

**M-Pro Visual Journalism: J-380V 08155**

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**twitter:** professorbock (one word)

**Facebook Group:**UTJ380V

**Lectures:** Thursday 9-11 CMA 6.174

**Labs:** Wednesdays (08155): 3-7pm BMC 3.208

Mary's Office Hours: Wednesdays, 1-2 and Fridays 1-3. BMC 3.384

Eun Jeong Lee's Office Hours: *TBA*

**Why take this course?** 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.

**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 *Photoshop*, *Final Cut*, *InDesign*, and web page design.

And yet: this is not a course in *Final Cut*, *InDesign* or *Photoshop*. 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 software.

You will be expected to work as a 21<sup>st</sup> 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. Take advantage of the College Fresh-Up courses. 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 does technology affect our ability as humans to communicate visually?
3. How can and how should journalists use visual communication in their work?

**How will you be assessed? By the end of this course, you should be able to:**

1. analyze and critique images in the language of art criticism, rhetoric and ideology
2. demonstrate knowledge of the history of photojournalism and the relationship between technology and visual journalism

3. demonstrate knowledge of the ethical considerations in the processes of image creation and media production
4. apply the concepts of design, narrative and aesthetics to the creation of visual media projects

### Required Materials

Kobre, K. (2013). *Photojournalism: The professionals' approach*, 6<sup>th</sup> Ed. Burlington, MA: Focal Press. *(available at the Coop)*

Wenger, D. H. & Potter, D. (2011). *Advancing the story: Broadcast journalism in a multimedia world*. Washington D.C: CQ Press. *Available at the Coop or as an e-book through Coursemart for \$22.50: [http://www.coursesmart.com/IR/5273182/9781608717149?\\_hdv=6.8](http://www.coursesmart.com/IR/5273182/9781608717149?_hdv=6.8)*

***This book is available as an e-book through PCL (we will read two chapters):***

Barry, A. (1997). *Visual Intelligence: Perception, Image and Manipulation in Visual Communication*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

***Other required readings will be available online.***

**Also Required:** You will be required to create, update and maintain a Website for this class. You may already have your own URL and domain – that is fine, as long as you can create pages and adjust them for class projects. If you have never done this before, I suggest purchasing space from WordPress (\$18.00/year) and creating a URL that is professional-sounding and unique to YOU (not any particular story).

**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.

**Grading:** Grades are distributed according to a point system. Students will be assessed according to their ability to demonstrate a mastery of the material (knowledge) and their ability to demonstrate thoughtful synthesis of the material (critical thinking skills). Letter grades will be based on percentages.

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
93% & above	90-92	87-89	83-86	80-82	77-79	73-76	70-72	67-69	63-66	61-62	61% & below

**Take note: students must earn a 61% to pass.**

**Failure to complete ALL assignments risks an F, no matter what the percentage earned.**

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

### Classroom Policies

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.

**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. It is your responsibility to take care of your computer, your flash drive, and know where the printers are on campus. It is your responsibility to back up your work.

**Cell phones & Computers:** I love my phone too, but there is great value in our face-to-face interaction. For our lecture sessions, turn off your cell phone, your iPod, your Kindle and your laptop. The distractions of the computer outweigh the advantages. I know what you're doing when you look at your own lap during class. Turn it off.

**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.

**Attendance:** I make note of your attendance for every class, and this is folded into your participation 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. But 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\** legitimate.

**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 emergency, you must notify me (just as you would a boss at work). 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. Please hang on to all graded materials until the end of the semester. 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:** Food is not allowed in the lab, for obvious reasons. During lecture, please use common sense and courtesy; that is, nothing smelly or messy.

## 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](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php)

**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 that you'll need to complete as part of the course: <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/services/instruction/learningmodules/plagiarism/>

**Use of Class Materials:** The materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, exams, quizzes, and homework assignments are copyright protected works. Any unauthorized copying of the class materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary actions being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of class materials without the specific, express approval of the instructor may be a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty, which could result in further disciplinary action. This includes, among other things, uploading class materials to websites for the purpose of sharing those materials with other current or future students.

