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ARTZ 284A.50: Photography I - Technologies and Processes

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ARTZ 284a; Photo-I, ONLINE

Course Syllabus

instructor: **Matt Hamon**

office hours: **M 12:10 – 2:00 pm, and by appointment**

email: matthew.hamon@umontana.edu

The University of Montana occupies the aboriginal territories of the Salish and Kalispell people. We honor the path they have always showed us in caring for this place for generations to come.

A NOTE ABOUT ONLINE LEARNING:

Online courses offer the convenience of allowing the student to fit the coursework into their busy schedules. However, they also require that the student carefully manages their time so that they can address the course material. The most common challenge I see students struggle with in my online courses is a failure to carefully schedule time to complete the coursework. I find this peculiar considering the student, theoretically, has four extra hours per week that they aren't required to be in class on campus. It seems that a lot of people struggle to take responsibility for (and advantage of) the freedom online courses offer. I strongly encourage you to schedule time during the week to work on this course, pay close attention to the Moodle course supplement, and carefully track due dates. You should be visiting the Moodle course site every Monday evening for new course material and assignments. A new shooting assignment will be given each Monday and the previous week's assignment will be due on Wednesday evening of each week.

Course Description and Objectives:

Welcome to Photo-I online. The primary mode of content delivery and submission of assignments will be via this Moodle page and via other internet resources. Because most of the enrolled students reside in proximity to the University of Montana, I will also be available to meet with you in person. Please note my office hours (above) or contact me via email to schedule an appointment. I am happy to assist you in person.

This 3 credit course offers an introduction to basic photography techniques and aesthetic issues from camera operation, approaches to various subjects and situations, post production editing and conceptual aspects of the medium. In addition, the class will introduce a variety of historical and contemporary photographers as well as issues and theories within photography. The student will strive to bring technical control into accord with artistic vision. It should be noted that this photography course is a fine-art

course: it does not address itself to vocational skills and results... *Individual creativity, visual problem solving and precise craftsmanship will be stressed.* Students should expect to gain an awareness of the expressive and creative possibilities of photography as well as developing a personal vocabulary utilizing the photographic medium.

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to: Understand the basic technical aspects of digital photography involving camera operation, and exposure control, selecting appropriate f-stops and shutter speeds for different picture taking problems, interpret in-camera reflected light meter readings, arrive at appropriate exposures in a variety of lighting situations, bracket exposures. Additionally, students will be able to critique the form and content of photographs in a class peer setting, state significant historical contributions and technical innovations pertinent to the development of photography, use photography as a medium of personal expression, and demonstrate the creative process through class discourse.

More Concisely

There are four (4) primary aspects of this course:

1. Technique: Technical operation of a digital camera
2. Process: Best approaches to a variety of subjects and situations
3. Editing: Post production and image editing in software (Lightroom/Photoshop)
4. Content: Creative use of photography (history, concepts, and ideas relating to the photographic object and lens based images)

Projects

Weekly assignments will be delivered throughout the semester on Tuesdays. Expect one assignment per week. Assignments are generally due (posted to your personal Tumblr blog) on the Wednesday of the week after they were assigned, giving you a full week to complete them. More involved assignments will have later due dates. Each assignment will be designed to address both technical and conceptual aspects of photography. We generally conclude the semester with a project that you design for yourself. It will be helpful to begin thinking about the project you will design early in the semester. Keep this in mind.

You will be expected to complete all projects, and participate fully in class discussions. I have a very strict late policy, so make special note the clearly presented due dates...

Note: Late assignments will not be critiqued or accepted for credit except in the case of a documented COVID related illness. Complete your work on time!

Grading

Your overall grade will be based on a percentage of the total available points that you earn. Each project will include a rubric with pass/fail elements each worth one point each. While I do not assign traditional letter grades to the work you turn in, I will be frank with my assessment. Additionally, I am available to discuss your work before and after critique if you have further questions. Please drop in during my office hours or email me to make an appointment.

