

# VM366-0: Digital Imaging for Photographers (4 cr.)

Emerson College — Fall 2013 Syllabus (last revised on 9/8/13)

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

Location: 180 Tremont Street, Ansin Bldg. #206 (Digital Photo Lab)

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

**Office Hours:** Mondays 12:20 pm – 1:50 pm / Fridays 2 pm – 3:30 pm, and by appointment.  
180 Tremont St. (Ansin Bldg.) #1311. 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:

[The Photograph as Contemporary Art](#) (2nd Ed.), by Charlotte Cotton, ISBN: 978-0500204016 (Recommended)  
[Digital Photography A Basic Manual](#), by Henry Hornstein, ISBN: 978-0316020749 (Recommended)  
[Adobe Photoshop CC for Photographers](#), by Martin Evening, ISBN: 978-0415711753 (Recommended)

## Supplies and Materials:

### Required Supplies and Materials:

- An email address that you regularly check
- Digital-SLR camera with manual aperture and shutter speed controls
- Any form of portable media that you can use to easily store and retrieve your work
- Inkjet Paper: Minimum 100 of sheets of 8.5"x11" Epson Premium Luster Photo Paper
- A manually operated still film camera: 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 six 36 exp. rolls or equivalent)
- Negative Sleeves: PrintFile brand for 35mm film (7 rows of 5 frames), 25pack (or correct size if using other formats)
- 3-ring Negative Box
- Anti-Static Orange cloth for negatives

### Recommended Supplies and Materials:

- Tripod & mechanical cable release for 35mm cameras (or remote release for your D-SLR)
- Adobe 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/colormunki-display>

## 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:

Grades will be earned for each major assignment and throughout the semester for smaller assignments. 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. 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 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. 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 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	9/6	<p>Introduction to the course, Review syllabus, Email Communication Test, EDC Session Working on a Mac, Setting up a hard-drive &amp; folder nesting, Pixels, Megapixels, File Types, Resolution, Image Quality &amp; Your Camera, Introduction to Project #1 - "Representation (B/W)" &amp; Slide Lecture</p> <p><i>Assignment:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Week 1 Reading &amp; 1pg. Response Paper (Walker Evans Articles)</i></li><li>• <i>Read Project #1 worksheet and write a 1 pg. proposal as described</i></li><li>• <i>Properly set up your hard-drive, Email Communication test due by Sunday</i></li><li>• <i>Shoot 100 new images in 1 folder on your hard-drive for next week</i></li><li>• <i>Obtain all required materials for the class (bring paper next week)</i></li><li>• <i>Bring your Digital-SLR to class, charged and ready to use with manuals &amp; cables</i></li></ul>
#2	9/13	<p>Turn in Response paper. Reading Discussion. D-SLR operation, Bracketing, Adobe Bridge &amp; 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 (<b>LAB</b>)</p> <p><i>Assignment:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Shoot 12 brackets in RAW format as described on the assignment sheet</i></li><li>• <i>Shoot an additional 64 images in RAW format as described on the assignment sheet</i></li><li>• <i>Print digital contact sheets for this week and the previous week's digital images (200 thus far)</i></li><li>• <i>Bring your Digital-SLR to class, charged and ready to use with all cables and manuals</i></li></ul>
#3	9/20	<p>Diagnosing Exposures/Detailed anatomy of an image/Histograms, Processing RAW files Color Modes, Models, Spaces. RGB vs CMYK, Grayscale Levels, Adjustment Layers Converting to B&amp;W, Grayscale Printing, Individual meetings / Print (<b>LAB</b>)</p> <p><i>Assignment:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Shoot 100 new RAW images and print contact sheets</i></li><li>• <i>Finish Project #1 (Contact Sheets for 300 Digital Images, 6 Good Grayscale Prints)</i></li></ul>
#4	9/27	<p><b>Group Critique of Project #1 "Representation (B/W)"</b> – 6 Good B/W Prints, Contact Sheets for 300 Digital Images, Introduce Project #2 "Sense of Place"</p> <p><i>Assignment:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Shoot 100 new RAW images &amp; print contact sheets</i></li><li>• <i>Read Review of "William Eggleston: Before Color" by Doug Rickard</i></li></ul>
#5	10/4	<p>Discuss Reading, Color Theory, RGB Levels &amp; Curves, ICC Profiles &amp; Color Management, Basic Color Correcting, Color Printing Viewing Environments, Individual Meetings, Medium format film demo Print (<b>LAB</b>)</p> <p><i>Assignment:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Shoot 100 new images &amp; Print Contact sheets</i></li><li>• <i>Week 5 Technical Reading (Download from Website)</i></li><li>• <i>Finish 6 Excellent color prints and contact sheets for 200 images due next week</i></li></ul>
#6	10/11	<p><b>Group Critique of Project #2 "Sense of Place"</b> – 6 Excellent Color Prints, Contact Sheets for 200 Digital Images, Introduce Project #3 - "In the Style of..."</p> <p><i>Assignment:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Shoot new 3 rolls minimum of Film (or equivalent) as described on the project sheet.</i></li><li>• <i>Print Contact Sheets of 3 rolls shot thus far.</i></li><li>• <i>Write a two page research paper on your chosen photographer as specified on the project sheet.</i></li></ul>

