

M-Pro Visual Journalism: J-380V

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Meetings: Mondays & Wednesdays 3-6, BMC 3.208
Mary's Office Hours: Mondays 9:30-11 and Wednesdays 1-2:30 *and by appointment*

Why take this course? Today's journalists are expected to be able to speak the language of words and images. Images can persuade us at an emotional and visceral level in ways that words do not. In combination with words, images can be even more powerful. For all these reasons, it is essential for journalists to know how to use images in their storytelling, how to critique and interpret images, and how to use them responsibly. Or because, based on the preceding reasons, it's required. The skills you learn here will help you get and keep your next job.

Description: This course is designed to present you with the "what" and the "why" of visual communication. We will go over the basic skills for digital visual journalism and design as well as the theory behind how it conveys meaning. We will explore the principles of photography, design, typography and color theory. Along the way, you'll learn some basic skills with digital cameras, *Photoshop & WordPress*.

And yet: this is not a software course. The digital world is moving too fast to try to master any particular program at this stage of your career. Our focus will be on the principles of good design and communication, not advanced proficiencies with any particular program.

You will be expected to work as a 21st Century internet citizen, which means doing a certain amount of self-education. Learn how to practice your skills in the lab, read the support materials for your programs, consult online tutorials and watch educational videos. You will need to devote a significant amount of time in lab EVERY WEEK —practicing with the software will be the best way to learn.

This course explores three broad questions:

1. How do human beings interpret and respond to visual communication?
2. How can journalists use visual communication to enhance their storytelling?
3. What ethical principles can guide journalists in their visual communication?

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Consider, plan, and execute a visual strategy for any story.
2. Analyze and critique images in the language of art criticism, rhetoric and ideology
3. demonstrate knowledge of the history of photojournalism and the relationship between technology and visual journalism
4. demonstrate knowledge of the ethical considerations in the processes of image creation and media production

5. apply the concepts of design, narrative and aesthetics to the creation of visual media projects

Required Materials & Resources

- Kobre, K. (2013). Photojournalism: The professionals' approach, 6th Ed. Burlington, MA: Focal Press. *(available at the Coop – feel free to use the 5th edition)*
- A pack of 3X5 Cards

Other required readings will be available online.

Also Required:

- Sign up for a Word-Press account and your own domain name. If you already have a website, check with Dr. Bock to make sure it is suitable for class assignments.
- Start reading “Reading the Pictures,” “Lens” (with the New York Times) and InSight (Washington Post)
- Please join the UTNPPA group on Facebook
- Sign on the UT’s Lynda.Com account and become a user. We will use Lynda.com as a resource for technical skill-building
- Instagram, Vimeo & Videolicious:** Create accounts with these services for your assignments.

Learning Management System: In this class I will be using *Canvas* — a Web-based course management system with password-protected access at to distribute course materials, to communicate and collaborate online, to post grades, to submit assignments, and to give you online quizzes and surveys. You can find support in using Canvas at the ITS Help Desk at 475-9400, Monday-Thursday 8am-10pm, Friday 8am-6pm, and Sat-Sun 12pm-5pm.

Labs: Moody College has labs where you can work and practice your skills with extended and weekend hours. Here’s a link to their hours and locations: <https://moody.utexas.edu/technology/digital-media-production-labs> **It is highly recommended that you buy and bring your own hard drive.**

Grading: Grades are distributed according to a point system. Letter grades will be based on percentages.

Grades based on a 500-point course:

Take note: students must earn a 61% to pass. Failure to complete ALL Visual Projects risks an F, no matter what the percentage earned.

Use the assignment chart on page 12 provided to keep track of your grades.

A	92% & above	460 or higher
A-	90-91 %	450-459
B+	88-89 %	440-449
B	82-87 %	410-439
B-	80-81 %	400-409
C+	78-79 %	390-399
C	72-77 %	360-389
C-	70-71%	350-359
D+	68-69%	340-349
D	62-67%	310-339
D-	61%	305-309
F	60% & below	304 or less

Classroom Policies

A university is a place to learn – not only the material of a particular course, but how to work in a professional environment. To that end, it is important for university students – that’s you -- to learn to be self-directed adult learners. I am your guide; I cannot simply place knowledge into your mind.

I am dedicated to your success – but it remains your success, not mine. If something in your life is interfering with your studies, if you are ill, if you are having trouble with the material or if you are somehow encountering anything else that is getting in the way of your learning, please let me know as early as possible so that I can help.

