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ARTZ 385.01: The Art of Digital Photography

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ARTZ 385; The Art of Digital Photography, (intermediate digital imaging and photographic lighting)

prerequisite: ARTZ 284a or equivalent

instructor: Matt Hamon

office hours: W 10:00 – 11:00, and by appointment (FA-413)

email: matthew.hamon@umontana.edu

phone: 360.789.9727 (*this is my personal number so please call/text for emergencies only*).

Meetings: T/TH, 11:00am – 2:50, Classrooms: FA- 415, 210, and 211

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.

Course Description and Objectives:

This course is a continuation of skills developed in Photo-I (ARTZ 284a) as students continue to build more advanced shooting, image editing, and output techniques. A significant portion of the course will be dedicated to studio lighting and location lighting with strobes. Emphasis is placed on mastering light-control devices such as soft-boxes, snoots, grids, reflectors/cutters, and gels. Additionally shooting and editing images with a DSLR and software packages such as Lightroom and Photoshop will be covered. Through a variety of technical exercises and assignments students will hone both photographic skill and conceptual thinking with photography.

This course has a heavy workload as well as modest financial requirements. Expect to spend 5-7 hours of work outside of class time each week (some weeks might require more time, some weeks will require less), so rethink taking this course if you have a busy schedule or little free time. Also, as photography is a very technical medium that depends on proper tools and supplies, which can cost a lot of money, *expect to spend around \$100 on materials and supplies for the semester (this expense will mainly relate to your final project)*.

More concisely:

There are four (5) main aspects to this course.

- Refining technical aspects of camera operation
- Refining technical aspects of photo editing (Lightroom) and compositing (Photoshop)
- Understanding and practicing *Studio* and *Location Lighting* techniques
- Refining Content in your personal work (history, concepts, and ideas relating to the photographic object and lens based images)

- Generating a concise and eloquent personal portfolio project in the form a book or “zine” by the end of the semester

Projects:

Various assignments or exercises will be delivered throughout the semester. Assignments are content driven, exercises place emphasis on technique. The total number of assignments/exercises will be based on the pace with which the group moves through the curriculum. 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 and which culminates in a self-published book or zine. It will be helpful to begin thinking about the project you will design early in the semester. Keep this in mind.

Grading:

You will be expected to attend all classes, complete all projects, and participate fully in class discussions. I have a very strict late policy, so make special note of the project due-date.

Your overall grade will be based on a percentage of the total available points that you earn in addition to any bonus or penalty you receive based on attendance. 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 during critique. Additionally, I am available to discuss your work before and after critique if you have further questions.

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

Attendance and Participation:

Because of extenuating circumstances due to COVID precautions and quarantining I plan to manage attendance with sympathy to each student's situation. It's critical, however, that you maintain communication with me about necessary absences. This course is heavily laden with technical information and demonstrations. It's very easy to fall behind after only a few absences. Though I'll do my best to update you on information you might miss, I implore you to make every effort to attend each class unless you have COVID symptoms or have been asked to quarantine.

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 see me. I have several I can loan you.

Other readings may be provided during the semester, including handouts, on-line

readings, or downloadable/emailed PDFs via the course Moodle site.

Supplies Needed:

- A Tumblr blog account with the Visual Artists theme installed... Tumblr is a free blogging service that we will use throughout the semester in addition to turning in prints. I will give you more detail about the way I'd like your blogs to be setup in the first few weeks of the class
- A digital camera that allows for manual adjustment of aperture, shutter speed, focus, and ISO. This camera must also shoot in the manufacturers RAW file format. Megapixel resolution does not matter.
- Several flash cards for image storage.
- An external USB drive of several gigabytes or more for archiving of digital files and storing your Lightroom catalog.
- USB "thumb drives" for storage and transportation of edited files.
- One, flat print portfolio for turning in projects like the Itoyo or something similar.

Other Recommended Supplies that might be helpful:

- A tripod and cable release (or remote) that will fit your camera
- Though Photoshop and Lightroom are installed in our labs (CC) it would be convenient to have a copy on your personal computer as well. The last non-subscribable version of this software is CS6. Look for a copy. With limitations you can use this software to engage with the curriculum.

Email/ Cell Phone Policy:

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.

If I see you texting during class, particularly when one of your classmates is asking or responding to a question, I will mark you absent. If I notice you texting during critique, I will make fun of you and mark you absent*. Or, you can accept the alternative punishment of bringing treats for the *entire* class during our next meeting.

*note: The convenience of cell phones for communication during emergencies is completely warranted. If you receive an emergency call during class, please leave the classroom to take the call.

Sources for output, equipment and materials:

- The UM bookstore - reasonable selection and decent prices)
- www.freestylephoto.biz - awesome selection of Arista papers, great prices and quick delivery)
- www.redriverpaper.com - excellent paper selection, affordable, quick delivery
- The FabLab, open access will be updated. The lab will be open on Tuesdays during class prior to Thursday critiques.
- Paw Print (In the Mansfield Library) - quirky but affordable printing option. Don't wait to the last minute though!
- Target - great local source for quality prints, ICC profiles available for many locations
- Costco - local source for affordable, large prints and prints of coffee mugs • Walmart - the unmentionable store, but a decent source for prints
- Staples & Office Max - quick turnaround of affordable prints
- Paper & Ink (www.paperandinkstudio.com)– local professional lab for excellent results with large prints. Not cheap. We will try to visit P&I on a field trip.

The Fine Print:

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/VPSA/Index.cfm/page/1321.

COVID precautions:

- Mask use is required within the classroom or laboratory.
- If you feel sick and/or are exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms, please don't come to class and contact the Curry Health Center at (406) 243-4330.
- If you are required to isolate or quarantine, you will receive support in the class to ensure continued academic progress. (Add specific information about how you, as the instructor, will continue providing course materials to students in quarantine or isolation.)

- (If instructors are comfortable sharing or including this) UM recommends students get the COVID-19 vaccine. Please direct your questions or concerns about vaccines to Curry Health Center.
- Where social distancing (maintaining consistent 6 feet between individuals) is not possible, specific seating arrangements will be used to support contact tracing efforts.
- Class attendance and seating will be recorded to support contact tracing efforts.
- Drinking liquids and eating food is discouraged within the classroom.
- (If applicable) Mask use is required in vehicles when traveling to field sites as part of class/fieldwork.
- (If applicable) Please note this class is being recorded. Notifying students is a requirement if this is the case.

Check Up-to-Date COVID-19 Information from the University of Montana

- UM Coronavirus Website: <https://www.umt.edu/coronavirus>

We strongly encourage students to remain vigilant outside the classroom in mitigating the spread of COVID-19.