

PICTURE STORIES



334

JOUR 334

Picture Stories

Wednesdays – 1:50-4:35pm
MMTH 118

INSTRUCTOR: Josh Meltzer
Photojournalist-in-Residence

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OFFICE HOURS

Monday – 9:30-11:00 a.m.
Tuesday – 9:30-11:00 a.m.
Thursday – 9:30-11:00 a.m.

I'll be happy to make an appointment with you if you cannot see me during the above hours.

I'll also be scheduling one-on-one meetings with you during the term for intensive edits.

ATTENDANCE

It is vital to success in this class. Each class is equal to one week of regular classes. There will be discussions and critiques that cannot be redone. You must be on time.

CELL PHONES

Do not use your cell phones **at all** in class. Please leave them in your bag. You will have a break each class to check them.

GOALS

1. To develop the art of telling stories with photographs.
2. To use picture stories as a tool to develop and improve all aspects of your photography.
3. To recognize the importance of idea generation, brainstorming and search for the story within the story.
3. To develop skills in establishing an effective relationship with your story subjects.
4. To recognize the importance of preparation and organization in the picture story process (research and time management).
5. To review storytelling mediums from previous courses (Audio, InDesign, Final Cut Pro).
6. To continue developing your digital processing/workflow skills.
7. To continue developing your lighting skills.
8. To continue developing your writing skills.
9. To find, research and tell stories of diverse topics including those that foster understanding of issues and perspectives that are inclusive in terms of gender, race, ethnicity and sexual orientation

You already have a solid foundation in many these areas. This semester I want you to immerse yourself in them. This is your time to eat, breath and sleep this stuff. It's going to take careful planning, determination, resourcefulness, a good attitude and a lot of heart to make a success of this class. Having solid plans for each story assignment will minimize the chance that you're floundering at the last minute.

Weekly Projects (not in order and subject to change)

International Student/Nontraditional Student (option); Child in Need; Farmer/Migrant Worker (option); Coach/Teacher (option); Caregiver/Volunteer (option); Religious Leader/Community Leader (option); Veteran/Senior Citizen (option); Portrait Series; Death and Illness; Widow/Widower (Option); Sports story

Long-term Projects

- Sports Portfolio (five pictures - 3 action, 2 reaction/feature)
- Final Project (Details announced soon.)

In addition to these assignments there may also be a surprise or two...

Deadlines and Reshoots

All assignments are due at the beginning of class. Assignment due dates are NOT flexible. Late assignments will receive zero points. You can reshoot one of your one-week stories from the Weekly Projects list above **ONLY IF** you've turned in something on time for that assignment. You will **NOT** be allowed to reshoot something you turned in nothing for. You cannot reshoot the Sports Portfolio or Final Project. The reshoot is due no later than **Wednesday April 27** at the start of class. Late reshoots will **NOT** be accepted.

Captions

You must submit captions at the same time you hand in your assignment. I will require you to write captions for all photos, no matter the medium of the project. I will also require that each story have a story summary that is well written, interesting, engaging and would cause a reader to view your project. Subjects' names must be complete for anyone recognizable in your images, as you've always done.

Assignment Mediums

For this course, we will also touch on reviewing some skills learned in previous courses. Some of your assignments will be turned in as layouts using Adobe InDesign, and others will be done as audio slideshows produced in Soundslides and Final Cut Pro. It is important that you practice using these tools learned in previous classes. Your final project can be either an audio slideshow or magazine layout. We will not be working with video in this course.

Grade Breakdown

Assignments – 75%
 Final Project – 20%
 Participation – 5%

You will receive a letter grade with a plus, neutral or minus for each assignment. Your course grade will be calculated based on the number associated with that letter.

A+ 100 A 98-93 A- 90-92
 B+ 89-87 B 86-83 B- 82-80
 C+ 79-77 C 76-73 C- 72-70
 D+ 69-67 D 66-63 D- 62-60
 F 59 and below

Important dates:

1/31 - Last day to drop a class without a grade
 3/7-3/11 - Spring Break
 3/18 - Last day to drop a class with a W
 4/27 Reshoot Due
 May 9-13 - Final Exams

ANOTHER NOTE: All work should be yours and completed within the time frame of each assignment. Plagiarism will result in an F grade in the class and other possible action according to university policy.

Students with disabilities

who require accommodations for this course must contact the Office for Student Disability Services, GCC Room 101. The OFSDS telephone number is (270)745-5004 V/TDD. Per university policy, please do not request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services.

This syllabus is a "living" document, so be prepared for changes as needed.

Critiques and Class Participation

One-on-one discussions about your work are extremely important to the learning process in this class. Therefore, I will be scheduling meetings with you outside of class. The out-of-class meetings are required to receive a grade on your project. Because of the size of the class, I won't be able to meet with everyone on every assignment, but will do my best to schedule appointments with you as much as I can.

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 stonger and more compelling. Liken it to an athlete who has to suffer through training in order to perform at his or her best.

Guest Speakers

I will bring in some guest speakers to talk about their work and to critique yours. Whenever possible, I will schedule these during our class time, but if this isn't possible my expectation is that you will make every effort to still attend.

Appalachian Cultural Project

There will be a limit of 10 shooters for the workshop which is only open to students in this class (we will be bringing labbies from other classes too). I will announce details about the application process in the next few weeks. We're looking at March 5-11 for the workshop. Check out <http://www.acpworkshop.org/> to see the work from previous years. This is a great opportunity to get out of the region and spend an intensive week working on your story-telling skills in a new environment in a small group.

Required Materials

- Cameras, lenses and Flash
- Digital Audio Recorder / Shotgun Microphone
- At least two 4GB or higher compact flash cards
- One ream (500 sheets) of HP® Premium Choice Laser Paper, Smooth, 8 1/2" x 11", 32 Lb
- Portable external hard drive (recommended 500GB minimum)

Final thoughts

Preparation is key to your success in this class. If you come up with story ideas in advance that you're interested, you have a better chance of shooting better AND enjoying your work. Preserve your subject's dignity. Treat yourself and others with respect. There will be challenges. There will be obstacles. There will be setbacks, but remember that all of these will help you grow and become the photographer I know you all can. I am looking forward to working with you this semester!

In addition...

This class will cover in part the values and competencies outlined in the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications accreditation guidelines. They are: understand and apply First Amendment principles and the law appropriate to professional practice; demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications; demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of groups in a global society in relationship to communications; understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information; work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity; think critically, creatively and independently; conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which you work; write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes you serve; critically evaluate your own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness; apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which you work.