

JTC 430 – Advanced Digital Documentary Photography

Spring 2016 – meets Tuesday & Thursday 11:00 a.m.-12:50 p.m. in Clark C-235

Instructor -- Dr. Pete Seel, Department of Journalism & Media Communication
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Course Description

This is a hands-on course in the conceptualization, production, and editing of photographic documentaries for publication in hard copy and online. Each student will produce two short-form and one long-form photographic projects during the term. **A key occupational focus for this field is magazine photography.** Course content will analyze conceptual, photographic, and editing criteria for creative non-fiction still photo documentation of people, places, and themes. Multiple course lab sessions will be dedicated to advanced lighting techniques using diffused natural daylight, LED instruments, and multiple electronic strobe heads. The class will consist of a one-hour lecture twice a week followed by a hands-on lab session. Students should be prepared to show new photographic work each week for instructor and peer-review purposes as part of a formal critique process. Students will also be expected to critique the work of fellow students and experienced professionals in an intelligent and thoughtful way as part of learning to be a skilled documentary photographer.

Course Objectives

At the completion of this course the student will be able to:

- 1) Shoot short and long-form documentary stories.
- 2) Create storyboards to assist in the *pre*-visualization of story concepts and images.
- 3) Describe how documentary production differs from news and advertising photography.
- 4) Define the steps involved in building rapport with documentary subjects.
- 5) Explain the photo editing process for short and long-form documentaries.
- 6) Describe multiple published and Internet-based distribution strategies for documentaries.
- 7) Create an entrepreneurial business plan for setting up a freelance photographic practice.
- 8) Define multiple techniques for lighting scenes in a naturalistic manner.
- 9) Explain why documentary production is an interesting career choice for photographers.

Required Reading

Simon, S. (2011). *The Passionate Photographer: Ten Steps Toward Becoming Great (Voices That Matter)*. New York: New Riders. And other readings as assigned.

Sontag, S. (2001). *On Photography*. New York: Picador.

Required Equipment

Each student must have a digital camera with at least 10 megapixel image resolution. The department now has 30 DSLR cameras for student use, but access to them is shared and thus limited.

Course Requirements

Students should have completed both JTC 326 and JTC 335 as course prerequisites.

Students will work individually to produce three photo documentaries -- two short and one longer program.

Academic Honesty Policy

All work on course exams and assignments must be your own. Students will be expected to retain digital photographic storage media such as SD cards until the assignments on it are graded – and may be asked to present such media on request by the instructor. The use of copyrighted photographic material or the use of photos taken by other students (e.g., your portrait taken by a classmate for your portfolio site) must be approved in advance by the instructor.

Equipment Policy

If you fail to return equipment to the equipment room on time, your name will be included in a list of delinquent borrowers. Every time your name appears on the list you will lose the equivalent of 3% of your final course grade. After three late returns, you will lose all equipment borrowing privileges for the semester.

Grading

All of your creative work in this course will be evaluated on an individual basis. There will also be a midterm, a documentary photographer profile that each student will present, and a final examination.

Grading Criteria

points	project
40	Photo project one – documenting a place
30	Class presentation – photographer profile
40	Photo project two – personality profile
40	Midterm exam
100	Long-form documentary photo essay
30	Final exam
20	In-class projects/ participation
300	Total points possible

points	%	grade
291	97	A+
282	94	A
270	90	A-
261	87	B+
252	84	B
240	80	B-
231	77	C+
210	70	C
180	60	D
<150	50	F

Course Schedule (may be revised **with notice** during the term at the discretion of the instructor)

Wk	DATE	LECTURE	LAB	READ IN ADVANCE	DUE
1	T – 1/19	Course introduction	“Canvas” review		
	R – 1/21	DSLR camera operation	Portraits – self and otherwise		Bring your camera to class
2	T – 1/26	Digital photography technology review – and creative caption writing	Portrait project	Simon text: Step 5	
	R – 1/28	Technology review pt. 2 – working with files	Edit portrait project and upload	Simon text: Step 5,	
3	T – 2/2	Documenting place . Visual variety and storyboard review	Submit topic of “place” project – typed -- with rationale	Simon text: Step 1, pp. 1-17, up to Lessons Learned	Submit name of documentary photog for profile
	R – 2/4	Examples of place-oriented photography	Work on the place project	Simon text: Step 1, Lessons Learned, pp. 18-29	
4	T – 2/9	Creative lighting for doc photography	Review all “place” storyboards	Simon text: Step 2 on Volume, pp. 30-45	“Place” storyboard is due
	R – 2/11	Critique place projects in class	Creative lighting practice	Simon text: Step 2, Gear and Tech. Proficiency, pp 46-61	
5	T – 2/16	Using professional multi-head strobe lighting systems in the field	Review all final “place” projects	Simon text: Step 3, Working it, pp. 62-77	Documentary “Place” projects are due
	R – 2/18	Studio strobe lighting systems – umbrellas and soft boxes	Strobe light practice	Simon text: Step 3, Autofocus and Composition, pp. 78-95	

