

## **ART220 History of Photography**

**Fall 2009: Tuesday and Thursday, 10:20-11:30, Hill 310**

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**Instructor:** Krista (Steinke) Finch

**Office:** Art Office/ studio room 103

**Office Hours:** Tuesday 3:45-4:45 and Wednesday 12:30-3:30 or by appointment

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\*\*\*Please note that email is the best way to communicate with me

“The illiteracy of the future will be ignorance of photography.”  
- László Moholy-Nagy (1895-1946)

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course explores the social, cultural, political, scientific, and artistic contexts surrounding the history of photography, from its invention to the present day. The course will look at how the medium has influenced how we view or interpret images and the impact that photography has had on contemporary visual culture. Lectures and discussions will highlight various photographic trends and photographers, both historical and contemporary, who have made major contributions to the art form. Students will be required to think about the formal and conceptual levels of photography, why and how an image is made, and the place images have in the lives of the photographer and the viewer. Through class discussions, student presentations, lectures, readings, hands-on art activities, and museum visits, students will become familiar with the photographic medium and its rich and diverse history. For the first half of the course, the class will study the historical narrative of photography through a linear time-line. The second half of the course is structured by theme, through which, we will explore a number of interrelated aspects of photography and its history.

*The course will culminate with a group project/installation on the history of photography in the student gallery at the end of the semester.*

### **THE PHOTO JOURNAL:**

A major component to this course is the “Photo Journal”. (Journals are worth 30% of your final grade) This will be a creative space where students will be asked to respond to a variety of questions or ideas revolving around the photographic medium. At times, journal assignments will directly address the historic images that we are looking at in class, at other times students may be asked to deconstruct the medium of photography, reflect on our current image culture, or create a hands on project that visually explores the photograph as an object. Costs for these journals (\$5.00) will be automatically charged to students’ accounts.

### **GOALS: Students will:**

- Become familiar with a broad overview of the history of photography and with major scientists, photographers, artists, and terminology associated with the history of photography, from the early 19th century to the present day.
- Become familiar with the fundamental language of photography and be able to formally and conceptually critique and analyze a photographic work of art.
- Be able to describe the significant people and events in the development of the photographic medium.
- Be able to identify the impact of photography on society, culture, and the art world.
- Analyze and evaluate the photographs of individuals who have set trends in the art of photography through its lifespan.
- Understand how photographic images are made and the theoretical and formal issues that shape the medium, especially as it pertains to the history of photography, fine art, and mass media production.

## REQUIREMENTS:

- Keep a photography journal
- Complete all class readings
- Actively participate and contribute to class discussion and hands on exercises
- Take a Mid-semester Exam and Take Home Final Exam on course related topics and information
- Write and present a research paper
- Attend required lectures and field trips outside of class time
- Participate in end of the semester group project

## READING ASSIGNMENTS:

Students will be assigned weekly reading assignments and should always be prepared to discuss in class.

**MIDTERM EXAM/FINAL EXAM:** There will be one exam given around midterm and a take home final exam. It is important that you take notes during class lectures, discussions, and slide presentations.

## PAPER AND PRESENTATION:

Students will be expected to write a research paper on one of the themes outlined in the second half of the course. Students will lead the class in discussion on this day. Students will also represent this theme in the group installation project at the end of the semester.

## FIELDTRIP/ ART DEPT. EVENTS:

- Students are required to attend the department field trip to New York City, tentatively scheduled for November 6<sup>th</sup>.
- All art students are also required to attend the Rudy Ackerman Visiting Artist Lecture each semester, TBA.
- All photo classes will also be attending the "New Visions: Contemporary Photography in Black and White", a citywide art exhibition during the month of September: TBA (opening reception Saturday September 12).
- Art students are encouraged to attend all Thursday night openings in the Payne Gallery. (September 10<sup>th</sup>, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, and December 3<sup>rd</sup>)
- On Wednesday, November 4<sup>th</sup>, art students are strongly encouraged to attend the "Careers in Art" panel discussion in Foy Hall, 7pm.

