

PHAR 203

Tuesdays

2:00 pm – 3:15 pm (GAN)-3140

Thursdays

11:00 am - 1:50 pm (GAN)-3200

2:00 pm -3:15 pm (GAN)-3140

INSTRUCTOR

Josh Meltzer

Assistant Professor

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jhmpph@rit.edu

OFFICE HOURS*

Mondays 11am - 12 pm

Tuesdays 10-11 am

Wednesdays – 2-3 pm

** I'll be happy to make an appointment with you at other times. Please email me to schedule an appointment.*

CONTACTING ME

I will reply to your emails as soon as I can, but will make every effort to answer all within 24 hours. If you email me the night before an assignment is due, I cannot guarantee that I will be able to get back to you quickly, so plan ahead.

*Though you are welcome to connect with me on social media, please do **NOT** use those mediums to contact me about classwork.*

IMPORTANT DATES

Sept 5 – Labor Day no class

Oct 10 – Columbus Day no class

Nov 11 – Last day to drop a class with a W

Nov 23 – No class, Thanksgiving

Dec 14 @ 8am Final Projects Due

ELEMENTS OF PHOTOJOURNALISM

MISSION

This course will introduce you to practical experience interacting, researching and working within the community to find, develop and execute great stories with great images. We will continue to work with solid ethics and become active listeners while we document this diverse community. The course will continue to develop your technical skills with the DSLR equipment and related editing software specifically for journalist mediums.

We will spend class time critiquing your work and giving one another feedback so that we can not only improve our craft but find and produce even better work with each assignment.

GOALS

- To teach technical proficiency in the use of a DSLR camera for visual non-fiction documentary reporting
- Further your workflow for processing and editing electronic imagery
- To create the path towards a development of a personal vision based on passionate engagement within diverse communities
- To provide the critical thinking skills for students to describe, interpret, discuss and critique images.
- Be exposed to the work of more photographers and how their work fits into different genres of photographic practice.
- Plan and execute assignment work with appropriate time management
- Develop your skills at accurate and thoughtful captioning which work in tandem with the visual information in photography
- To help you acquire and develop intellectual, technical and analytical skills to make photographs that communicate
- To help you understand the all-important contribution of the idea to the photograph; the critical element that separates the picture maker from the picture taker
- To be creative, work hard and be successful.

TOPICS

• Idea generation • Caption writing • Depth of field • Light • Composition • Color • Portraits • Picture packages • Electronic Flash • Photography history • Photographing your community • Action/Motion • Features • Events • Ethical boundaries • Digital processing and workflow • Story development

DEADLINES

All assignments are due at the beginning of class. You must be present on assignment deadline classes to receive a grade at all. Failure to be present in person when assignments are due will be as if nothing was turned in at all.

Late work will receive a reduction of a letter grade for every 24 hours it's late starting immediately after the beginning of class. When the server uploads your work, it is given a time-date stamp. If it is not uploaded before class starts, it is late.

CELL PHONES & LAPTOPS

Do not use your cell phones or laptops at all in class unless asked to for an exercise. Please leave them in your bag or pocket. You will be asked to leave if you are using them in class for non-class related activities. We will take a break during our longer classes and labs to allow for cell phone use.

If you need special accommodations for note-taking, please talk to me at the beginning of the semester and I'll be happy to figure out a solution that works well for you.

GRADING SCALES

97-100 pts = A+
 93-96 pts = A
 90-92 pts = A-
 87-89 pts = B+
 83-86 pts = B
 80-82 pts = B-
 77-79 pts = C+
 73-76 pts = C
 70-72 pts = C-
 67-69 pts = D+
 63-66 pts = D
 60-62 pts = D-
 0-59 pts = F

TEXTBOOKS

Photojournalism: The Professionals' Approach 6th Edition, Focal Press 2008, ISBN-13: 978-0750685931

The Great Picture Hunt 2
 Dave LaBelle, Second edition,
 1st printing, Kernel Press Inc.
 2005, ISBN 0976489201

GRADED ASSIGNMENTS

*Assignments will be broken into three categories. **Participation (10%), Writing/Oral Presentations (5%), Technical Shooting Assignments (10%), Weekly Shooting Assignments (60%) and Final Shooting Assignment (15%).***

PARTICIPATION (5 POINTS)

Q: What I will count for participation?

