

VM366-1: Digital Photography (4 cr.)

Emerson College — Spring 2024 Syllabus (last revised on 01/18/2024)

Class sessions: In-person on Thursdays, 10 a.m. – 1:45 p.m.

Locations: 180 Tremont Street, Ansin Bldg. #206 (Classroom), #703 (Photo Electronic Lab)

Professor: Camilo Ramirez
Camilo_Ramirez@emerson.edu
www.camramirez.com/teaching.html (Syllabus, some readings, project worksheets, public resources)
[Shared Google Drive Repository](#) (Delivering your work, additional resources, project evals & grades)

Office & Hrs: 180 Tremont St. (Ansin Building) #911. Mailbox is also on the 9th floor of the Ansin bldg.
In-person office hrs on Tue & Thu: 8:20am–9:50am, or schedule an appointment via email.

Course Description:

A hands-on production class created especially for the photography student who is interested in the digital darkroom. It is designed to give students a basic introduction to the elements of digital capture, manipulation, and output. The course addresses the digital tools within the context of the aesthetics of photography. Photoshop is used as another photographic tool.

Prerequisite: VM265: Introduction to Photography

Student Learning Objectives - Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the history, theory, and practice of media arts (digital photography).
- Demonstrate basic skills in media arts production (digital photography).
- Demonstrate a critical understanding of photographic projects and images through group critiques.
- Learn professional standards and techniques for shooting still images with medium-format cameras.
- Learn professional standards and techniques for shooting still images with Digital SLR or Med Format cameras.
- Demonstrate knowledge of converting color analog film and printed photographs into digital.
- Establish an effective color-managed workflow for digital photography with industry standard software.
- Learn various output workflows for print and online use.

Expectations:

The content of this course requires in-person, physical presence by students. We will be critiquing prints in person and using equipment that is specific to our digital and darkroom labs. There will be no remote attendance unless it is planned by me in advance for the entire class, and cleared by our department. Whenever possible inform me in advance if you will be missing class. Missing three or more of our 4-hour class sessions means that you will have not had sufficient exposure to the course material and will result in failing the course. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to follow up in order to mitigate your absences & any missed work.

Students are required to complete all assignments on time. This means regularly shooting & printing new pictures and attending each critique. Scheduled lab-work time means coming prepared with new pictures to edit or print. Students should expect to spend time outside of class for shooting, editing and printing new photographs. Active participation during critiques is required. Each student is responsible for having and bringing all supplies required of this course to every class. Students must also follow all lab rules. Use of A.I. technology for image based or written assignments is prohibited unless it is integral to your work, and stated in advance. Outside of a conceptually appropriate use and prior notification, delivering an assignment utilizing A.I. in this course is considered [Academic Misconduct](#).

I will notify you of any updates or changes to the course/schedule during the semester via email, so you are expected to check it frequently.

Mobile Devices & Class Recording:

- The use of mobile devices in class is strictly prohibited unless otherwise instructed.
- Under no circumstances should you ever make or answer phone calls during class.
- Text messaging, web browsing, even checking the screen on your device is also prohibited.
- Your phone should be turned off and put away when you enter the classroom.
- Audio or video recording, filming, photographing, viewing, transmitting, producing or publishing the image or voice of another person or that person's materials, creative works or educational records without the person's knowledge and expressed consent is strictly prohibited, unless it is part of a registered accommodation.

Textbooks:

Digital Photography A Basic Manual, by Henry Hornstein, ISBN: 978-0316020749 (Recommended)
The Photograph as Contemporary Art (4th Ed.), by Charlotte Cotton, ISBN: 978-0500204481 (Recommended)
Research in Photography, (2nd Ed.), by Ana Fox & Natasha Caruana, ISBN: 978-1350010499 (Recommended)
A World History of Photography by Naomi Rosenblum, ISBN: 978-0789209375 (Recommended)

Supplies and Materials:

Required Supplies and Materials:

- An email address that you regularly check
- A Digital-SLR or Digital Medium Format camera with manual aperture and shutter speed controls (both available for checkout at the EDC)
- A still film camera: medium format up to 4"x5" ([available for checkout at the EDC](#))
- Inkjet Paper: Minimum 100 of sheets of 8.5"x11" Epson Premium Luster Photo Paper
- Medium Format Color Negative Film: Preferably Kodak Portra 400NC 120 size (minimum 14 rolls of 120 size)
- Color Film Processing Service: each roll of color film must be developed externally (C-41 Processing)
- Negative Sleeves - PrintFile brand 120-3HB, 25pack
- 3-ring Negative Box
- Anti-Static Orange cloth for negatives
- Any form of portable digital media that you can use to easily store and retrieve your work
- Journal/Notebook for use as an Exposure/Printing Log, class notes, jotting ideas and thoughts

