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

Instructor: Leigh Merrill, Assistant Professor of Art
Office Location: Journalism Room 300
Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 2:00 – 3:00pm
University Email Address: leigh.merrill@tamuc.edu

COURSE 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 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 competency in 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
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

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Due to the rising cost of photo textbooks that are outdated by the time of publication, there is no mandatory text.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

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments
This course will consist of a series 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.

Maintaining a Blog: In-class assignments, reviews of other’s 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.

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-way review before submitting your final project. The mid-way review 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. Your final project will be displayed in the End of the Semester Photography exhibition.

As a studio art course, you should always come prepared to work on assignments. In addition to designated studio works days, there is the possibility for individual studio work time at the end of each class.

Grading
Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90%-100%
B = 80%-89%
C = 70%-79%
D = 60%-69%
F = 59% or Below

Assessment:
Article and Review Posts 15%
## 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. It will be your responsibility to find time to use the lab for working outside of class.

Students will need to provide the following:

- **Digital camera (cell phone cameras are acceptable)**
  
  *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:** merril.leigh@tamuc.edu  
**Office Hours:** By appointment on TR 2 – 3pm

## 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. Work must be finished at the beginning of the critique class to be counted as on time. 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.

**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.

**Syllabus Change Policy**

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

**University Specific Procedures:**
University Specific Procedures

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 current Student Guidebook).

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: Netiquette http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html

ADA Statement
Students with Disabilities
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- Room 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
Email: Rebecca.Tuerk@tamuc.edu

Website: Office of Student Disability Resources and Services http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/

Nondiscrimination Notice
Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

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.

Week 1 9/1  Introduction to Class / Review of Syllabus / Introduction to Project 1 Everyday Assignment
9/3  Bring your cameras.
   Lecture/Demo: Introduction to cameras and common settings, functions, Introduction to Blogger
   In class assignments: Scavenger Hunt Shooting assignment, creation of your Blog, email me the URL of your Blog.

Week 2 9/8  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)
9/10  Lecture/Demo: Continued Lightroom
      Introduction to Article Review Blog Posts

Week 3 9/15  Lecture/Demo: Intro to Check-out / Demo on the digital rebel and lenses
   In class group shooting exercise: Scavenger Hunt II
   Due: Post in-class shooting exercise to blog (contact sheet)
9/17  Lecture / Demo: Review File Prep for Critique, review of Lightroom
      Due: Article and Review blog post #1

Recommended Event: Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic at the Modern at Museum of Fort Worth, Sept 20 – Jan 10
Recommended Event: Bani Abidi, Dallas Contemporary, Sept 20 – Dec 21

Week 4 9/22  Critique: Project #1
Introduction to Project 2

9/24 Class cancelled for SPE Regional Conference in Oklahoma City, OK
Due: Article and Review blog post #2

Week 5 9/29 Lecture/Demo: Long Exposure Demo / Tripod Demo
In class group shooting exercise
10/1 Open Studio/Work Day
Due: Article and Review blog post #3

Week 6 10/6 Lecture / Demo: Intro to Photoshop
Review File Prep for Critique, review of Lightroom
10/8 Critique: Project #2
Due: Article and Review blog post #4

Week 7 10/13 Introduction to Project 3
Lecture/Demo: Making Simple composites in Photoshop
In class group shooting exercise
10/15 Lecture/Demo: The World as a Toy
Continued Photoshop
Due: Article and Review blog post #5

Week 8 10/20 Lecture/Demo: Continued Photoshop/compositing
Introduction to Final Project
Recommended Event: Alec Soth in conversation with Anne Tucker at University of Texas Arlington, 7pm
10/22 Critique: Project #3
Due: Article and Review blog post #6

Week 9 10/27 Due: Final project proposals
10/29 Lecture/Demo: Printing

Week 10 11/3 Lecture/Demo: Matting
11/5 Individual Meetings: Mid-way review for final: 5 photographs due
Due: Article and Review blog post #7

Week 11 11/10 Printing and Matting: Studio Time
11/12 Printing and Matting: Studio Time
Due: One matted print

Week 12 11/17 Printing and Matting: Studio Time
11/19 Printing and Matting: Studio Time
Due: Three matted prints

Week 13 11/24 Printing and Matting: Studio Time
11/26 NO CLASS THANKSGIVING

Week 14 12/1 Printing and Matting: Studio Time
12/3 Printing and Matting: Studio Time
**Due:** Four matted prints

**Week 15  12/8  Final Critique**

**12/10  Final Critique**

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**RESOURCES**

**Camera Resources:**
Competitive Camera, Dallas
Fort Worth Camera
Arlington Camera
Adorama, [http://www.adorama.com](http://www.adorama.com)
B&H Photo, [http://www.bhphotovideo.com](http://www.bhphotovideo.com)
Freestyle, [http://www.freestylephoto.biz](http://www.freestylephoto.biz)
Calumet Photo, [http://www.calumetphoto.com](http://www.calumetphoto.com)

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](http://www.dpreview.com)

**External Hard Drive Resources**
I have found Western Digital to be a good brand and reliable for external hard drives.
NewEgg, [http://www.newegg.com](http://www.newegg.com)
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.

**Be sure to get a harddrive that is compatible with MAC computers and/or MAC and PC if you work with a PC outside of class**

**General Photography Resources:**
[https://www.aclu.org/free-speech/ know-your-rights-photographers](https://www.aclu.org/free-speech/ know-your-rights-photographers)