COURSE TITLE: INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY
COURSE CODE: DI PH ID 180
SECTION: 101

Day and Time:
Instructor:
Instructor availability:
Available to see students individually after class by appointment

1. DESCRIPTION
This course will introduce students to the digital photography world with particular focus on updated techniques and how they can be incorporated into classic fine art photography. The course will explore the use of state-of-the-art computer software and techniques. The instructor will guide the student in learning to master the whole process (from taking a picture, through a conscious and deep selection to its final editing) to make a good quality digital print. Elements of photo composition and graphic design, photo history, and relationships with other art mediums will also be addressed during the course.

This introductory class introduces contemporary technologies for producing photographic images. Approaching the medium in its current complex and pluralistic state, students explore a variety of photographic concepts and techniques. The fundamentals of using a digital camera including manual exposure and lighting are stressed. Single lens reflex camera (DSLR) as well as point and shoot cameras are allowed. This course also introduces seeing, thinking, and creating with a critical mind and eye in a foreign environment (Italy) to provide understanding of the construction and manipulation of photographic form and meaning. Assignments, lectures, readings and excursions progressively build on each other to provide students with a comprehensive overview of both the history of the medium and its contemporary practice. Color correction, retouching, and compositing techniques are covered and complemented by further development of digital capture and printing techniques.

2. OBJECTIVE
COURSE OBJECTIVES: Upon completion of this course you will be able to:

1. Explain the theoretical and technical aspects of digital photography.

2. Use digital cameras and associated computer hardware and software for creating, modifying, and producing images for print, World Wide Web and other digital media.
3. Create a digital image archive and a final portfolio.

4. Explain and show specific aesthetics associated with digital photography including the manipulation of images for enhanced design.

5. Be able to frame subject matter, shoot an artistic photograph, and adjust the digital image to produce a high quality photo print.

6. Analyze your own and others digital photography needs and determine what would be appropriate to meet those requirements.

Students will gain proficiency in taking, editing, processing and printing digital images. Students will develop their photographing skills with special attention to formal and compositional elements in an image. Students will also become more familiar with the technique as the course will introduce them to the history of photography and a fertile knowledge of classic and contemporary photographic projects. In order to reach this goal the teacher will lead the students, as frequently as possible, to exhibitions and when possible to photo festivals.

3. REQUIREMENTS
- This course is recommended for communications, journalism and social science students.
- Basic photography experience and knowledge will be helpful.
- A digital camera of 8.0 to 10.0 megapixels minimum with an optical zoom lens of at least 3X is required.

A questionnaire is distributed on the first day of class to inform the instructor about the general background and characteristics of the students. Students are not required to answer all questions.

Lectures are held in English.
For the material you will need to type and print, please check the school computer facilities.

Students must be aware that many lessons will consist of outdoor walking, working in groups, carrying photographic equipment. The student is responsible for the efficiency of his own photographic equipment, (lenses, battery charger, general state of the camera).

Individual study of notes, readings, handouts, fulfillment of assignments etc. at home is required after every lecture, at least on a weekly basis.

Students will be asked to research, read and study. Materials are available at the School Library or as indicated in class, on-line. Please make sure you are familiar with it (know how it works, opening and closing times, facilities, etc.) from the very start of the course.

No eating is allowed in class.
No internet use is allowed in class. Students caught using the internet during class hours, including breaks and lunch will lose a full letter grade.

A responsible and active class participation is expected at all times and activities.
At all times cell phones must be turned off (both during lectures and visits).
Please consider strict guidelines regarding attendance and behaviour during scheduled visits/field trip (as described in pertinent paragraphs).
Please also consider important notes on attendance, participation and assignments (as described in pertinent paragraphs).

4. METHOD
The method used will be experimental by means of interactive lectures, demos, workshops, on-site visits, direct interaction with subjects for assignments, participation in special projects, field trips, collective critiques and magazine readings. The continuous relation with the environment will a fundamental issue: all the field trips are intended to introduce the students to an
unconventional and deeper knowledge of the town, through its less touristy aspects. The
students will be required to explore Florence, to “get lost” in it in order to save personal
impressions. They will be stimulated to propose their own reportages. At the end of the course
the assignments will become a sort of personal journal and, at the same time, a portrait of a
town.
Beside the review of the assignment the teacher will control on a weekly basis the progress of
the students’ work.

