

Tools & Techniques for Digital Photography – Photo 1201-002

Professor, Jeff Curto
College of DuPage – Spring, 2012

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I) Catalog Description

Technical skills for digital photography are covered including refinement of exposure, post-image capture processing, and manipulation. Issues addressing controlled output of digital images are also covered. 3 Credits. Prerequisite: Photography 1200 or equivalent, or concurrent enrollment in Photography 1200. (6 lab hours)

II) Class Meeting Schedule

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:00PM to 3:50PM

Our time will be divided up between “class” days (when lecture, demonstration, critique and discussion will occur) and a few “lab” days, where students will work on assignments with the instructor available to assist. Students are responsible for all material that is covered. Get notes from another student if you are absent.

Note that the AC 161 lab is available for your exclusive use only during the time that your class is scheduled. Additional computers, scanners and output devices are available in the 2nd floor photography lab facility.

III) Course Objectives

- A) Choose appropriate image input methods
- B) Demonstrate the advanced use of digital camera controls
- C) Demonstrate the ability to critique photographic work
- D) Create and manipulate channels, layers, selections, and masks
- E) Apply color management for the digital workflow
- F) Prepare an image for output to printer
- G) Prepare an image for screen output

IV) Text

- No required text, but *Adobe Photoshop CS5 for Photographers* – by Evening is a good reference
 - Handouts will be plentiful; I'd suggest a 3–ring binder to contain them

V) Topics covered—Week By Week

(Asset Management, Accurate Image Adjustment & Efficient Workflow)

- 1) Course overview, digital imaging basics review + Assignment #1: “Edges”
1/12 (Thursday)
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- 2) Lightroom Review (workspace, interface, tools, storage of catalogue and image library, etc)
1/17 (Tuesday)
- 2) Photoshop Review (workspace, interface, tools, etc)
1/19 (Thursday)
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- 3) Lightroom & Photoshop Round-Trip (including open as Smart Object)
1/24 (Tuesday)
- 3) Critique of Assignment #1 (“Edges”) + LR Web Module + Lab
1/26 (Thursday)
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- 4) RAW Bar: Adobe Camera RAW? Bridge + ACR? Lightroom? Where do I do my color/tone correction?
1/31 (Tuesday)
- 4) Lightroom Refinements + Digital Asset Management, Keywords & Metadata
2/2 (Thursday)
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- 5) Apple Aperture - A Lightroom alternative for Mac users - Part 1
2/7 (Tuesday)
- 5) Apple Aperture - A Lightroom alternative for Mac users - Part 2
2/9 (Thursday)

(Metering & Accurate Exposure)

- 6) Metering & Exposure for digital photography + Assignment #2: “Zone Test” + Workflow Assignment Due
2/15 (Tuesday)
- 6) Metering & Exposure for digital photography + RAW Files, Bit Depth & Tone/Color Correction
2/17 (Thursday)
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- 7) Critique of Assignment #2 (Zone Test) + Lab
2/22 (Tuesday)
- 7) Color Theory & Color Management - Introduction + Assignment #3: “Ring Around”
2/24 (Thursday)

(Color Management & Prints that Match your Display)

- 8) Color Management in practice + Color Correction + Assignment #4: “1 Image, 3 Printers”
3/1 (Tuesday)
- 8) Sharpening (Unsharp Mask, Smart Sharpen) + History
3/3 (Thursday)
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- 9) Lab: Create and Print your Assignment #3 (Ring Around)
3/6 (Tuesday)
- 9) Lab: Create and Print your Assignment #3 (Ring Around)
3/8 (Thursday)

The evening of 3/8 - Photographer Michel Tcherevkoff presents his work in SRC 2800 @ 7:00PM - Attendance mandatory

- 10) Critique of Assignment #3 (Ring Around) + Assignment #5: “1 Image, 3 Interpretations”
3/13 (Tuesday)
- 10) Lab Day
3/15 (Thursday)
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- 11) Critique of Assignment #4 (1 Image, 3 Printers) + Assign #6: “Complementary Colors”
3/20 (Tuesday)
- 11) No Class - Instructor away at conference; work on projects as assigned
3/22 (Thursday)

- 12) No Class - Instructor away at conference; work on projects as assigned
3/27 (Tuesday)
- 12) Color Correction Revisited: Local Color vs. Global Color + Local vs. Global Contrast + Lab
3/29 (Thursday)

- 13) Spring Break - No Classes this week
4/3 & 4/5

- 14) Retouching (Healing & Cloning, Blur/Lens Blur, Liquefy, Content-Aware Scale/Fill, Puppet Warp)
4/10 (Tuesday)
- 14) Critique of Assignment #5 (1 Image, 3 Interpretations) + Layer Masks
4/12 (Thursday)

- 15) Working with Layers in Photoshop + Assgn. #7: "Subtle Color" & Assgn. #8: "Contrast"
4/17 (Tuesday)
- 15) Critique of Assignment #6 (Complementary Colors) + Lab
4/19 (Thursday)

- 16) Critique of Assignment #7 (Subtle Color) + Critique of Assignment #8 (Contrast)
4/24 (Tuesday)
- 16) Creating Slide Shows in Lightroom & Aperture
4/26 (Thursday)

- 17) Lab - Work on your Slideshow using Lightroom or Aperture
5/1 (Tuesday)
- 17) Lab - Work on your Slideshow using Lightroom or Aperture
5/3 (Thursday)

- 18) Final Exam Week - Show your Slideshow
5/8 (Tuesday)

The evening of 4/30 - Susan Carr & Mary Virginia Swanson present on "Creating Your Arts Marketing Presence" in SRC 2800 @ 7:00PM - Attendance mandatory

Note: • This is an estimated schedule. There may be changes at the discretion of the professor or as class progress dictates.
• Students should be familiar with the rules and regulations of the College of DuPage as stated in the college catalog.

