

# Photo Arts 1 Fall Quarter 2010.1

**Instructor: Joe Ziolkowski “ Joe Z. “ 20100907**

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## Course Information Sheet

### Goals of the course (with a rationale for the course, when necessary):

To teach an introduction to the standards of still imaging required for first year students in the broad fields of documentary, fine art and photo illustration with a balanced emphasis on practical, technical, aesthetic and intellectual skill sets. The student will gain general experience in digital photography through lectures, demonstrations, assignments, practice, readings, critiques, and research. The curriculum emphasizes craft, photographic vision and visual problem solving using a digital SLR, light meters and digital darkroom processes for soft digital display. Visual design concepts along with historical and contemporary photographic images will be stressed.

### Course description:

An introduction to the BFA major in Photographic Arts. Students will learn to use a DSLR camera and digital workflows skills related to image capture and input. They will complete projects that address various aspects of photography as used in documentary, fine art and photo illustration. The course (first of six consecutive quarters) emphasizes both craft and visual problem solving. It will focus on image capture and photographic seeing. ALL STUDENTS MUST OWN A DIGITAL SLR CAMERA FOR THIS COURSE.

### Joe Ziolkowski Teaching Philosophy:

The ability of a visual image to communicate depends on the meshing of intention and technique into a succinct vocabulary. To this end a successful educational program must emphasize both content and technique within a historical context.

Teaching is a huge responsibility as it lays the foundation for the future. Students come to class with a wide range of backgrounds and experience. It is important that the students be responded to as individuals while developing a sense of community in the classroom. From this grounding of the pressure/spontaneity and stress/thrill of the creative process can be explored.

Classroom management and activities center around developing the student ability to communicate ideas and concepts. They are encouraged to participate in open dialogue during lectures and critiques. Students are also guided to develop writing skills with journals, research projects and assessments for each project. Assignments are developed to explore and refine the students ability to translate ideas by executing visual works of art that blend technique with content.

Critiques and spontaneous discussions are a very important part of the educational process. Among the most valuable skills a student can acquire is a critical eye toward their own work and developing the ability to be articulate about their work and the work of others. This will aid the student after leaving the supportive environment of the classroom.

Students need to have a firm grounding in traditional techniques and equipment. They also need to be encouraged to be innovative and explore alternative processes and new technologies. This search must not stop at materials. Content must be explored with the same openness and spirit of adventure. Students must be prepared to take risks and challenge their preconceived notions concerning themselves and society. It is this risk taking, along with problem solving that builds confidence.

Projects should be structured to allow students to utilize their strengths while working on less familiar areas. They should be able to work from their own level while still contributing to the group dynamic. In addition students need to have a historical awareness and to understand their work as part of a continuum. Stylistic movements and technical innovations must be viewed in relation to the ideas that were the driving force behind their development.

The result of a successful educational program is in the ability of the student to prosper outside the classroom, to continue to search and to explore. As a working artist I practice this philosophy on a daily basis and share the results with my students, peers and the community at large.

### **Student Responsibilities:**

I will expect that you will read every handout given to you, and make careful note of the information contained therein. This goes for material that is discussed in class as well, please take notes in your required journal, most of what is said in class or included on a handout is strictly for your benefit. I put a significant amount of time and effort into making handouts and preparing lectures and demonstrations so I'd greatly appreciate it if you'd listen, pay attention and read and review your notes. If anything appears unclear, please don't hesitate to ask questions.

It will be presumed that you have reached a certain level of maturity. An adult level of conduct is expected. Please show the appropriate respect for me as well as your classmates. One other courtesy is also requested; since cell phones seem to be standard accessories for many students, please turn them **OFF** before entering the class and during class. Having it on vibrate is just as bad as your favorite loud ring. If it goes off, it goes on my classroom desk for the duration of the class and lab. I am serious. Turn them off.

Lap top computers are not allowed during lecture and critiques. If you need to take notes. Use the required journal, put pencil to paper. I am serious about this. You can access your electronic devices during breaks, or at the end of the class.

