



Syllabus

## Historic Photographic Processes - AR 263

Tuesday and Thursday 8:30 – 11:30 am

Jeff Hurwitz

**Office Hours:**

Tuesday & Thursday: 3:30 – 5:00 or by appointment

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**Office Location:**

Photo Studio

**Course Text:**

*The Book of Alternative Processes*, Christopher James

Supplemental readings as assigned

**GOOD TEACHING IS MORE OF A GIVING OF RIGHT QUESTIONS THAN A GIVING OF RIGHT ANSWERS.**

Josef Albers

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Course meets LinC Requirement U1

- This course takes an exploratory and experiment approach to the earliest photographic processes in use from the mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century within the context of modern aesthetics and contemporary image making.
- The historical evolution of photography, through practice and discussion will be considered in terms of the industrial and cultural evolution of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.
- Audio/Visuals, lectures and critiques along with the freedom and encouragement to experiment will commingle historic and contemporary examples of photography-based art.
- Combined with an introduction to the basic principles of chemistry and light, the committed, self-motivated student will learn to apply the new possibilities of old processes to original concept based personal imagery

An increasing number of artists from diverse media are adopting the unique characteristics of color, tone and hand-made qualities of Salt, Van Dyke Brown, Cyanotype and Gum Dichromate prints into their work as others embrace the latest advances in digital imaging. Important among class topics will be the impact of photography's invention on painting in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries. Discussions will use parallels drawn from this period to apply to an ongoing dialog regarding the future possibilities of light sensitive, silver based image making. As digital imaging replaces many of the utilitarian responsibilities of the traditional medium of photography, so did photography do the same to painting more than 150 years ago, contributing to a redefining journey, which altered its essential meaning, and intent as it entered the modern age.

#### IMPORTANT

- Students missing the first class without prior permission of the instructor will be dropped from the class list.
- You can expect to devote at least 6 additional hours outside of class to assignments and lab work.
- The lab schedule should be posted by the second week of the term. Any student unable to manage this course requirement is urged drop the course.

#### ATTENDANCE:

- Attendance and on time arrival is a requirement of this class.
- Anyone more than 15 minutes late will be marked absent.
- Unexcused absences are limited to three for each student over the course of the semester.
- Additional absences will reduce the final grade by 1/3 for each additional unexcused absence.
- After four unexcused absences, a student risks an instructor-initiated withdrawal.
- If a health or family problem requires an extended period of absence, the instructor must be notified immediately, either through Student Services or by direct communication.
- Incompletes are not an option except under the most extreme circumstances and reserved for students who have satisfactorily completed the bulk of the semester's work.
- Students are expected to obtain information missed in class due to absence on their own. Demonstrations, lectures and presentations will not be repeated.

#### PARTICIPATION:

- Participation, an important factor in grading, refers to a student's involvement in critiques, class discussions, presentations and attendance.
- Your engagement with the various forms of content that makes up the heart and soul of this course will determine the quality of your classroom experience.
- Lack of participation is a drain on the energy of everyone and will be reflected in the final grade.
- You are ultimately responsible for your own satisfaction.

#### ASSIGNMENTS

- Due dates will be strictly adhered to for all work.
- Late assignments will receive a penalty of 1/3 of a grade for each class meeting it is past due.
- Students are permitted to re-submit a project for a better grade at any time, provided the work originally submitted was on time and the student was in attendance for the critique.
- Extensions, overdue work and re-submitted work will be graded but will not receive a group or individual critique.
- All work submitted must have been specifically made for that project unless otherwise stated.

#### Critiques

Critiques are an integral part of the learning process of this class. Critiques provide the opportunity to discuss, question and defend issues related to creative endeavors.

- An unexcused absence from a scheduled critique will result in a failing grade for that project

- Students are expected to approach assignments in their own individual ways. Do not make work that you think the instructor or other students will approve of and avoid clichés.
- Often unexpected topics arise during critiques. Lively, enlightening dialogue is far more interesting and valuable than a discussion devoted to the “nuts and bolts” of a subject.
- Students should be motivated to make an attempt to answer their own questions whenever possible. True learning is the result of personal discovery.

### RESEARCH PROJECT

Familiarize yourself with Reeves Library and its holdings of books on photographers, photography and its history.

- You will be assigned a research project that will require you to use, among other things, the resources available to you there. You will work in pairs or small groups on a topic that will investigate the parallels between one of the milestone discoveries that led to the invention and subsequent use of photography, and the cultural changes that made the invention of photography an inevitability, long before the term “Photography” was ever conceived. Each group will be given a scheduled time to make their presentation to the class.

