$100.00, which covers the paper and ink usage (recommended: two boxes)
- Digital SLR or micro 3/4 camera with lens. The camera must be able to produce raw files
- Card reader (optional, depending on the card your camera takes)

Class Schedule

Day 1 Wednesday 1/23:

Introductions

Review syllabus

Exposure: shutter, aperture, ISO and related issues

Digital camera/lens discussion

Day 2 Monday 1/28:

Exposure issues continued: histograms, white balance, metering, exposure modes

Digital camera set-up – **bring a digital camera to class**

Setting up external hard drives – **bring an external hard drive to class**

Bridge, Lightroom (catalogs, collections, keywords), Camera RAW demo/workflow

Rating system, contact sheet demo

Assignment for Wednesday 1/30: 1) read “The Photographer’s Eye” by John Szarkowski and essay on The New Documents. PDF’s available on Blackboard, 2) produce at least fifty (50) exposures, ten (10) exposures for each of Szarkowski’s five ways of describing images. Make a contact sheet in Lr.

Day 3 Wednesday 1/30:

Lecture and discussion: “The Photographer’s Eye” and “The New Documents: Arbus, Friedlander, and Winogrand” – **in preparation for crit #1 on 2/6**

Debate groups for and against Szarkowski

Rotations – review contact sheets of each person in the class, 6 minutes each. Make a screenshot with your selections after you’ve finished each round.

Editing images in Lr – corrections, Basic panel, exporting in preparation to print

Two part assignment for 2/4: 1) read “Civilizing Criticism” by Robert Adams. PDF on Blackboard. 2) produce at least fifty (50) exposures. Make a contact sheet and select at least five (5) images as 5-stars. PDF due on Blackboard by 4:30pm on 2/4

Day 4 Monday 2/4:

**Contact sheets due by 4:30pm on Blackboard for 100 points*

Discussing Adams reading

Lecture on portraits: Richard Avedon “In the American West” v. Susan Lipper “Grapevine” v. Doug Dubois “My Last Day at Seventeen” v. Jen Davis – *in preparation for crit #2 on 2/13*
Printing demo
Open lab in preparation for critique #1

Day 5 Wednesday 2/6:

Critique #1: five (5) 8.5x11 inches prints due in response to The Photographer’s Eye

Day 6 Monday 2/11:

Introduction to Photoshop, quick keys
Tone painting demo: layers, curves, masks (burning, dodging)
Look at W. Eugene Smith “The Country Doctor” – *in preparation for crit #3 on 2/20*

Day 7 Wednesday 2/13:

**Contact sheets due by 4:30pm on Blackboard for 100 points. Fifty (50) exposures with at least five (5) images marked as 5-stars*

Critique #2: at least four (4) 8.5x11 inch prints due on portraiture

Day 8 Monday 2/18:

Monotone color correction, Lr color correction
Color corrections in Photoshop (color points, curves)
America Books: Robert Frank “The Americans”, Walker Evans “American Photographs”, Joel Sternfeld “American Prospects” – *in preparation for crit #4 on 2/27*

Day 9 Wednesday 2/20:

**Contact sheets due by 4:30pm on Blackboard for 100 points. Fifty (50) exposures with at least five (5) images marked as 5-stars*

Critique #3: four (4) 8.5x11 inch prints due. Produce a narrative in at least four photographs on a topic/subject of your choice in response to “The Country Doctor”

Day 10 Monday 2/25:

Camera Raw / Lightroom / smart object workflow combined with Photoshop
Looking at problematic files from student work – 3 volunteers

Assignment for 3/4: read Atget excerpts. PDF on Blackboard

Day 11 Wednesday 2/27:

**Contact sheets due by 4:30pm on for 100 points. Fifty (50) exposures with at least five (5) images marked as 5-stars*

Critique #4: four (4) 8.5x11 inch prints due in response to America books

Day 12 Monday 3/4:

Blending demo, HDR, combining files
On Photographic Seeing: Eugene Atget and Stephen Shore – *in preparation for crit #5 on 3/20*

Day 13 Wednesday 3/6:

**Contact sheets due by 4:30pm on Blackboard for 100 points. Fifty (50) exposures with at least five (5) images marked as 5-stars*

Individual meetings on digital workflow. Bring prints/files.
Midterm grades delivered in meetings and posted to Patriot Web

SPRING BREAK (classes do not meet 3/11 and 3/13)

Day 14 Monday 3/18:

Bridge Rotations
Art star workflow demo

Assignment due 3/20: read Gossage essay and Richard Benson Lee Friedlander. PDF's on Blackboard

