

# PHOT 120

**Instructor: John Dotta**

**Office: 3702, Art Building**

**Office Hours M/W 12:30 -2 PM T/TH by appointment**

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**Class Website: [http://johndotta.com/Phot\\_120/public\\_html\\_Photo\\_120/Home.html](http://johndotta.com/Phot_120/public_html_Photo_120/Home.html)**

**Class blog: <http://phot120.wordpress.com>**

Welcome to Introduction to Photography! This course is designed to introduce you to the fundamental vocabulary, techniques and sensibilities of the photographic medium. In addition, we will explore the history of photography, which will integrate photography's technical and aesthetic history with contemporary practice and criticism. This is a hands-on course of applied assignments and reflective evaluations.

Photography is the dominate form of visual communication used by society today. Throughout this course we will examine the medium's theories and practices, exploring the contexts that produce photography's meaning from within artistic, commercial, and editorial activities.

This non-darkroom, lecture/demonstration course is designed to introduce you to basic concepts of photography and to improve upon technical skills in the operation of both digital and film cameras. Emphasis is placed on developing an understanding of design, composition and creative vision. The course will explore the many applications of photography, career possibilities and photography's impact as a major communication force. This is a transferrable course to CSU and UC schools.

## **Student Learning Outcomes:**

1. Translate concepts and experiences through images
2. Demonstrate proficiency in the technical skills of camera operation
3. Demonstrate proficiency the aesthetic skills required of photography

## **Course Objectives**

- Appreciate the historical development of the camera and the process of photography.
- Examine photography as a major communication medium in contemporary society.
- Describe and explain common designs and components of the camera.
- Effectively utilize basic camera exposure controls (ISO, aperture, shutter speed).
- Demonstrate and apply knowledge of common photographic accessories (lenses, flash, tripods, filters).
- Identify digital sensor types, image file types, and storage media.
- Apply aspects of composition and design for effective visual communication.
- Introduction to Digital Asset Management using Aperture
- Produce photographic images that demonstrate effective visual communication.

## **CELL PHONES:**

All cell phones or communication devices must be **TURNED OFF** at all times during the class. If I hear a cell phone or see someone texting during the lecture, the student will be asked to leave the class and receive an unexcused absence for the day. This also includes chatting online or sending e-mails during the lecture. If I hear a keyboard clacking or a mouse clicking during the lecture/critique you will be asked to leave the classroom as well and receive an absence for the day. If you need to have your cell phone on during the lecture, please discuss it with me first.

## **LATE WORK:**

I will not accept late work. Having your work late deprives you of critical feedback and deprives your peers of the opportunity to develop their ability to talk about photographs. Therefore, it is imperative that work be ready for discussion at the specified time.

## **EQUIPMENT:**

You are required to supply your own camera. In addition, you must have a flash drive to transfer files.

## **POLICY ON DATA LOSS AND WORKING WITH COMPUTERS:**

This course requires the use of digital media for storing and transmitting required coursework. Learning good data management practices constitutes a portion of the class agenda. As such, computer failure or other forms of computer data loss will **NOT** be accepted as a legitimate excuse for late work.

Working with computers is always a risky business as some computers can behave unpredictably, especially in experimental situations. Each student must act responsibly and make back-up copies of personal data at every convenient opportunity. The safest way to do this is to copy data to a portable medium that can be stored in a secure location. Simply making extra copies of files and storing them on the same hard drive is not enough

## **PROJECTS and TECHNICAL EXERCISES**

They are 11 technical exercises and 7 projects designed to familiarize you with the medium.

## **CRITIQUES:**

I believe that critique is the most valuable aspect of an art class. It gives valuable feedback on your current development and helps direct you in the next stage of your artistic process. Even more importantly, learning to analyze and talk about artwork builds skills that reach far beyond art. It is becoming increasingly more important to develop a critical analysis of the world. Viewing, assessing and deconstructing visual art is a skill that translates into any aspect of our lives where we interact with other people, printed material, news media, the internet, politics, etc.