### LOG / SKETCHBOOK

- You will need to keep a log/sketchbook to record notes from class lectures and demonstrations, detailed records of the results of your work, and as a resource for ideas and inspiration.
- Use this as a journal to draw, write and otherwise archive useful and inspirational ideas and practices. The quality of your drawing and grammar is not an important issue.
- **Tip:** Divide the book you use into designated sections for each topic and note the date and time of your entries. The best thing to use for this is a hardbound sketchbook. Many things depend on time of day; exposure time, temperature, etc.
- **Advice:** You must keep good notes as you learn each of the processes. They can be very finicky and you will not make progress unless you have a detailed record of all processes

### PORTFOLIO

- Prior to Finals Week, each student will schedule a time to present a portfolio of work from the semester that will be evaluated for quality, craft and consistency.
- You may be asked to leave selected work for the purpose of making reproduction images as we build an archive of student work. Work will be returned.

### PERIODICALS:

- We have a good selection of magazines on the arts and related topics in the lobby of the Art Department Office for your perusal. These include: Aperture, History of Photography, Camera Arts, View Camera, PDN, Photo Review, Photo Review Newsletter, Photography in New York, and publications on a variety of digital topics.
- Besides the web, this is often where you’ll find examples and critiques of the most contemporary work.

### LIBRARY:

- In addition to the library’s value as a resource for your research project, you should try to spend an hour each week looking at the rich legacy of historic and contemporary images there for inspiration, ideas and personal direction.
- Periodically, I may place books on reserve to be discussed in class. Record your impressions in the Sketchbook section of your book.
- The most successful work will be done by those who learn how to teach themselves. Once you graduate, this trait will be key to your career. Now’s a good time to begin.

## GRADING

- Grading for a course in studio art must be in harmony with its goals. While many of these goals are objectively measurable, some are more subjective. Competency and understanding of the methods and materials of photography can be directly observed. Creativity is a matter of opinion.
- Students are encouraged to develop their own individual vision in addition to the required basic skills.
- The instructor reserves the right to apply qualitative judgment in determining a grade based on creativity (concept) and craftsmanship (form).
- The commitment to this pursuit in the form of effort, time and progress must be a factor in determining grades.
- **Projects receive a grade that is based on technical accomplishment and concept. The final grade for each assignment will be based on an average of the two.**
- **Skill developing exercises will receive a Pass/Fail rather than a numerical or alphabetical grade.** The following lists the weight of each course requirement on the final grade:

**A grade of A is a special accomplishment and is the result of going well beyond the basic requirements laid out for the course. It is earned by accomplishing the following:**

- Consistent, on Time Attendance.
- All Work Submitted on Time.
- Class Participation as described in syllabus.
- Innovative & Meaningful Solutions for all Assignments conspicuously exceeding the basic requirement.
- Technical Expertise. Evidence of competency in the photographic processes learned in class.
- Well thought-out research project that reflects a good combination of fact-based theory and originality of presentation.
- Productive Use of Class Time.
- Regular Use of Open Lab Time.
- Clean, Well-Crafted Presentation.

Projects	40 %	A (4) – Exceptional
Research Project	25%	B (3.25) – Clearly Above Average
Participation & Craftsmanship	15%	C (2.5) – Satisfactory: All assignments, quizzes, and portfolios meet basic requirements
Final Portfolio	20 %	D (2.0) – Below Average
		F (1.5 or below) – Failure

- **THE INSTRUCTOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MAKE CHANGES IN ANY ASPECT OF THIS SYLLABUS FOR THE SAKE OF CONTENT IMPROVEMENT OR SCHEDULING CHANGES DUE TO CANCELLED CLASSES OR DUE DATE RESCHEDULING.**

## A WORD OF CAUTION

MANY OF THE CHEMICALS IN THE FORMULAS WE CAN BE HAZARDOUS AND REQUIRE SPECIAL HANDLING PROCEDURES TO ASSURE THE SAFETY OF EVERYONE. ANYONE INTENTIONALLY MISHANDLING OR OTHERWISE PUTTING THEMSELVES OR OTHERS AT RISK WILL BE DROPPED FROM THE CLASS AND FACE DISCIPLINARY ACTION IN ACCORDANCE WITH COLLEGE POLICY. YOU WILL BE GIVEN A HANDOUT THAT INCLUDES RELEVANT INFORMATION AND PRECAUTIONS.

## **SUPPLIES**

**THE BULK OF THE SUPPLIES REQUIRED FOR THIS CLASS ARE ITEMS THAT CAN ONLY BE OBTAINED FROM SPECIALTY SUPPLIERS AND WILL BE PROVIDED FOR YOU. THE CHARGE FOR THESE SUPPLIES IS SEPARATE FROM THE LAB FEE THAT IS REQUIRED FOR ALL STUDIO ART COURSES.**

### **ADDITIONAL SUPPLIES:**

- **APRON: VINYL COATED (IF YOU WANT YOUR OWN RATHER THAN USE THE LAB'S APRONS)**
- **SAFETY GLASSES: CLEAR PLASTIC (A FEW DOLLARS AT HOME DEPOT OR LOWES)**
- **DUST MASKS (ALSO AVAILABLE AT THE ABOVE MENTIONED HOME IMPROVEMENTSTORES)**
- **ART OR TOOL SUPPLY BOX**
- **FOLIO (INEXPENSIVE 11X14 OR 14X17 TO CARRY CUT PAPER AND PRINTS)**