Day 15 Wednesday 3/20:

**Contact sheets due by 4:30pm on Blackboard for 100 points. Fifty (50) exposures with at least five (5) images marked as 5-stars*

Critique #5: eight (8) 8.5x11 inch prints due (two weeks worth of work) in response photographic seeing (Atget and Shore)

Day 16 Monday 3/25:

Review art star workflow
Lecture: looking at projects/books, and work mentioned in critique
Reading successful statements

Day 17 Wednesday 3/27:

**Contact sheets due by 4:30pm on Blackboard for 100 points. Fifty (50) exposures with at least five (5) images marked as 5-stars*

Critique #6: four (4) 8.5x11 inch prints due. Open topic/subject.

Day 18 Monday 4/1:

Workshop: writing a statement about your work/planning a final project
Open lab

Day 19 Wednesday 4/3:

**Contact sheets due by 4:30pm on Blackboard for 100 points. Fifty (50) exposures with at least five (5) images marked as 5-stars*

Critique #7: four (4) 8.5x11 inch prints due. Open topic/subject.

Day 20 Monday 4/8:

**Submit drafts of statements by 9am on Blackboard so I can read them before class for 100 points*

Rotations in reading each other's statement

Day 21 Wednesday 4/10:

**Contact sheets due by 4:30pm on Blackboard for 100 points. Fifty (50) exposures with at least five (5) images marked as 5-stars*

Critique #8: four (4) 8.5x11 inch prints due. Open topic/subject.

Day 22 Monday 4/15:

Guest speaker TBA
Open lab

Day 23 Wednesday 4/17:

**Contact sheets due by 4:30pm on Blackboard for 100 points. Fifty (50) exposures with at least five (5) images marked as 5-stars*

Lecture on producing a project
Watch Tierney Gearon movie “The Mother Project” and discussion

Day 24 Monday 4/22:

**2nd draft of statements due by 9am on Blackboard so I can read them before individual meetings for 100 points*

Individual meetings

Day 25 Wednesday 4/24:

**Contact sheets due by 4:30pm on Blackboard for 100 points. Fifty (50) exposures with at least five (5) images marked as 5-stars*

Working on problematic files as a class – 3 students sign up
Bridge Rotations
Open lab

Day 26 Monday 4/29:

**Contact sheets due by 4:30pm on Blackboard for 100 points. Fifty (50) exposures with at least five (5) images marked as 5-stars*

Open lab

Day 27 Wednesday 5/1:

Final crit group A

Day 28 Monday 5/6:

Final crit group B

Final critique groups A and B. Three parts. Part one: read and submit a statement on your work. Part two: present 12-15 finished prints, at least 8.5x11 inches each. You may present up to four (4) prints previously presented in class. Part three: submit all the jpegs and statement as a compressed (zipped) file on blackboard by 4:30pm on Monday 5/6.

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 2019

February 23, 2019

March 30, 2019

April 13, 2019

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 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 Spring 2019

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/>

January 24, 2019

February 21, 2019

February 28, 2019

March 7, 2019

Important Deadlines:

Martin Luther King Day (no classes)	Mon Jan 21
First day of classes ; last day to submit Domicile Reclassification Application; Payment Due Date; full semester waitlists removed	Tue Jan 22

Last day to add classes —all individualized section forms due	Tue Jan 29
Last Day to Drop (with 100% tuition refund)	Feb 5
Drop period begins with a TBD refund percentage	Feb 6
Final Drop Deadline (TBD tuition refund percentage)	Feb 12
Student Self-Withdrawal	February 13 – February 25
Immunization Record Deadline	Thu Mar 1
Midterm progress reporting period (100-200 level classes)—grades available via Patriot Web	Mon Feb 18 – Fri Mar 22
Selective Withdrawal Period (undergraduate students only) (100% tuition liability)	February 26 – March 25
Spring Break	Mon Mar 11 - Sun Mar 17
Incomplete work from Fall 2018 due to Instructor	Fri March 29
Incomplete grade changes from Fall 2018 due to Registrar	Tue April 2
Dissertation/Thesis Deadline	Fri May 3
Last day of classes	Mon May 6
Reading Days Reading days provide students with additional study time for final examinations. Faculty may schedule optional study sessions, but regular classes or exams may not be held.	Tue May 7
Exam Period (beginning at 7:30 a.m.)	Wed May 8 – Wed May 15
Commencement	Fri May 17
Degree Conferral Date	Sat May 18

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 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.