To make our time together as valuable as possible, we all have to work hard at it. The following basic principles may give us some guidelines:¹ In order for you to get the most out of this class, please consider the following:

- a. Attend all scheduled classes and arrive on time. Late arrivals and early departures are very disruptive and violate the first basic principle listed above. Everyone is late once in a while, but if it’s habitual, it’s a problem and I expect you to make changes in your routine – unless --you are trying to get to Belo from a preceding class far across the 40 acres, in which case, please let me know in advance.
- b. Please do not schedule other engagements during this class time – this includes your travel itineraries and routing medical appointments. Think of college as a job you pay for. I will try to make class as interesting and informative as possible, but I can't learn the material for you.
- c. If you have trouble hearing the lecture or media presentation because of distractions around you, quietly ask those responsible for the distraction to stop. If the distraction continues, please let me know. It is often impossible for me to hear such things from my position in the classroom.
- d. Please let me know immediately if you have any problem that is preventing you from performing satisfactorily in this class. I cannot help you if I do not know what’s going on. Please do NOT wait until the problem grows into something unmanageable. We can almost always work things out.

Cell phones & Computers: I love my phone too, but there is great value in our face-to-face interaction. Turn off your cell phone, your tablet and your laptop. The distractions of the computer outweigh the advantages. If a personal situation has emergency status, please leave the room to call and text. **If I observe you using your phone during class discussion or lecture, or using your laptop to surf the internet, you will be marked absent, because your brain will indeed be absent from class.**

E-Mail policy: E-mail is the best way to reach me. I check it at least every 24 hours. I will always try to answer e-mails quickly, *but not necessarily immediately*. At the very most a response might take 48 hours (weekends, etc. may slow me down.) During the work week, YOU are expected to check your e-mail every 24 hours.

Classroom Conduct: It is my wish that our classroom where each of us can feel comfortable and accepted. We may discuss controversial issues; it is our job to allow others to express their opinions and to truly listen to ideas with which we may disagree. It is essential that we work to help one another -- communication, by its nature, is not something we can pursue alone. In keeping with our effort to maintain a collegial environment, crude, vulgar or insulting language will not be tolerated.

¹ Lasorsa, 1990, courtesy the Center for Teaching and Learning

Attendance: I do make note of your attendance for every class, and this is part of your grade. While I do not wish to know about day-to-day attendance issues, I DO require documented excused in the cases of exams or assignment deadlines. As in the professional world, it is better to make arrangements for an absence BEFORE a test or deadline – keep track of your obligations in a planner. Of course, emergencies do happen. Legitimate reasons for missing a test or deadline might include:

- ◆ Medical care (written documentation required – not an elective appointment!).
- ◆ Absence due to participation in an authorized University activity (written documentation required).
- ◆ Absence due to attendance at legal proceedings requiring your presence (advance notification and written documentation required).
- ◆ Absence due to the death or serious illness of an immediate family member (written documentation required).

An excused absence involves something that's *not under your control*. Appointments you make, such as a routine dental or medical appointment, are under your control and are **NOT** excused.

Religious Holy Days: By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Deadlines: Without *prior* arrangements, work can be submitted up to one week later for 50% credit. For example, if it's a 100-point assignment and you turn it in up to a week late, the most you can receive is 50-points. ***After a week, the work is not accepted and is graded as a zero.*** It is your responsibility to work on your assignments in a timely manner and to avoid last-minute problems.

Make-Up Work: You must make arrangements with me in advance to make up work, and you must provide me with a documented, legitimate excuse to do so. If you are ill or facing an urgent situation, you must call me (just as you would a boss at work) to notify me: 512-471-0673. In the case of a missed exam or presentation, we can re-schedule once you provide me with a document that explains your legitimate excuse.

Grade Discussions: I do not discuss grades via e-mail. I post your grades to *Canvas* and expect you to monitor your grades and make sure my records match yours. A sheet for recording your grades is in this packet. If you want to discuss a grade, you may visit during office hours or make an appointment to do so face to face.

My Phone: I will check for messages on my office phone once a day.

Food: Please do not eat meals in class. A discreet energy bar, smoothie or drink is fine (I occasionally need one, too!) but anything more than that is distracting to everyone around you.

IT responsibility: Students in 2016 are expected to be acquainted with computer use essentials. This means **you** are responsible for making sure your laptop has proper anti-virus software; that **you** know where the printers are on campus; and that you know how to **back up** your work. This is also a good time to make sure you have a professional presence on line, that you know proper posting etiquette, and that you have a resume-worthy e-mail address. Finally, when posting work to *Canvas*, always double check to make sure your assignment is properly uploaded. Become acquainted with the software BEFORE you submit your first assignment so you are not rushed.

