

# Digital Photography

## Course Description:

This is an introduction to digital photography. The class will push you to be in control of your camera, to develop an artistic style beyond the regular snapshot, and learn to describe and critique work with a photography vocabulary. Students will study basic composition, depth of field, exposure, action, color balance, and other creative aspects of photography.

## Materials Needed:

1. A digital camera is required in this course.
  - a. You must have a digital SLR camera with a standard focus lens (18-55 mm lens is great!) and full manual exposure controls (focus, ISO, aperture, and shutter speed settings).
2. Memory Card for your camera (1 GB minimum)
3. Tripod (optional)

## Course Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Identify the standard parts of a camera and explain the function.
2. Apply knowledge of their camera operations to create properly exposed and focused photographs.
3. Apply knowledge of aperture settings to achieve small and large depth of field.
4. Apply knowledge of shutter speeds to achieve both stopped and blurred action.
5. Identify and apply the elements of composition used in creating successful photographs.

## Assessment:

You will complete reading assignments and lessons, post photography assignments, and participate in critiques on discussion boards. All photography assignments must be posted online by 11:59 pm on the day the lesson is due. Critiques on discussion boards will also have a posted due date. Every student will receive a grade in this course based on his or her effort put forth, the quality of the photos handed in, and critiques on discussion boards. Grades for any assignments posted after the deadline will be lowered by 10% for each day it is late.

If you have general questions, please post them so the whole class can benefit from the answers. Please post them under the “General Questions” discussion board.

## Discussion Boards and Journals:

Discussion boards are an important component of your online experience. This course contains discussion boards related to the topics you are studying with each lesson.

A 'General Questions' discussion board will be established to manage administrative tasks of the course, and where you can post photos and ask 'process' questions as well as receive answers throughout the course. Please feel free to answer any question if you feel you know the answer; this sharing of information is valuable to other students.

A 'Share Your Shots' discussion board will also be created. This is a place to share a photo from each assignment that you are proud of, and explain the camera settings and story behind HOW you took your photo. You must post at least 1 photo for each assignment. You are welcome, however, to post more than 1 photo with each assignment. You are required to critique at least 2 photos per assignment using photography vocabulary such as: Elements of Composition, Depth of Field, Exposure, Lighting, etc. (within the online participation guidelines). Keep in mind that you will get back equally honest responses and critiques on your photos. Of course, sometimes it is painful to hear that your photo could be improved on, but please remain open-minded as that's the best way to learn. With only getting "good job" and "well done" comments, you wouldn't get too far. Constructive critiques are what make you think more about your photos and take action to correct your own mistakes. It's one of the best tools in learning photography.

All 'Share Your Shots' Discussion Critiques are worth 5 points each photo. I will use the following rubric to evaluate discussion critiques.

**5** = The critique posting reflects vocabulary covered throughout the course.

Feedback is constructive on reasons for agreement or disagreement with a photo. All comments are courteous and point out at least 1 positive feature to the photo.

**4 – 3** = The critique posting reflects some basic photography vocabulary covered throughout the course. Feedback could have been more extensive with explaining what they like or dislike about a photo.

**2 – 1** = The critique posting didn't use little to no photography vocabulary. Feedback is too short to help other students improve their images.

**0** = If there is no critique posting at all or if it reflected little to no effort.

Journals will be kept for the "Famous Photos in History Assignment". The Famous Photos in History Assignment is a way to show students how photography has played an important role in documenting history and the world around us. Some "Famous Photos" show significant moments of history in war and have very serious and somber background stories. While some other moments in history show big moments in sports or maybe even just the progress of photography itself (black and white vs. color photography). A Famous Photo in History will be posted on the Discussion Board about every 3 weeks. As a student, your assignment is to research everything you can about that particular photo. Learn the events leading up to what is happening in the photo as well as what happened afterwards. For some photos, I will give you both the name of the photo as well as the date taken. For other photos, I might only give you the date taken. Once you have researched everything about that photo, you will fill out the Famous Photo in History Report. Download it onto your computer, fill out the

form, and then post it into your journal. There will be 5 Famous Photos to do throughout the semester, worth 25 points each. You will be graded on the accuracy of your information, how well written everything else, and finally your personal response to the photograph. As a general rule, plan to fill out the form and use all the blank space provided.

### **Online Participation Guidelines:**

We want to create a pleasant and harmonic online learning environment. To do this, we must consider each other. Please write in a language that does not sound offensive; start your messages with a greeting and sign them with your name or nickname (no initials). Praise the work of others when you see something you like. If you are giving critical feedback, first explain what you like about the photo and then give ideas of how you could improve the photo. Abstain from using offensive language, do not make fun of anybody, and always treat everyone kindly.

### **Course Expectations & Time Management**

You are required to log in to your course at least 3-4 times a week so that you can participate in the ongoing course discussions. Online courses are no less time consuming than “face to face” courses. You will have to dedicate some time every day or at least every other day to your studies. If you find yourself getting behind, please contact the instructor immediately.

### **Your Instructor’s Role**

Your instructor’s role in this course is that of a discussion facilitator and learning advisor. As instructor, she will read all postings to the general discussions boards on a daily basis but may not respond to each posting. You will receive feedback on each assignment however.

The instructor may choose to designate “office hours” when she will be online and available and will immediately respond to questions. Depending on the instructor, this response may be by e-mail or telephone.

### **Your Role as a Student**

As an online student, you will be taking a proactive approach to your learning. As the course instructor’s role is that of a learning guide, your role is that of a leader in your own learning. You will be managing your own time so that you can complete the readings, activities and assignments for the course.

### **Academic Integrity/Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is a major form of academic dishonesty involving the presentation of the work of another as one’s own. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the direct copying of any source, such as a photograph, without proper acknowledgement that it is someone else’s.

Plagiarism, like other forms of academic dishonesty, is always a serious matter. If an instructor finds that a student has plagiarized, the appropriate penalty is at the instructor’s discretion.

## **Course Schedule**

Throughout the semester we will cover a wide variety of topics, starting with the basics of taking a picture. As the semester continues, we will learn how to manually control the shutter speed, F-Stop, ISO settings on your camera. We will end the semester with topics that will push your photography skills and style beyond basic point and shoot methods. Below is a detailed list of topics we will be covering this semester.

1. Introduction and Preparation (Getting familiar with your camera and the online class format)
2. Composition
3. Exposure (Controlling Shutter Speed and F-Stop)
4. Depth of Field (F-Stop and Focus)
5. ISO/Motion/Action Photos (Fast, Slow, and Panning)
6. Lighting
7. Color Balance
8. Macro
9. Creative Photography
10. Final Project