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#7	10/18	Discuss Research Assignment. Flatbed Contact Sheets. High end film scanning. Spotting & Basic Retouching. Local Adjustments, Individual meetings / Editing, Scanning & Printing (LAB).  <i>Assignment:</i> • Shoot new 3 rolls minimum of Film (or equivalent) as described on the project sheet. • Print Contact Sheets of all rolls shot so far.
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#8	10/25	Advanced use of Printers & Ink types, Soft Proofing, Paper Media Options, Custom Output Profiles, Sharpening Individual Meetings / Print in Class (LAB)  <i>Assignment:</i> • Finish work on Project 3: (In the Style of...) as described on the project sheet.
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#9	11/1	<b>Critique of Project 3 “In the Style of...”</b> – 7 Excellent Prints, Contact Sheets for 6 rolls of film Introduce Project #4 “Time and Space”  <i>Assignment:</i> • Write one-page project proposal as described in the project sheet. • Shoot 100 new RAW images minimum (or film equivalent) + contact sheets for next week
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#10	11/8	Advanced Selection and Compositing Techniques. Making & Handling Large Prints. Fixing Noise & Grain. Individual Meetings / Print in Class (LAB)  <i>Assignment:</i> • Shoot 100 new images minimum (or equiv.) + contact sheets for next week • Begin Compositing work and have several examples ready for next week. • Field Trip Reading – T.B.A.
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#11	11/15	Field Trip (T.B.A.), Discuss Reading, Complete “Questions in Art Criticism” worksheet in class. Individual meetings: Review new contact sheets & select images for enlargement  <i>Assignment:</i> • Shoot 100 new images minimum (or equiv.) + contact sheets • Continue developing composites and show progress after Thanksgiving. • Write a 1pg. response paper as described in the “Questions in Art Criticism” worksheet.
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#12	11/22	Discuss Field Trip and Reading. File Versioning. Naming Systems. Optimizing and controlling color options for the Web. Saving for web.  <i>Assignment:</i> • Shoot 100 new images minimum (or equiv.) + contact sheets for next week • Continue developing composites and show progress after Thanksgiving. • Read “Interview with Photographer Gregory Crewdson” & write a 1 page response paper.
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➤	<b>11/29</b>	<b>No Class – Thanksgiving</b>  <i>Assignment:</i> • Finish the compositing work for next week’s critique.
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#13	12/6	<b>Final Group Critique Project #4 “Time &amp; Space”</b> — 10 Perfect Prints + contact sheets for 400 images Discuss Digital Portfolio  <i>Assignment:</i> • Prepare Digital Portfolio (see handout for specifications)
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#14	12/13	<b>Final Exam Period</b> (8am - 10am, same location) Turn in Digital Portfolio. Next steps in Photography. Instructor’s work. <a href="http://www.emerson.edu/academics/registrar/academic-calendars/final-exam-schedule">http://www.emerson.edu/academics/registrar/academic-calendars/final-exam-schedule</a>