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS POLICIES AND INFORMATION

University of Texas Honor Code: The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Scholastic Dishonesty: The University defines academic dishonesty as cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to avoid participating honestly in the learning process. Scholastic dishonesty also includes, but is not limited to, providing false or misleading information to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment, and submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructor. By accepting this syllabus, you have agreed to these guidelines and must adhere to them. Scholastic dishonesty damages both the student's learning experience and readiness for the future demands of a work-career. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php

As a reminder: here is the University Honor Code:

<http://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/the-university/#universitycodeofconduct/>

Special note on plagiarism: It bears repeating: using material that is not yours without proper attribution is *plagiarism*. For clarification, the library has a module:

<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/services/instruction/learningmodules/plagiarism/>

Copyright and Fair Use: For Production Classes Only

You may find the need to use copyrighted material this semester: music, photographs, movie clips, or any other expression. For many of your uses, you need to find the copyright holder and negotiate a license. You own the copyright to the work you produce in this class. As a copyright holder yourself, you understand the importance of copyright ownership. It is your responsibility to secure music and archival footage licenses as well as artwork, location and personal releases. You will find release templates on the RTF website.

For some uses, however, neither you nor anyone else needs to license copyrighted material. This is because copyright law exists to encourage and support creativity. Copyright law recognizes that creativity doesn't arise in a vacuum. As creators, we all stand on the shoulders of giants. New works of art (such as films, books, poems, paintings) all make use of what has gone before. Thus, copyright law not only protects authors with a copyright that lets them decide who can use their works, but also offers exemptions from the author's control.

For filmmakers, the most important exemption is the doctrine of fair use. You can rely on fair use, where appropriate, in the film and video projects you undertake for this course. If you are making a documentary film, consult the influential Documentary Filmmakers Statement of Best Practices in Fair Use (**PDF**) which was created by a group of national filmmaker organizations, has been endorsed by the University Film and Video Association, and is now relied on by film festivals, insurers, cablecasters, distributors and public broadcasters. Fair use also applies in the fiction film environment, but not necessarily to the same extent or in the same way. As always, the central question is whether the new use is "transformative" -- i.e., whether it adds significant value by modifying or re-contextualizing the original.

For more information, visit <http://www.centerforsocialmedia.org/>

Course Evaluation:

During this course I will be asking you to give me feedback on your learning in informal as well as formal ways, including through anonymous surveys about how my teaching strategies are helping or hindering your learning. I encourage you to respond to these surveys, ensuring that together we can create an environment effective for teaching and learning.

At the end of the semester, there will be a formal survey as well. These course instructor surveys are required by school policy and reviewed by senior faculty administrators as an important component in annual faculty evaluations. I will use the paper option. These surveys are strictly confidential, and I have no access to the results until I get a summary after the semester is completed. I encourage you to take time to write your open-ended feedback in the space provided. These comments are often the most informative.

Q drop Policy:

The State of Texas has enacted a law that limits the number of course drops for academic reasons to six (6). As stated in Senate Bill 1231: “Beginning with the fall 2007 academic term, an institution of higher education may not permit an undergraduate student a total of more than six dropped courses, including any course a transfer student has dropped at another institution of higher education, unless the student shows good cause for dropping more than that number.”

Use of E-mail for Official Correspondence to Students: All students should become familiar with the University's official e-mail student notification policy. It is the student's responsibility to keep the University informed as to changes in his or her e-mail address. Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. It is recommended that e-mail be checked daily, but at a minimum, twice per week. (I recommend daily during the work-week). A complete text of this policy and instructions for updating your e-mail address are available at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/help/utmail/1564> .

Documented Disability Statement:

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 512-471-6259, <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>

Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at (512) 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone). Faculty are not required to provide accommodations without an official accommodation letter from SSD.

Please notify me as quickly as possible if the material being presented in class is not accessible (e.g., instructional videos need captioning, course packets are not readable for proper alternative text conversion, etc.).

Please notify me as early in the semester as possible if disability-related accommodations for field trips are required. Advanced notice will permit the arrangement of accommodations on the given day (e.g., transportation, site accessibility, etc.).

Student Veteran Services:

If you're a vet – thank you for your service! Here are some UT resources:

Office of the Dean of Students: <http://utstudentveteranservices.org>

Academic Support Resources: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/veterans/academicsupport.php>

Resources for Learning & Life at UT Austin: The University of Texas has numerous resources for students to provide assistance and support for your learning. You are particularly encouraged to use the Learning Skills Center on campus for help on writing assignments. Also, the PCL reference librarians can assist you with online news retrieval and other information finding tasks.

