PHO 111 Introduction to Digital Media  
COURSE SYLLABUS: Spring 2013

Instructor: Leigh Merrill  
Email: leigh.merrill@tamuc.edu

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:
Due to the rising cost of photo textbooks that are outdated by the time of publication, there is no mandatory text. Instead of a textbook, it is recommended that students get a Lynda.com account, an online tutorial for software and photographic information.

Optional Textbooks
Adobe Photoshop CS6 Classroom in a Book, Adobe Creative Team

Course Description:
Introduction to Digital Media (IDM) is an intensive semester-long course in which you will learn the technical and conceptual tools to understand the basics of digital media as well as begin to learn the language of the visual imagery. In this class you will build a blog as a means of communicating and presenting your work to a wide audience.

Student Learning Outcomes:
At the conclusion of this course students should be able to demonstrate the following:

• editing and archiving digital files using digital asset management software (Lightroom and Photoshop)  
• how to make color correct inkjet prints by using technical software (Lightroom, Photoshop, Canon Printers)  
• an understanding of the photographic vocabulary  
• how to analyze and interpret photographic images  
• effective critique by participation in critical evaluation regarding your own work and the work of others  
• have an understanding of professional presentation (printing and matting)  
• have submitted a weekly blog of commentary and assignments  
• have entered artwork in no less than two (2) competitive contests
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

This course will consist of a series photographic assignments and excises to assist you in achieving the objectives of this course. Each week you will work on various combinations of shooting, blogging, and participating in critiques and discussions.

This will be a fun learning experience so please bring your energy and enthusiasm and a willingness to share into this class. It is important to attend class, keep your blog up to date, and turn in your assignments on time.

Maintaining a Blog: In-class assignments, reviews of other art blogs and photographic projects will all be posted to your blog.

Articles and Reviews: on a weekly basis you will review other art blogs and write a review. These reviews will be posted to your blog.

In-Class Assignments: Throughout the semester there will be in-class assignments. These assignments will be either turned in to me or posted to your blog.

Art Opportunities Applications: You will be required to submit artwork to two different art opportunities.

Projects: There will be 3 projects throughout the semester. Project assignments will be posted to your blog and also turned in as digital files. We will project your files in class for critique. Critiques should be thought of like an exam. You should come to class prepared to present your work and participate in class discussion.

Final Project: Your final project will consist of a 10-15 photographic project on a single theme. You will be required to submit a proposal and a mid-term before submitting your final project. The mid-term will consist of 5 photographs turned in as digital files. At the time of the final critique, you will need to have your final 10-15 photographs printed and matted. You will also need to turn in these photographs as digital files as well as post them to your blog.

Grading
Article and Review Posts 20% (2% each)
In Class Assignments 20% (5% each)
Projects 30% (10% each)
Final Project 25%
Art Opportunity application submissions 5% (2.5% each)

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Students will have access to a Macintosh OS X computer and print lab equipment with all the software needed to complete photographic assignments and exercises.

Students will need to provide the following:

- Digital camera and media cards.
  Note: Find the instruction manual and read it / make sure that the camera is in good working order. Cameras are available from the 3rd Floor of Journalism Check-Out for student's use.
- An external hard drive / two hard drives would be better. Hard drive should be at least 250 GB. Flash Drives will not be a stable and large enough resource for the needs of this class.
- Printing and Matting costs
COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement:
Please contact me through email.

Email: leigh@leighmerrill.com
Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 3 – 4 pm.
**Please contact me one day in advance to schedule an appointment.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures:

Procedures & Policies for Submission of assignments
A. Due Date: All assignments and exercises are due on the date and time given by the instructor. Any work that is late will be reduced by one letter grade. Assignments will not be accepted if they are more than a week late.
Note: All images must have been shot, processed and printed this semester for this class only.

B. Print Submission: All work must be from files that were produced during this semester. No images from previous classes can be submitted. All printed assignments will be printed on 8 X 10 or larger inkjet paper and presented in a professional manner. Work must be handed in at the beginning of the critique designated for that particular assignment to be counted “on time”.

Attendance:
Attendance is required and is recorded at all class and lab meetings. Every student will be responsible for all information given during scheduled class and lab times. Note: A total of 4 absences from any class meetings (lecture or lab) will result in a failing grade ("F") for the course and you will be dropped from the class. Excused absences are listed under Class Attendance (A13.02) in the A&M-Commerce Procedures. Verifiable excuses for absences must be turned in to the instructor.

