

# Digital Imaging for Photographers – VM366 (4 cr.)

Emerson College — Fall 2012 Syllabus (revised 9/11/12)

Class Sessions: Fridays, 10 a.m. – 1:45 p.m.

Location: 120 Boylston Street, Walker Bldg. – W418

**Instructor:** Camilo Ramirez  
[Camilo\\_Ramirez@emerson.edu](mailto:Camilo_Ramirez@emerson.edu)  
[www.camramirez.com/teaching.html](http://www.camramirez.com/teaching.html)

**Office Hours:** 180 Tremont St. (Ansin Bldg.) #1118A  
Fridays 2 p.m. – 4 p.m. and by appointment. Mailbox is also available nearby.

## Course Description:

This course is a hands-on production class especially for the photography student. It is designed to give a basic introduction to the elements of electronic, digitally realized, and manipulated photography. Students will learn to use computer-related input and output devices for photographic imaging, and to create work that is produced on the page as well as on the screen. The course addresses the need to understand the potential for the computer manipulation of photo-real images in design and illustration as well as the introduction of the computer as a tool within the context of photography classes that use traditional cameras and darkroom.

Prerequisite: VM265: Introduction to Photography

## 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 setting up and shooting still images with Digital SLR cameras.
- Demonstrate knowledge of converting analog photographs into digital.
- Establish an effective color-managed workflow for digital photography with industry standard software.
- Demonstrate a knowledge of various output techniques for print and online use.

## Expectations:

Students are required to complete all assignments on time. This means successfully 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. I will notify you of any updates or changes to the course or schedule during the semester, so read your email regularly.

## Mobile Devices:

The use of mobile devices (such as cell or smart-phones) in class is strictly prohibited. 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 prohibited. Your phone should be turned off and put away when you enter the classroom.

## Textbooks:

### Recommended Textbooks:

- The Photograph as Contemporary Art (2nd Ed.), by Charlotte Cotton, ISBN: 978-0500204016
- Digital Photography A Basic Manual, by Henry Hornstein, ISBN: 978-0316020749
- Adobe Photoshop CS6 for Photographers, by Martin Evening, ISBN: 978-0240526041

## Supplies and Materials:

### Required Supplies and Materials:

- An email address
- Any form of portable media that you can use to easily store and retrieve your work
- Inkjet Photo Paper (Epson Premium Photo Paper - Luster)
- A digital SLR Camera (also available for checkout at the EDC)
- A still film camera: any from 35mm format up to 4"x5" (also available for checkout at the EDC)
- Color Film: preferably Kodak Portra 400 (the right size for your camera, at least 6 rolls or equivalent)
- Negative Sleeves (7 rows of 5 frames for 35mm)
- 3-ring Negative Box
- Anti-Static Orange cloth for negatives

### Recommended Supplies and Materials:

- Tripod & Cable Release (or remote release for your D-SLR)
- Adobe CS6 Suite & a compatible computer
- Display Calibrator (Such as the X-Rite ColorMunki Display): Our monitors at school are regularly profiled with a calibrator, but for home use this will be an invaluable investment that will actually pay for itself in the long run. Again, shop around. [http://www.xrite.com/product\\_overview.aspx?ID=1513](http://www.xrite.com/product_overview.aspx?ID=1513)

## Getting your Supplies:

The cheapest way to buy film and supplies is online through stores such as B&H ([www.bhphotovideo.com](http://www.bhphotovideo.com)) and Adorama ([www.adorama.com](http://www.adorama.com)). In town, you can go to Calumet ([www.calumetphoto.com](http://www.calumetphoto.com)) in Cambridge, EP Levines ([www.eplevine.com](http://www.eplevine.com)) in Waltham, Hunt's ([www.huntsphotoandvideo.com](http://www.huntsphotoandvideo.com)) in Cambridge and Kenmore Square, or Newtonville Camera ([www.nvcamera.com](http://www.nvcamera.com)) in Newton. For analog equipment you should also try Joe & Karen's Cameras (617- 770-3446), they have excellent prices. Emerson is affiliated with Harvard University's educational store: ([www.computers.harvard.edu](http://www.computers.harvard.edu)) or call 617-495-5450. Always remember to ask for a student discount.