The UT Learning Center: <http://www.utexas.edu/student/utlc/>

Undergraduate Writing Center: <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>

Oral presentation: <http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/sig/propose/requirements/communication>

Writing: <http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/sig/faculty/writing>

<http://www46.homepage.villanova.edu/john.immerwahr/UTAustin.htm>

Counseling & Mental Health Center: <http://cmhc.utexas.edu/>

Career Exploration Center: <http://www.utexas.edu/student/careercenter/>

Student Emergency Services: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/>

Safety issues: <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/terms/>

Emergency Evacuation Policy: Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following recommendations regarding emergency evacuation from the Office of Campus Safety and Security, 512-471-5767, <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/>

- Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside.
- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
- Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors.
- Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.
- Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL): 512-232-5050
- Link to information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at: utexas.edu/emergency.

What you achieve, unlike what you acquire, can never be lost or stolen.

Tentative Schedule

Week	Date:	Material	Read this ahead:	Assignment Due
1	W/Aug 30 th	Welcome	The Syllabus	Contract
		Observation Exercise		(debrief)
2	M/Sept. 4	☺ Labor Day Holiday ☺		
	W/Sept. 6	Equipment Checkout Briefing	Wordpress.org v. com	Sign up for Wordpress
3	M/Sept. 11	Vocabulary of the Visual	Zelanski & Fisher PDF	Plagiarism Quiz
		Get to know the camera		
	W/Sept. 13	Working in Manual	Check out a DSLR	Photograph an object
		Story Workshop A1	Kobre 1-3 & 8	
4	M/Sept. 18	Captions, Special Beats	Kobre 4, 6	
		Light Room Basics		
	W/Sept. 20	Light Room Basics /Practice		Light Room Exercise
		Critique A1		A1: Story Image
5	M/Sept. 25	Gestalt and Color Theory		
		Lighting Basics	Kobre 9 Lighting	(Quiz One opened online)
	W/Sept. 27	Practice with Lighting	Bring a DSLR	Quiz One due
		Visual Stereotyping	Implicit Association Test	Visit 1
6	M/Oct 2	Portraits	Kobre 5 Portraits	
		Story Workshop A2		
	W/Oct 4	Practicing portraits	Bring a DSLR	
		Photojournalistic Ethics	Kobre 15 & 16, Neiman PDF	
7	M/Oct. 9	<i>Matt Valentine</i>		
		Photoshop II Layers		
	W/Oct. 11	Photoshop Layers Practice	Kobre 7	
		Critique Portrait		A2: Portrait
8	M/Oct. 16	Five Contexts	Kobre 10 & 11	
		Creating a Gallery		(Quiz 2 opened online)
	W/Oct. 18	Creating a Gallery Practice		Quiz 2 due
		Propaganda and Design History	Kobre 14 Illustrations	Visit Two

Note: Deadlines are subject to change. Consult Canvas for deadline updates.

Week	Date	Material	Read this ahead:	Assignment Due
9	M/Oct. 23	Story Workshop A3		
		Web Design Basics		
	W/Oct. 25	Web Design Practice		
		Maps & Cartoons		
10	M/Oct. 30	Photojournalism History	Kobre 17	
		Embedding a Gallery		(Quiz 3 opened online)
	W/Nov. 1	Embedding a Gallery Practice		Quiz 3 due
		Critique A3		A3: Gallery
11	M/Nov. 6	Photojournalism History II		
		Story Workshop A4		
	W/Nov. 8	Advanced Photoshop		<i>Create a cut-out</i>
		Fun with Phi		
12	M/Nov. 13	<i>Newspaper Design Speaker</i>	Kobre 18 Going Pro	
		Graphics with Powerpoint		(Quiz 4 opened online)
	W/Nov. 15	Practicing Graphics		Quiz 4 due
		Fonts & Color Theory		
13	M/Nov. 20	Critique A4		A4: Graphic
		Helvetica		
	W/Nov. 22	No Class: Happy Thanksgiving!		
14	M/Nov. 27	<i>Multimedia Producer Spkr</i>		<i>Pitch letter</i>
		Facebook Live		
	M/Nov. 29	Embedding a Graphic		
		Contemporary Problems		
15	M/Dec. 4	Film History	Kobre 12 & 13	(Quiz 5 opens)
		Videolicious		<i>Video</i>
	W/Dec. 6	Working with a phone only		Quiz 5 Due
		Film Conventions		
16	M/Dec. 11	<i>Alumni Panel</i>		
		Critique A5		A5: Story Page

ASSIGNMENTS, EXERCISES & ASSESSMENT

Participation in lecture and in lab (2 a day in lecture & lab): You will be assessed according to your attendance and preparedness. The first point is awarded for showing up, the second is awarded for being prepared (i.e. bringing the camera you were supposed to check out, doing the assigned reading, coming to story sessions with realistic pitches, etc.)

