J 347G (08230) / J387 P (08335)
A Cultural History of Photography

This course carries the Global Cultures flag. Global Cultures courses are designed to increase your familiarity with cultural groups outside the United States. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one non-U.S. cultural group, past or present.

Professor Donna DeCesare
Lecture/Seminar: Tuesday 9:00am-12:00pm HRC 2.20F

Office hours: BMC: 3.366 Wed 12 noon to 3:00 pm
Students must sign up for a slot on my electronic sheet http://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090A4FA4AA22AA8-professor3

If you have a class conflict with my office hours please email to request another time or see me after class. I will try to accommodate you.

Email: donna.decesare@austin.utexas.edu
Phone: 512 471-1980

Course Description
Although photography developed from evolving technological and technical processes, the “nature” of the medium has been subject to debate ever since its inception in 1839. Is photography document, art, or science? This course will follow developments from photography’s earliest forms up to the present digital age. We will explore photography’s physical and conceptual characteristics as a medium, paying particular attention to epistemological questions about its uniquely intimate and frequently contested relationship to “the real.”

The course will begin with a consideration of debates central to 19th-century photography. Next we will examine the role of photography as a document. One focus will be on issues of who is “doing the looking” and who is being “looked at” during the formative period when photography became central to visual reporting of news, conflict, and social issues during the 20th
century. The course also examines the concurrent development of photography as a fully accepted art form in the 20th- and 21st-centuries. Although the course follows a roughly chronological foundation, we will move backward and forward in time to consider historical parallels, which provide context for some of the ethical issues we confront in the digital age. A goal is to help students become more critical consumers of images in a time when image production through digital devices and image proliferation through social networking has resurrected epistemological debates from photography’s past as well as adding new dimensions to ethical concerns.

We have the benefit of a specific traditional history as exemplified by the Gernsheim collection at the Harry Ransom Center and a wealth of photo-reportage materials in the Magnum Collection. We will in addition consider critiques arising in response to questions about the nature of visual representation and cultural production with implications for photography’s many roles in how “others” are seen and understood and how we see and understand ourselves in an increasingly digitized and globalized world.

Course Learning goals:

- Recognition of key photographic processes from inception of the medium to the current digital revolution. Students will be able to identify significant discoveries, developments and inventions.
- Students will master an understanding of the chronology of the development and popularization of photography.
- Students will be able to identify historically important figures, sponsoring individuals and agencies as well as specific iconic exemplary photographs.
- Students should be able to recognize and discuss the contributions of specific influential photographers upon the medium’s development and the development of theoretical frameworks for understanding photography’s nature and role.
- This course will promote critical thinking about photography and its “histories.” Questions about the gaze and about culture will be important--who is looking or being looked at? Who writes history? What are the issues surrounding subject agency?
- Students will be encouraged to explore photographic traditions beyond the dominant US/European traditions.
- Students will learn to exercise critical thinking while looking, reading, writing and speaking about photographers and photographic images.
This course will enhance student mastery of visual concepts and ability to communicate ideas and questions about photography and its history clearly and succinctly.

Particular emphasis will be placed upon the role of photographic witness or documentary photojournalism and its social, political and scientific impact as well challenges which the digital revolution pose for this tradition of photographic representation.

Course design to achieve learning goals:

- Since an objective of the course is to promote critical thinking about photography all assignments will require careful looking at and writing about photographs. We have the privilege to have original works from the HRC collections to use as part of our practice in careful looking.
- Students will be assigned weekly readings –keyed to the lectures as indicated in the Class Schedule, which follows—from the required textbook. Students must purchase this book as the class follows it closely. Blackboard will have additional readings and materials posted. We will also have works on reserve at the HRC reading room and the PCL library.
- These additional materials are an aid to thinking further about the ideas presented in the class lectures. These other materials will generally be more challenging than the textbook. While all students must do the readings, each week one or more students will be assigned to write a 3-4-page expository paper detailing the central argument so as to lead the discussion of that work in class.
- I expect all students to read the blackboard assigned materials and textbook assigned materials for the date of the class indicated in the course schedule. You should take notes on these readings based upon key works and concepts emphasized in the lectures and in your study guides and be prepared to discuss the issues connected to these images in class as well as in the quizzes, exams and papers required for evaluation.