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

## Grading and Standards:

Detailed evaluations will be completed for each major assignment. Students will be graded using a standard A through F scale on **4 categories** which will be averaged into one Overall Grade for the course (also A through F):

<b>Production:</b> Deadlines & Deliverables	25%
<b>Quality:</b> Technical and conceptual proficiency	25%
<b>In-Class Assignments:</b> Only if finished in-class	30%
<b>Participation:</b> Active participation in Critiques and Presentations	20%
<b>OVERALL GRADE:</b> Production + Quality + In-Class + Participation	<b>100%</b>

Various assignments throughout the semester will earn you scores in one or more of the four categories listed above as appropriate to the individual assignment. Major grades are earned on Presentation/Critique days. When presenting your work and critiquing you will earn a grade under three categories: Production, Participation & Quality, thus missing a critique will significantly lower your Overall Grade. Students are encouraged to ask about their grade or request further clarification on grading policies if necessary.

Poor attendance and tardies can also negatively impact your Overall Grade as stated in the next section.

**Attendance:**

Class attendance is absolutely required. Two absences will limit your final grade to a maximum of B+. Three absences will result in automatic failure of the course. Punctuality counts. Being tardy twice equals one absence. Coming unprepared to a lab session will count as an absence.

1 Absence	No Grade Penalty
2 Absences	Course Grade can not be higher than B+
3 Absences	Automatic F (Course Failure)
1 Early Departure	½ of an Absence
1 Tardy	½ of an Absence
Coming to Class Unprepared	1 Absence

Even if you are absent, your work is due on the due date. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to find out what you've missed and turn in any pending work. Late work will only earn minimal credit. If you are absent, you should make arrangements to deliver the work before class on the due date. For additional information on attendance see the Student Handbook: [www.emerson.edu/student-life/student-handbook](http://www.emerson.edu/student-life/student-handbook)

**Plagiarism Statement:**

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. Also see the Student Handbook for more information: [www.emerson.edu/student-life/student-handbook](http://www.emerson.edu/student-life/student-handbook)

**Disability Statement:**

Students with disabilities who are seeking consideration for services or accommodations should contact the Associate Director for Disability Services: 617-824-8592, [dso@emerson.edu](mailto:dso@emerson.edu), or Disability Services Office, Emerson College, 120 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116.

**Safety Statement:**

Safety is always a concern on any film or video set; safety training is also a requirement for employment in the production industry. Emerson supports safety measures and requires safety training through seminars and The Emerson Safety Manual. Students participating in any Emerson film or video production must meet all requirements as set forth by the Emerson College Safety Manual and the Director of Production and Safety (DPS). Students with questions or concerns should contact Lenny Manzo (DPS) at (617) 824-8126 or [leonard\\_manzo@emerson.edu](mailto:leonard_manzo@emerson.edu). In case of emergency, the PRODUCTION SAFETY HOTLINE can be reached 24/7 at (617) 939-1311.

Emerson's Safety Manual is available at this link:

<http://www.emerson.edu/sites/default/files/Files/AboutEmerson/trf-vma-safety-manual.pdf>

Emerson's Safety Forms are available online at these links:

<http://www.emerson.edu/sites/default/files/Files/AboutEmerson/trf-s1-safety-checklist.pdf>

<http://www.emerson.edu/sites/default/files/Files/AboutEmerson/trf-s2-safety-checklist.pdf>

There are also printed forms at the reception desk at the 9th and 11th floor of the Ansin building and 5th floor and sound stage of the Paramount. There are also forms with Tony Acenso on the 8th floor in the Tufte building.

## Course Schedule:

The following schedule is subject to change at my discretion. **If you miss a class, it is your responsibility** to find out from your classmates what, if any, changes to the schedule have been made. Unless you receive an exemption from me, **you will be responsible** upon returning to class for both the current weeks assignments, as well as the assignments for the week you missed.

