

# VM265-04: Introduction to Photography (4 cr.)

Emerson College – Syllabus: Fall 2015 (last revised on 9/21/15)

Class sessions: Wednesdays, 2 p.m. – 5:45 p.m.

Locations: 180 Tremont Street, Ansin Bldg. #206 (Photo Electronic Classroom) and #504 (Darkroom)

**Professor:** Camilo Ramirez  
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[www.camramirez.com/teaching.html](http://www.camramirez.com/teaching.html)

**Office & Hrs:** Wednesdays 6 pm – 7 pm, & Fridays 2 pm – 4 pm, and by appointment.  
180 Tremont St. (Ansin Bldg.) #1311. Mailbox is on the 9th Floor of the Ansin Building.

## Course Description:

This course introduces the fundamentals of black-and-white photography by combining darkroom techniques with the latest digital processes. Essential comparisons between the two methods will be explored by learning camera controls, film development to darkroom printing, digital capture to print workflow, and through hybrid techniques such as making digital negatives for darkroom use. Critiques of student work will develop “the critical eye.” Students must use cameras with adjustable speed and aperture.

## Learning Objectives:

The objective of this course is to provide each student with a fundamental understanding of black & white photography by introducing traditional darkroom and digital photography. In addition, the course will provide students with a grounding in the history of black & white photography as an artistic practice through classroom slide lectures. Critique sessions will stimulate dialogue and critical thinking regarding the visual language of photography in its present and rapidly evolving forms. The methods and skills learned in this course will provide a foundation from which students can continue their photographic endeavors.

## 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 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 prohibited. Your phone should be turned off and put away when you enter the classroom.

## Textbooks:

[Black & White Photography: A Basic Manual](#) by Henry Horenstein, ISBN: 978-0316373050 (**Required**)  
[Looking at Photographs](#) by John Szarkowski, ISBN: 978-0870705151 (Recommended)  
[On Photography](#) by Susan Sontag, ISBN: 978-0312420093 (Recommended)  
[Why People Photograph](#) by Robert Adams, ISBN: 978-0893816032 (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
- 35mm Camera with manual aperture and shutter speed controls
- 12 Rolls of 35mm Film: Kodak Tri-X 400, 36 exposures per roll
- 3-ring Negative Box
- Negative Sleeves - PrintFile brand for 35mm film (7 rows of 5 frames) 25pack, Model: 35-7B
- Anti-Static Orange cloth for negatives
- Ilford Multigrade Contrast Filters (6x6")
- Photographic Paper - **CAUTION: DO NOT EXPOSE YOUR NEW PAPER TO LIGHT BY OPENING THE BOX!**  
Minimum 100 sheets of 8"x10" Ilford Multigrade IV B&W photographic paper - RC Pearl Surface
- Inkjet Paper: Minimum 50 of sheets of 8.5"x11" Epson Premium Photo Paper - Luster Surface
- Any form of portable 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:

- Digital-SLR camera with manual aperture and shutter speed controls
- Lock (for darkroom lockers)
- Tripod & mechanical cable release for 35mm cameras
- 8x10" Negative Sleeves for contact sheets - PrintFile brand, Model: 810-1HB, 25pack
- Compressed Air
- Can Opener & Scissors
- Self Timer
- Latex Gloves (Purple), Hand Towels, Apron

## 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 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

Grades will be earned for each major assignment and throughout the semester for smaller assignments. Students will be graded on **4 categories** which will earn points to be converted into an Overall Grade for the course (also A through F) as listed in the following tables:

<b>Production:</b> Deadlines & Deliverables	300 pts	<b>A</b> 900-1000 pts
<b>Quality:</b> Technical and conceptual proficiency	300 pts	<b>B</b> 800-899 pts
<b>In-Class Assignments:</b> Only if finished in-class	250 pts	<b>C</b> 700-799 pts
<b>Participation:</b> Active participation in Critiques and Presentations	150 pts	<b>D</b> 600-699 pts
<b>OVERALL GRADE:</b> Production + Quality + In-Class + Participation	<b>1000 pts</b>	<b>F</b> 599 or fewer pts