A: Discussing work in class, providing feedback to fellow students, asking questions that you have based on readings or assignments and commenting on work that you find on your own. Taking good notes, being an active listener and leader in promoting friendly discussion in class and labs.

Q: What does not count for participation?

A: Simply showing up for class, showing up on time, only speaking when prompted, or in general, being a passive student.

WRITING/ORAL ASSIGNMENTS (5 POINTS)

You will have three writing assignments which will each have a more detailed assignment sheet with explanation of expectations

TECHNICAL SHOOTING ASSIGNMENTS (15 POINTS)

1. Lensing / Camera Exercise
2. See the Light
3. Fill Flash use
4. Using Audio
5. Composition exercise

WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS (60 POINTS)

1. Emotion
2. Sports
3. DayLong Narrative
4. Portraits
5. Event (Picture Package)
6. Nighttime Feature
7. Dig

Each shooting assignment will be accompanied with an assignment sheet and plenty of examples will be shown in class to prepare you for the assignment.

FINAL SHOOTING ASSIGNMENT (15 POINTS)

You will find, develop, research and shoot a photo story on a subject to be approved by me. This will likely be your first photo story, and we'll have several deadlines as part of this final assignment. More details to come.

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

- A DSLR or mirrorless digital camera that allows for full manual control of all exposure and focus functions, including ISO, aperture and shutter speed. The camera also should be able to shoot in RAW mode.
- Lenses – By this point you should own a few good prime lenses or a zoom that covers from wide to short telephoto, but be prepared to use the cage equipment every week to supplement what you own.
- A good tripod
- ** A portable hard drive (500 GB or larger) preferably a Firewire 800 or USB 3 device **See Page 5 for more info
- At least two digital media cards (16 GB or larger)
- Card (media) reader should be USB3 or FireWire

INSURANCE:

As an accompaniment to any equipment purchase, students are strongly encouraged to acquire insurance for their personal gear and any gear they check out from the School's equipment "Cage." To learn more about insurance programs, please visit:

http://finweb.rit.edu/grms/student_personal_property_insurance.html

GRADING CRITERIA

[A] The work has exceptional merit: superior vision, creativity, initiative [A] The work has exceptional merit: superior vision, creativity, initiative in problem solving, thoughtfulness and effort, and fulfills all assignment requirements and goals in an exceptional and significant manner. Technical quality of work is excellent. It follows assignment instructions. The assignment is complete, (all specifications of the assignment - amount, content, etc. have been adhered to) and shows no technical flaws in exposure, nor printing. The contrast and color have been accurately corrected. Not only is the image-maker able to communicate a clear idea or intent, but also is able to do so in an inventive, engaging manner effectively using formal and technical decisions. The images not only respond appropriately to the assignment, but they push it in innovative, and unexpected directions.

[B] Work is well done. Work exhibits good vision, creativity, initiative in problem solving, thoughtfulness and effort, and fulfills assignment requirements and goals in a better-than-average manner; however, vision, storytelling, and/or aesthetic quality could be improved. The assignment is complete and shows very few technical flaws in exposure, printing and color corrections. The image-maker is able to communicate a clear intent in as much as the photographs engage viewer attention through good use of formal and technical tools. The images respond appropriately to the assignment.

[C] Work is of average quality. Work exhibits acceptable but average vision, creativity, storytelling, thoughtfulness and effort, and fulfills assignment requirements and goals in an average manner. The assignment is complete, though there may be some technical problems such as under or overexposure, imperfect prints, or poor color correction. The student attempts to make use of formal and technical tools to effectively communicate his or her ideas. The images respond appropriately to the assignment.

[D] Work shows a barely adequate effort. Work demonstrates serious effort to fulfill the assignment requirements and goals but is unacceptable and poorly executed. The work demonstrates that the student tried to fulfill the assignment but had serious technical problems or did not carry through with enough effort to produce a usable assignment. The assignment is incomplete, and/or there exist significant errors in exposure, processing, printing, or color correction. The pictures express the intended meaning of the image-maker in a confused, ineffective manner. Little serious attempt is made to use formal and technical tools to communicate clear, intended meaning. The images fail to respond to the central problems posed by the assignment.