### **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. It's very important for me to know your reaction to what we're doing in class, so 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. These surveys are strictly confidential, and I have no access to the results until I get a summary after the semester is completed. I also encourage you to take time to write your open-ended feedback in the space provided, as these comments are often the most informative.

**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>.

**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, I will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

**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.”

**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>

**Documented Disability Statement:** 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.).

Contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone) or reference SSD's website for more disability-related information: [http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/for\\_cstudents.php](http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/for_cstudents.php)

#### **Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)**

If you are worried about someone who is acting differently, you may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone your concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

**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 policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform me in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow my instructions or those of class instructors.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you're given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.
- Questions about emergency evacuations? More information on routes and procedures can be found at this link: [www.utexas.edu/emergency](http://www.utexas.edu/emergency)
- And as a reminder: the Behavior Concerns Advice Line, BCAL: 512-232-5050

**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 recontextualizing the original.

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

**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 (generally):  
<http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/sig/faculty/writing>  
<http://www46.homepage.villanova.edu/john.immerwahr/UTAustin.htm>
- Newswriting:  
<http://ddce.utexas.edu/academiccenter/2013/11/01/lcae-opens-new-journalism-writing-center/>
- 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/>

### Tentative Schedule

Week	Date:	Material	Read this ahead:	Assignment Due
1	Aug. 27	Equipment checkout, course overview	(website)	
	Aug. 28	How does Vision Work?	Barry CH 1 & ADV 1-4	<i>plagiarism tutorial, five ideas</i>
2	Sept. 3	Photoshop I		<i>Establish your website domain</i>
	Sept. 4	Vocabulary of the Visual Peer Critique	Barry CH 2 & Kobre 1-4	<i>Single Image &amp; Story Proposal</i>
3	Sept. 10	WordPress I		
	Sept. 11*	Design Principles	Kobre 5,7,8	<i>Office Visit One</i>
4	Sept. 17	Photoshop II		
	Sept. 18	Semiotics, Ideology, Persuasion Peer Critique	Kobre 9, 10	<i>Portrait &amp; Production Report</i>
5	Sept. 24	Creating a Gallery		
	Sept. 25	History of Photography & PHJ	Kobre 17	<i>Critique 1: Analyzing a Still Image</i>
6	Oct. 1	WordPress II		
	Oct. 2	History of Film & TVJ	ADV Ch. 6	
7	Oct. 8	Video: Using the Camera, Lights and Tripod		
	Oct. 9	Video Journalist Speaker Peer Critique	Kobre 11, 12, 13	<i>Gallery &amp; Production Report</i>

Week	Date:	Material	Read this ahead:	Assignment Due
8	Oct. 15	Video Editing I		
	Oct. 16	Context, Intra & Inter-Textuality		<i>Office Visit II</i>
9	Oct. 22	Video: working with sound		
	Oct. 23	Stereotypes	ADV 11, Kobre 15, 16	<i>Critique II: Assessing a Creator</i>
10	Oct. 29	Video: working with titles		
	Oct. 30	Maps, Cartoons, Graphs	Kobre 14	<i>Video Story &amp; Production Report</i>
11	Nov. 5	InfoGraphics & Maps		
	Nov. 6	<i>Possible: InfoGraphic Speaker</i> Peer Critique	ADV 7, 8	
12	Nov. 12	InDesign		
	Nov. 13	Fonts, Writing	ADV 9	<i>Critique III: Ideology</i>
13	Nov. 19	Word Press & InDesign		
	Nov. 20	Helvetica Movie Peer Critique		<i>InDesign &amp; Production Report</i>
14	Dec. 3	Putting it Together		
	Dec. 4	Games, Interactivity Peer Critique & Post-Mortem	Kobre 18	

*\* The next day, Sept. 12, is UT's official enrollment day*

***Final Web Page & Production Report due Dec. 10, 9am***



### Assessment Opportunities

*All assignments should be submitted to Canvas by 9am on the due date unless otherwise noted.*

**Participation in lecture and in lab** will be assessed according to your attendance and preparedness.

**Office Visits:** You are required to visit me in my office, during office hours or by mutually convenient appointment, to discuss your goals and progress.

