

SPECIALIZED JOURNALISTIC PHOTOGRAPHY

JOU 4603

Techniques that lead to better photojournalism

Brought to you by
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Fall 2013: 7:20pm - 10:10 p.m. Wednesdays; Room 1092 Weimer Hall

The Course

To keep it simple, this is the lighting class. Photography is defined as “painting with light” so devoting a course to the main ingredient of picture taking is justified. We will base teachings on documentary/editorial photography purposes. Whether it is newspapers, magazine or web-based, the mediums for photography are all enhanced by better lighting and technique. By the end of this course, your understanding of lighting should be on a professional level.

Gadgetry will not replace content. We should all have a story we want to tell with our images whether it is that of a human subject or a message about an inanimate object photographed for an illustration.

Cameras and course materials

You will supply your cameras, cards, lenses and flash. Some limited equipment is available from the College of Journalism and Mass Communications depending on the demands of other classes, but you must seek that out. Below are the assignments. You will have to secure the gear you need to do the job well. The more you have of your own camera system, the less you have to depend on the schedules of others to use the basic tools you need. It is difficult enough to chase the schedules of your subjects let alone finding time to borrow a camera. At this point in your careers I realize it is financially difficult to have the system of your dreams. Embrace this problem. Ingenuity and creative use of the tools that you have will make you all the wiser. We will consistently look at ways to improvise with inexpensive modifications and sources that serve as a means to an end.

Critiques

Photojournalism, like many art forms, has its success judged through the eye of the beholder. In other words it is quite subjective. Great photographers have an eye for great photographs and a knack for self-editing. We will grow that process throughout this course as an integral part of study. It is advised you leave your ego at the door. Critique is

sometimes difficult but the reward can be measured by your personal growth. We will accomplish this goal as a class and incorporate many opinions. This is a course where there is no stupid question. If you are not sure about something, those around you probably are unsure as well. You are expected to contribute and will be graded on your participation.

Weekly Agenda

Each class period will be broken up into two sections. The first part will involve hands-on substantive direction for the next assignment. We will be using corresponding equipment, going into the relative environment and providing examples of what works and what does not. The second part will be class critique and self-editing training. This is where you're going to get feedback for the previous week's work.

Attendance

Mandatory. We only meet once a week. Unexcused absences will result in 10 points docked from the final grade. In-class critique of each student's work is key to the learning curve. Contact me as soon as you know you will miss.

Participation

A big percent of your grade will be based upon your participation. It is critical that we are all paying attention to the task at hand. This means no talking, texting or even laptops unless approved by the instructor.

Office Hours

You may reach me via email or cell phone. Please schedule a time before or after class to meet in person.

Course Schedule

August 21

Using Available Light

Introduction to the class, meet and greet, equipment overview.

■ Assignment 01: Outdoor portrait- Create portraits outside using full sun, open shade and overcast lighting conditions. Utilize time of day and position of your light source (the sun). Maximize creativity!

August 28

The Reflector and Subtractive Lighting.

View and Critique Assignment 01

■ Assignment 02: Outdoor reflector portrait- Using a substantial reflective surface, create a portrait where the reflector is the main source of light. Ambient light should be at least one stop underexposed using the shutter speed to enhance effect. Maximize creativity!

September 4

One Light Portrait

View and Critique Assignment 02

■ Assignment 03: Outdoor one light portrait- Using an off camera strobe and modifier, create a portrait of an interesting subject in an interesting environment. Use subtractive lighting in 3 steps- 1) match strobe with ambient light 2) match strobe with ambient light 1-stop underexposed 3) match strobe with ambient light 2-stops underexposed. Maximize Creativity!

September 11

Better Understanding light

We will explain Rembrandt, short, broad, main, garlie, fill and fill light and how to choose the light that best accentuates your subject.

View and Critique Assignment 03

■ No assignment this week

September 18

Two Light Portrait

■ Assignment 04: Outdoor two light portrait- Using two off-camera strobes and modifiers, create a portrait of an interesting subject in an interesting environment. Use subtractive lighting in 3 steps- 1) match strobe with ambient light 2) match strobe with ambient light 1-stop underexposed 3) match strobe with ambient light 2-stops underexposed. Maximize Creativity!

