

VM331-5: Photographic Manipulation (4 cr.)

Emerson College — Fall 2020 Syllabus (last revised on 9/5/2020)

Scheduled Synchronous Class Sessions: ~2hrs Weekly on Zoom, **Mondays @ 8pm** (U.S. Eastern Time)

Zoom Class Session ID: (Find invitation info in your Emerson email, calendar & Canvas)

Professor: Camilo Ramirez – Camilo_Ramirez@emerson.edu

Course Materials: [Canvas Course 1755444](#) & www.camramirez.com/teaching.html

Office & Hrs: Online Zoom Meeting ID: [938 1058 2932](#) PW: [966933](#) (Please note this differs from class sessions)
Tues & Thurs: 10 am–11:30 am, or by appointment via email.

Course Description:

This production course explores a range of techniques used in manipulating photographic images. Projects offer students experience with techniques for manipulating their own images using workflows such as physical manipulations, seamless compositing, and emerging A.I. image processors. Students will examine the varied uses manipulated photos over time and how those have led to contemporary digital manipulations in various social contexts. Discussions, readings, and workshops will develop a critical understanding of the creative possibilities and develop the skills to ethically consider the altered image. Projects will combine theory and practice, while group critiques serve to advance both. Prerequisites: VM 110, VM 101, VM 120, and junior standing.

Student Learning Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- Develop an understanding of the history, theory, and practice of photographic manipulation.
- Develop a critical understanding of their own photographic projects via written & live group critiques.
- Establish essential skills in photographic workflows centered on photo manipulation for a variety of media.
- Learn professional standards and techniques for working with available analog & digital technologies.
- Establish an effective workflows for with industry standard software.

Expectations - Adjusted for COVID-19 Mitigation and our Online Course:

Since we are all entering into this **Online Course** voluntarily and from the beginning, here are our class guidelines: During this pandemic, everyone's health and wellness will come first in this course, and we will work together to adjust for any unplanned events and/or changing needs as they happen. I will strive for the most humane and healthy options available to most of us. If you feel sick for any reason that will affect your performance in the class, let me know right away, stay in touch, and follow any [college screening protocols](#) including [self-reporting](#) and [quarantine](#) if necessary. The VMA department additionally requires that students read the [VMA Covid-19 Safety Guidelines](#) and sign the [acknowledgement form](#).

Students are otherwise required to complete all assignments on time and attend class as collectively agreed upon on our first day of class. This is a 4 credit course (~4hrs/week) meaning that some of our class will be synchronous and some asynchronous. Students should expect to spend time outside of class hours for shooting, editing and/or processing new photographs. This includes regularly shooting new pictures (or equivalent), coming to class with all deliverables on the due dates, and attending and actively participating each live and online critique. Each student is responsible for having all required supplies for this course. Check your email daily. I will notify you of any updates or changes to the course during the semester via email.

That said, I realize we are living through a global pandemic, and this **Online Course** is extraordinary:

We are all still learning do deal with the effects of this virus, social distancing, shut downs and travel restrictions, the recent and drastic changes to our collective lives together online and off campus, teaching remotely, learning in new ways at home, mastering new technologies, and having varied access to learning resources.

Therefore, we will generally prioritize the most humane option as being the best choice, and will emphasize:

- ▶ Supporting each other as humans
- ▶ Simple solutions that make sense for the most of us
- ▶ Sharing resources and communicating clearly

And we will foster intellectual nourishment, social connection, and personal accommodation by emphasizing:

- ▶ Accessible asynchronous content for varied access, time zones, and contexts as best is possible
- ▶ Live and synchronous discussions to learn together by sharing experiences, ideas, and work in progress
- ▶ Flexibility in realizing that everybody needs support and understanding through this unprecedented time

About Recorded Class Sessions & Consent:

In order to adhere to FERPA requirements and protect everyone's privacy, online classes may be recorded, but only by the instructor and with express written and unanimous consent of each student in the class as per [Emerson's Recording Policy & Consent Form](#). Any class recordings will only be made available to enrolled students and the instructor until the end of the term.

Mobile Devices:

- The purpose of this policy is to maintain a respectful and equitable learning environment to all.
- The use of mobile devices in class is strictly prohibited unless otherwise instructed.
- Your phone should be turned off and put away when class is in session 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.