VI) Materials

Students will need to provide the following for this course:

- A) Ideas, imagination, images, initiative
- B) Digital camera capable of at least 8 Megapixels and of producing a RAW file. While some cameras fitting this description are available for 24-hour checkout, this is a digital photography course and a digital camera is a required resource. It will be difficult to complete the course without access to your own digital camera.
- C) Printing paper for use in the department's printers and/or outside-source prints as needed.
- D) Portable Hard Drive: a portable, external USB or FireWire hard drive is a required resource for this class. Using the concepts we will discuss, you will be able to keep your catalogue/library of images with you at all times and be able to keep a backup of those images on your home computer. Thumb drives are just not big enough, fast enough (or cost-effective enough) for what we need to do.

NOTE:

It is important that you establish an effective backup strategy for ALL your files, both those you transport to and from our class and those you have at home. If you don't back up, the law of averages dictates that eventually, you *will* lose something that you want.

VII) Grading Criteria

Student's grade will be based on:

A) Class Attendance (5 points deducted for each absence)	15 Points
B) Workflow Analysis	5 Points
B) Eight Technical / Aesthetic Assignments @ 8 points each	64 Points
C) Slideshow: ~40-image slideshow (completed with Lightroom or Aperture).....	16 Points

Possible Total: 100 Points

A: 100 to 90 Points	B: 75 to 89 Points	C: 65 to 74 Points	D: 50 to 64 Points	F: Below 50 Points
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Projects will be evaluated based on the concepts demonstrated and explored in class and contained in assignment handouts and discussions. Instructor will endeavor to return written feedback within 2 weeks of assignment completion. Students wanting permission for the pass/fail option must request this by the mid-term date. Incompletes are not available in this class except in extraordinary circumstances.

VIII) Assignments

Assignments:

Assignments for this class are due on the dates listed on the syllabus, and will be given out as we go along.

Each of the assignments is intended to help you discover something about photography, either technically or aesthetically; usually both. Obviously, using "archive" images doesn't help you in this, so they aren't allowed for any of these assignments. **For most of the assignments, you should be prepared to turn in (in an envelope that fits your images) at least 3 new photographs.** There will be a couple exceptions to this (an assignment that gets turned in digitally or an assignment that can be fulfilled with one image) but for the most part, you'll need to be producing several new images on a regular basis.

Each assignment will have its own set of instructions, delivered orally or in writing on the date listed on the syllabus.

All of the assignments have a component that must be turned in via the Blackboard course management system. you will find Blackboard at <http://bb.cod.edu>. Your login for Blackboard is the same as your MyAccess login. Note that the Blackboard component of the assignment will "turn off" about 1 week after the due date; you'll need to have the Blackboard info completed in order for the assignment to be considered complete. I will feed back to you via Blackboard, as well.

You will also have one "final assignment" that I want you to work on for the whole semester. Photographer Wynn Bullock said, "Mysteries lie all around us, even in the most familiar things, waiting only to be perceived." Your goal is to create 40 interesting, insightful photographs of "Where You Live." The pictures could include people or not. There are no "rules" other than that all the pictures come from where you live. We'll look at how to use Lightroom or Aperture to help you collect these images together and we'll use that same software to create a slideshow of these collected photographs and show your images, set to music, during our finals week class meeting.

The key to this assignment is to make photographs all throughout the semester. Trying to accomplish all 40 images in the last week will likely result in lackluster images (plus, we can see the dates the images were made using the image metadata!) Start right away and keep making images of what you see around you.

IX) Website for this Class

I have created a small web site for my classes at: www.cod.edu/photo/curto

There is a link off the main page for this class, which can be reached directly here: www.cod.edu/photo/curto/1201

The site has a copy of the syllabus, as well as extensive links to information pertinent to this class.

Note: Since we have so much ground to cover, I am a stickler for starting class on time and I'm not fond of having students come into the room late. I'll be in the room on time and ready for the day's class. You do the same.

Also, it's important that you not get into the habit of surfing the web/emailing your pals/checking your stocks/buying stuff during class time. This is time that's been carefully prepared to help you learn the course content and the stuff you're not paying attention to will likely be the stuff you'll need to know later.

I have software on my computer that allows me to see *everyone's screen at all times* and I'm not afraid to show people what you're doing up on the big screen. Cool, huh? Don't worry; the internet (and your significant others) will still be there when we're done.