PHO 111 Introduction to Digital Media
COURSE SYLLABUS: Spring 2015
TR 6:00 - 8:50pm
Wathena Room 207

Instructor: Leigh Merrill
Office Location: Journalism 3rd floor
Office Hours: Thursday 1:30 – 3:00, by appointment
University Email Address: 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Due to the rising cost of photo textbooks that are outdated by the time of publication, there is no mandatory text.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.

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
- create a professional presented portfolio of images (printing and matting)
- have submitted a weekly blog of commentary and assignments
- have entered artwork into competitive contests

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Optional Textbooks
Adobe Photoshop CS6 Classroom in a Book, Adobe Creative Team
**Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments**

This course will consist of a series of photographic assignments and exercises 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 art opportunities.

Projects: There will be 3-5 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 15%*

*In Class Assignments 15%*

*Projects 45%*

*Final Project 20%*

*Art Opportunity application submissions 5%*

**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 500GB.**

- **Printing and Matting costs**
COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement:
Please contact me through email.
Email: leigh.merrill@tamuc.edu
Office Hours: By appointment on Thursday 1:30 – 3:00pm

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. 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) can result in a failing grade ("F") for the course or 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).

**COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR**

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
- Studio work time for assignments
- Individual and Group Critiques
- Discussions
- Guided in-class shooting sessions;

**Week 1** 1/20  Introduction to Class / Review of Syllabus / **Introduction to Project 1** Everyday Assignment

1/22  **Class Begins at Visiting Artist Lecture: Charissa Terranova**

*Bring your cameras.*

**Lecture/Demo:** Introduction to cameras, common camera settings, and functions.

**In class assignments:** Scavenger Hunt I, creation of your Blog, email me the URL of your Blog.

**Week 2** 1/27  No class – Independent work day

1/29  **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

**Due:** Scavenger Hunt assignment posted to Blog (contact sheet)

**Week 3** 2/3  **Class Begins at Visiting Artist Lecture: Margaret Meehan**

**Lecture/Demo:** Continued Lightroom

**Introduction to Article and Review Blog Posts**

2/5  **Lecture/Demo:** Intro to Check-out / Demo on the digital rebel and lenses

**In class shooting exercise:** Scavenger Hunt II

**Due:** Post in-class shooting exercise to blog (contact sheet)

**Due:** Article and Review blog post #1

**Week 4** 2/10  **Lecture / Demo:** Review File Prep for Critique, review of Lightroom

2/12  **Class Begins at Visiting Artist Lecture: Arthur Pena**

**Critique:** Project #1

**Due:** Article and Review blog post #2

**Week 5** 2/17  **Introduction to Project 2**

**Lecture/Demo:** Long Exposure Demo / Tripod Demo

**In class group shooting exercise**

2/19  **Lecture/Demo:** Introduction to Photoshop (workspace, general tools, creating new layers for editing, adjustment layers)

**Due:** Article and Review blog post #3

**Week 6** 2/24  **Critique:** Project #2

**Introduction to Project 3**

2/26  **Class Begins at Visiting Artist Lecture: Francisco Moreno**

**Lecture / Demo:** World as a Toy

**Continued Photoshop / Review compositing / Miniatures**

**Due:** Article and Review blog post #4
Week 7 3/3  Lecture / Demo: Continued Photoshop Introduction to Art Competitions / Opportunities Assignment

3/5  Class Begins at Visiting Artist Lecture: Michelle Mackey
Due: Article and Review blog post #5

Week 8 3/10  Critique: Project #3
Introduction to Final Project: 10-15 Photographs on a single theme, printed and matted

3/12  No Class – Independent Work Day
Due: Article and Review blog post #6

Week 9 3/17  Spring Break

3/19  Spring Break

Week 10 3/24  TBA

3/26  Individual meetings: Final Project proposals due
Due: Article and Review blog post #7

Week 11 3/31  Bring your cameras
Lecture/Demo: Time-based media.
In class shooting assignment: time-based media

4/2  Lecture/Demo: Continued time-based media.
Due: Post time-based media assignment to blog
Due: Article and Review blog post #8

Week 12 4/7  Individual Meetings: Mid-way review for final: 5 photographs due

4/9  Class Begins at Visiting Artist Lecture: Nathan Green
Individual Meetings: Mid-way review for final: 5 photographs due

Week 13 4/14  Lecture/Demo: Review Photoshop and Lightroom, Printers, Printing Prep, Matting

4/16  Printing and Matting: Studio Time
Due: Article and Review blog post

Week 14 4/21  Class Begins at Visiting Artist Lecture: Andrew Sexton
Printing and Matting: Studio Time

4/23  Printing and Matting: Studio Time

Week 15 4/28  Printing and Matting: Studio Time

4/30  Printing and Matting: Studio Time

Week 16 5/5  Critique: Final Project
DUE: Art opportunities applications

5/7  Critique: Final Project
Camera Resources:
Competitive Camera, Dallas
Fort Worth Camera
Arlington Camera
Adorama, http://www.adorama.com
B&H Photo, http://www.bhphotovideo.com
Freestyle, http://www.freestylephoto.biz

You can also find cameras at Costco, Walmart and other local retailers. Additionally online retailers such as amazon can be retailers to look at.

A good resource to compare cameras is DP Review: http://www.dpreview.com/

External Hard Drive Resources
I have found Western Digital to be a good brand and reliable for external hard drives.
Fry’s Electronics
Best buy, circuit city or other local electronics supplier
Harddrives and flash drives are sold at many retailers, electronic and computer stores.