### **Personal head phones and listening devices and recording devices are not allowed in classes and labs.**

This means the digital labs as well. If you need to listen to music in the lab and in the studio, use a stereo system with speakers. Do not walk around with headphones on. During the K Lab we can listen to music you provide on an iPod.

Talk to your instructors, TA, and fellow classmates.

Attendance and tardiness are an issue which I will bring to your attention; not only do absences and tardiness affect individual student performance, they also affect the entire class. It is difficult, both for me and the class, when there is confusion about material, assignments, and due dates because someone wasn't there when the is-

sues were discussed.

You are expected to attend all class sessions, and to arrive on time. Because of the nature of the curriculum, 1 or 2 missed sessions could put you significantly behind. In order to assist you in making decisions about attendance, penalties will be assessed for absences:

Four (4) absences for any class meetings will result in an “F” for both participation and attendance, which is a 20% portion of the overall grade. Being late three times counts as an absence. Being late is 7 minutes or more after class or lab starts. Three (3) absences will result in the filing of an “advising” form, which becomes part of your academic file. If you miss more than 15 class hours YOU WILL AUTOMATICALLY FAIL THE COURSE. I have failed students due to poor attendance. This means attend all lectures, critiques and labs.

Lab time is set aside for you so that you will have adequate supervised access to facilities as well as individual assistance with your work. You are expected to work in the lab during this time. I do not want you to be photographing for assignments during lab and lecture time. Only when we have a class activity will you be photographing with supervision. If you have already completed the next assignment, please work on related work for the class and make good use of this opportunity. There is plenty of reading material in the class to cover and repetition of functions in software. You can always stop by the library to check out a photo book before class and bring it to lab. This can be a great time for you to assess the work published in the book and fuel new ideas. I assure you that if you come to every lab prepared to work, with my assistance you will learn to photograph efficiently and with some extra effort on your part, quite skillfully. Lab times are also a great time to get feed back on editing a shoot, work not fully discussed during a critique, and when you are trying to map out a new photograph or idea in your journal.

In addition, it is important that each student develop good work habits which will be required throughout your career, whether academic or professional. You will have a reasonable amount of time to complete each assignment, but you must be efficient about using that time or you will find yourself behind. Time management skills are extremely important and I am here to help you develop them.

You will most likely be unable to finish all of the necessary lab work during class time alone, so expect to spend additional time outside of class completing assignments. A 5 credit class requires that you spend a MINIMUM of 10 hours outside of class time on assignments or course work.

### **Assignments:**

All photographs should be made specifically for this class. You will not be allowed to use older images or images for another class for credit. The idea is that you’re able to apply and demonstrate what you learn in class by making new images. All of my assignments are designed to give you a reasonable amount of freedom to fulfill the requirements. If I find that you are using images from another class, you will receive an immediate “ZERO” for that assignment and we will both meet with the chair of the department to discuss further actions.

When you turn in any assignment, all the requested materials should be present for the assignment to be considered complete. Everything you turn in should show proper identification and regard for your work. Your name & letterhead must be on everything you hand in to me. Prints, contact sheets, comment sheets, folders, digital files, CD-R/DVD-R Jewel cases. EVERYTHING! Any assignments submitted in an unfinished state will not be graded and will be considered late. Only completed assignments handed in on time will be considered for a grade of “A”. Anything late cannot be considered for an “A” Grade. This means the best you could achieve if you are late is a “B”. Hand in something on time, even if you feel it is not your best, is better than handing in nothing. If you hand in unfinished work on time, you can still achieve an “A” if you resubmit the completed project.

When writing this I am starting a new system for submitting homework and giving grades and feedback electronically. So I will have a separate handout for handing in work electronically. I do know that when you submit any file to me, I want the following in the title of the file:

Last Name. First Name.PA1.Section.2010.1.Assignment.file extension (Example: Ford.Betty.PA1.5.2010.1.3a.tif) You must also include metadata embedded in files. We will go over this.