**Colleague Critique:** You will be expected to provide thoughtful feedback to your colleagues regarding their visual work. “Thoughtful” means constructive and informed in terms of visual theory and journalistic values. There will be a space provided online for you to comments; these comments will be graded over time as a whole. A significant amount of time during our class meetings will be devoted to story development and visual thinking. As expected in any newsroom: come prepared, come with ideas, come ready to contribute.

**Visual Critiques:** Three written assignments (to be submitted via Canvas) will provide you the opportunity to apply what you learn about visual theory, design principles and journalistic ethics to image-artifacts. They should be 1,000 words long, written as an essay in the THIRD PERSON with a thesis statement (argument) will logically connected evidence in support of the argument AND acknowledgement of (and relevant responses to) the counter-argument.

**Visual Projects:** You will create five projects during the semester: a photo-shopped image, a portrait, a double page design; a video and a web page with a creative illustration. A rubric with the grading criteria will be provided for each project.

**Professional Submission:** At the end of the semester, you will a) research an appropriate venue for your work b) craft a professional submission letter and c) submit your work for consideration in a professional publication

	Assignment	Due Date	Points Possible	Points Earned
Professionalism	Lecture Participation		28	
	Lab Attendance		15	
	Colleague Critiques		25	
	Visits 1 & 2		5 & 5	
	Professional Submission		25	
Visual Analysis	Critique 1		50	
	Critique 2		50	
	Critique 3		50	
Projects	Object & Story Proposal		25	
	Portrait & Production Report		25	
	Gallery & Production Report		50	
	Video & Production Report		50	
	InDesign & Production Report		50	
	Web Page & Production Report		50	
	<b>Total</b>			<b>500</b>

\*The point system is designed to give you one “free” day off if needed

### **Class Structure:**

The entire course will be devoted to visual coverage of one in-depth story.

Lab sessions will be devoted to learning and practicing technical skills. Lecture sessions will usually be devoted to conceptual, historical and theoretical materials \*and\* a newsroom session. Be ready to come to class and talk about your own work, helpfully critique the work of your colleagues and discuss your stories.

### **Grading Rubrics**

Grading in this class is on a point system. It's perfectly possible for everybody in the class to earn an "A" – there is no curve. Every visual project will have its own rubric. But here are some general guidelines for letter grades:

#### **Visual projects:**

A: outstanding work of exceptional quality. Such work goes above and beyond expectations and is strong in every category. Such work could be published with few or no changes. Both the concept and execution are excellent.

B: superior work with many strong points. Such work could be published with minor revisions. The idea might be excellent with a weak execution.

C: satisfactory work. It might have some strong points and is fair in the concept or execution.

D: this work has problems, and has a poor concept and/or poor execution

F: this work fails to meet the requirements in any way or missed the deadline.

#### **Written Assignments:**

A: no grammatical errors, presents a clear and organized argument, and uses appropriate examples from the class lectures and readings.

B: might have a mechanical error or two, but presents a clear and organized argument using appropriate examples from the class lectures and readings.

C: the post answers the question but is occasionally unclear, disorganized, or uses poor syntax and grammar.

D: the post has multiple grammatical or syntax errors, is unclear, disorganized, and does not use appropriate examples from the lectures and readings.

F: the post does not meet the requirements or misses the deadline.

Remember that late work is assessed a 50% penalty up to a week after a deadline. After a week, the grade is zero.