Required Textbooks
Fred Ritchin, Bending the Frame: Photojournalism, Documentary and the Citizen, Aperture, 2013.
The textbooks are available at the University Coop. I ordered copies for this course. If the Coop has run out of books you may also obtain them from Amazon. You may also check UT libraries but be sure to have the same edition of the book.

**Student evaluation:**
Your grade will consist of the following components:

- 20% of your grade will consist of a research project with multiple components. You will research two images from the HRC collections—one conceptual and constructed—for example, composite photography, portraiture, conceptual photography etc. and the other a spontaneous or intuitive found situation—for example street photography or reportage. You will write a 5-6 page research paper with footnotes summarizing the history, context and critical importance of the images you selected. You will also write and additional 4-5 pages about what attracted you to these images and describe your own process of image making using each of these images as a point of departure for your own process of image making. Every student will do a short talk and visual presentation of their project in class.

- Three exams will make up 50% of your grade. Exams will combine multiple choices, true/false and fill in blanks and essay questions. The first exam will be given in class. Later exams will be divided into multiple choice in class and essays to be completed during the exam week. For the in class exam that includes essays--You may bring blue books with notes but these must be turned in with the exam. Writing counts strongly—this is a writing component class in the undergraduate program. Be sure to review materials on my writing expectations before submitting papers and to aid your preparation for exam essays.

- 15% of your grade will consist of a 3-4-page paper (double-spaced) critically responding to an assigned reading and an in class presentation. Undergraduate students will respond to one of the weekly short readings. Graduate students will be assigned books to report on.

- 5% based upon pop quizzes given in class unannounced.
• Since being a journalist (this is a journalism sponsored course) requires one to be present and meet deadlines—the consequences of failure to do so in the real world are unemployment—and because it is not possible to duplicate the experience of class lectures and discussions simply by reading assigned texts, the remaining 10% of your grade will be based on **class attendance and participation in discussion.** Three unexcused absences are grounds to fail the class. Excused absences are medical emergencies with documentation or bereavement leave with documentation—see UT policy in Appendix 1

There will be no make-up exams and papers will not be accepted late nor will absences be excused without written verification of a medical excuse, a death in the family etc. You should notify me in advance or as soon as practicably possible if you are under emergency medical care.

The grading Matrix is as follows:

20% Research Paper and class presentation describing your experiences making two different kinds of images inspired by works in HRC collection. (100 points)

5% Pop quizzes (25 points—each quiz 5 points)

50% Exams (250 total points)
   - Exam 1 (75 points)
   - Exam 2 (75 points)
   - Exam 3 (100 points)

15% Critical Response Paper/ Book report (Everyone has different due date. You lead class discussion on the day of your report. (75 points)

10% Attendance (50 points for perfect attendance and participation)

This class meets once a week for 3 hours so one day missed counts heavily: You will lose more than 50 points on 3rd absence and/or tardy penalties.

Deductions for unexcused absences and tardiness as follows-- the points are minus points. In other words you lose 20 points for every absence or every 2 late appearances or early departure.

1 unexcused absence – 20 points 2 tardy entrances or early departures=1 unexcused absence
2 unexcused absences – 40 points  
3 unexcused absences – 60 points  
4 unexcused absences are equivalent to missing a full month of classes and therefore will result in an automatic F

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4 tardy entrances or early departures=2 unexcused absences

6 tardy entrances or early departures=3 unexcused absences

100% 500 total points

Class Policies, Courtesy and Attendance:

We will be using Blackboard for this course. Please check the sections marked Syllabus, Course Documents, Assignments and External links to stay on top of course deadlines and readings. The full syllabus will have due dates listed.

I expect that you will take notes with pencil and yellow notepaper provided by the HRC. Please see the HRC rules and notes about orientation in the Course Documents section of the Blackboard. Cell phones, backpacks, cameras and books will not be permitted in the Zarrow room. You can leave most items in unlocked cubbyholes outside the classroom in a supervised hallway but staff is not responsible for items that go missing. We have only one locker for the class so it would be wise to avoid bringing items of value like camera equipment to the HRC.