When handing in hard copies for assignments, each assignment must be handed in a protective portfolio with your name clearly on it. You should purchase several of these. At times I am backed up with grading. Do not hand in two assignments in one portfolio. One will not be graded and returned with the other. This will have a major impact on your grade. If you do not hand in your assignment, it will be an immediate ZERO.

Graded work will be placed on my cart and I will notify you when assignments have been graded.

Late assignments will be accepted up until one week from the original due date, assignments submitted late will immediately drop one full letter grade. No more than two late assignments will be accepted during the quarter. Work that is not shown in a critique on the due date will be considered late. Even if you are not proud of work you have done, please put it up for critique, you will be allowed to pass on any discussion of it. Even if this means you have an underexposed digital file, a blank roll of film from processing, or a bad digital print, I want to see it to see it and discuss what went wrong. Everyone learns from the good, the bad and the ugly side of an assignment.

When we print, I require that all final digital ink jet prints be matted for critique unless otherwise stated. Again, everything must have your name on it clearly visible, and with your section and phone number and email on it.

Along with each assignment you are to submit an assessment sheet. I will provide you with an example of an assessment for an assignment. I require you to create a letterhead with your assessment that you will use over and over. You can continue to improve on an idea for your letterhead. This will help you to create a unique look to your identity. You must have your letterhead, date and assignment for every assignment. Including the final assignments due during finals. This should be roughly a page in length discussing your ideas, the way you interpreted the assignment and should include a thoughtful analysis of your results. This is to be typewritten on the computer and clearly identified prior to class and not handwritten during class on the day the assignment is due. It is important for you to write the assessment for each assignment as it gives me a much better evaluation of what was your expectation, your actions, your success and your assessment of where you can improve on an assignment. In many ways this can govern how I grade a completed project.

Assignments that are handed in on time may be re-done for a better grade. I will grade up to an A if the assignment is handed in on time, but not complete. I will not grade up to an A if an incomplete assignment is handed in late. Follow any of my suggestions on the grade sheet or comments for improvement. If you have any further questions on how to improve, please see me before you attempt to re-do any assignment. Re-do's should be submitted along with the original work and the grade sheet from it or comments. (No exceptions, if you lost the original grade sheet or the prints or files - you can't submit a re-do, I need to refer to my original comments.) The original assignment and the re-do must be labeled accordingly. Please submit any re-do's no later than two weeks after you receive a graded assignment back.

### **Assignments will be evaluated according to the following criteria:**

- Your interpretation of the assignments objectives: the amount of thought, effort, planning and development that is evident in your results. Don't waste valuable time and energy trying to figure out what you think it is that I want. Ask questions about an assignment before you start working on it. How you solve each particular problem or assignment is up to you. If you need extra help please seek my assistance.

- Technical considerations (camera usage, proper exposure of film, digital files, development of negatives, use of software, density and contrast of the prints or file, etc.)
- Aesthetic considerations (effective use of light and shadow, composition and design, and the amount of interest your work incites in the viewer.
- Being prepared for labs and work in progress critiques. If you do not show up prepared to work, or rework ideas during labs and critiques, it will affect your over all grade for the assignment, and the over all class participation.
- Presentation (organization, image quality, print quality, tone and color, or any other type of finishing as required, etc.)

Your final course grade will be determined by these factors:

An average of the grades from assignments, your attendance, involvement and participation in class activities and critiques; and your growth during the term.

### **Required Equipment:**

1. \*Digital SLR camera with a minimum of 12 megapixels. Invest in a good, solid body camera and lenses. Think quality first! The purchase of a quality camera now will allow you to upgrade over the next few years, enabling you to add superior interchangeable lenses of differing focal lengths, for example.

If interested in learning more about the variety of digital cameras, you may wish to visit [www.dpreview.com](http://www.dpreview.com). This site is great for comparison-shopping.