## PARTICIPATION:

Students are expected to come to class ready for discussion. Students should take notes, mark points of interests, and form questions based on the assigned texts or subject of research. I believe in setting up a classroom community that encourages a healthy, open exchange of ideas. Learning is a collaborative process and every student's input is a valuable contribution. Students will be graded on participation in class discussions and group projects. (Participation is worth 20% of your final grade)

**Also note: Your participation grade includes your attendance record.**

## REQUIRED TEXTS:

**Seizing the Light: A Social History of Photography, second edition by Robert Hirsch**

## CAMERA:

Students will need to have some type of camera for class exercises. While this is not a studio course, we will be photographing for some assignments to explore a hands-on approach to the medium. A digital camera will be most convenient; however, students can use what ever is available for them. You will be graded on your ideas and not on technique and skill.

## ATTENDANCE:

The Art Department established this department-wide attendance policy to apply to students in all art classes.

After the second **unexcused absence**, final grade will be dropped by one full letter.

After the fourth **unexcused absence**, student will receive a failing final grade.

An **excused absence** is one confirmed by a note from the Dean's Office, Student Services, the Learning Center, or verified with a doctor's note (within 24 hours of illness). Death in family should be confirmed with Student Services.

Documentation is required for sports. Coach should email a note to instructor confirming matches, meets, departure time for away games, or anything that would require absence from class. Practice is not an excused absence.

Job interviews or doctor's/dentist's appointments are not to be scheduled during class and are not excused.

**Missing Portions of Class: The following count as unexcused absences**

- More than 15 minutes late for class
- Failure to bring supplies to class
- Failure to return from break
- Leaving class half an hour or more early without permission
- Being tardy more than 3 times. Tardiness: being 5 to 15 minutes late for class

*If you are late or absent, it is your responsibility (not the professor's) to find out what you missed and to catch up in a timely manner.*

**GRADING:**

Students will be assessed through classroom projects, papers, presentations, homework assignments, and a quiz and final exam. Again, it is important to note that students will be graded on class participation, especially during class discussions. Students will be made aware of the expectations for each assignment in terms of grading.

- **"A":**  
Excellent  
Outstanding achievement  
Mastery of skills or knowledge involved  
Unique, creative, original  
Shows personal investment and EFFORT beyond expectations  
Completed on time
- **"A-":**  
All of the above – except one or two factors
- **"B+":**  
Very good attainment of all requirements
- **"B":**  
Good- average attainment – may need some minor improvements in certain areas
- **"C":**  
Adequate understanding of essentials – fulfills assignment but lacking in content, effort, and/or skill.
- **"D":**  
Does not fulfill assignment and exhibits little skill, effort, and thought.
- **"F":** Failure, no credit
- **"I"** Incomplete

Final Exam/Mid-term Quiz	20%
Photo Journal	30%
Class Participation	20%
Paper/Presentation	20%
In Class Projects	10%
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>100</b>

**LATE ASSIGNMENTS**

I will mark down all late projects one letter grade for every class period they are late unless you give me a satisfactory reason (in my estimation) for their lateness. Projects may be reworked for the final portfolio review.

**CELL PHONES AND EMAIL:**

All phones must be turned to the Silent position. No texting while in class. If working in a computer lab, absolutely no emailing during class lectures or demonstrations.

**CLEANLINESS:**

It is the job of every student to leave the classroom better than the way they found it. Disrespecting your environment and those around you implies poor participation and may affect your grade.

**DISABILITY STATEMENT:**

Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Mr. Joe Kempfer, Assistant Director of Learning Services for Disability Support, 1307 Main Street (extension 1510). Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the office of Learning Services.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY:**

Plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade. Cheating on exams or quizzes is not tolerated and will result in a failing grade. Written assignments are designed to engage students with material covered in class through personal reaction. Papers must be your own thoughts, ideas, impressions, or reflections. The Internet can provide valuable source material, but remember that not all published sites are legitimate. Be aware that I read student papers on this subject every semester and I am very familiar with a variety of information published on the web.

Students who violate the standards of academic honesty face serious disciplinary consequences, including referral before the honor council and/or immediate course failure. For further information, please refer to the Moravian College policy in the Student Handbook.

**RESOURCES:**

**The Library-** Reeves Library has an expanding collection of photography and art books, periodicals, and catalogues. The Art Department also has a selection of periodicals that you may browse through.

**Exhibits-** In addition to the Bethlehem/Easton area, there are countless galleries and museums in New York and Philadelphia that are well worth visiting. At least two field trips will potentially be scheduled for this class. Nothing can beat seeing a work of art up close, in the real as opposed to a published version.