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. Smaller assignments or checkpoints may earn a grade in one or two categories. Major grades are earned on Presentation/Critique days and 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, tardies and leaving class early 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. Arriving five minutes after class begins is considered tardy. Being tardy twice equals one absence. Coming unprepared to a lab session counts as one 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 (if later than 5 minutes)	½ of an Absence
Coming to Class Unprepared	1 Absence

Even if you are absent, your work is due on the due date. If 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 so 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 and Academic Dishonesty 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.

**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. If you have any concerns or suggestions for improving the classroom climate, please do not hesitate to speak with the course instructor or to contact the Office of Diversity and Inclusion at 617-824-8528 or by email at [diversity\\_inclusion@emerson.edu](mailto:diversity_inclusion@emerson.edu).

**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.

Class	Date	Topics and Assignments
#1	9/2	<p>Introduction to the course, Review syllabus, EDC Session, The technical roots of photography, Intro to Film Camera, loading, and exposure controls. Introduce Project #1 “Sight versus Vision”</p> <p><i>Assignment:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>E-mail test, Sign up for a locker.</i></li><li>• <i>Read: Horenstein, pg. 2–15 (Basics), 22–27 (Film), 32–44 (Lenses), 49–55 (D.O.F.), Ch 5 (The Shutter), Ch 6 (Film Exposure)</i></li><li>• <i>Read worksheet for Project #1 “Sight versus Vision”.</i></li><li>• <i>Bring 2 bracketed, shot but undeveloped rolls to class next week.</i></li><li>• <i>Purchase all needed supplies and bring to class.</i></li></ul>
#2	9/9	<p>Slide lecture (Early Photography), Film Processing Primer, Lab/Cage tour. Introduction to film processing and darkroom demo, Process one roll of film with a partner (<b>LAB</b>).</p> <p><i>Assignment:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Read: Horenstein, Ch. 9 (Developing Film), pg. 215–218 (Photograms)</i></li><li>• <i>Read: <u>Understanding a Photograph</u>, by John Berger and write a 1pg response paper</i></li><li>• <i>Process your second bracketed roll of film on your own.</i></li><li>• <i>Shoot min. 2 new rolls of film and develop them on your own.</i></li><li>• <i>Bring object(s) for photogram experiments, 4 cut/sleeved rolls &amp; printing supplies.</i></li></ul>
#3	9/16	<p>Discuss readings. Darkroom demo: Contact Sheets, Photograms, Gang Darkroom Etiquette. Gang Darkroom Etiquette, Make Contact Sheets of the 4 rolls you have developed, then make 1 Photogram &amp; 1 enlargement (<b>LAB</b>).</p> <p><i>Assignment:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Read: Horenstein, Ch. 10 (Making the Print)</i></li><li>• <i>Shoot, Develop and make contact sheets for at least new 2 rolls</i></li><li>• <i>Bring to the Critique: All Film Shot, 6 contact Sheets, 4 Enlargements &amp; 3 Photograms (dry).</i></li></ul>
➤	9/23	<p>Exhibition Visit Assignment: See “Unfinished Stores” Exhibition at the Museum of Fine Arts &amp; fill out the Questions in Visual Criticism Worksheet.</p> <p><i>Assignment:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Write 1pg response paper as indicated on Worksheet</i></li></ul>
#4	9/30	<p>Darkroom Enlargements, Filters, Templates, Easels, Grain Finders, Using a Log. Introduce Project #2 “The Decisive Moment”. Make at least 1 enlargement (<b>LAB</b>).</p> <p><i>Assignment:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Finish Project #1 (6 rolls &amp; Contact Sheets, make 4 Great Prints, 3 photograms).</i></li></ul>