Textbooks (Recommended):

The Photograph as Contemporary Art (3rd Ed.), by Charlotte Cotton, ISBN: 978-0500204184
Faking It: Manipulated Photography before Photoshop, by Mia Fineman, ISBN: 978-0300185010
Believing Is Seeing: Observations on the Mysteries of Photography, by Errol Morris, ISBN: 978-0143124252
The Reconfigured Eye: Visual Truth in the Post-Photographic Era, by William J. Mitchell, ISBN: 978-0262631600

Supplies and Materials:

Required Supplies and Materials:

- Your Emerson mail address that you regularly check
- A computer, internet and/or devices that can run the Adobe Suite, connect to the web, and allow for synced Video
- A Digital-SLR camera with manual aperture and shutter speed controls (or a device with RAW capability)
- The following software (Photoshop, Bridge, Lightroom, Zoom, Google Suite via your Emerson login)
- Any form of portable digital media that you can use to easily store and backup your work
- Journal/Notebook for use as an Exposure/Technical Log, class notes, jotting ideas and thoughts

Recommended Supplies and Materials:

- Tripod & remote-release for your D-SLR
- Display Calibrator, such as an i1 Display Pro (typically available for checkout at the EDC)

Getting your Supplies:

If you do not have access to any of the Required Supplies and Materials above, please schedule an appointment with me as soon as possible. I may be able to guide you to Emerson College Resources to supplement what you have available, but it is urgent to communicate this very quickly.

Equipment: In the U.S., the least expensive way to buy photographic supplies is online through stores such as B&H (www.bhphotovideo.com) and Adorama (www.adorama.com). Locally, you can go to Hunt's (www.huntsphotoandvideo.com) in Cambridge and Kenmore Square, and Newtonville Camera (newtonville.camera) in Newton. For camera equipment you should also try Joe & Karen's Cameras (617- 770-3446), 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.

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 in points throughout the semester by completing assignments, critiques and their 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:

During this pandemic, everyone's health and wellness takes priority over any attendance policy, therefore health guidelines will override the following requirements and I will work with you to the best of my ability toward the most humane and healthy options available, while doing my best to maintain equity for everyone in the course. However, if you are experiencing any attendance issues it is your responsibility to communicate with me and to work together, proactively if possible on any alternate plans.

- Outside of Covid-19 policies and accommodations, attendance is essential to this course as described below:
- Attendance scores are based on attending the scheduled Zoom synchronous class sessions.
- Good attendance is absolutely critical to this course.
- 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.
- 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)

For additional information on attendance see the Student Handbook:
<http://www2.emerson.edu/student-affairs/undergraduate-student-handbook>

Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct 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: <http://www2.emerson.edu/student-affairs/undergraduate-student-handbook/academic-standards-resources>

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

Emerson is committed to providing equal access and support to all qualified students through the provision of reasonable accommodations, so that each student may fully participate in the Emerson experience. Student Accessibility Services (SAS) staff will be working remotely for the fall of 2020. If you have a disability that may require accommodations, please contact them at SAS@emerson.edu or at (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.

Emerson College Title IX Statement:

I am a responsible employee at Emerson College which means I am not a confidential resource. I will keep your information as private as I can, however, if you disclose information that may violate [Emerson's Sexual Misconduct Policy](#) I must report it to the [Title IX Coordinator](#). If you would like to speak with someone confidentially, please contact the [Healing & Advocacy Collective](#), [Counseling and Psychological Services](#), or [Health and Wellness](#).

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:

As an addendum to safety production guidelines which address Covid-19, the VMA department requires that production students read the [VMA Covid-19 Safety Guidelines](#), sign and return an [acknowledgement form](#). Please read the guidelines, then sign and attach the acknowledgment form in an email to me by the first week of classes.

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. In case of emergency, the PRODUCTION SAFETY HOTLINE can be reached 24/7 at (617) 939-1311. Please see the [VMA Student Production Safety Manual](#) which is available online.

All Students will familiarize themselves with the College'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 Safety or Working with Minors visit: <https://www.emerson.edu/visual-and-media-arts/safety-workshops>

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	In-Class Lesson Topics	Due this class	Due next class
#1	Fri 9/4 8pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the course • Review syllabus • Online Class Materials • Digital Imaging Primer & Digital Capture Terms • HD, Backups & Online Album setup • Introduction to Project #1 	—	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain all required course materials. • Email test due by Sunday • Emerson Recording Consent Form • VMA Covid Safety Guidelines Form • VMA Covid Captain Course • Set up your hard-drive, backups, etc. • Shoot 100 new RAW or equivalent. • Read Project #1 worksheet • Be prepared to discuss your written statement with the class as well as discuss your peers'.
➤	9/7	No Class - Labor Day	—	—
#2	Sat 9/12 8pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read written statements out loud & show work in progress (contact sheets / journals) • Manual Camera Operation & Digital Camera Tips • Physical Manipulations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain all required course materials. • Email test due by Sunday • Emerson Recording Consent Form • VMA Covid Safety Guidelines Form • VMA Covid Captain Course • Set up your hard-drive, backups, etc. • Shoot 100 new RAW or equivalent. • Read Project #1 worksheet • Be prepared to discuss your written statement with the class as well as discuss your peers'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upload 1pg Proj 1 proposal (PDF) • Reading for in-class Discussion • Add Group Written Feedback for each of your classmates • Contribute 1 link to our Photo Resources / Resources to Share • Shoot 100 new RAW or equivalent.
#3	9/14 8pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Discussion • Lightroom Setup & Basic RAW workflow for color • Setup of Online Albums • Project Check-ins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upload 1pg Proj 1 proposal (PDF) • Reading for in-class Discussion • Add Group Written Feedback for each of your classmates • Contribute 1 link to our Photo Resources / Resources to Share • Shoot 100 new RAW or equivalent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add Group Written Feedback for each of your classmates • Contribute 1 link to our Photo Resources / Resources to Share • Shoot 100 new RAW or equivalent. • 300 Photos in "All Project Photos" • 6 Processed RAW Photos, saved as JPG's to your Proj1 Critique Album • Arrange final images so they appear in a sequence in your Critique Album
#4	9/21 8pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Critique for Project 1 (Group A)</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total of 150 RAW Images Shot • Add Group Written Feedback for each of your classmates • Contribute 1 link to our Photo Resources / Resources to Share • 300 JPGs in All Project Photos album • 6 Processed RAW Photos, saved as JPG's to your Proj 1 Critique Album • Arrange final images so they appear in a sequence in your Critique Album 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same Critique Deliverables for Group B

