

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

Emerson College – Syllabus: Fall 2009 (revised 10/7/09)

Class sessions: Thursdays 2pm – 5:45pm

Rooms: T206 / T504 (lab)

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Office Hours: Room: 180 Tremont (Ansin Bldg.) #919B, Mailbox also on the 9th floor
Thursdays 12:50pm – 1:50pm, and by appointment

Introduction:

This introductory black and white photography class will emphasize technical, aesthetic and critical concerns of black and white photography. We will use enlargers and the wet tray process in the darkroom to make photographic prints and a manual 35mm camera to take photographs.

Assignments are structured to refine both technical and critical skills, with particular emphasis on each student developing his/her own unique sense of the medium, so have fun!

Objectives:

The objective of this course is to provide each student with a fundamental understanding of black & white photography through the use of a 35mm camera and traditional darkroom printing and finishing techniques. 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. The methods and skills learned in this course will provide a foundation from which students can continue their photographic endeavors.

Expectations:

Attendance – 3 absences will result in a course grade of No Credit.

Punctuality – 2 tardy's (over 10 minutes) equals an absence, leaving class early equals one tardy.

Accountability – All assignments must be completed and handed in on time. Late assignments will receive 5 points off. If you are absent, you should make arrangements to deliver the work before class on the due date. Scheduled darkroom time means coming prepared with new negatives to print. If you are not prepared with new negatives to print you will receive an absence for the day! Each student is responsible for having all required supplies.

Quality – Students should expect to spend time outside of class for shooting and printing new photographs. Final project must consist of 10-12 finished prints of the highest quality. Students must follow all darkroom rules/ethics.

Mobile Devices:

The use of mobile device (such as cell-phones and 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 mobile device is also prohibited. Your phone should be turned off and put away when you enter the classroom.

Grading is based on the following:

Technical Skill & Production:	25%	(Image/Print Quality, Presentation)
Aesthetic Achievement:	25%	(Content, Meaning, Clarity of Ideas)
In Class Assignments:	30%	(Any assignment due before the end of a class period)
Presentations & Participation:	20%	(Critiques, reading assignments, class discussions)
Attendance & Preparedness:	See attendance & expectations above	

Textbooks:

Black & White Photography: A Basic Manual by Henry Horenstein (**Required**)

Looking at Phtographs by John Szarkowski (Recommended)

On Photography by Susan Sontag (Recommended)

Why People Photograph by Robert Adams (Recommended)

A World History of Photography by Naomi Rosenblum (Recommended)

Required Supplies:

35mm Camera (with manual aperture and shutter speed controls)

Consider a Vivitar V3800N w/ a 50mm lens or smaller if buying new

Film: Tri-X 400 (you will need about 20 rolls of 36 exposures)

8x10" Negative Sleeves for negatives (PrintFile brand, 7 rows of 5 frames, 25pack)

3-ring Negative Box

Photographic Paper (**CAUTION: DO NOT EXPOSE YOUR NEW PAPER TO LIGHT!**)

200 sheets of 8"x10" Ilford Multigrade IV B&W photographic paper (RC pearl surface)

50 sheets of 8"x10" Ilford Fiber Paper (optional, for final project)

Ilford Multigrade Contrast Filters (6x6")

Anti-Static Orange cloth for negatives

Journal/Notebook for use as an Exposure/Printing Log, class notes, jotting ideas and thoughts

Optional Supplies:

Lock (for lockers)

Tripod & Cable release (highly recommended)

8x10" Negative Sleeves to be used for contact sheets (PrintFile brand, Model: 810-1HB, 25pack)

Compressed Air

Can Opener

Scissors

Self Timer

Latex Gloves, Hand Towels, Apron

Film Developing Reels and Canisters

Print Drying Book or Hairdryer

Getting your Supplies:

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 Calumet

(www.calumetphoto.com) in Cambridge, EP Levines (www.eplevine.com) in South Boston, Hunt's

(www.huntsphotoandvideo.com) in Cambridge and Kenmore Square, or Newtonville Camera

(www.nvcamera.com) in Newton. Always remember to ask for a student discount. For equipment

you should also try Joe & Karen's Cameras (617- 770-3446), they have excellent prices.

Disability Statement:

If you believe you have a disability that my warrant accommodations in this class, I urge you to register with the disability Services Coordinator, Diane Paxton at 216 Tremont Street, 5th Floor, (617.824.8592) so that, together, you can work to develop methods of addressing needed accommodations in this class.

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.

*Please Note: 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.