[F] Student turned in something, but the work is unacceptable. Work does not fulfill assignment requirements and goals and demonstrates unacceptable effort and results. Or, work is incomplete technically, in content, or missed deadlines.

[Zero] Student turned nothing in at all.

GENERAL RULES (OF THUMB)

Bring your camera and lens to class every day. You never know when we'll need them in class.

Keep your camera with you always. Take it to every class, get in the habit of being ready all the time. Always keep batteries fully charged.

Push yourself this semester. Go out of your comfort zone.

Act professionally and push yourself to do things, photograph people, meet people, investigate ideas that you thought you'd never do just a year ago.

Be curious about the world you already know and be inquisitive about parts of the city, campus and region for which you know nothing about but have great needs to discover and share.

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 Aug 23, 25

Introductions, Course overview, Camera Tech Review, Emotion in images

WEEK 2 Aug 30, Sept 1

Light, Day-long Narratives

WEEK 3 Sept 6, 8

Storytelling in Sports

WEEK 4 Sept 13, 15

Flash review, Budgeting Time, Being an observer

WEEK 5 Sept 20, 22

Composition, layering images, portrait intro

WEEK 6 Sept 27, 29

Event coverage, Small picture packages

WEEK 7 Oct 4, 6

Ethics

WEEK 8 Oct 11 no class, follows Monday schedule, Oct 13 (normal class)

Idea research, Making images from Issues, Finding the middleman/woman

WEEK 9 Oct 18, 20

Shooting in low light, safety

WEEK 10 Oct 25, 27

Audio

WEEK 11 Nov 1, 3

Photo Stories vs Photo Essays

WEEK 12 Nov 8, 10

Idea generation, writing story pitches

WEEK 13 Nov 15, 17

Working With an Editor, Finding your interests

WEEK 14 Nov 22 (No class Thursday, Thanksgiving break)

Professionalism in the field/classroom

WEEK 15 Nov 29, Dec 1

One-on-One meetings, edits, reviews of work

WEEK 16 Dec 6, 8

Final Project Edits

FINAL CRITIQUE date TBA

EXTERNAL HARD DRIVE(S)

Buy a hard drive for your work. Don't lose it. In fact, buy two if you can.

Write your name, phone number and email on the harddrive in case you lose it.

Though the work for this class will likely not be super large in file size, you can get more bang for your buck (including getting a drive that will serve you for future classes in video) if you buy at least a 500GB drive or even 1TB or 2TB sized drive.

Most of the computer labs have new computers in them, including the Kodak (K) labs. Having a drive with USB3 connection cable is recommended and will work in all labs. The Electronic Still Photography (ESP) labs still have computers without USB3 but they have Firewire 800 ports, but buying a USB3 drive is backwards compatible with USB2.

I would recommend NOT buying drives that are ONLY USB2 (in other words, those that don't have USB3 connections) as you will find they communicate much more slowly than Firewire 800 and are not the fastest connection for modern computers (which is USB3). If you have a new drive or one that you have previously used on a PC (not a MAC) please see me and I'll be happy to get it formatted correctly for either using only a MAC or a MAC and PC. Just ask, I'm happy to help.

CRITIQUES

One reminder about critiques in class. I want involvement from everyone. The critiques need to be honest and constructive. You can be tough without tearing people apart. A thin line often separates what is perceived to be constructive versus destructive feedback. Find the balance, and when in doubt, take the higher road.

Likewise, feedback that is full of hot air and praise does little to help one another grow. Speak positively when you really feel something is great, and critique when you have constructive feedback and suggestions. Participate, participate, participate. This will be part of your grade.

When receiving a critique, you need a similar balance. There is a fine line between defending your position and making excuses. Be a good listener. Don't be so connected to your work that you lose sight of how it could be better. You need to develop a thick skin and an open mind. We will use our time to focus on solutions instead of problems. I want you all to be successful.

