

PGY 2100C-01
Photography for Non-Majors
(Florence, Italy)
Spring 2009

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Course Syllabus

General Information

Meetings: Tuesdays 9:30am – 12:30pm
Classroom: N.W. I
Prerequisite: you just need a camera!

Course Description and Objectives

This course presents the basic and essential skills to making great photographs along with the important concepts to creating compelling compositions. We will continually produce our own photographic images in and around Florence as well as complement this by looking at the work of contemporary and historic photographers. An emphasis will be given to “travel photography” so that you will go home with an exciting and visually interesting record of your time abroad.

As I expect students will have a wide variety of camera equipment to work with, emphasis will be given to training your eye and making the most of the tools available to you. We will consider the many aspects of composition, how to make an effective portrait/self-portrait, and ways to tell a story through images. From this knowledge, you will develop a final project of photographs that present an in-depth look at a subject of your choice.

Class Format

The class periods will consist mostly of on-location instruction during field trips, plus occasional slide lectures and/or video presentations. You are expected to attend all classes and be on time, since we will often leave the classroom to wander the city. In addition, we will look for ways to incorporate the various school trips around Italy into our image making.

Grading

Your overall grade will consist of 4 short photo assignments (worth 10% each, 40% total), one final photo project (20%), a participation score (10%), a quiz (10%), and a short paper (20%). Photo assignments are assessed on your creativity and your understanding of the photography concepts presented in class. The short paper is assessed on your research and insight into the photographer/photographs you choose to write about, expounding on this subject through the photography approaches you have learned. You will be expected to attend all classes, pass a quiz, and participate fully in class discussions.

Grading Scale:

- A** excellent work – photo assignments show excellent creativity and understanding of concepts presented in class; paper is insightfully researched and written
- B** good work – photo assignments show good creativity and understanding of concepts presented in class; paper is well researched and written
- C** average work – photo assignments achieve basic creativity and understanding of concepts presented in class; basic research and writing in the paper
- D** below average work – photo assignments do not show creativity and understanding of photo concepts; poor research and writing in the paper
- F** failure – photo assignments and/or paper not completed; showing total disregard for the class; also given to any student with 4 or more unexcused absences

I have a very strict late policy, so be sure to turn in all photo assignments and the paper on time. Photo assignments or papers turned in late are penalized one letter grade (10%) *per half week* late after the due date. Finish them on time! Since the class only meets once a week, try to connect with me outside of class to turn in late projects/papers, if necessary. **A late final project (which will be collected near the end of the semester) will not be accepted at all!**

Attendance and Participation

Attendance and participation is essential to academic success. Therefore, I include attendance and participation in my grading. Missing class will cause you to quickly fall behind on the materials and concepts, *especially in this class that meets only once per week*. And I see participation in class discussions as providing the wonderful benefit of peer-to-peer learning.

Whereas participation is a factored percentage of your overall grade, attendance has the ability to raise or lower your final grade from your earned score. Poor attendance will result in a lowering of your overall grade, but I will also reward good attendance with bonus points, as follows:

- If you do not miss a single class during the entire semester, 5 points will be added to your overall grade (that's half a letter grade!)
- If you miss only one class, 2 points will be added to your overall grade
- Missing two classes is acceptable and will result in no penalty
- Each class missed beyond two will result in a drop of one letter grade (10 points), with 4 unexcused absences resulting in failure
- In addition, three late arrivals to or early departures from class count as an absence

Excused absences are absences none-the-less – I make no differentiation. I have no qualms about failing you for poor attendance. This policy is not flexible, so be in class and be on time!

Required Readings

Caputo, Robert. National Geographic Photography Field Guide: Travel. National Geographic, 2005. ISBN-10: 0792295056, ISBN-13: 978-0792295051

Plus additional handouts/PDFs that will be provided in class.

Supplies Needed

- Students must have a working camera, film or digital, and will be expected to have prints made of their photographs for in-class critiques.
(**note: you need to bring your camera to class every time**)
- Since there are no photographic facilities at the study abroad center, students will need to purchase processing/printing plus any additional supplies from local vendors.

Resources for Camera Supplies and Film Developing

- Bonghi, Via Por San Maria 82/84/r (camera store)
- Fotolocchi, Via del Corso 21/r (film developing/digital printing)
- MB Photo, Via Ghilbellina 131/r (developing/printing)

Note: I have not yet had a chance to try these stores. I will update with more information once I have a better sense of what they offer and their prices.

Email/ Cell Phone Policy

I highly recommend that you check your email often, as this is where outside-of-class updates and notices will be sent (I will have you provide me with your preferred email address). Because I realize in Florence checking of email may not be as frequent as in the U.S., I will try my best to not use email contact for anything that I do not back up or repeat in class.

Cell phones are both a blessing and a curse. The number I provided above is for my mobile phone here in Italy, so please do not call me late at night or on the weekends expecting to just “leave a message”. Generally, I prefer you contact me via email. For your own cell phones, *I don't want to see or hear them during class*. You won't see me making or answering phone calls (or text messaging) in class, so pay fellow students and me the same respect – **turn it off or silence it!**

If your phone rings during class or I see you using it, I will ask you to leave and mark you absent for that class. Or you can accept the alternative punishment of bringing treats for the <i>entire</i> class during our next meeting.
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Course Calendar

My intention with this course in Florence is to keep the calendar fluid and evolving, reacting to new possibilities and discoveries made during the semester. My plan is for us to be *outside* of the classroom as often as feasible, for full or partial class periods. I will also keep some various slide and/or video lectures prepared for if the weather is bad, to supplement what we learn in the field, or when important perspectives on photography are not easily found in the vicinity.

With 5 photo assignments during the semester, expect these to be due every two weeks. The paper will be due in the second half of the semester, and the final project will be due the week *before* exam week (14 April), so that I can have it back to you before you depart.

The Fine Print...

Florida State Academic Honor Policy

The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of student's academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to "be honest and truthful and... [to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University." (The full Academic Honor Policy is at <http://www.srr.fsu.edu/academic.htm>)

Americans with Disabilities Act Policy

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodations should: (1) Register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class. This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request. (More information about services available to FSU students with disabilities can be found at <http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu>)

Non-Discrimination Policy

Discrimination of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. (Information on Florida State University's non-discrimination policy can be found at <http://www.diversity.fsu.edu>)

Sexual Harassment Policy

Sexual Harassment of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. (Information on Florida State University's non-discrimination policy can be found at <http://www.auditservices.fsu.edu/sh>)

Syllabus Change Policy

This syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

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