

Western University
Department of Visual Arts
VAS2246A - Digital Photography

Term/Session: Fall 2017
 Time: Mondays and Wednesdays 2:30 - 5:30pm
 Location: VAC 134/135
 Professor: Colin Carney ccarney@uwo.ca
 Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 1:00 - 2:00pm - Rm 241B

Course Description

This is an introductory course examining a variety of technical and artistic approaches to digital photography in the context of contemporary artistic practice. This course will offer students a technical foundation for using DSLR cameras as well as for using Adobe Photoshop. Students will learn about output preparation, print production and archival maintenance. A combination of demonstrations, in-class exercises, thematic lectures and slideshows will introduce students to the relationship between technical skill and critical thinking in contemporary photography. This class will be an opportunity for students to experiment and discover ways to express themselves in digital photography. It will also be a class concerned with various theoretical discourses which inform artistic practices in digital photography. Students will be making thoughtful work which responds to these considerations in 4 major projects over the term.

Note: Through this course, students will be exposed to a very broad range of photographic art. Some of the most canonical or universally esteemed works depict what is commonly called 'mature subject matter.' Be forewarned that a small percentage of the visual material students will be expected to view is of an explicit nature, containing for example, scenes or depictions of sexual and/or violent acts. Students must accept that by taking this course they have consented to viewing such material. If this poses a problem for a student, for whatever reason, it must be BROUGHT TO THE IMMEDIATE ATTENTION OF THE INSTRUCTOR (DURING THE FIRST CLASS).

Learning Outcomes

Depth and Breadth of Knowledge

Students will acquire the range of skills required to engage in the material practice being studied, and will have a thorough understanding of the genesis of those skills historically

Knowledge of Methodologies

Students will gain an understanding of the critical potential of the medium, be able to identify various ways works in that medium operate critically, and will apply their understanding, in creative ways, to the realization of their projects

Application of Knowledge

Students will use their capacities with the medium as a critical, discursive and expressive tool to develop creative works; understand the potential viability of their works, and will utilize their reflections on their works to explore and develop further projects

Materials:

- A small-format, digital, single-lens reflex camera (D-SLR) is **required** for this course
- A memory stick or external hard drive (preferred) , for the storage and transfer of larger digital files.
- A USB card-reader may be useful for transferring images from the camera's memory card to lab computers, especially if your DSLR uses a proprietary memory card (eg. Sony, Olympus).
- Students should expect to produce their own digital files and prints, and, buy their own paper.

Course Requirements

Attendance

Attendance, punctuality and preparedness for class are critical, as the teaching methods used will include class critiques, lectures and studio work. Under University regulations, if a student misses 15% of their classes, without written corroboration for health or bereavement, they can be debarred from participation in final evaluations and/or critiques.

Studio Work

Class time will be devoted to lectures, tutorials, demonstrations, presentations, critiques and studio work time, allotted to the students of this class to occupy the Lab exclusively for their own purposes to complete assignments. The student is expected to spend an amount of time equivalent to the courses' assigned 3 hour weight working towards meeting course requirements outside of class time. Students are required to observe all specified mandatory safety protocols governing lab and studio use.

Assignments/Late Assignments

Students are expected to complete all assignments on time. Failure to complete assignments without prior arrangements with the instructor will result in a failing grade. With prior discussion, students may hand in late work with a 10% deduction from the assignment. Extensions will be given upon official notification from the student's faculty advisor due to documented serious health and bereavement reasons.

Medical Policy

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed assignments, presentations or participation components worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counseling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department.

A student who cannot complete coursework totaling less than 10% of their final grade, due to medical reasons, may speak with the instructor and arrange an extension of no more than one week to complete the assignments without presenting medical documentation.

For more information on accommodations for medical reasons, refer to https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Mental Wellbeing

"Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Wellbeing http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help."

Course Evaluation

All grades will be based on the student's ability to clearly demonstrate:

- Understanding of project concepts and ability to express that understanding
- Ambition, resourcefulness, creativity
- Technical development
- Completion and quality of assignments
- Development and maturity of ideas
- Attendance and participation in class activities

VISUAL ARTS Undergraduate Grading Guidelines – Studio

These guidelines are benchmarks, not to be followed as rigid regulations. They will be adjusted as appropriate to take into account the level of the course and any specific instructions given by a professor. For example, grades at the first year level are generally lower than at fourth year.

90-100 (Outstanding, A+)

The studio work shows significant originality and exhibits a high degree of critical engagement. Sophisticated analysis and synthesis involving complex theoretical and conceptual thinking are demonstrated. Mastery of complex ideas is immediately evident. The studio work has originality, clarity and ambition. The project is treated with sensitivity and subtlety of thought. The quality of the background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is exemplary.

80-89 (Excellent, A)

The studio work shows originality and exhibits a high degree of critical engagement. The work is clearly focused and intelligently presented. Mastery of complex ideas is demonstrated. The studio work has clarity and ambition. The quality of the studio production immediately engages the viewer. The studio work has been sufficiently developed and demonstrates mastery of techniques so that results are compelling. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is impressive.

75-79 (Very Good, B+)

The studio work shows above average analysis, critical thinking and independent thought. It demonstrates a clear awareness of the parameters of the assignment and a very good attempt to respond creatively to them. The work demonstrates reasonable depth and/or breadth and engages in a production that is appropriate to the level of the course. The quality of studio work engages the viewer and demonstrates above-average mastery of techniques. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is very good.

70-74 (Good, B)

The studio work shows a satisfactory attempt at analysis and critical thinking. It shows a good attempt to respond to assignment parameters. The work demonstrates some depth and/or breadth, making references to appropriate course material/art context. The studio production engages the viewer and demonstrates a sufficient mastery of techniques. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is satisfactory.