Recommended Supplies and Materials:

- Inkjet Paper: Large Format Inkjet Paper in sheets 13"x19" up to 17"x22". Or a 24"x100' roll of a specialty paper.
- 8x10" Negative Sleeves for contact sheets - PrintFile brand, Model: 810-1HB, 25pack
- Tripod & mechanical cable release for 35 mm cameras (or remote release for your D-SLR)
- Display Calibrator, such as an i1 Display Pro ([available for checkout at the EDC](#))
- Adobe Suite (Provided by Emerson to Full-time students) & a compatible computer

Getting your Supplies and Color Film Processing:

Equipment: The cheapest way to buy film and supplies is online through stores such as B&H (www.bhphotovideo.com) and Adorama (www.adorama.com). In town, you can go to Hunt's (www.huntsphotoandvideo.com) in Cambridge and Kenmore Square, and Newtonville Camera (newtonville.camera) in Waltham. For analog cameras I recommend Joe & Karen's Cameras (617- 770-3446) in Quincy, they have excellent prices. Emerson provides students with the Adobe Suite and student pricing on computers, for more info visit (support.emerson.edu). Always remember to ask for a student discount when buying any supplies.

Digital Camera Review Sites: These sites are a good start when shopping for digital equipment, especially cameras. <http://www.dpreview.com/> & <https://www.imaging-resource.com/> & <https://www.cameralabs.com/>

Film Processing: Local labs [Panopticon Imaging](#), [Hunt's](#), and [Color Tek](#), do (C-41) color film processing. This semester, the EDC has coordinated a film drop with Panopticon Imaging which picks up on Mondays and returns film on Wednesdays. Details and procedures to use this service will be discussed in class and sent via email. No matter which service you use, be sure to plan ahead and give yourself enough time to shoot, ship, process, and receive your film in time for class deadlines, *since ultimately you are responsible for developing your film on time.*

Access to Emerson Photo Facilities & Equipment:

As part of your first project you'll need to complete the following **three items for credit**.

1. Learn about photo facilities, see open lab hours, sign the usage contract, and take the hazmat quiz:
https://support.emerson.edu/hc/en-us/articles/21709025428123-Darkroom-and-Photo-Facilities-Access#h_01H9QZ6N4BM92YJS5H3MNYZHR0

2. Learn about equipment access at the EDC, terms of usage, safety, and sign the usage contract:
<https://support.emerson.edu/hc/en-us/articles/21694607357979-Equipment-Distribution-Center-Terms-of-Use>

3. VMA's safety form and procedure is required as part of all equipment reservations as per VMA department policy:
- [Sign the Safety Production Guidelines Agreement](#) (once per semester, and for credit)
 - Get an Approved Location Safety Form (per reservation)
 - Make an equipment RESERVATION on Web Checkout (per reservation)

Grading and Standards:

Grades will be earned in points throughout the semester by completing assignments, critiques and deliverables. The total points possible and all grading criteria are specified in each Project Description sheet. The three Project Critiques are weighed with the highest values. The total points earned throughout the term are factored against total possible points into a percentage which determines the Final Course Grade according to this scale:

COURSE GRADE SCALE

A	93% - 100%	C+	77% - 79%
A-	90% - 92%	C	73% - 76%
B+	87% - 89% *	C-	70% - 72%
B	83% - 86%	D	60% - 69%
B-	80% - 82%	F	59% and under *

Apart from assignment grading: absences, tardies, leaving class early, and being unprepared can also negatively affect your Course Grade as stated in the following Attendance Policy section.*

Attendance Policy:

- In person attendance is absolutely critical to this course. There will be no remote attendance.
- Late work is unacceptable and may only be accepted/graded at my discretion.
- If absent, it is your responsibility to make arrangements to deliver your work on or before the due date.
- If absent, it is your responsibility to find out what you've missed and make arrangements to turn in pending work.
- If absent, it is your responsibility to find out if the Course Calendar/Schedule has been updated.
- Poor attendance can negatively affect your Course Grade as described in the following tables.*