2. Capture media, for example, compact flash cards, for your camera should be a minimum of 2 GB. You will want no less than two cards accessible to you as an incoming student.
3. Card Reader with either a USB2 or Firewire support.
4. Portable hard drive, bus-powered preferred for easy storage and accessibility. Hard drive should be a minimum of 500 gb's, better yet 1 to 2 tb's..
5. Removable flash drive
6. Hand-held meter with incident/reflected and flash capability
7. Electronic flash with off-camera cable (3 to 5 foot extension cable) Winter Term
8. Remote electronic trigger specific to your camera's preferences. Winter Term
9. High quality, sturdy tripod
10. All weather camera bag

**Insurance:**

A must for camera equipment against loss, theft or repair. Check to see if a 'rider' can be assigned to your parent's homeowner's policy (if applicable). I recommend that your name be engraved on your equipment and you have a list of all equipment and serial numbers.

**\*General guidelines:**

- Minimum 12-megapixel camera
- Glass (lens) + digital sensor = you get what you pay for.
- A higher-level camera will not only have a better lens, but it will also have a superior digital sensor. For instance Nikon's D300 and D3 both are 12 megapixel cameras, however the D3 has a larger sensor, therefore, the quality of information captured is higher.
- Entry-level cameras tend to have lower quality zoom lenses. Ultimately, your better bet may be to buy multiple, higher quality fixed lenses although this may happen after you get to know your camera and image making style.
- Invest in a good, solid body and lens, upgrading lenses as you are able (the cage also has a very good selection of lenses for check out)
- Entry-level camera bodies are usually made of plastic that can be easily damaged and will begin to fall apart after about a year. A higher end camera may seem like an extra expense now, but it will last a great deal longer.
- Make sure any camera you buy is going to allow you to upgrade, i.e. investigate which lenses are interchangeable, etc.
- Shop around and get a feel for cameras before you commit to purchasing. Check out from cage to learn about differences of each.

The RIT Electronics Store currently has discounts for many cameras and lenses. See them for specifics.

**Supplies:**

- Lens cleaner and tissue
- Digital Gray Card
- Dust Blower

This term you will not be making prints and all of your evaluations will be done via digital files and projection so you will not be required to purchase any printing or matting supplies until next term.

**Textbooks:****Overall Photography Text:**

Photography: The Essential Way, London & Upton, Prentice Hall (ISBN#: 978-0136142768)

**Digital Tech:**

The Adobe Photoshop Lightroom 3 Book, Martin Evening, Adobe Press, 2010, (ISBN: 978-0-321-68070-9)

**Composition/Image Makers:**

Image Makers/Image Takers, Anne-Celine Jaeger, Thames & Hudson, 2007, (ISBN: 978-0500286623)

**Criticism/Theory:**

Criticizing Photographs: An Introduction to Understanding Images, Terry Barrett, McGraw-Hill (ISBN: 978-0072977431)

All four books are required and will be used for the entire year. They are available at the bookstore or on line. You should get them all today and read the syllabus handout for specific readings.

You will also want to secure a locker in the photo building for storing your supplies. This will allow you to keep things at the school and not to have to carry them back and forth from where you live. To get one go be sure you have \$10 in your FLEX account. Then go to the 3rd floor 'cage' to claim your locker number and combination. I suggest that you do this as soon as possible because the 'good' lockers go fast. If you wait too long you may have a locker on the ground floor or may not get one at all!

It is intended that this information will help to clarify and make our time together more enjoyable. If some of it seems too specific or harsh it is intended to give some overall course structure and organization. Your knowing and understanding the philosophies and ground-rules of this course will make our time together much more enjoyable.

Please remember that if you do not understand something it is your responsibility to let me know. Some concepts are quite confusing and take time and practice to fully understand. In this class (and life for that matter) the only 'dumb' question is the one that is not asked. We are all here to learn. Education is a life-long process that should be enjoyable as well as enriching. Together we can and will explore the vision and technologies of photography. Chances are that there is someone else in the class who does not understand what you do not understand. Please ask and let me help you to clarify your confusion so we can all move on with clear understanding.

Remember: Photo is Phun! and Dig-i-tal is Dyn-o-mite!

And if you have nothing else to do, go browse my blog...