***Course Schedule:**

- #1 9/17 Introduction to the course, Review syllabus, EDC Session (3pm), The technical roots of photography, Introduction to the Camera, loading, and exposure controls. Discuss Project #1.
- Assignment: E-mail test, Sign up for a locker.*
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)
Project #1 “Light Exploration: Transform the Everyday” - See handout.
Bring your 2 bracketed, shot but undeveloped rolls to class next week.
Purchase all needed supplies and bring to class.
- #2 9/24 Slide lecture (The Photographer’s Eye), Film Processing Primer, Lab/Cage tour. Introduction to film processing and darkroom demo, Process one roll of film with a partner.
- Assignment: Read: Horenstein, Ch. 9 (Developing Film), pg. 215–218 (Photograms)*
Read: Introduction to The Photographer’s Eye, by John Szarkowski
Process your 2nd roll of film. Bring your 2 sleeved rolls & printing supplies.
Bring object(s) for photogram experiments.
- #3 10/1 Discuss readings, Print Lab Primer
Darkroom demo: Contact Sheets, Photograms, Print Processing & Gang Darkroom Etiquette
Make Contact Sheets of the 2 rolls you shot. Use the remaining time to make 3 Photograms.
- Assignment: Read: Horenstein, Ch. 10 (Making the Print)*
Finish 3 Photograms for next class.
Shoot 2 new rolls & print contact sheets ready at the beginning of next class.
Bring next class: All contact Sheets & Photograms (dry), + all printing supplies.
- #4 10/8 Making Enlargements: Contrast Filters, Print Templates, Easels, Grain Finders, Using a Log
Individual meetings: Review contact sheets & select images for enlargement
Use Contrast Filters and begin working in class on 4 enlargements with full tonal range.
- Assignment: Read: The New Color; The Return of Black-and-White, by Charlotte Cotton*
Choose 4 images from your 4 rolls and make Good Quality 8”x10” prints.
- #5 10/15 **Group Critique Project #1** – Show 4 Good Enlargements & 3 Photograms
Video: “Paper Movies” from The Genius of Photography series, Discuss Project #2.
- Assignment: Proj. #2: “The Decisive Moment” – See handout (4 rolls, 5 Prints due class #7)*
Read: “Colleagues” from Why People Photograph by Robert Adams
Shoot for Proj. #2 (2 rolls & Contact Sheets ready at the beginning of next class)
- #6 10/22 Slide lecture (The Decisive Moment), Dodging and Burning, Flashing and Fogging
Individual meetings: Review 2 new contact sheets & select images for enlargement
Print in class using dodging, burning and other techniques shown in class.
- Assignment: Finish Project #2 (shoot 2 new rolls & Contact Sheets, make 5 Great Prints).*

- #7 10/29 **Group Critique Project #2** – Show 5 Great Prints, 4 Contact Sheets
Slide lecture (The Landscape), Discuss Project #3.
- Assignment: Read: The Intro to The Americans by Jack Kerouac, Photos by Robert Frank*
Project #3: “The Landscape” – See handout (6 rolls, 6 prints due class #10)
Shoot for Proj. #3 (2 new rolls & Contact Sheets for the beginning of next class)
- 11/4 Mid-term Grades Due**
- #8 11/5 Reciprocity Failure, External Light Meters, Push/Pull Developing, Fiber Paper Demo
Individual meetings: Review 2 new contact sheets & select images for enlargement
Print in class using dodging, burning and other techniques shown in class.
- Assignment: Read: Horenstein, pg. 239 (Flattening Fiber-Based Prints)*
Shoot new 2 rolls at night, Pull-Process & print contact sheets due next class.
- #9 11/12 Split Filtering Demo
Individual meetings: Review 2 new contact sheets & select images for enlargement
Print in class using the Split Filter technique.
- Assignment: Finish Project #3 (shoot 2 new rolls & Contact Sheets, make 6 Excellent Prints).*
- #10 11/19 **Group Critique Project #3** – Show 6 Excellent Prints, 6 contact sheets
Slide lecture (Portrayals), Discuss Project #4 and Field Trip.
- Assignment: Read: Field Trip Related Reading – T.B.A.*
Project #4: “Portrayals” – See handout (8 rolls, 10 Perfect Prints due class #13)
Project #4: Write Project Proposal – See handout (due class #11)
Shoot for Proj. #4 (4 rolls & Contact Sheets ready at the beginning of next class)
- 11/26 No Class - Thanksgiving Holiday**
- #11 12/3 Field Trip (T.B.A.), Discuss Reading, Complete “Questions in Art Criticism” worksheet
Individual meetings: Review 4 new contact sheets & select images for enlargement
- Assignment: Write a 1pg. response paper for one work you just saw (due next class)*
Shoot 2 new rolls & print contact sheets ready at the beginning of next class.
Work on Final Prints
- #12 12/10 Editing a Series, Print Finishing Techniques
Individual meetings: Review 2 new contact sheets & select images for enlargement
- Assignment: Read: Horenstein, Ch. 12 (Finishing the Print)*
Finish Project #4 (2 new rolls & Contact Sheets, make 10 Perfect Prints).
- #13 12/17 **Final Critique** – Show 10 Perfect & Cohesive prints based on your project proposal
Show 8 Contact Sheets
- #14 12/22 **Final Exam Period** (2-3:45pm) – Beyond 35mm: Larger formats & instructor’s work.