TARDIES, etc.	COUNT AS:
1 Tardy	½ of an Absence
1 Early Class Departure	½ of an Absence
Coming to Class Unprepared	½ of an Absence

ABSENCES	COUNT AS:
1 Absence	Course Grade not affected
2 Absences *	Course Grade is no greater than B+
3 Absences *	Automatic F (Course Failure)

If you have a religious observance or practice that impacts our course calendar, please see me as soon as possible to discuss how we may make appropriate arrangements. **If you feel sick, DO NOT come to class. Check in with me ASAP and we'll work things out for next week.** For additional information on attendance see the [Student Handbook](#) & [Emerson's Attendance Policy](#).

Plagiarism, Academic Misconduct Statement, and Artificial Intelligence standards:

It is the responsibility of all Emerson students to know and adhere to the College's policy on plagiarism. If you have any questions concerning the Emerson plagiarism policy or about documentation of sources in work you produce in this course, you should speak to your instructor. View the college's [Academic Misconduct & Plagiarism Policy](#).

As stated above, delivering any assignment in this course that utilizes Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) technology for image based and/or written assignments as your own work is considered Academic Misconduct, and may lead to [Failing the course, being suspended from the college, or being dismissed by the college](#). The only exception in this course, is for image based work, where you must first state in your project proposal - your intended use of A.I. for a specific conceptual goal as part of your project and which tools you will be using.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

Emerson is committed to providing equal access and support to all students who qualify through the provision of reasonable accommodations, so that each student may fully participate in the Emerson experience. If you have a disability that may require accommodations, please contact Student Accessibility Services at SAS@emerson.edu or 617-824-8592 to make an appointment with an SAS staff member. Students are encouraged to contact SAS early in the semester. Please be aware that accommodations are not applied retroactively.

Equal Opportunity Statement:

If you have been impacted by discrimination, harassment or sexual violence, I am available to support you, and help direct you to available resources on and off campus. Additionally, the [Office of Equal Opportunity](mailto:oeo@emerson.edu) (oeo@emerson.edu; 617-824-8999) is available to meet with you and discuss options to address concerns and to provide you with support resources. Please note that because I am an Emerson employee, any information shared with me related to discrimination, harassment or sexual violence will also be shared with the [Office of Equal Opportunity](#). If you would like to speak with someone confidentially, please contact the [Healing & Advocacy Collective](#), the [Emerson Wellness Center](#), or the [Center for Spiritual Life](#).

Diversity Statement:

Every student in this class will be honored and respected as an individual with distinct experiences, talents, and backgrounds. Students will be treated fairly regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identification, disability, socio-economic status, or national identity. Issues of diversity may be a part of class discussion, assigned material, and projects. The instructor will make every effort to ensure that an inclusive environment exists for all students.

VMA Safety Statement & Working with Minors Statement:

All Students will familiarize themselves with the VMA's [policies on minors](#). At no time is a student to be one-on-one with a minor without a guardian present. For more information on Production Safety, Working with Minors, forms and other production resources visit: <https://emerson.edu/academics/academic-departments/visual-media-arts/student-production-safety>.

In order to make equipment reservations you must have an Approved Safety Form. To submit a location safety form visit the VMA Production Portal by visiting: <https://emerson.edu/academics/academic-departments/visual-media-arts/student-production-safety/safety-policies-0>

VMA Photography BFA Option:

This course is part of a sequence of courses that are required to complete VMA's optional Photography BFA. For VMA students who are interested and meet the requirements, it is highly recommended that you meet with your academic advisor as early as possible to map out your trajectory over several semesters.

VMA students have a choice to apply to the Photography BFA Option as part of the existing BFA in Media Arts Production. This offering has all the same requirements as the traditional BFA with the main difference being that students accepted into this program will be required to enroll in two consecutive semesters of VM 492 Photo Practicum for their capstone experience rather than the traditional BFA Production Workshop. BFA seats are limited, so applications into the program will be reviewed by committee and selected based on the merit of the highest quality work/proposals. Accepted students will have the opportunity to concentrate on a single photographically based project over the course of an entire academic year, and receive \$500 in VMA funding to complete their work.

To view all requirements, deadlines, and to learn about the application process, visit the [Photography BFA Option](#) page.

