COMM 3316: DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY
Spring 2020
TERM AND INSTRUCTOR INFO

Spring 2020

MW 12 - 1:20pm

Cotton 307

Instructor: Dr. Corrie Boudreaux

Email: cmboudreaux@utep.edu. I am available by email, typically within 5-6 hours on weekdays and 24-48 hours on weekends.

Office Hours: MW 10am – 12pm; Cotton Memorial 307A (go through computer lab)
“If it makes you laugh, if it makes you cry, if it rips your heart out, that’s a good picture.” – Eddie Adams

Photojournalism is about the practice of telling a story to and eliciting emotion from viewers. It’s also about all the mechanics and logistics of using equipment—cameras, lenses, software, etc.—and adhering to the standard practices of photojournalistic practice.
The purpose of this course, then, is to introduce you to digital photography and photojournalism. We will learn about the manual control of a camera and lens, composition, digital editing and processing, and preparing images for sharing and printing. We will also study the history, ethics, and industry standards of photojournalism. The projects and assignments in this class are designed to develop not only your technical skills in camera use and digital editing, but also the soft skills of having vision and feeling with regard to your photographs and your subjects.

Basic computer and technical skills are required for this course. You are also required to be familiar with your own camera, so make sure you have/locate a user manual for the model you have and make it your friend.
Upon completion of this course, you should:

- Understand the relationship among aperture, shutter speed, and ISO; and apply this understanding in order to make correct exposures
- Apply AP style to caption writing
- Understand and abide by a photojournalist code of ethics
- Know how to manage a digital workflow
- Differentiate between acceptable and unacceptable editing practices/ techniques
- Know how to use Lightroom to make necessary and acceptable adjustments to your photos
- Understand how to use available light
- Know and appropriately apply guidelines for interesting and aesthetically pleasing composition
- Create strong images that tell stories and elicit emotion
REQUIRED MATERIALS

Equipment:

- A digital camera with a resolution of at least 10 megapixels; RAW capability; manual control capability – point-and-shoot cameras or phone cameras are not acceptable
- An 18-55mm, 50mm, or 24-70mm lens (some kits might come with a lens that has more range, just ask me if you have questions about what will work)
- Memory cards (check your camera to see what size/type)
- A card reader (depending on what type of card your camera uses - most computers do not have a slot for CF cards)
- An external hard drive to organize and back up your folders and files. Memory cards are useful for capturing images but are not an acceptable storage plan for your photos. They are easily lost, become corrupted, etc.

Optional/recommended:

- A subscription to Adobe Lightroom Classic (make sure you choose "Lightroom Classic" and not just "Lightroom"). The subscription costs about $10/month and includes Photoshop, and you will probably find it more convenient to have it on your own computer than to have to come to
campus to use the labs. Having your own subscription will make it easier for you to save work, create presets, and use the catalog/file management capabilities of Lightroom.

- clear, protective lens filters
- Cleaning kit
- Long lens and/or a wide-aperture lens
- A handbook for Lightroom. There are some books available in the library. There’s also a ton of information and tutorials online, so you may want to check out all the free stuff before you buy a book.
- Associated Press Stylebook. You can find this at [www.apstylebook.com](http://www.apstylebook.com) or from used sellers on Amazon, etc.
I recommend Canon or Nikon. These are the best brands and the ones most commonly used in newsrooms and journalism. The particular model will depend on what your aspirations are. Entry-level cameras that still meet the course requirements are models such as Nikon D3200 or Canon EOS Rebel T3i. If you want to do professional photojournalism, you may want to invest in a higher-end model. Talk to me if you have questions about this.

As you progress, you may also want to invest in additional lenses. Again, talk to me if you have questions about lenses.
Check around local stores and online. You can get used or discontinued cameras, lenses, and other accessories at very good prices — I purchase almost all of my own equipment used. These are some places that I shop (I don’t have any affiliation with these businesses):

- www.keh.com
- www.bhphotovideo.com
- www.adorama.com
- Amazon

COURSE SCHEDULE (MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

YOU MUST BRING YOUR CAMERA TO CLASS EVERY DAY.