Please turn off cell phones before class begins. They will need to be left in lockers. In addition, electronic devices (laptop computers, pdas, ipods, recording devices) may not be used in class unless the device is necessitated by a registered disability. If you are a student with a disability who requires an accommodation(s) to participate in this course, please contact me within
the first two weeks of the semester. You will be asked to provide documentation from the Student Disability Office. Failure to contact me in a timely manner may delay your accommodations.

If tardiness becomes a problem, the classroom door will be locked at 5 minutes after the beginning of class. If you are late, you will not be allowed into class and given an unexcused absence.

This syllabus and all lectures related to this course are protected by copyright law, registered in the year 2011, as the original expression of the professor. This and related materials may not be reproduced without her express written consent. Students are prohibited from selling (or being paid for taking) notes during this course to (or by) any person or commercial firm without the express written permission of the professor. Notes from this class may not be posted on the Internet or worldwide web. You are encouraged to share hard copies of your notes with your classmates, provided you do not charge for this service.

The professor reserves the right to deviate from the schedule and change the syllabus. You will be informed of any changes in advance. Blackboard readings will appear a week the week before the class in which they will be discussed. Some of these readings are subject to change.

**Class Schedule:**

**Pre-class Blackboard reading:** See overview of Photographic history on Blackboard.

**01/14 Discussion:** Overview of the work ahead. Rules of the HRC, Assignments discussed—Lecture--an overview timeline of photographic history and intro to some of the issues we will be considering.

Evolving Technologies and Aesthetics – 19th and 20th Century

**For next class read:** Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, 3rd Edition, 38-45, 79-97 and 395-423, 433-435. **Also see Blackboard readings:**
Walter Benjamin, “Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” 1931; W.J.T. Mitchell “Benjamin and the Political Economy of the Photograph”

01/21
Lecture and discussion of readings:
Emerging Technologies and Aesthetics – 19th and 20th Century Theories and Debates/Photographic Crises: Then and Now

Blackboard readings:

01/28
Lecture and discussion of readings:
Origins and “Founding Fathers” / The Daguerreotype Portrait Goes Global

[PCL Reserves you may view for 2 hours at a time]

02/04
Lecture and discussion of readings:
Monuments and Colonial Expeditions and Photographing War

**Blackboard readings/reserve materials:**

**02/11**

**Lecture and discussion of readings:** Survey Photography and the American West and its Peoples.

**Hand in your proposal ideas for your Photographic Writing assignment at the beginning of class.**


**Blackboard readings/reserve materials:**

**02/18**

**Exam One: Aesthetics and Technologies**

**II: Documentary: The Surveyors and the Surveyed**

**Lecture and discussion of readings:**
Photography, Medicine, and Anthropology


**Blackboard readings/reserve materials:**

**02/25**

**Lecture and discussion of readings:**
FSA and the Limitations of Documentary Photography

**Final Writing Assignment proposal reflecting research work you have done documenting how you will do the**
project and reflecting feedback and input you have received in previous communications with me must be handed in at start of class.


**Blackboard readings/reserve materials:**

03/04

Lecture and discussion of readings:
The Rise of the Picture Magazine, Photojournalism and the Decisive Moment / Debates about the Public Uses of Photography


**Blackboard readings/reserve materials:**

03/11

Spring Break

03/18

Lecture and discussion of readings:
Whose reality?: Street Photography / Photographic Witness

**Paper assignments: Due**


**Blackboard readings/reserve materials:**
Henry Peach Robinson, “Idealism, Realism Expressionism,” in *The Elements of Pictorial Photography*;

03/25

Exam 2: Surveyors and Surveyed

Lecture and discussion of readings:
Pictorialism and its Critics--

**Blackboard readings/reserve materials:**

04/01

**Lecture and discussion of readings:**
American Modernism/The European Avant-Garde


**Blackboard readings/reserve materials:**
John Szarkowski, Introduction to *The Photographer’s Eye*

04/08

**Lecture and discussion of readings:**
Photography and the Museum
Guest speaker Curator Roy Flukinger.


**Blackboard readings/reserve materials:**

04/15

**Lecture and discussion of readings:**
Conceptualism and Post-Modernism

We will begin class presentations in the second half
Students presenting must arrange 1 week in advance to have the original HRC prints in the room when they present their work.