- #1 9/7 Introduction to the course, Review syllabus, Email Communication Test, EDC Session  
Working on a Mac, Setting up a hard-drive & folder nesting, Pixels, Megapixels  
File Types-Resolution-Image Quality & Your Camera, Intro to Project 1 - B/W Portraits
- Homework:*
- *Week 1 Reading & 1pg. Response Paper (Walker Evans Articles)*
  - *Properly set up your hard-drive, Email Communication test due by Sunday*
  - *Write a 1 pg. proposal for Proj. 1 - B/W Portraits*
  - *Shoot 100 images in 1 folder on your hard-drive for next week*
  - *Obtain all required materials for the class (bring paper next week)*
  - *Bring your Digital-SLR to class, charged and ready to use with manuals & cables*
- #2 9/14 Turn in Response paper. Reading Discussion. D-SLR operation, Bracketing, Adobe Bridge & Editing  
File naming conventions, Bridge Filters, Star Ratings, Keywords, Contact Sheets (Bridge Output Panel)  
File types and usage, Basics of printing, Individual meetings/Make Digital File of Contact Sheet, Print (**LAB**)
- Homework:*
- *Bracketing Assignment: Shoot brackets as described on the assignment sheet*
  - *Print Contact Sheets of 100 previously shot images from week 1*
  - *Shoot bracketing homework (12 brackets)+contact sheets for this and previous jpg's*
  - *Bring your Digital-SLR to class, charged and ready to use with all cables and manuals*
- #3 9/21 Diagnosing Exposures/Detailed anatomy of an image/Histograms, Processing RAW  
Color Modes, Models, Spaces. RGB vs CMYK, Grayscale Levels, Adjustment Layers  
Converting to B&W, Grayscale Printing, Individual meetings / Print (**LAB**)
- Homework:*
- *Finish 6 good grayscale prints using Levels and B&W Adjustment Layers*
  - *(64 new images) & Contact sheets*
- #4 9/28 **Critique of Proj. 1 - (B/W Portraits 6 Good Prints)**, Intro to Proj.2 - Sense of Place
- Homework:*
- *Shoot 100 new images & Print Contact sheets*
  - *Read "Twilight of the Color Photo" by Petrovich*
- #5 10/5 Color Theory, RGB Levels & Curves, ICC Profiles & Color Management, Basics of Color Correcting,  
Color Printing, Viewing Environments, Individual Meetings, Medium & Large format film demo / Print (**LAB**)
- Homework:*
- *Shoot 100 new images & Print Contact sheets*
  - *Week 5 Technical Reading (Download from Website)*
  - *Finish 6 excellent color prints due next week*
- #6 10/12 **Critique of Proj.2 (Sense of Place - 6 Excellent Prints)**, Intro to Proj.3 - (In the Style of...)
- Homework:*
- *Shoot new 2 rolls minimum of Film (or equivalent) as described on the project sheet.*
  - *Print Contact Sheets of 2 rolls shot so far.*

#7 10/19 Flatbed Contact Sheets. High end film scanning. Spotting & Basic Retouching. Local Adjustments  
Individual meetings / Editing, Scanning & Printing (**LAB**).

*Homework:* • Shoot new 2 rolls minimum of Film (or equivalent) as described on the project sheet.  
• Print Contact Sheets of all rolls shot so far.

#8 10/26 **Mid-term Grades Due.**  
More on Printers & Ink types, Soft Proofing, Paper types, Custom Output Profiles, Sharpening  
Individual Meetings / Print in Class (**LAB**)

*Homework:* • Finish work on Project 3: (In the Style of...) as described on the project sheet.

#9 11/2 **Critique of Project 3 - (In the Style of... - 7 Excellent Prints),** Intro to Proj.4 - (Time & Space)

*Homework:* • Write one-page project proposal as described in the project sheet.  
• Week 9 Reading Assignment & 1 page response paper.  
• Shoot 100 new images minimum (or equiv.) + contact sheets for next week

#10 11/9 Advanced Selection Techniques, Advanced Compositing Techniques.  
Making & Handling Large Prints. Fixing Noise & Grain. Sharpening

*Homework:* • Shoot 100 new images minimum (or equiv.) + contact sheets for next week

#11 11/16 Field Trip (T.B.A.), Discuss Reading, Complete “Questions in Art Criticism” worksheet  
Individual meetings: Review new contact sheets & select images for enlargement

*Homework:* • Shoot 100 new images minimum (or equiv.) + contact sheets for next week  
• Write a one-page response paper for the work you just saw (due next week)

**11/23 No Class – Thanksgiving**

*Homework:* • Finish making 10 Perfect prints for next week

#12 11/30 File Versioning. Naming Systems. Optimizing and controlling color options for the Web

*Homework:* • Shoot 100 new images minimum (or equiv.) + contact sheets for final critique

#13 12/7 **Final Critique of Proj.4 - (Time & Space - 10 Perfect Prints) + new contacts, Discuss Digital Portfolio**

*Homework:* • Prepare Digital Portfolio

#14 12/14 **Final Exam Period (10:30pm - 12:30pm)**

Turn in Digital Portfolio. Next steps in Photography. Instructor’s work.