5. TEXT BOOK – FURTHER READINGS – INTERNET RESOURCES

TEXT BOOK:
The instructor will provide the required readings to students and also indicate other readings or
resources in the FUA library. The class readings come from:
- Barbara London/Jim Stone “A Short Course in Photography, An Introduction to
Photographic Technique” Upper Saddle River, New Jersey (2006)

FURTHER READINGS:
- Susan Sontag, "On Photography", Picador (2001), "Regarding the pain of others"
- Katrin Eisman, Sean Duggan, Tim Grey "Real World, Digital Photography" Peachpit Press,
Berkeley, California (2004) and related website (www.digitalphotobook.net)
(5th Edition) 2009
- Robert Adams, "Beauty in Photography"
- John Berger, "Ways of seeing", “Another way of telling”, “The shape of a pocket”
- Henri Cartier Bresson, “The mind’s eye” (Aperture)
- Geoff Dyer, “The ongoing moment”
- Italo Calvino, “Invisible Cities”, “Difficult Loves”

Note: all the above books are or will be soon available for consultation at the FUA Library

DVD / MOVIES
- Zana Brisky, "Born into brothels"
- Contrasto, "La fotografia Italiana"
- William Klein, “Contacts”
- Christian Frei, “War photographer
- Dziga Vertov, “The man with a movie camera”
- W. Herzog, “The Time of Silence and Darkness”

INTERNET RESOURCES:
www.magnumphotos.com
www.agencevu.com
www.photography-now.net
www.smithfund.org
www.mediastorm.org
www.viiphotography.com
www.50statesproject.net
www.lalettredelaphotographie.com

6. VISITS – TRIPS
San Salvi
MNAF (National Museum Alinari of Photography)
Cascine Park
7. MATERIAL LIST
A Digital Camera, (more than 8.0 Megapixels) with optical zoom lens or fix lens (wide and normal).

8. ADDITIONAL FEES:
In addition to the textbooks, students will be responsible to pay for all museum/site visit entries and reservation costs as well as any materials or supplies necessary for the successful completion of the course.
Students will be informed on the first day of class of the exact amount for the above by the instructor.

In addition students may be required to leave a deposit for equipment that will be loaned to them during the semester. The deposit will be returned at the end of the course, provided the equipment has been returned in the same condition it was loaned.

9. EVALUATION – GRADING SYSTEM

Attendance:10%
Participation:10%
Improvement:10%
Assignments: 20%
Midterm Critique (inclusive of mid term test):20%
Final Project: 30%

Please note that a detailed explanation of the above grading system is found in Section 11 (Assignments, Term Papers and Exams).

Grading Scale

A = 93-100 %, A- = 90-92%, B+= 87-89%, B = 83-86%, B-=80-82%, C+ = 77-79%, C=73-76%,
C-=70-72%, D = 60-69%, F= 0-59%, W = Official Withdrawal, W/F = Failure to withdraw by the designated date.

10. ATTENDANCE – PARTICIPATION
Academic integrity and mutual respect between instructor and studente are central to Palazzi’s academic policies. This is reflected in the attendente policy. Class attendance is mandatory and counts towards the final grade. Roll will be taken at the beginning and end of each class. Coming late and leaving earlier affects the attendance and participation grade. It is important that students come to class on time.Two delays will be considered one absence.

Each absence from class will negatively impact your final grade (Attendance).

After the second absence the instructor will notify the student is at risk.

After the third absence the instructor may lower the final grade by one letter grade at the end of the term. (Example: 90/A- = B-)

After the fourth absence the student will receive an automatic Failure.

It is always the student’s responsibility to know how many absences they have in a course.
Travel is NEVER an excuse for absence from class.

11. EXAMS – PAPER

Assignments:
As every professional photographer knows the importance of being on time and ready with a coherent body of work is part of the job. In our class, be on schedule with the homework will be a teacher's must. No excuses will be accepted, the student is responsible for the efficiency of their own photographic equipment (lenses, batteries). The completion of all the the assignments counts as 20% of the course grade. Students are evaluated by collective and individual critiques given throughout the semester. The grading of the assignments will be divided into 100 points across assignments.

The assignments (5 plus the final project, whose theme will have to be proposed by the student) have been thought to push the student towards a deeper and daring knowledge of Firenze. The making of all of them will imply a research on the place and for a certain time, the analysis of works by famous photographers and readings, either recommended by the teacher.

1st assignment: Getting Lost: the student will have to take a bus (drawn by the teacher), go to the final stop and realize a visual and written reportage of her/his experience. Suggested reading: Georges Perec's Species of spaces and other pieces. References: Josef Koudelka, Mario Giacomelli, Stephen Shore, Josef Sudek, Eugene Atget and others, as well as the view of documentaries concerning the theme.