# Photo Arts 1 Fall Quarter 2010.1 2067-201-05 & 6

Instructor: Joe Ziolkowski “ Joe Z. “

## Grade Point Scale

Assignments: 10/10

Labs: 5/5

Labs: 2.5/2.5

10	A+	5	A+	2.5	A+
9	A	4.75	A	2.375	A
8.75	A-	4.5	A-	2.25	A-
8.5	B+	4.25	B+	2.125	B+
8.25		4	B	2	B
8	B	3.75	B-/C+	1.875	B-/C+
7.75	B-	3.5	C	1.75	C
7.5	C+	3.25	C-	1.625	C-
7.25		3	D	1.5	D
7	C	2	F	1	F
6.75	C-	0	“ZERO”	0	“ZERO”
6.5	D+				
6	D				
5.5	F+				
5	F				
0	“ZERO”				

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## Extra Credit.

I am a strong believer in students that do extra work, should receive extra credit.

If during the course of one of my classes, or during a break between quarters while you are in my class, you do the following, it will apply for extra credit.

- Visit a gallery or museum.
- Go to a lecture outside of class.
- Work on a job that is related to the photographic, or digital imaging area.
- Or some other related activity that applies to my class you are in.

In a separate portfolio or closed envelope, hand in the following within 2 weeks of the activity.

- Once again, no more than two weeks after you do the activity.
- Hand in a 250 - 500 word comment sheet listing what, when, and where you did the activity.
- Whenever possible, please hand in a handout, show card, or other material that proves to me that you were to support your comment sheet.

I will give you a response to your efforts and keep it with my grades.

Sometimes a few extra credits on file can help your grade when you are between the two letter grades at the end of a quarter.

Remember, RIT is on a letter grade system. No half grades, say a B+ or D-.

Please do not hand in on the 11th hour at the end of the quarter, at that point I usually have a lot to be grading already.

Remember, “Photo is Fun !”

**Generic Name**  
**1234 Main Street**  
**Action Town, NY 14219**  
**585.987.6543**  
**Generic@yahoo.com**

March 13, 2011  
PA-3 Section 8  
Assignment #9-Editorial  
Instructor: Joe Ziolkowski

### Assessment Sheet:

For the Editorial project, I felt more confident in my photography. I feel that this project reflects both the weak and strong aspects to my photography. Mainly my struggles were the studio shots as I was attempting to find a model and a well thought out scene for the shoot. The open critique helped redefine my ideas into a more meaningful and convincing way. In the studio I felt that I could have pushed my project a little more further with the choice in background scenes had I allowed myself to find money to pay for a proper backdrop that well suited the scene. I could definitely see the impact the Fabrication project has made with the decisions of creating a home setting of an average Ebay seller. Besides the backdrop choice, overall I felt my final print well established as a starting point, an editorial shot within a studio setting. The re-shoot allowed me to visualize a setting that proves in a more convincing manner, from the added information within the set, what the scene conveys. I found it quite similar as writing an essay, where one must think and provide a hefty amount of examples in order to make an argument or in this case, a picture, convincing.

For the on location photo shoot, I felt more confident in my work. As a photojournalist inspired student, I felt that my pictures reflect my statement more convincingly. I definitely enjoyed traveling to Buffalo, NY to photograph a bookstore in the attempts to compare booksellers online as well as booksellers within street stores. By photographing these people, I feel that I became more personal to these strangers. Rather than taking someone and bringing them into my setting, I was able to capture them within the essence of the scene. This may seem somewhat paradoxical in a sense, but I felt that strangers and I as a photographer become more personal with each other rather than what most say, intrusive. Here I was able to ask more questions and become familiar with their side of the story when actually witnessing the way these booksellers live, rather than subjectively assuming the part through the use of a studio. That, I felt was one of the downsides to the "fabrication" project. I did not feel comfortable with creating something imaginary, and making it appear as if it were real. My strong suit is photographing the so-called "truth" to the story or an event in the attempts to educate others. Therefore, as a self-evaluation I feel that my work was much stronger in the on-location shoot rather than my work in the studio.