Final Grading Scale:

93-100 A 90-92 A- 87-89 B+ 83-86 B 80-82 B- 77-79 C+ 73-76 C 70-72 C- 60-69 D <60 F

Texts:

There are no required texts for this course. If you are the type of person who would benefit from a technical manual of photography throughout the semester, please contact me. I have several I can loan you.

Other readings may be provided during the semester, including handouts, on-line readings, videos, web links, or downloadable/emailed PDFs via the course Moodle site.

How to be successful in this course:

The way to earn an “A” in this class is to simply complete all assignments **on time** and to the best of your ability.

REQUIRED: Equipment & Supplies:

Camera:

- A digital camera that allows for manual adjustment of shutter-speed and aperture (This is a must, so don't even ask*). DSLRs or mirrorless cameras are fine. Ideally, your camera will also allow you to shoot in the RAW file format. While a camera does represent a significant expense, it is an indispensable piece of equipment for all art majors and an obvious necessity to any photo enthusiast. Make the best investment you can afford at this time.

*Today, some phones have advanced cameras, though they can not rival the quality and versatility of a DSLR or mirrorless camera. If you are determined to use your phone in this course, please invest in an app that allows you to access RAW file data and control ISO, Shutter Speed, White Balance, Aperture. ProCam7 (\$8.99) is my favorite for IOS.

Access to Adobe Photoshop and Lightroom (required):

I will be teaching via the latest versions of Photoshop CC and Lightroom Classic. This software is available in all of the UM computer labs. You can also choose to subscribe to Adobe CC for home use. You'll at least need the “Photography Plan” that includes

Lightroom and Photoshop. It costs \$15.99 per month. (<https://www.adobe.com/creativecloud+creative+cloud+photography>), or use the last non-subscription version, CS6 (It's worth asking for a copy from a friend who is good at finding such things). However, CS6 will have limitations and differences from the versions of these applications that I am demonstrating. I would suggest using on campus labs. Or, starting with a free One-Month trial from adobe then purchasing an additional two month to complete the semester. NOTE: You will not be able to complete the course assignments with the simple image editing options on your phone or tablet. You must have access to Photoshop and Lightroom Classic.

Tumblr blog account, Assignment Submission:

- A Tumblr page (www.tumblr.com) with the "Visual Artist" theme installed. There is a link to this theme on the Moodle site.

Visual Artists Theme: <https://www.tumblr.com/theme/39288>

Not required, but it wouldn't hurt to have:

- A "thumb," or "flash" drive with several Gigs of space for moving and transporting files
- An external USB drive of 250 Gigs or more
- Two SD memory cards for your camera
- Not required but recommended: A sturdy tripod and a long cable release or camera remote
- any version of Adobe Photoshop and Lightroom installed on your personal computer
- lens cleaning cloth or tissue

Course text:

In an effort to reduce student expenses, there is no required text for this course. Much of the technical information I offer will be accompanied by handouts. Careful note taking will also aid in your understanding of the material. If you feel your learning style benefits most from access to a text book, please contact me... I do have some options for you to pursue.

The Fine Print:

Email

You will benefit from regularly check your email account and the course Moodle site, as

this is where outside-of-class updates and notices will be sent. I will email you via your official UM email account (If you generally use a different email account than your UM account, I recommend setting your UM email to forward to whichever email provider you prefer). You will be responsible for all information and updates pertaining to the class sent to you via email. I generally check my email 3 or more times per day, so this is also the best way to contact me.

Students with Special Needs:

It is not at all out of the ordinary for various students to have unique needs and learning styles. Students with disabilities or unique needs should meet with the instructor immediately. Though requirements for the course will not be adjusted for individual needs, I am happy to assist each individual in meeting the requirements for the course.

Academic Misconduct and the Student Conduct Code:

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at www.umt.edu/SA/VP/SA/Index.cfm/page/1321.