Office Visits (2 at 5 points each): You are required to visit me in my office, during office hours or by mutually convenient appointment, to discuss your goals and progress twice during the semester.

Lab Exercises: (5 at 5 points each): Some labs will expect you to complete a short exercise that applies what you are learning. You will:

- Establish your Website
- Photograph an object several ways
- Improve a photo with Photoshop
- Use Photoshop to “cut out” an object
- Create an instant (mobile phone) video

Professional Submission (5 points): First, research an appropriate venue for your work then craft a professional submission letter for consideration in a professional publication. It does not have to be accepted for you to receive credit for this assignment; the task is designed to get you thinking about researching venues and writing a pitch.

Instagram (10 at 5 points each): Open an Instagram account and tell me your ID so I can follow you. Post at least ten images with captions – use the account to reflect what we’re discussing in class. You’ll receive a checklist for this assignment.

Quizzes (5 at 20 points each): We will have five ten-point quizzes based on material from the readings and from lecture. Quiz dates can be found in the schedule.

Visual Projects (5 at 50 points each): You will create five projects during the semester. These projects CAN be connected to the stories that you are working on for J380W – in fact I ENCOURAGE it, but do not require it. They will be critiqued in class. A production report is required for every project.

1. News Image: Using the DSLR, create an image connected to a story; crop, size and optimize it; write a caption, post to Canvas. Include a written story (approx. 250 words) either from J380W or an original story – to contextualize your photo AND submit a production report to Canvas. Tentative deadline: Sept 20.

2. Portrait: Using the DSLR, create an image of a person connected to one of your stories; crop, size and optimize it and write a caption. Include a written story (approx. 250 words) either from J380W or an original story – to contextualize your photo AND submit a production report to Canvas. Tentative deadline: Oct 11.

3. Photo Essay: This exercise will combine your photographic and narrative skills. Using the DSLR, create a set of (six to ten) photos that tell a story. Crop, size and optimize each one; write captions for each one. Create a Gallery and post it to the work site. Include a written story (approx. 250 words) either from J380W or an original story – to contextualize your photo AND submit a production report to Canvas. Tentative deadline: Nov 1.

4. Infographic: Using PowerPoint or a visualizing platform of your choice, create an infographic or map that enhances a story. Write a caption for it and be sure to supply information on the source of your data. Include a written story (approx. 250 words) either from J380W or an original story – to contextualize your photo AND submit a production report to Canvas. Tentative deadline: Nov. 20.

5. Story Page -- create a story page that all the appropriate visual elements – including the page design. Include a written story (approx. 250 words) either from J380W or an original story – to contextualize your photo AND submit a production report to Canvas. Tentative Deadline: Dec. 11.

Checklist for Visual Projects

- ✓ Artifact
- ✓ Labels, cutlines, captions
- ✓ Word-Story (250 words)
- ✓ Production Report
- ✓ Submit URL and report on Canvas

Rubric for Visual Projects

Assessment:	Points:
Meets Technical Production Standards	10
Tells/Enhances the News Story	10
Text is well-written and uses AP style	10
Thoughtful Report that answers all the questions	10
Makes creative use of resources	10

Grade Recorder

	Assignment	Points Possible	Points Earned	
Professionalism	Present & Prepared	60		
	Visit One	5		
	Visit Two	5		
	Pitch Letter	5		
	Lab Exercises (Five at 5 points each)			
	Set up Web Page and Domain	5		
	Photograph an object several ways	5		
	Improve a photo with Photoshop	5		
	Create an infographic with a cut out	5		
	Create an instant (mobile phone) video	5		
Quizzes	Five at 20 points each			
	Quiz 1	20		
	Quiz 2	20		
	Quiz 3	20		
	Quiz 4	20		
	Quiz 5	20		
Instagram	Ten Photos & Captions	50		
Projects	News Scene	50		
	Portrait	50		
	Photo Gallery/Essay	50		
	Infographic	50		
	Story Page	50		
	Total	500		