## **ATTENDANCE:**

Attendance is critical. The success of this class relies upon the ongoing exchange of ideas between participants. A student may be dropped from the course if they are absent once more than the number of times a class meets per week. If you cannot make it to a class it is your responsibility to obtain the information you missed. You are responsible for all assigned work regardless of attendance in class. Failure to attend any critique will result in an overall reduction of one letter grade for each critique missed. Failure to attend the final critique will result in an automatic "F" in this course, regardless of one's grade average going in to the final project. **This policy is not negotiable.**

## **ARTIST PRESENTATION**

You will choose a photographic artist to present to the class. You can start your search using the list of artists found on the class website. You may present an artist who is not on the list as long as you approve it with me first. Your presentation must include a visual, digital presentation using Adobe PDF Presentation. It is okay to use the artist's website, YouTube, etc., if necessary but they should be IN ADDITION TO your PDF presentation.

### **PARTICIPATION:**

Participation means showing up, being attentive to your own and others' work, and prepared to get things done when you arrive, participating in critiques, posting podcasts responses on your blog as well as keeping your blog up to date.

### **EXAMS:**

There will be a midterm and final exam that will cover lecture, discussion, and reading material and short quizzes from podcasts content.

### **GRADING:**

Grading of all assignments are on a pass/fail basis. Your final grade is based on the number of assignments you pass.

### **A passing response does all of the following:**

- meets the specified requirements of the task;
- demonstrates knowledge of the subject matter relevant to the task;
- reflects accurate understanding of concepts and terminology;

### **Projects/Technical Exercises**

Student demonstrates outstanding skill, discernment and understanding of visual principles in accomplishing his or her work. The quality of work is excellent, and it is integrated with exceptional creativity. The student will demonstrate **exemplary** knowledge of a variety of techniques which can be used in working with their chosen art form. In the case of studio assigned homework (activity) the student completes the assignment in all aspects and creatively exploits possibilities within open- ended assignments. The work demonstrates skill, good judgment, and application of principles.

### **Readings/podcasts**

Student has carefully read/listened and understood the material as evidenced by oral contributions; familiarity with main ideas, supporting evidence and secondary points. Comes to class prepared with questions and critiques of the readings/podcasts

### **Critiques/Class Participation**

Student demonstrates through discussion, critique, and studio interaction outstanding ability to discuss and assess work, communicating how visual elements and strategies are used. The student demonstrates extensive use and understanding of concepts and terminology used in the discipline.

**A failing response does some or all of the following:**

- neglects major aspects of the task;
- demonstrates weak knowledge of the subject matter relevant to the task;
- frequently misuses concepts and terminology;

The student demonstrates **deficient** knowledge or occasionally an understanding of a variety of techniques which can be used in working with their chosen art form. He or she does not demonstrate new insights and working methods, and has insufficient historic knowledge of the uses and development of the medium chosen.

The student fulfill the assignment, but gave no evidence of trying anything unusual. The student showed no evidence of original thought.

**Readings/podcasts**

Student either is unable to adequately understand and interpret the material or has frequently come to class unprepared, as indicated by serious errors or an inability to answer basic questions or contribute to discussion. In the case of written assignments, oral presentations, and research, the work /presentation/ document, presents faulty or negligible research and is not well written and/or presented.

**Critiques/Class Participation**

In discussion, critique, and studio interaction, the student states an opinion vaguely or does not assess the work and shows little to no evidence of an understanding of how visual elements and strategies are used. No effort is made to relate an understanding of concepts and terminology used in the discipline.

	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>F</b>
<b>Projects</b>	Completes all projects and technical exercises with "Pass"	Completes 6 projects and all technical exercises with "Pass"	Completes 5 projects and 10 technical exercises with "Pass"	Completes 4 projects and 8 technical exercises with "Pass"	Completes 3 or less projects and 6 or less technical exercises with "Pass"