Course Calendar:

- **The following schedule is subject to change at my discretion.**
- Late work is unacceptable and may only be accepted/graded at my discretion.
- If absent, it is your responsibility to make arrangements to deliver your work on the due date.
- If absent, it is your responsibility to find out what you've missed and turn in any pending work.
- If absent, it is your responsibility to find out if the Course Calendar/Schedule has been updated.

Class	Date	Lesson Topics this week	Due this class	Due next class
#1	1/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the course • Review syllabus • EDC, Facilities, & Safety Contracts • Email Communication Test • Backups, Setting up a hard-drive & folder nesting • Exposure Triangle & Bracket Review • Medium-Format film camera demo • Introduction to Project #1 	—	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Email test due by Sunday</i> • <i>Complete Hazmat Quiz, EDC Contract, Safety Production Guidelines Agreement</i> • <i>Week 1 Reading, and Discussion</i> • <i>Read Proj #1 Assignment Sheet</i> • <i>Upload 1pg Proj 1 proposal (PDF)</i> • <i>Shoot and develop 2 rolls of 120 film</i> • <i>Completed Bracket Worksheet</i> • <i>Bring your hard-drive next class</i> • <i>Bring some old color or b/w negatives</i>
#2	1/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Discussion • Film Scanning Basics - Flatbeds • Hard Drive Setup for Photo Libraries • Lightroom Setup • Individual meetings / Print (LAB) Scan Contact Sheets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email test due by Sunday • Complete Hazmat Quiz, EDC Contract, Safety Production Guidelines Agreement • Week 1 Reading, and Discussion • Read Proj #1 Assignment Sheet • Upload 1pg Proj 1 proposal (PDF) • Shoot and develop 2 rolls of 120 film • Completed Bracket Worksheet • Bring your hard-drive next class • Bring some old color or b/w negatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Setup your Hard drive for use with Lightroom</i> • <i>Shoot, process, sleeve & print contact sheets: min. 2 rolls of 120 film</i> • <i>Print all contact sheets so far</i> • <i>1 high-res medium format film scan on a Flatbed scanner</i>
#3	2/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Proposal Presentations with Contact Sheets • Individual Frame Scans: Flatbed vs Flextight Scanners • Lightroom Setup & Basic Navigation • Individual meetings / Scan (LAB) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setup your Hard drive for use with Lightroom • Shoot, process, sleeve & print contact sheets: min. 2 rolls of 120 film • Print all contact sheets so far • 1 high-res medium format film scan on a Flatbed scanner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Shoot, process, sleeve & print contact sheets: min. 2 rolls of 120 film</i> • <i>Print all contact sheets so far</i> • <i>High Res Flextight Scan of at least one image from your rolls, color corrected & printed</i>
#4	2/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Image Anatomy & Basic Color Theory & Manual Global Color Corrections • Digital Printing workflow for color • Q&A review for critique next week • Individual meetings / Project Check-in, Scan & Print (LAB) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shoot, process, sleeve & print contact sheets: min. 2 rolls of 120 film • Print all contact sheets so far • High Res Flextight Scan of at least one image from your rolls, color corrected & printed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>6 Good Color Prints from High-Res Medium format Film Scans</i> • <i>Contact Sheets for total 6 Rolls of 120 Film.</i> • <i>Printed Project Proposal</i>
#5	2/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critique for Project #1 • Introduction to Project #2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 Good Color Prints from High-Res Medium format Film Scans • Contact Sheets for total 6 Rolls of 120 Film. • Printed Project Proposal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Week 5 Reading and Discussion</i> • <i>Read Project #2 Worksheet</i> • <i>Submit your choice of Photographer</i> • <i>Research your chosen photographer</i> • <i>Shoot, process, sleeve & print contact sheets: min. 2 rolls of 120 film</i> • <i>1 color print from a new film scan</i>