**Internet-** The web is a fantastic resource for finding the works of the old master photographers and newer, emerging artists as well as useful information about materials, techniques, and equipment. Again, be aware that not all published sites are legitimate resources such as Wikipedia.

**The Media-** Pay attention to articles in newspapers and magazines. Photographic images are EVERYWHERE. Be observant and critical of what you see. Bring to class any interesting finds!

# Course Schedule: History of Photography Fall 09

September 1, 2009, schedule is subject to change during course of semester

## **WEEK 1: 9/1 -9/3 (CH 1)**

Intro/Syllabus

Short Presentation on Course Material

DVD: Masters of Light

Journal #1: Cover Photo, "A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words"

## **WEEK 2: 9/8-9/10 (CH 1-4)**

Early Photographic Processes and Attempts: The Elusive Image  
(The Daguerreotype, Calotype, Web Plate)

Hands on Activity: Cyanotype

Journal #2: Reflections on Cyanotype

## **WEEK 3: 9/15-9/17 (CH 6-9)**

The New Medium (A New Form of Communication and New Ways of Visualizing)

Choose from list of artists and lead a brief discussion.

Pictorialism

Visit Payne Gallery Archives: Gertrude Kasebier

Journal #3: Are you a Visual Realist or a Haptic?

## **WEEK 4: 9/22-9/24 (CH 10)**

Early Modernism

Choose from list of artists and lead a brief discussion.

DVD: "Man Ray - Prophet of the Avant-Garde (American Masters)", "Lee Miller"

Journal #4: Modernist Photo Collage

## **WEEK 5: 9/29-10/1 (CH 11)**

The New Culture of Light

Choose from list of artists and lead a brief discussion.

DVD: American Experience: Ansel Adams

Journal #5: TBA

## **WEEK 6: 10/6-10/8 (CH 12-15)**

Social Documentary

Nabbing Time

DVD: Henri Cartier-Bresson

(Choose topics for weeks 10-13)

Journal #6: Find an image in the press that captures the spirit of HCB. Explain.

## **WEEK 7: 10/13-1-15 (CH 16-17) Tuesday: FALL BREAK – ENJOY!**

New Frontiers/Alternative Visions

Journal #7: TBA

## **WEEK 8: 10/20-10/22 (pg.360 and article from *Color Magazine*)**

History of Color

DVD: William Eggleston In the Real World

EXAM REVIEW

Field Trip: To Lehigh Valley Photo Exhibitions, TBA

Journal #8: Reflections on Lehigh Valley citywide photo exhibition.

**WEEK 9: 10/27-10/29 (CH 18)**

EXAM

Art Photography (part 1)

Choose from list of artists and lead a brief discussion.

DVD: John Szarkowski: A Life in Photography

Journal #9: Comment on the saying "The camera never lies" or "Photography is the purveyor of absolute truth" – take a photo that lies and one that tells the truth.

**WEEK 10: 11/3-11/5 (CH 18)**

Art Photography (part 2)

The Portrait and Identity

Journal #10: Take a Self Portrait/ write a poem about the experience    Journal # 11: NYC Field trip

**Wednesday, November 4, 6pm, Foy Concert Hall**

Moravian art alumni from various areas will offer a one-hour panel discussion; this will be followed by a reception with the panel members and additional art alumni available to answer student questions one on one

**Friday November 6: NYC Field Trip: mandatory**

**WEEK 11: 11/10-11/12**

Science and Photography

Documentary Photography (CH 5)

DVD: National Geographic Photographers

Journal #12: "Family of Man" – Find one photo that you feel represents a universal experience.

**WEEK 12: 11/17-11/19**

Gender and Photography

Multi-Culturalism and Race and Photography

Journal #13: TBA

**WEEK 13: 11/24-11/26 No Classes on Thursday: Happy Thanksgiving**

Family and the Snap Shot

Brainstorm for installation

Journal #14: Take snapshots of family and friends over the holiday and choose one image to write about. Is it art?

**WEEK 14: 12/1-12/3 (CH 18)**

The Digital Age: Imaging and Pixels

Choose from list of artists and lead a brief discussion.

Work on Group Installation

Journal #15: Reflections on Group Project.    Journal #16: Digital vs. Traditional?

**WEEK 15: 12/8: Last Day of Class**

Review for Exam

Critique Installation

Journal #17: Reflections on the Course

**WEEK 16**

**TAKE HOME EXAM**