



J 347G (07935) / J387 P (08025)

A Cultural Survey 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 De Cesare

Lecture/Seminar: Tuesday 9:30am-12:30pm HRC 2.202 F

Office hours: BMC: 3.366 Wed 12 noon to 3:00 pm

To secure a scheduled appoint please sign up here:

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090a4fa4aa22aa8-spring1>

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.

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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 a technological tool, a document or evidence or is it an art form? This course will follow developments from photography’s earliest uses up to the present digital age. We will explore photography’s physical and conceptual characteristics as a medium, paying particular attention to it’s pivotal cultural roles in “visibilizing knowledge or perceptions, its relation to commerce, as well as epistemological questions about its uniquely intimate and frequently contested relationship to “the real.”

The course will begin with a consideration of debates central to technological development of the medium in the 19th-century, which remain relevant albeit newly formulated. Next we will examine the role of

photography as a document, evidence, reportage. We will consider issues of who is “doing the looking” and who is being “looked at” and how this reflects culture and changes in societies 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 variations on some of the epistemological and ethical questions, which have dogged photography since its inception.

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 surveilled, 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 Textbook

Mary Warner Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, 4th edition (Upper Saddle, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2014).

Strongly suggested

Fred Ritchin, *Bending the Frame: Photojournalism, Documentary and the Citizen*, Aperture, 2013.

Both books 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 Marien 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 that is unplanned and captured from the flux of life—for example: street photography or reportage photography. You will write a 5-page research paper with footnotes summarizing the history, context and critical importance of the images you selected. You will also write an additional 2-3 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. Half your grade will be based on the written work. Half the grade will be based on your short talk and visual presentation of the researched images and your own work in class.
- Three exams will make up 50% of your grade. Exams will combine multiple choices, true/false and essay questions. You will receive a study guide a week before the exam. The exam essay prompt will be published at the beginning of the week and due at the end of the week. The quiz formatted short answer section may be done any time that same week but must be completed before the deadline cutoff. It will be timed and once you begin you must complete it. **Do not attempt to do it on a mobile device it**

won't work properly. At the end of the time allotment you will be shut out of the short answer exam. Your grade will stand. You will not have time to complete this portion if you try to look up answers. This is a tool to measure your understanding and knowledge recall of key concepts, photographers and works. The second portion of the exam will be a choice of essay questions. Your writing counts strongly—this is a writing component class in the undergraduate program. Be sure to review materials on my writing expectations before submitting essay exams or papers. Form is as important as content. The written portions of all assignments must be uploaded to Canvas.

- 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 both a short reading and a book length work to report on. **This is your opportunity to show your mastery of concepts by teaching/guiding your peers and the conversation.**
- 5 % based upon pop quizzes announced in class and due the same week.
- This is a journalism sponsored course. Being a journalist 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 active participation in weekly discussion.** Three unexcused absences will result in an official warning that it is recommended you drop the class. A fourth absence or lateness is an automatic F. 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. Only absences with written verification of a pressing medical issue, a death in the family etc. can be excused. You should notify me in advance or as soon as practicably possible if you are under emergency medical care. **If you have an accommodation letter please come to my office hours the first week of classes so that we can work out a plan for your progress in the class.**

The Grading Matrix weighting as follows:

Research Project 20 % of the grade: Breakdown as follows

10% Research Paper about the HRC works that inspired your investigation.

10% visual and oral class presentation of your own investigation., The visual presentation uploaded as PowerPoint or PDF to Canvas describing your process and how you worked with the images, researched to come up with your own image making process.

5% Pop quizzes

50% Exams Each exam includes a Multiple choice visual component section and a separate Essay component. Check due dates for each.

Instructions are on Canvas and Canvas will automatically calculate and weight the point totals. All exams together will contribute 50% of your grade.

15% Critical Response Essay Report

Undergrads (Everyone has different due dates. You are responsible for remembering when you will present. Check the Box doc signup document to double check your reading and date you lead class discussion of the reading on the day of your teaching report. (100 points)

Grad Students do a book Report and an Essay Report. 75/25 point breakdown for total of 100

10% Attendance/Participation (attendance and active weekly participation in class discussion. Roll call will compute your attendance and Lateness score. I will manually track your active participation and add this component at the end of the semester.

This class meets once a week for 3 hours so one day missed counts heavily. If you miss more than 3 classes you will not be able to pass the class.

Grading:

A (94 to 100): Excellent work that shows creativity, control and understanding of the course assignment objectives. You have sought out subjects you didn't previously know on almost all assignments.

A- (90 to < 94): Very strong work that exceeds the requirements and shows creativity and understanding of assignment objectives. Subject matter is creative and fresh.

B+ (87 to < 90) Good work which meets the requirements of the assignment occasionally going beyond the requirements and which demonstrates effort and technical and aesthetic skill.

B (84 to < 87) Work meets the requirements of the assignment and demonstrates effort and some technical and aesthetic skill.

B- (80 to < 84) Work meets the requirements of the assignment and demonstrates limited effort or limited technical and aesthetic skill.

C + (77 to < 80): Work is of average quality; meets minimal requirements but technical skill is inconsistent. Creativity is seldom apparent.

C (74 to < 77): Work is of average quality; meets minimal requirements but technical skill is inconsistent. Creativity is not apparent.

C - (70 to < 74): Work is below average quality; meets some minimal requirements but technical skill is inconsistent. Creativity is not apparent.

D (60 to < 70): Work shows lack of effort or does not display adequate understanding of technical and/or design elements. Work is incomplete or does not follow requirements.

F (< 60): Unacceptable work that displays a lack of understanding of assignment objectives and/or is not complete.

Class Policies, Courtesy and Attendance:

You will need to progress through the weekly module pages and quizzes in order to move to the next module. You will not be able to progress until you complete each. This is to ensure that you do not fall behind. Please pay attention to the weekly modules and to the Assignment due dates.

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 Getting Started Module on Canvas. 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. If you absolutely must we will use the locker issued to the class to lock them up. Come to class early if you have equipment to lock up so as not to infringe on class time.

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.

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.

The professor reserves the right to deviate from the schedule and change the syllabus. You will be informed of any changes in advance. Canvas readings will appear in a module after class for the following week. Some readings are subject to change

The full class schedule is on Canvas

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.”