September 25

Painting With Light

View and Critique Assignment 04

■ Assignment 05: Using flashlight or continuous light source to shoot a controlled image at dawn or dusk using exposure techniques discussed in class. Use of tripod or stabilization is mandatory. Maximize Creativity!

October 2

“Sportrait”

View assignment 05

■ Assignment 6: Portraits of athletes in uniform are a staple at any newspaper. Using a bat, ball, hoop or whatever props, use any of the lighting scenarios we have learned or better yet a mixture of them to create a stunning “sportrait.” Maximize Creativity!

October 9

Bounce Flash

Exam One

Discuss Final Project

No Assignment

October 16

Food

View assignment 06 (include Final Project Update)

■ Assignment 07: Using two light sources, shoot a well composed food picture that highlights the dish and is accented by ingredients, plating, utensils etc. Maximize Creativity!

October 23

Profile Portrait/ Environmental Portrait

View assignment 07

■ Assignment 08: Indoor or outdoor using off camera light and modifier, shoot an environmental portrait that tells the story of who your subject is. The goal is to fuse lighting technique and photojournalistic style to capture the essence of your subject. Maximize Creativity!

October 30

Studio Fashion

View assignment 08

Discuss Final Projects

■ Assignment 09: Tentatively we will be using the studio and a couple models to have a night of fun and fashion. The goal is to create images that make readers want to grab these clothes off the shelves.

November 6

Guest Speaker

November 13

Stylized Fashion

View Assignment 09

■ Assignment 10: Put all the techniques you have learned on the table and create a magazine-worthy image showing a model with head-to-toe fashion. Make use of strong techniques in ambient, reflective and artificial light. MUST use extraordinary post-processing for one and standard toning for the other. Maximize Creativity!

November 20

View assignment 10

Final Project proposals due

Open Forum: Pick my brain. Historical photographers you should know, leaders in the field, ethics, photography in society, best business practices as a freelancer.

November 27

No class – Thanksgiving Break

December 4

Final Exam

Final Projects due/View Final Projects

Submission of assignments 1 through 10:

- You will bring the best 36 UNTONED and UNCROPPED images from your assignment to class on a USB jump drive for class review. We will critique and edit the shoot and decide on the best image. Once decided, we will tone that image in Photoshop as a class. Grades will be posted in list form at the beginning of the next class.

Final Project

This is a photojournalism class with an emphasis on lighting; therefore, it only makes sense to do a portrait series for the final project. We will flush out the details over the first few weeks. The main idea will be to capture 10 EXTREMELY interesting people. The format for submitting this will be a blog with all your assignments from the semester. I want creative design and thoughtful posts. The suggestion is you start it now and perfect it through the course of the semester and not wait till the end when you will no doubt be rushing to finish the project.

Digital archive

Keep a complete digital archive of everything you photograph for class. This should be burned to a labeled CD and safely stored. Always work from a copy of your original image when preparing an image for class. If there are questions about your final toned image, you can always go back to the original file for reworking the tones or to prove original accuracy in exposure.

Grading

The ten assignments:	200 points (20 points each)
Participation	30 points
Attendance	30 points
Final Project	50 points
Mid-term Exam	40 points
<u>Final Exam</u>	<u>50 points</u>
Total	400 points

Deductions

Unexcused absence	10 points
Late assignment	4 points

Grading Scale (out of 400 total points possible)

400-372 = A (100%-93%)
371-360 = A- (92% - 90%)
359-352 = B+ (89% - 88%)
351-332 = B (87% - 83%)
331-320 = B- (82% - 80%)
319-312 = C+ (79% - 78%)
311-292 = C (77% - 73%)
291-280 = C- (72% - 70%)
279-272 = D+ (69% - 68%)
271-252 = D (67% - 63%)
251-240 = D- (62% - 60%)
<239 = F

Weekly Grades

Each of the 11 assignments is evaluated on its suitability for publication in a newspaper, website or magazine. Improvement and consistent effort is taken into consideration during calculation of overall grades. I'll look at 10 points for technical, and 10 for creative.