60-69 (Competent, C)

The studio work demonstrates adequate engagement with the project. It shows an attempt to respond to assignment parameters but does so at a very basic level that lacks creativity. Engagement with studio production demonstrates basic mastery of techniques. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is competent.

50-59 (Marginal, D)

The studio work shows less than adequate engagement with the topic and with the material covered by the course. The studio work waivers in its attempt to respond to assignment parameters and tends to be simplistic. Engagement with studio production demonstrates less than a basic mastery of techniques. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is less than satisfactory.

Below 50 (Unacceptable, F)

The studio work demonstrates a failure to comprehend/engage the topic. The studio work is incomplete and lacks redeeming creative merit. The work clearly does not meet the minimal requirements of the assignment. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is unacceptable.

Evaluation Breakdown:

10% In-Class Exercises
 15% Project 1
 15% Project 2
 20% Project 3
 20% Project 4
 10% Presentation
 10% Attendance & Participation

Western University Visual Arts Department**POLICIES****Student Conduct:**

All students will conduct themselves in a manner that will be consistent with the maturity and academic integrity expected of university students. Student conduct shall be consistent with the general laws of the community and with University regulations. Students shall show regard and respect for the rights, safety, and property of all members of the University community and are expected to act in a responsible manner within the University and the community at large.

Attendance:

A student who misses more than 15% of the course hours, without written corroboration for health or bereavement, can be debarred from writing final exams, or participation in final studio evaluations. Note that if a student consistently is absent from a 3-hour class for 1 hour, they will exceed the 15% cutoff and can be debarred.

Prerequisites:

You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that you have not taken an antirequisite course. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as basis of appeal. If you are not eligible for a course, you may be removed from it at any time, and you will receive no adjustment to your fees. These decisions cannot be appealed.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism, which may be defined as “The act or an instance of copying or stealing another’s words or ideas and attributing them as one’s own,” will not be tolerated. (Citation excerpted from Black’s Law Dictionary, 1999, 7th ed., p.1170). (Refer to <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/pg113.html> with regards to academic penalties for plagiarism.) This includes presenting the visual or aural work of another creator as your own. Visual or Aural Plagiarism may involve both hand-based media such as drawing, painting, printmaking and sculpture, as well as digital media such as photography, video and sound. It includes work subsequently manipulated or transferred between different media, as well as self-plagiarism – work submitted for assignments previously produced and graded for another course. Similar to textual plagiarism, all student work involving the visual or aural work of others must be appropriately cited/identified whether in print or orally. Failure to do so will lead to similar academic penalties as those identified in Western’s Academic Calendar.

Medical Policy:

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. See course outline for specific arrangements regarding less than 10% of assignments.

Mental Wellbeing:

“Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Wellbeing http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.”

Building Access:

The John Labatt Visual Arts Centre will be closed at 10:00pm each night Monday to Friday. There will be no after-hour access for undergraduate students. The Centre is open weekends 12:00pm-5:00pm unless otherwise posted; access by side entrances only. Students should be prepared to vacate the building promptly at 10:00pm and 5:00pm. You must also sign-in with the building monitors when working in the workshop areas outside of regular office hours.

Permission re: Promotion

You grant permission for Western University to reproduce your name, information describing your artwork, representations of your work and any other information you have provided for the purpose of display, promotion and publicity either now or in the future.

By installing your artwork in the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre, you grant Western University an irrevocable, perpetual, royalty-free world-wide licence to photograph your artwork and use such photograph(s) for the promotion of your artwork and/or Western University, including, without limitation, advertising, display, editorial, packaging, promotion, television, social media, the Department of Visual Arts website, flickr, Twitter, Instagram etc.). Students wishing to not have their work photographed should not exhibit it in the Visual Arts Centre, Artlab Gallery or Cohen Commons. As the area is open to the public, students, faculty, staff and other visitors will not be prohibited from photographing your artwork while on exhibit at the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre.

You otherwise retain all ownership in your artwork.

Artwork Installation Liability Release

You understand that the area where your artwork will be hanging or displayed is unsupervised and is in a part of the building that may be open to the public, day and evening, whether or not the building is open. Western University accepts no responsibility for damage to, or loss of, artwork at any time while on display or while being transported to or from the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre. By displaying your artwork in the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre, you accept all risk of loss or damage to your artwork.

Western University does not provide insurance for the artwork on exhibition. **If you wish to insure artwork, it is your responsibility to do so.**

Removal

Western University reserves the right to dispose of artwork not picked up by April 15th of each year.

Please remember:

One of the most important resources for course counselling, special permissions, course changes, grade appeals, etc., is the Undergraduate Chair of Visual Arts, Professor C. Barteet (tel. 519-661-3440; vaugc@uwo.ca). Please note, however, that should you encounter any serious difficulties due to illness, family emergency, etc., you should consult the Academic Counselor for your Faculty. Ms. Amanda Green and Mr. Ben Hakala are the academic counselors in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities located in IGA Building, Room 1N20.

The Student Development Centre (WSS room 4111; tel: 519-661-3031; www.sdc.uwo.ca) offers a wide range of useful services including workshops on learning skills, career and employment services, and an effective writing program, amongst many more.

The D.B. Weldon Library offers orientation tours from the first week of classes until Thanksgiving, where you will get acquainted with the numerous research resources available. As well, the University libraries have an extremely useful website where you can search the library system, the databases, view your circulation record, renew materials, access your UWO e-mail account, and much more. Check it out at: www.lib.uwo.ca.

Financial Aid Services is your main source of information for OSAP, bursaries, loans, scholarships, and the work-study program which offer part-time positions on campus for Western students. Tel: 519-661-2100; e-mail, finaid@uwo.ca; or check out their website at http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/student_finances/financial_counselling.html