Class	Date	Lesson Topics this week	Due this class	Due next class
#6	2/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Discussion Local Adjustments & Photoshop Editing via Lightroom Color Management & ICC Profiles Individual meetings / Print at least 1 photo in class / Project Check-in, (LAB) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Week 5 Reading and Discussion Read Project #2 Worksheet Submit your choice of Photographer Research your chosen photographer Shoot, process, sleeve & print contact sheets: min. 2 rolls of 120 film 1 color print from a new film scan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shoot, process, sleeve & print contact sheets: min. 2 rolls of 120 film Contact Sheets for all photos shot 1 color print from a new film scan
#7	2/29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visiting Artist Presentation 4-up color print tests Advanced use of Printers & Ink types, Soft Proofing, Paper Media Options Individual meetings / Print at least 1 photo in class / Project Check-in, (LAB) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shoot, process, sleeve & print contact sheets: min. 2 rolls of 120 film Contact Sheets for all photos shot 1 color print from a new film scan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shoot, process, sleeve & print contact sheets: min. 2 rolls of 120 film Contact Sheets for all photos shot 1 color print from a new film scan Bring your D-SLR or Mirrorless camera
#8	3/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shooting with your DSLR & Medium Format Digital Cameras in RAW Individual meetings / Print at least 1 photo in class / Project Check-in, (LAB) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shoot, process, sleeve & print contact sheets: min. 2 rolls of 120 film Contact Sheets for all photos shot 1 color print from a new film scan Bring your D-SLR or Mirrorless camera 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shoot, process, sleeve & print contact sheets: min. 2 rolls of 120 film Contact Sheets for total 8 Rolls of 120 Film. 8 Great Color Prints from High-Res Medium format Film Scans Upload PDF of Research Paper to shared google drive Present Printed Research Paper + research materials
➤	3/14	<p>No class - Spring Break</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> REMINDER: Deadline to apply to the PHOTO BFA PROGRAM is Saturday 3/16 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Below 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Above
#9	3/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critique for Project #2 Introduction to Project #3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shoot, process, sleeve & print contact sheets: min. 2 rolls of 120 film Contact Sheets for total 8 Rolls of 120 Film. 8 Great Color Prints from High-Res Medium format Film Scans Upload PDF of Research Paper to shared google drive Present Printed Research Paper + research materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Week 9 Reading and Discussion Read Project #3 Worksheet Upload 1pg Proj 3 proposal (PDF) Printed version of your proposal Shoot a minimum of 100 new RAW images (or film equivalent) Digital Contact Sheets for all photos shot
#10	3/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field Trip – TBA Reading Discussion Questions in Art Criticism Worksheet Individual meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Week 9 Reading and Discussion Read Project #3 Worksheet Upload 1pg Proj 3 proposal (PDF) Printed version of your proposal Shoot a minimum of 100 new RAW images (or film equivalent) Digital Contact Sheets for all photos shot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 pg Art Criticism Response Paper stapled to Art Criticism Worksheet Uploaded Critical Response Paper Shoot a minimum of 100 new RAW images (or film equivalent) Digital Contact Sheets for all photos shot 1 color print from a new photo
#11	4/4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic RAW workflow for color Digital Contact Sheets in LR Individual meetings / Print at least 1 photo in class / Project Check-in, (LAB) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 pg Art Criticism Response Paper stapled to Art Criticism Worksheet Uploaded Critical Response Paper Shoot a minimum of 100 new RAW images (or film equivalent) Digital Contact Sheets for all photos shot 1 color print from a new photo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shoot a minimum of 100 new RAW images (or film equivalent) Contact sheets for all photos shot 1 color print from a new photo

Class	Date	Lesson Topics this week	Due this class	Due next class
#12	4/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding Image Resolution & Image Sharpening • Large format Printers & Handling Big Prints • Individual meetings / Print at least 1 photo in class / Project Check-in, (LAB) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shoot a minimum of 100 new RAW images (or film equivalent) • Contact sheets for all photos shot • 1 color print from a new photo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Shoot a minimum of 200 new RAW images (or film equivalent)</i> • <i>Contact sheets for all photos shot</i> • <i>1 color print from a new photo</i>
➤	4/18	<p>Makeup Day (We will not meet this day, unless otherwise needed and I notify you via email)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>See Below</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>See Above</i>
#13	4/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Output workflows for print, press, and Saving for Web • Online Publishing Platforms, Venues & Dissemination of your work • Final Project Q&A Session • Individual meetings / Print at least 1 photo in class / Project Check-in, (LAB) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shoot a minimum of 200 new RAW images (or film equivalent) • Contact sheets for all photos shot • 1 color print from a new photo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>10 Perfect Color Prints</i> • <i>Contact Sheets for total 500 RAW Files or 10 Rolls of 120 Film.</i> • <i>Printed Project Proposal</i>
#14	5/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Critique for Project #3</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 Perfect Color Prints • Contact Sheets for total 500 RAW Files or 10 Rolls of 120 Film. • Printed Project Proposal 	<p>Nothing due next week as this is our final class. Keep up with your photo practice and stay in touch!</p>