University Specific Procedures:

ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu
Student Disability Resources & Services

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook.
The Instructor reserves the right to make adjustments and changes to this calendar. Any changes will be mentioned in class or via email.

In PHO 111, IDM, each class will consist of one or more of the following activities:
- Lectures on contemporary art
- Technical demonstrations
- Guided in-class shooting sessions
- Studio work time for assignments
- Individual and Group Critiques
- Discussions

**Week 1** 1/14  
Introduction to Class / Review of Syllabus

1/16  
**Bring your cameras.**
**Lecture/Demo:** Introduction to cameras and common settings, functions, Introduction to Blogger  
**In class shooting assignment:** Scavenger Hunt  
**In class blog Assignment:** Create your Blog and email me the URL.

**Recommended Event:** through February 16, Casey Williams, Holly Johnson Gallery

**Recommended Event:** January 15 – July 21, Ed Ruscha: Made in California at the Amon Carter Museum

**Week 2** 1/21  
No Class – Presidents Day

**Recommended Event:** January 22 Vaughn Wascovich Exhibition opening reception at TAMUC Art Gallery

1/23  
**Bring images from Scavenger Hunt shooting exercise.**
**Lecture/Demo:** Files Types and Resolution, Introduction to Lightroom: Workflow, Set up your catalog, keyword and rate images, create a contact sheet  
**Blog Post:** Post Scavenger Hunt to Blog (contact sheet of images)  
**Introduction to Project 1** Everyday Assignment (Due 2/6)

**Week 3** 1/28  
**Lecture/Demo:** Continued Lightroom
**Introduction to Article Review Blog Posts**

1/30  
**Lecture/Demo:** Intro to Check-out / Demo on the digital rebel and lenses  
**In class group shooting exercise: Scavenger Hunt II**  
**Blog Post:** Post in-class shooting exercise to blog (contact sheet)  
**Blog Post:** Article and Review blog post

**Week 4** 2/4  
**Lecture / Demo:** Review File Prep for Critique, review of Lightroom  

2/6  
**Critique:** Project #1: Everyday  
**Introduction to Project 2:** Night Photography (Due 2/20)  
**Blog Post:** Article and Review blog post

**Week 5** 2/11  
**Lecture/Demo:** Lightroom continued: Advanced Development / Lightroom Review  
**Tripod Demo**

2/13  
**Lecture/Demo:** Introduction to Photoshop (interface; tool, creating new layers for editing, Adjustment Layers)  
**Blog Post:** Article and Review blog post

**Week 6** 2/18  
**Lecture / Demo:** Review File Prep for Critique / continued Photoshop (Layers, masking,
### Introduction to Final Project:
10-15 Photographs on a single theme, printed and matted

**Blog Post:** Article and Review blog post

#### Critique:
- Project #2 Night Photography
- **Introduction to Project 3:** Multiple Me, Multiple Place

**Blog Post:** Article and Review blog post

#### Week 7 2/25
- **Individual meetings:** Final Project proposals due

#### Week 8 3/4
- **Lecture / Demo:** World as a Toy
  - Continued Photoshop / Review compositing / Panorama / File Prep for Printing / Intro to Printing

**Recommended Event:** March 5 – April 21, Big Pictures Exhibition at the Amon Carter Museum

- **Assignment:** Application to (2) art opportunities. Documentation of apps due 4/24

**Blog Post:** Article and Review blog post

#### Week 9 3/11
- NO CLASS : Spring Break

**Recommended Event:** March 17 – June 9th, Cindy Sherman Exhibition at the DMA

- NO CLASS : Spring Break

#### Week 10 3/18
- **Critique:** Project #3 Multiple Me, Multiple Place
  - **Individual Meetings:** Mid-term review for final: 5 photographs due

- **3/20 Individual Meetings:** Mid-term review for final: 5 photographs due
  - **Blog Post:** Article and Review blog post

**Recommended Event:** March 21 6-7pm, Artist Talk: Dornith Doherty and Misty Keasler, Amon Carter Museum

#### Week 11 3/25
- **Lecture/Demo:** TBA

**Recommended Event:** March 25 Penelope Umbrico artist lecture, UNT

- **3/27 Lecture/Demo:** Time-based media. Stop animation in Photoshop
  - In class shooting assignment: narrative or sequential images for stop animation

**Blog Post:** Article and Review blog post

#### Week 12 4/1
- **Lecture/Demo:** Continued time-based media.
  - **Blog Post:** Post in-class stop-animation/video assignment to blog

#### Week 13 4/8
- **Lecture/Demo:** Continued Printing and Matting Demo
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