Harsh and honest critiques aren't easy, and I understand that, but we have a limited time together and I want to use this time to make our work stronger and more compelling. Liken it to an athlete who has to suffer through training in order to perform at his or her best. My word is only one person's opinion (though I write your grade) so please don't take it as the only way.

SOFTWARE AND HARDWARE

The College and School supply the software that you'll use in the course – Adobe Lightroom – on the machines in the labs. You must back up your work on your external drive (see notes at left) and may even want to have a second backup, either in the cloud or on a second external drive. Avoid saving your work on your internal (computer) hard drive and NEVER use the lab desktop to store your work. Consider it being erased nightly.

You may choose to use your own computer, however neither I nor RIT will be available to troubleshoot problems, nor deal with your own software issues, since the school provides you will access to software and hardware in house.

REPEAT AFTER ME

Back up your work.

Back up your work.

Back up your work.

Back up your work.

ATTENDANCE

Your attendance in every class is absolutely critical, as each lesson builds upon the previous one, and I will not be able to go back and repeat missed material. Attendance is taken at the beginning of each class and lab. **Three or more absences OR severe lateness will lower your semester grade by one letter grade. I CANNOT be flexible on this policy.** Please do not come late or miss class, as it's disruptive to everyone.

If you know you must be absent some time in the future, you should let me know as far in advance as possible so that I can help you find ways to get caught up. I'll be happy to help you get caught up for things like **SERIOUS** health issues, family emergencies and religious holidays—but not much else. If you are too sick to attend class, you must email me before the start of class time. Simply waking up tired or with a headache does not indicate a serious health issue.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

RIT is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities.

Students with Disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact the Disability Services Office Student Alumni Union. It is located in the Student Alumni Union, Room 1150; the Web site is www.rit.edu/dso. After you receive accommodation approval, it is imperative that you see me during office hours so that we can work out whatever arrangement is necessary.

Please DO NOT request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from the Disability Services Office Student Alumni Union.

CIAS SERVER

You will have access to the CIAS server where you can store some files and turn in your work. This is NOT large enough for you to backup large amounts of data, but it can be a place to backup exported projects, or some smaller files should you need a 2nd or third place to back up your work. It should not be considered a replacement for your external hard drive(s).

LABS

Lab/Studio time is for you so that you will have adequate supervised access to facilities as well as individual assistance with your work. You are expected to work during this time only on projects for this class. If you have already completed the assignment, please work on something else and make good use of this opportunity. Lab times are also a great time to get feedback on editing of a shoot, work not fully discussed during a critique, and when you are trying to map out a new photograph or idea.

WORK ETHIC / TIME COMMITMENT:

You will NOT be able to finish all of the necessary work during lab time alone, so expect to spend additional time outside of class completing assignments. A 5-credit class requires that you spend a MINIMUM of 10 hours outside of class time on assignments or course work each week. You should plan for time for shooting, printing, editing, reading and writing all on your own time. Of that work, plan to spend a minimum of 6 hours a week, outside of class, actually making photographs (this does not include printing). Remember that all of your images record metadata which shows me how much time you've spent in the field making images.

More importantly, photography is FUN! So enjoy the time with your camera and subjects...it's hard to call it homework, right?

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

To represent ideas or interpretations taken from another source as one's own is plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious offense. The academic work of a student must be his or her own. Students must give the author(s) credit for any source material used.

To lift content directly from a source without giving credit is a flagrant act. To present a borrowed passage after having changed a few words, even if the source is cited, is also plagiarism. Disposition of Offenses - Students who commit any act of academic dishonesty may receive from the instructor a failing grade in that portion of the course work in which the act is detected or a failing grade in the course without possibility of withdrawal.

As an institution of higher learning, RIT expects students to behave honestly and ethically at all times, especially when submitting work for evaluation in conjunction with any course or degree requirement. The Department of [NAME] encourages all students to become familiar with the RIT Honor Code and with RIT's Academic Honesty Policy.

That said, taking ideas and examples from others and using those to inspire your work is **NOT** plagiarism and should be encouraged. This is an important distinction, however crediting from where you received inspiration always helps.

On your journal entries you are **REQUIRED** to note the name and credit of the photographer and source of the image(s) just as you would in an academic paper.