	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>F</b>
<b>Critiques</b>	Attends all critiques student demonstrates extensive use and understanding of concepts and terminology	Misses 1 critiques student demonstrates extensive use and understanding of concepts and terminology	Misses 2 critiques. Student demonstrates extensive use and understanding of concepts and terminology	Misses 3 critiques. Shows little to no evidence of an understanding of how visual elements and strategies are used. No effort is made to relate an understanding of concepts and terminology used in the discipline.	Misses 4 or more critiques. Shows little to no evidence of an understanding of how visual elements and strategies are used. No effort is made to relate an understanding of concepts and terminology used in the discipline.
<b>Podcasts/ reading/ presentation</b>	Completed all podcasts and readings. Comes to class prepared with questions and critiques of the readings/ podcasts	Misses a total of 2 podcasts and readings. Comes to class prepared with questions and critiques of the readings/ podcasts	Misses a total of 3 podcasts and readings. Comes to class prepared with questions and critiques of the readings/ podcasts	Misses a total of 4 podcasts and readings. Frequently come to class unprepared, as indicated by serious errors or an inability to answer basic questions or contribute to discussion.	Misses a total of 5 or more podcasts and readings. Frequently come to class unprepared, as indicated by serious errors or an inability to answer basic questions or contribute to discussion.
<b>Tests/ quizzes</b>	Averages 90% or better on all Tests and quizzes	Averages 80-89% on all Tests and quizzes	Averages 70-79% on all Tests and quizzes	Averages 60-69% on all Tests and quizzes	Averages less than 60% on all Tests and quizzes

**STUDENTS IN NEED OF ACCOMMODATIONS IN THE COLLEGE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT:**

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a learning disability should contact Learning Services in the Library and Learning Resource Center (LLRC), room 1766, phone (707) 256-7442. A Learning Disability Specialist will review your needs and determine appropriate accommodations.

If you need accommodations for physical or other types of disabilities, schedule an appointment with DSPP Counselor, Sheryl Fernandez, in the Counseling Department located on the top floor of the 800 building, phone (707) 253-3040 for appointment. All information and documentation is confidential.

Please feel encouraged to make an appointment with me privately to discuss your specific learning needs in my class.

**DISCLAIMER**

This syllabus is designed to evolve and change throughout the semester based on class progress and interests. You will be notified of any changes as they occur.

Approximate Calendar

Week	Topic	Assignment	Podcast	Reading	Due
1	Intro to class Mac Basics Aperture Overview Creating a Blog	<a href="#">Camera Symbol assignment</a>	<a href="#">Quest for Visual Representation</a>  <a href="#">Camera Types</a>		Online portfolio address
2	Camera Fundamentals	Project 1 Technical Exercise 2 SALG survey	<a href="#">Understanding the Light Meter</a>  <a href="#">Exposure Compensation and Bracketing Exposures</a>  <a href="#">ISO</a>  <a href="#">White Balance</a>	<a href="#">Language of Light</a>  <a href="#">Farewell to the Revolution</a>	<a href="#">Camera Symbol assignment</a>
3		Technical Exercise 3	<a href="#">Metering Modes</a>  <a href="#">The Histogram</a>		
4	Light	Project #2	<a href="#">Seeing light</a>	Language of Light	Project 1

Week	Topic	Assignment	Podcast	Reading	Due
5	Depth of Field and Shutter Speed	Project #3	<a href="#">Depth of Field</a> <a href="#">Shutter Speed</a>	<a href="#">Beyond the Surface - Thinking About Photography</a>	
6			<a href="#">Pictorialism</a> <a href="#">Modernism</a>		Project 2
7	Composition and Design		<a href="#">Principles of Design</a> <a href="#">Elements of Design</a> <a href="#">Color</a>		Pictorial and Modernism
8					Project 3
9	Narrative	Midterm Exam			
10		Photographers Presentation			
11		Photographers Presentation	<a href="#">Directorial Photography</a>		
12		Photographers Presentation			
13		Photographers Presentation			
14	Landscape	Project #6	<a href="#">Landscape pt1</a> <a href="#">Landscape pt. 2</a> <a href="#">Landscape pt3</a>	<a href="#">Irony and Critique in New Topographic Photography</a> <a href="#">The Romance of Platonic Forms- Edward Weston and Ansel Adams</a> <a href="#">Reinventing the Genre: New Topographics and the Landscape</a>	

<b>Week</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Podcast</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Due</b>
15		Reading discussion			
16					
17		Final Review			Project 6 Print for print exchange
18		Final Exam SALG survey Print exchange			