**Week 1 (Jan 21 - Jan 26)**

Introduction and Syllabus Review

Topics: syllabus and course introduction; basic camera settings; basic exposure triangle

Discussion Board: Introductions

Discussion Board: News/Documentary Photo of the Week due Sunday
**Week 2** (Jan 27 - Feb 2)
Topics: camera settings; exposure and depth of field; Lightroom - importing, metadata, exporting
Discussion Board: News/Documentary Photo of the Week due Sunday
Assignment #1: Free Shoot

**Week 3** (Feb 3 - Feb 9)
Topics: news and newsworthiness; basic adjustments in Lightroom; caption writing; composition
Discussion Board: News/Documentary Photo of the Week
Assignment #2: Single Subject Study

**Week 4** (Feb 10 - Feb 16)
Topics: assignment critique; file management in Lightroom; laws and public photography; advanced composition
Discussion Board: News/Documentary Photo of the Week
Assignment #3: Composition

Documentary Project Topic

2 - Photo: Corrie Boudreaux
Week 5 (Feb 17 - Feb 23)
Topics: composition critique; lighting, social documentary/photography for change
Readings: TBA
Discussion Board: News/Documentary Photo of the Week
Assignment #4: Available Light
Documentary Progress Report 1

Week 6 (Feb 24 - Mar 1)
Topics: available light critique; motion; editing and selection; isolated adjustments in Lightroom
Discussion Board: News/Documentary Photo of the Week
Assignment #5: Motion

Week 7 (Mar 2 - Mar 8)
Topics: motion critique; street photography; preparing to print; creative effects in Lightroom
Discussion Board: News/Documentary Photo of the Week
Assignment #6: Street Photography

Week 8 (Mar 9 - Mar 15)
Topics: street photography critique; photo manipulation and journalism
Readings: TBA
Discussion Board: News/Documentary Photo of the Week
Documentary Progress Report 2
Assignment #7: Day in the Life

SPRING BREAK (Mar 16 - Mar 22)

Week 9 (Mar 23 - Mar 29)
Topics: Day in the Life critique; sports; advanced Lightroom
Discussion Board: News/Documentary Photo of the Week
Assignment #8: Sports
Week 10 (Mar 30 - Apr 5)
Topics: sports critique; documentary portraiture; advanced Lightroom
Discussion Board: News/Documentary Photo of the Week
Assignment #9: Environmental Portrait

Week 11 (Apr 6 - Apr 12)
Topics: sensitive images; conflict; disaster; risk & safety
Readings: TBA
Discussion Board: News/Documentary Photo of the Week
Documentary 1st Selection & Critique
Week 12 (Apr 13 - Apr 19)
Topics: documentary critique; showcasing your work
Readings: TBA
Discussion Board: News/Documentary Photo of the Week

Week 13 (Apr 20 - Apr 26)
Topic: expanding your gear; working in the field; showcasing your work
Readings: TBA
Discussion Board: News/Documentary Photo of the Week
Assignment #10: News

Week 14 (Apr 27 - May 3)
Topics: employment strategies; showcasing your work
Readings: TBA
Discussion Board: News/Documentary Photo of the Week
Assignment: Final Documentary
**Week 15 (May 4 - May 10)**

Topics: view documentaries

**GRADING AND EVALUATION**

Your grade is based on the following categories and assignments:

- Photo assignments: 1000 points
- Reading Assignments: 240 points
- Photo of the Week posts: 250
- Social Documentary Project: 400 points
- Attendance and Participation: 200

I offer extra credit for spot news photos. The extra credit is in the form of up to 10 points added to one of your photo assignment grades. Spot news photos submitted for extra credit must have complete captions and adhere to technical, compositional, and editorial standards to receive full credit.

I do not offer any other extra credit and I do not round up grades because you are only one point away from an A, etc. If you are concerned about your grade, complete all assignments on time and ask me for help as soon as possible. Do not wait until late in the semester to seek help.
Grading is on a ten-point scale:

- A = 90-100
- B = 80-89
- C = 70-79
- D = 60-69
- F = 0-59

Photo Assignments:

Details will be given about each assignment. You must take all photos during this current semester. However, you may wish to look ahead and familiarize yourself with the assignments so you can plan ahead. If you have the opportunity to attend a sports event, for example, you may do that prior to the week in which your sports assignment is due.

Lab Hours:

Computers with Lightroom are available in Cotton 307 (M-F 8am-6pm, except scheduled class times) and LACIT (LART 405) in the Mac section. You will need to schedule time to work on your photos outside of class, as class time for editing, captioning, and tagging will be limited. You may also consider purchasing Lightroom Classic; the monthly subscription is only about $10/month.