Wk	DAY	LECTURE	LAB	READINGS	DUE
6	T – 2/23	Building rapport in long-term documentary photography	Using histograms	Simon text: Step 4, Concentration, pp. 96-105	Storyboard for personality profile is due
	R – 2/25	Photo editing using Lightroom software: pt. 1	Lightroom demo	Simon text: Step 4, Lessons Learned, pp. 106-117	
7	T – 3/1	Photo editing using Lightroom software: pt. 2	Lightroom practice	Simon text: Step 6, Lighting, pp. 146-153	Personality profile projects are due
	R – 3/3	Critique personality profile projects in class	Critique personality profile projects in lab	Simon text: Step 6, Lessons Learned on Lighting, pp. 154-165	
8	T – 3/8	The long-form photo documentary	Midterm Exam	Simon text: Step 7, Art of the Edit, pp. 166-173	Topic for long-form project is due
	R – 3/10	Exemplars of the long-form photo documentary	Critique long-form topics	Simon text: Step 7, Editing Lessons Learned, pp. 174-186	
		March 12-20 – Spring Break	Have fun...	Get some great photos	
9	T – 3/22	The posed image: Richard Avedon, Annie Liebovitz, and Martin Schoeller Documentary Photographer Profile 1	Critique long-form project storyboards	Simon text: Step 8, Assessment, pp. 188-199	Storyboard for long-form project is due
	R – 3/24	To pose or not to pose, that is the question Documentary Photographer Profile 2	Critique long-form project images	Simon text: Step 8, Lessons Learned, pp. 200-204	First images from long-form project are due
10	T – 3/27	Shooting video segments as part of the photo story Documentary Photographer Profile 3	Critique long-form project images	Simon text: Step 9, Goals and Strategies, pp. 206-213	images from long-form project are due
	R – 3/29	Editing and inserting video segments in the photo story Documentary Photographer Profile 4	Critique long-form project images	Simon text: Step 9, Lessons Learned: Teach It, pp. 214-219	images from long-form project are due
11	T – 4/5	Building websites for documentary photography and video Documentary Photographer Profile 5	Critique long-form project images	Simon text: Step 10, Publication, pp. 220-235	images from long-form project are due
	R – 4/7	Analysis of websites for documentary photography and video Documentary Photographer Profile 6	Critique long-form project images	Simon text: Step 10, Lessons Learned: Perseverance, pp. 236-248	images from long-form project are due
12	T – 4/12	Publishing documentary photography Documentary Photographer Profile 7	Critique long-form project images	Sontag text, ch. 1 – “In Plato’s cave”	images from long-form project are due
	R – 4/14	<u>Self-publishing</u> documentary work Documentary Photographer Profile 8	Critique long-form project images	Sontag text, ch. 2 – “America, seen through photographs, darkly”	images from long-form project are due

Wk	DAY	LECTURE	LAB	READINGS	DUE
13	T – 4/9	Careers in documentary and magazine work Documentary Photographer Profile 9	Critique long-form project images	Sontag text, ch. 3 – “Melancholy objects”	images from long-form project are due
	R – 4/11	Magazine photography guest speaker Documentary Photographer Profile 10	Critique long-form project images	Sontag text, ch. 4 – “The heroism of vision”	
14	T – 4/26	Doc. photography guest speaker Documentary Photographer Profile 11	Critique long-form project images	Sontag text, ch. 5 – “Photographic evangelists”	Long-form photo essay <u>URL</u> must be posted by 6 p.m.
	R – 4/28	Critique long-form projects Documentary Photographer Profile 12	Critique long-form projects	Sontag text, ch. 6 – “The image world”	
15	T – 5/3	Critique long-form projects Documentary Photographer Profile 13	Critique long-form projects	Readings are complete	
	R – 5/5	Review for the final exam Documentary Photographer Profile 14	Course evaluation		Hard copy portfolios are due
16	Thursday, May 12th	Final Exam -- 9:40 – 11:40 a.m. in Clark C-235	End of course celebration – location TBA		Hard copy portfolios returned

JT 430 – Advanced Digital Documentary Photography
 Prior Experience Survey
Spring Semester 2016

(All the information provided below is **confidential** -- for the instructor's use only)

Name _____ Class (Jr., Sr., Grad?) _____

Major _____ CSU Student Number _____

Home Phone _____ e-mail address _____

Address

1) Please list **when** you took **the prerequisite courses, JTC 326 and JT 335**, or their equivalents, **and your grade in each.**

JTC 326 _____

JTC 335 _____

2) Do you have your **own DSLR camera?** _____ **If yes, which brand and model?**

3) If you do not have a DSLR camera, **what type of digital camera** do you own or have access to?

4) Do you own or have access to **a multihead photographic strobe lighting system?**

If yes, which brand and model? _____

5) Why are you enrolled in this course? What are your long-term goals in working with digital photography?

6) Do you already have **an idea** for your **long-form documentary photo project** in this course? What is the subject?