

**B/W Darkroom Techniques**  
**PHO 360-001**  
**Meets: Jan 16-May 11 2018**  
**MW 8:00a-10:50a Location: Wathena 213 Hours: 3**  
**Professor Vaughn Wascovich**  
**office: J308**  
**h/ by appointment**  
**c/ 573.220.5968**  
**e/ vaughn.wascovich@tamuc.edu**

“When words become unclear, I shall focus with photographs. When images become inadequate, I shall be content with silence.”

— Ansel Adams

“All photographs are memento mori. To take a photograph is to participate in another person’s (or thing’s) mortality, vulnerability, mutability. Precisely by slicing out this moment and freezing it, all photographs testify to time’s relentless melt.”

— Susan Sontag

“Today everything exists to end in a photograph.”

— Susan Sontag

#### Description:

B/W Darkroom Techniques is an intensive 15-week class, which is a continuation of your education in the art/photo program at TAMUC.

On a practical level, this course will teach you to historic and alternative methods of printmaking as well as alternative methods of image acquisition. We’ll start by reviewing historic images from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and see how they apply to today’s understanding of contemporary thought in photography. We’ll make digital as well as analog negatives, and use them to produce prints without using a computer. We’re going to start at the beginning, with a simple pinhole camera. From there, we’ll also make a fully functioning sliding-box view camera, much like the one’s used in the 19th century.

#### Student Learning Outcomes:

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

- A basic understanding of basic historic camera design and construction.
- A basic understanding of tools and techniques used in an alternative wet darkroom.
- A working knowledge of several historic processes.
- A working knowledge of digital and analogue film production and processing.
- Effective critique by participation in critical evaluation regarding your own work and the work of others.
- Have an understanding of professional presentation.
- Have submitted a weekly blog of commentary and assignments
- Have entered photographs in no less than two competitive contests.

#### What’s Expected of You, Generally:

Energy and enthusiasm in this class are vitally important, as is attendance. Please be prepared to share your experiences and ideas. Influences for discussion can come from anywhere: music, nature, writing, philosophy, personal experiences, etc.

Class discussion and peer review are very important for everyone as artists, and this class should function in such a way for you to get the most from your classmates. This should be a fun and rewarding learning experience for all of us, please work and participate actively and steadily.

You will also be utilizing a journal/blog as a means to clear your mind and gather your thoughts. Please plan on sharing this with the class.

Please come to class with a positive attitude, and respect for your peers and instructor!

#### Requirements, Specifically:

Each student will provide a blog of all their work for this class. Students will participate in class discussions, field trips and visiting lectures. If you are unable to attend a field trip, it is expected that you will attend the venue at some other time and prepare a written summary for your blog. Students will need to turn in assignments on time and participate in group critiques.

This course is assignment driven, meaning that I'll be giving you specific assignments with specific deadlines. I will meet with each of you individually during the fifth and tenth week of class to discuss your project and progress.

#### Grades:

Your final grade will be based on class participation, attendance, and how well you complete the assignments. (70% of grade.)

You will develop a final portfolio based on your weekly projects, to be turned in the final week of class (30% of grade.)

Please make an appointment to see me during the fifth and tenth week of the semester, so that we can individually review your grades and your progress in the class.

Photography projects, blogs, websites and final portfolios are graded based on a number of criteria. Is the work turned in on time? Does it solve the problem posed by the instructor? Is the work well-crafted (are there spots or dust on the prints, are the borders even? Is the print contrast correct?) Remember, neatness counts!

In addition to craft, excellent work is content driven; that is, the print goes beyond being pretty and well crafted. Excellent work is about something!

The "A" student will have attended all classes and participated (in a meaningful and relevant way) in the class discussions. They will turn projects in on time, and those projects will be clearly superior to the majority of those presented. Often the excellent student will do more than asked and may raise questions that challenge not only the students but also the instructor. Please understand that just by attending all classes and turning in all work does not guarantee you an "A".

The "C" student will attend most of the classes and turn in a significant number of assignments on time.

The work from the average student will look pretty much like the majority of work turned in; in other words it will look average. Average students contribute to class discussions, but may not do so consistently and/or with the same insight as the excellent student.

Please remember that the grade you receive is the grade you earn, not the grade that the instructor "gives" you.

#### Student Learning Outcomes:

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

- know how to develop film and paper negatives in a darkroom
- a basic understanding of camera, lens and pinhole
- 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
- have submitted a weekly blog of commentary and assignments
- basic understanding of gravure and other intaglio alternative printing processes

#### Attendance:

All students are required to regularly attend class. Art is a practice-based discipline and the learning process requires active participation. Students will receive a failing grade upon their fourth absence. If you miss more than two classes, you will be unable to receive a final grade of "A" for this course. Being tardy for class equals ½ of an absence. Being unprepared for class by not having an assignment on critique day or not

having the appropriate materials to perform in class assignments will count as an absence.  
Please turn your phones off before you come into the classroom.  
You should expect to work **AT LEAST 12 HOURS** every week outside of class for this seminar.

Text:

Handouts. Web referrals.

Supplies: We're going to be working with a number of processes and cameras in this class. I'll provide as much as I can, but understand that you'll have to be prepared to purchase papers, inks and other materials for printing and making cameras, as well as film and/or paper for photographing. Please see the detailed supply list, provided.

Academic Honesty:

Academic honesty is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. The academic community regards academic dishonesty as an extremely serious matter, with serious consequences that range from probation to expulsion. When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting or collaboration, consult the course instructor.

Statement on Student Behavior:

"All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment." (See Student's Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct) Students must show respect for the instructor and the instructor's syllabus, presentations, assignments, and point of view. Students should respect each others' differences. If an instructor determines that a student is not being respectful towards other students or the instructor, it is the instructor's prerogative to ask the student to leave, to refer the student to the department head, and to consider referring the student to the Dean of Students, who may consider requiring the student to drop the course. Please refer to pages 42-46 of the Texas A&M University-Commerce student guidebook's Code of Conduct for details.

Statement on Accommodations for ADA eligible students:

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 me, and

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library, Room 132

903-886-5150 or 903-886-5835

Fax 903-468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

One more thing. If your phone goes off, or I see you texting at any time during class, you owe everyone pizza.

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to (<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>) and/or consult your event organizer). Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open

carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

### **Handbook & Safety**

While the online manual covers specific issues related to the Department of Art, Texas A&M University-Commerce policies must also be followed. All users of Department of Art (DOA) classrooms and facilities are required to follow the health and safety guidelines outlined in this manual at all times. Report any safety issues IMMEDIATELY to your instructor(s), Teaching Laboratory Specialist, or to the DOA Health and Safety Liaison. Each course instructor will discuss their area's inherent risks, procedures and policies to provide the student with informed consent. These will be reviewed verbally at the start of each semester. A link to the online Handbook: <http://sites.tamuc.edu/art/resources/healthandsafety/>

Students that meet in face-to-face Department of Art courses must complete the online form for each course they attend. A link to the online form: <http://dms.tamuc.edu/Forms/ArtLabPolicy>