Submitting work:

All work must be submitted in the proper folder on our Google Drive account. I’ll deduct 10% from your grade for work that is not submitted in the correct folder or that is not properly named. You should save your photos as your initials, underscore, name of the assignment or subject matter, and sequence (for photos in same group). Example: My photographs look like this: CB_O’RourkeDefeat01; CB_O’RourkeDefeat02; etc. OR CB_Assignment1_01, etc.
Grading:

Creating and viewing images is an inherently subjective process. Regardless, your photographs will be held to technical, compositional, and editorial standards. These standards include:

Technical – sharpness, focus, contrast, color balance, lighting, exposure

Compositional – creative, interesting, “draws” the eye in

Editorial – news value, caption quality, capturing “decisive moment,” elicits emotion/response, honest, communicative

You will not receive credit for photos that:

- are not taken in Manual mode
- do not have proper captions
- include family members/friends/personal pets

Make sure your metadata is showing up before submitting your photos to me.
Late Policy:

Photo assignments are typically due on Tuesday evenings. This gives me time to review your submission and prepare for our critiques on Wednesdays. We will devote time to these critiques for most assignments. Therefore, our productivity and success as a class depends on timely submissions and participation from all students. Also, when you have a job as a journalist, you will often be asked to take assignments and meet deadlines within hours. For these reasons, late work will be heavily penalized.

If you intend to request an extension on any assignment for a legitimate reason, you must notify me in advance about the reason why you need an extension. Extensions may be given for serious reasons such as serious illness, military obligations, or religious observance. Documentation is required. I do not accept extension requests after deadlines have passed. Extensions are granted at my discretion. **Work that is more than two weeks late will not be accepted.**
Attendance is required. Two or more unexcused absences will negatively affect your final grade. In general, you are responsible for dropping the class if you no longer wish to attend and complete assignments. However, I reserve the right to drop you from the class if you have six or more unexcused absences.
• All work must be completed by you. All work must be completed this semester. You may not turn in work you’ve done prior to this class. You may not turn in work that you’ve also submitted in another class. You may not turn in work you didn’t do. If you violate this policy, you will receive a zero on that assignment. In addition, you may receive a zero for the course and/or be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution.

• Make sure your camera’s date setting is correct. The date should be included in the metadata associated with each photo, NOT stamped onto the image itself.

• You must adhere to AP guidelines for what constitutes acceptable editing. Generally, this is limited to minor adjustments in exposure, highlights/shadows, contrast, and sharpening. This class is not about learning advanced Photoshop techniques nor is it about the artistic interpretation of photography.

• All submissions may be shown in class and critiqued/discussed by your classmates. Do not turn in work you don’t want shown to the rest of the class.

• All photos must be made with available light. You are not to use flash or other lighting to make images.

• Images may not be cropped.

• News photographs sometimes show offensive or graphic events—hate groups, victims of disaster or crime, etc. All submissions, but especially those that might be considered offensive, must have news
value that justifies their use. You may be asked to view, discuss, and critique images of an offensive or graphic nature in class.

• You may not use family members, friends, classmates, or other people you know personally as subjects for your photos. Your job is to become comfortable with approaching strangers.

• You must inform subjects that you are a journalism student and that your photos may appear in print or online publications.

• You may not stage, direct, or pose any photos except for the portrait assignment. All other photos should be candid. Your job is to witness events, not intervene in them. You will receive a zero on any assignment in which you use photos that are staged, directed, or posed.

• It is legal for you to take and publish photos of people that are in public space, with or without their permission. However, it’s a good idea to get subjects’ names and contact info, at least, and sometimes even a signed release. There are apps that can help you do this.

• You are responsible for maintaining copies of your work. All work done on school computers is deleted regularly. You must have an external hard drive to work in Lightroom and to save all of your work. Your memory card is not an adequate Deleted or lost work will not be a legitimate excuse for late or missing assignments.

• I do not accept assignment submissions through email.

• No audio or video recording during class unless necessary as an accommodation with proper documentation from CASS.

• No cell phones, laptops, etc., during class unless specific instructions or permissions are given. Notes must be taken with pen/paper unless an alternate method is necessary for accommodation with proper documentation from CASS.
ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of rules articulated in UTEP’s Handbook of Operating Procedures. It is also contrary to the process of organizational leadership itself, and includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion.

Any sort of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Violations will be taken seriously. Students will receive a zero on any assignment where there is a reasonable suspicion of cheating, plagiarism, and/or collusion. Additionally, students who are suspected of academic dishonesty will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution for possible disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions. More information can be found in the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures, under the heading “Alleged Student Scholastic Dishonesty” and the UT System Regent’s Rules and Regulations.
The Americans with Disabilities Act requires reasonable accommodations be made for students with documented special needs, and that all materials needed for a course be made available to all students in that course, whether it is face-to-face or online. If you have any special needs that require accommodations, please let me know as soon as possible. In order to receive accommodations, you will need to make a formal request by contacting the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at cass@utep.edu or visit https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/cass/.