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- #5 10/7 **Group Critique Project #1 “Sight versus Vision”** – 4 Good Enlargements & 3 Photograms + Contact Sheets  
Introduce Project #2 “The Decisive Moment”.  
Individual Meetings: Review your 4 new contact sheets & select images for enlargement (**LAB**).
- Assignment:*
- Read worksheet for Proj. #2: “The Decisive Moment”
  - Watch linked videos in group email.
  - Shoot min. 3 new rolls & make Contact Sheets for all (dry and ready to go for next class).
  - Read: “Colleagues” from Why People Photograph by Robert Adams
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- #6 10/14 Discuss the Reading Lecture on The Decisive Moment, Split Filtering Demo.  
Individual Meetings: Review your 2 new contact sheets & select images for enlargement (**LAB**).
- Assignment:*
- Shoot min. 3 new rolls & make Contact Sheets for all (dry and ready to go for next class).
  - Finish Project #2 (8 rolls & Contact Sheets, make 5 Great Prints).
  - Bring your D-SLR
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- #7 10/17 Split Filtering and silver print refinement workshop (in conjunction with class the week of 9/23).  
Sat. Individual Meetings: Review your 2 new contact sheets & select images for enlargement (**LAB**).
- Assignment:*
- Finish Project #2 (8 rolls & Contact Sheets, make 5 Great Prints).
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- #8 10/21 Film Scanning. Resolution, and Image Quality. Dodging/Burning, Flashing and Fogging.  
SUB Setting up your D-SLR to shoot in RAW. D-SLR Basics.
- Assignment:*
- Finish Prints and Contact Sheets for Project #2
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- #9 10/28 **Group Critique Project #2 “The Decisive Moment”**– 5 Great Prints, 6 Rolls & Contact Sheets,  
Introduce Project #3 “The Landscape”. Setting up your D-SLR to shoot in RAW. D-SLR Basics.
- Assignment:*
- Read worksheet for Project #3: “Portrayals”
  - Shoot min. 100 new RAW images & download your RAW files to your drive for next week.
  - Reading TBA
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- #10 11/4 Discuss the Reading. Slide Lecture “Portrayals”. Pixels, Megapixels, File Formats,  
D-SLR Camera controls and settings. Long Exposures, Making Digital Contact Sheets. (**LAB**).  
Visiting Artist Presentation.
- Assignment:*
- Shoot min. 100 new RAW images and Print Contact Sheets for next week.
  - Print a “draft” enlargement for next class.
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- 11/11 **No Class – Veteran’s Day**
- Assignment:*
- Shoot min. 100 new images minimum + contact sheets

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#11 11/18 Digital Printing Primer Detailed anatomy of an image, Color Modes, Models, Spaces. RGB vs CMYK , Grayscale Levels, Processing RAW Files. Adjustment Layers. Converting to B&W, Histograms, Diagnosing Exposures Grayscale Digital Printing. Individual meetings & Print if time allows (**LAB**).

*Assignment:* • Shoot 100 new RAW images and Print Contact Sheets for next week.  
• Print a “draft” enlargement for next class.

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➤ 11/25 **No Class – Thanksgiving Break**

*Assignment:* • Shoot min. 100 new images minimum (or film equivalent) + contact sheets  
• Print a “draft” enlargement for next class.

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#12 12/2 Refining Digital Prints, Saving for Web, Digital Media and Digital Portfolio.  
Individual meetings: Open time to finish work on Final Projects (**LAB**).  
*Assignment:* • Finish Project #4

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#13 12/9 **Final Group Critique Project #3 “Portrayals”** – 10 Perfect & Cohesive prints based on your project proposal and Contact Sheets for 375 images or film equivalent.

*Assignment:* • Prepare Digital Portfolio (see handout for specifications)

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#14 **12/16 Final Exam Period** (1pm – 3pm, same location)

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

<http://www.emerson.edu/academics/registrar/academic-calendars/final-exam-schedule>