**Blackboard readings/reserve materials:**
04/22

**Lecture and discussion of readings:**
Staged Photography and the Cinematic/Photographic Intimacy and the Gaze of Fashion

We will continue class presentations in the second half.
Students presenting must arrange 1 week in advance to have the original HRC prints in the room when they present their work.

Blackboard readings/reserve materials:

**For next class read:** Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, 3rd Edition, 493-519
**Blackboard readings/reserve materials:**
Fred Ritchin, After Photography [HRC Reserves]

04/29

**Third Exam given in the first half of class.**
Second half of class will conclude WITH student presentations and a discussion of Fred Ritchin’s book AFTER PHOTOGRAPHY
REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS FOR BOTH UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE SECTIONS OF THIS COURSE:


Both books are available at the CO-OP, and at Amazon etc. MUST use the third edition of Marien book. There are pagination and other differences among editions.

REQUIRED TEXTS GRADUATE SECTION OF THIS COURSE:

Morris, Errol, *Believing is Seeing*, (check UT libraries. I can put my personal copy on reserve if not available)…HRC Reserves

Ritchin, Fred, *After Photography*, (my personal copy) HRC Reserves—do not remove from Library. Read in library or purchase the book.

Sontag, Susan, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, (check UT libraries. I can put my personal copy on reserve if not available)…HRC Reserves

PRELIMINARY CLASS RESERVE LIST AT UT LIBRARIES – Research projects both graduate and undergraduate

(I will be adding more books. Not all are required reading, but all are related to course topics and will be valuable primary source materials to consult for writing assignments and book reports for class. You must use in the libraries.)

Barthes, Roland, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* HRC Reserves

Reserves
De Carava, Roy and Hughes, Langston, *The Sweetflypaper of Life*, HRC Reserves

Duncan, David Douglas, *David Douglas Duncan Portfolio*, HRC Reserves

Flukinger, Roy, *The Gernsheim Collection*, HRC Reserves


Harker, Margaret, *Henry Peach Robinson: Master of Photographic Art: 1830-1901* HRC Reserves

Newhall, Beaumont, *The History of Photography: from 1839 to the Present* HRC Reserves

Peterson, Linda, Colson, JB, *Russell Lee Photographs* HRC Reserves


Richards, Eugene, *A Procession of Them*, HRC Reserves

Ritchin, Fred, *In Our Own Image*, HRC Reserves

Ritchin, Fred, *After Photography*, (my personal copy) HRC Reserves

Sontag, Susan, *On Photography* HRC Reserves

APPENDIX I
Required University Notices and Policies

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.

Documented Disability Statement
The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 232-2937 (video phone), http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/

Plagiarism and the Consequences of Plagiarizing
http://www.lib.utexas.edu/services/instruction/faculty/plagiarism/preventing.html
http://www.lib.utexas.edu/services/instruction/learningmodules/plagiarism/

Resources for Learning & Life at UT Austin
The University of Texas has numerous resources for students to provide assistance and support for your learning.
The UT Learning Center: http://www.utexas.edu/student/utlc/
Undergraduate Writing Center: http://uwc.utexas.edu/
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/

Use of Blackboard in Class
This course will use Blackboard—a Web-based course management system with password-protected access at http://courses.utexas.edu—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 Blackboard at the ITS Help Desk at 475-9400, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., so plan accordingly.
Use of E-Mail for Official Correspondence to Students
Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, you are responsible for reading your email for university and course-related information and announcements. You are responsible to keep the university informed about changes to your e-mail address. You should check your e-mail regularly and frequently to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-critical. You can find UT Austin’s policies and instructions for updating your e-mail address at http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php.

Religious Holy Days
By UT Austin policy, you must notify the instructor 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, the instructor will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

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.
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.”