Excellent (18-20 points)

Professional quality work that is insightful, relevant and newsworthy. The photographs involve the reader with drama, humor or pictorial beauty. Compositions are layered and balanced with distinct backgrounds and foregrounds. Captions are complete and accurate. Files are exposed correctly, color balances are precise.

Good (14-17 points)

Competent, functional storytelling. Clean and simple images that make a significant point efficiently and effectively that can support the story. Portraits have appropriate expressions and lighting. Documentary moments reveal key events. Captions are complete and accurate.

Unsatisfactory (10-13 points)

Average, run-of-the-mill picture making. Publishable but undistinguished. A "record" shot of a person, event or scene that goes with the story but offers little insight into why the subject matters. Composition and background might be cluttered. File is close, within one stop, to correct exposure. Bad shadows.

Poor (1-9 points)

Unpublishable work. A combination of flaws in conceptualizing, shooting, exposure and/or toning render the photo unsatisfactory. This is work, which, with better planning, luck and effort, could have been published.

Unacceptable (0 points)

Unpublishable and unprofessional. Weaknesses in journalistic thinking and/or photographic technique.

Warning

*Inaccurate or misspelled captions can reduce an assignment to 0.

*The use of post-production Photoshop to create a falsehood will be a 0. (Read as overt digital manipulation beyond the realm of toning, dodging and burning.)

On a positive note

What will boost points in your favor? DIVERSITY.

Your ability to photograph subjects beyond the safety net of your friends will be seen as a positive. Our community is made of many different cultures and beliefs. A good photojournalist's portfolio contains diversity in faces and lifestyles. We cover a diverse world. Our portfolios and assignments should reflect this diversity. If you seek out these subjects for your assignments, giving voice to those who may not otherwise have a voice, your scores will reflect this effort.

Special accommodations

“Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.”

Academic Honesty

The Department of Journalism faculty has endorsed the following statement on plagiarism: <http://www.jou.ufl.edu/academic/jou/honesty/>

Issues of dishonesty and misrepresenting your work are taken extremely seriously and can result in serious repercussions including expulsion.

Grading

Information on current UF grading policies for assigning grade points. This may be achieved by including a link to the appropriate undergraduate catalog web page <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html> .

Attendance

Absences

Students are responsible for satisfying all academic objectives as defined by the instructor. Absences count from the first class meeting.

In general, acceptable reasons for absence from class include illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays and participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate. Absences from class for court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) must be excused. Other reasons also may be approved.

Students cannot attend classes unless they are registered officially or approved to audit with evidence of having paid audit fees. The Office of the University Registrar provides official class rolls to instructors.

Students who do not attend at least one of the first two class meetings of a course or laboratory in which they are registered, and who have not contacted the department to indicate their intent, can be dropped from the course. Students must not assume that they will be dropped if they fail to attend the first few days of class. The department will notify students dropped from courses or laboratories by posting a notice in the department office. Students can request reinstatement on a space-available basis if documented evidence is presented.

The university recognizes the right of the individual professor to make attendance mandatory. After due warning, professors can prohibit further attendance and subsequently assign a failing grade for excessive absences.

Evaluations

“Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>. “

The Honor Code

The University of Florida Honor Code was voted on and passed by the Student Body in the Fall 1995 semester. The Honor Code reads as follows:

Preamble: In adopting this Honor Code, the students of the University of Florida recognize that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students who enroll at the University commit to holding themselves and their peers to the high standard of honor required by the Honor Code. Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the Honor Code is bound by honor to take corrective action. A student-run Honor Court and faculty support are crucial to the success of the Honor Code. The quality of a University of Florida education is dependent upon the community acceptance and enforcement of the Honor Code.

The Honor Code: We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied:

"On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

For more information about academic honesty, contact, Student Judicial Affairs, P202 Peabody Hall, 392-1261.

You can review UF's academic honesty guidelines in detail at:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/procedures/honestybrochure.php>

Student Help

“The University Counseling Center is located in P301 Peabody Hall. The major goal of the Center is to provide counseling and student development services to students. Individual, couples, and group counseling are available to help students with a wide variety of personal, academic, and career concerns. All counseling is confidential.”

Please call 392-1171 for an appointment. For 24-hour urgent care, an answering service will connect you with a counselor when the service is closed.