Class	Date	In-Class Lesson Topics	Due this class	Due next class
#5	9/28 8pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critique for Project 1 (Group B) • Introduction to Project 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group B Critique Deliverables same as above 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings for in class Discussion • Read Project #2 worksheet • Upload 1pg Proj 2 proposal (PDF) • Shoot 100 new RAW or equivalent.
#6	10/5 8pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Discussion • Photographing for composites • Project Check-ins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings for in class Discussion • Read Project #2 worksheet • Upload 1pg Proj 2 proposal (PDF) • Shoot 100 new RAW or equivalent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add Group Written Feedback for each of your classmates • Contribute 1 link to our Photo Resources / Resources to Share • Shoot 100 new RAW or equivalent.
➤	10/12	No Class - Indigenous People's Day	-	-
#7	10/19 8pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photoshop Selections & Compositing • Project Check-ins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add Group Written Feedback for each of your classmates • Contribute 1 link to our Photo Resources / Resources to Share • Shoot 100 new RAW or equivalent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add Group Written Feedback for each of your classmates • Contribute 1 link to our Photo Resources / Resources to Share • Shoot 100 new RAW or equivalent. • 8 Processed Composites, saved as JPG's to your Proj 2 Critique Album • Arrange final images so they appear in a sequence in your Critique Album
#8	10/26 8pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critique for Project 2 (Group A) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total of 200 RAW Images Shot • Add Group Written Feedback for each of your classmates • Contribute 1 link to our Photo Resources / Resources to Share • 200 JPGs in All Project Photos album • 8 Processed RAW Photos, saved as JPG's to your Proj 2 Critique Album • Arrange final images so they appear in a sequence in your Critique Album 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same Critique Deliverables for Group B
#9	11/2 8pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critique for Project 2 (Group B) • Introduction to Project 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group B Critique Deliverables same as above 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings for in class Discussion • Read Project #3 worksheet • Upload 1pg Proj 3 proposal (PDF) • Shoot 100 new RAW or equivalent.
#10	11/9 8pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visiting Artist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings for in class Discussion • Read Project #3 worksheet • Upload 1pg Proj 3 proposal (PDF) • Shoot 100 new RAW or equivalent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings for in class Discussion • Add Group Written Feedback for each of your classmates • Contribute 1 link to our Photo Resources / Resources to Share • Shoot 100 new RAW or equivalent.
#11	11/16 8pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Discussion • Contemporary & Experimental Techniques • Final Project Check-ins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings for in class Discussion • Add Group Written Feedback for each of your classmates • Contribute 1 link to our Photo Resources / Resources to Share • Shoot 100 new RAW or equivalent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add Group Written Feedback for each of your classmates • Contribute 1 link to our Photo Resources / Resources to Share • Shoot 100 new RAW or equivalent.
#12	11/23 8pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Output workflows for print, press, and Saving for Web • Final Project Check-ins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add Group Written Feedback for each of your classmates • Contribute 1 link to our Photo Resources / Resources to Share • Shoot 100 new RAW or equivalent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add Group Written Feedback for each of your classmates • Contribute 1 link to our Photo Resources / Resources to Share • Shoot 100 new RAW or equivalent. • 8 Processed Composites, saved as JPG's to your Proj 2 Critique Album • Arrange final images so they appear in a sequence in your Critique Album

Class	Date	In-Class Lesson Topics	Due this class	Due next class
#13	11/30 8pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Critique for Project 3</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add Group Written Feedback for each of your classmates • Contribute 1 link to our Photo Resources / Resources to Share • 400 JPGs in All Project Photos album • 10 Processed Images, saved as JPG's to your Proj 2 Critique Album • Arrange final images so they appear in a sequence in your Critique Album 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same Critique Deliverables for Group B
#14	12/7 8pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Critique for Project 3</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group B Critique Deliverables same as above 	<p>Nothing due next week as this is our final class. Keep up with your photo practice and stay in touch!</p>