2nd assignment: Portrait: people as individuals in a town where they end by looking just as crowd: Florence as a human landscape. Photographing people, looking for persons in the crowd is a way to understand and decipher the less superficial nature of the town. Each student will choose or will be assigned a place / theme connected with the project (people at work, students, tourists, for instance) and all the directions needed by the realization of it. Suggested reading: Italo Calvino’s Difficult loves (the chapter titled: The adventure of a photographer), Henri Cartier Bresson, The mind’s eye. References: Josef Koudelka, Luc Delhaye, Henri Cartier Bresson, Bruce Davidson, Paul Strand, Robert Frank, William Klein, Michael Ackerman, Sally Mann.

3rd assignment: A Story: the narrative power of photography is the theme of this assignment. Its making will require an introduction to the authors who have experimented how photography can tell stories, from Eugene Smith and the other LIFE’s photographers to contemporary artists (for instance Sophie Calle). Suggested reading: John Berger’s Another way of telling. References: Sophie Calle, Eugene W. Smith, Danny Wilcox Frazier’s Driftless, Paul Fusco, Sebastiao Salgado’s Workers, Ralph Eugene Meatyard.

1- First Assignment
Counts for 10 points

2-Second Assignment
Counts for 15 points

3- Third Assignment
Counts for 20 points

4- Fourth Assignment
Counts for 25 points

5- Final Assignment
Counts for 30 points

Each assignment will be explained during the class and will consist in a series of 10 to 15 selected pictures or 6 to 8 prints
Midterm Review and Critique
There will be a midterm review and critique that counts for **20% of the final course grade**. This will include a presentation of a series of 8 printed pictures chosen from the assignments projects and a technical test consisting in 10 to 15 questions (not multiple choices).

Final Project and Critique
The final project consist in a portfolio presentation of 8 prints. The series of pictures has to be a coherent body of work with a specific topic. No single pictures will be accepted. The student will also scan and present all the selected pictures in digital version on cd or dvd given by the school. As a complementary critique each student will present the final work from the “Personal Diary Project”.

Remember that the dates of the exams cannot be changed for any reason, so please organize your personal agenda accordingly.

Note: the following schedule is subject to change

12. LESSONS

Lesson 1
Meet In Class
Lecture  Course introduction and presentation. Syllabus presentation and materials used during the course. Information on assignments and exam. Check of students’ photo stuff. If possible introduction to Photography technique. How the camera works. Basic Rules. Introduction to the “Personal Diary Project”.
Lab  Set Up Your Work Station. Adobe Bridge Introduction. How to Archive your Photos.
Assignments 1st Assignment (at least 10 images) - “Getting lost”. The teacher will draw bus lines. The students will have to take a bus, arrive to the final stop and photograph during the run. A short written report about the student’s impressions is due (to be sent via e-mail by the next lesson). Due by
Readings Handout about technique and extract from Henri Cartier Bresson's The mind’s eye and from Geoff Dyer’s The ongoing moment
Web www.mediastorm.org

Lesson 2
Meet In Class/Outdoor
Lecture  Technique: how to use the camera with manual setting (when possible). Exposure, Light and Shadows. Choose your exposure technique. If possible field trip.
Lab  File formats, Raw, Jpeg, Tiff. Introduction to Adobe Bridge. Review of your 1st assignment Assignments 2nd Assignment (at least 10 images): Life in a place. Each student will be given a street or a square to document for a day. The goal of the project is showing how life and time can change a place (a short written report is due – to be sent via e-mail by the next lesson)
Readings Handout about technique and from John Berger's The shape of a pocket or Susan Sontag's On photography
Web www.magnumphotos.com

Lesson 3
Meet In Class/Outdoor
Lecture  Handling your camera, Aperture Priority/ Shutter Priority. What is the Histogram – Review of 1st assignment
Lab  Adobe Photoshop CS5 Introduction. Bridge (how to import and select your images).
Assignments 2nd Assignment (at least 10 images): Human landscape/Portrait: people in Florence (People at work, tourists, students, not crowd but individuals).
Readings  Handout about technique and extract from Roland Barthes' Camera lucida
Web  www.agencevu.com / www.viiphoto.com

Lesson 4
Meet In Class/Outdoor
Lecture  Depth of Field. How to play with composition. Technical review. If possible visit to MNAF or to Marangoni Gallery for an exhibition
Lab  Adobe Photoshop Introduction. Camera Raw.
Assignments  Shoot for 2nd assignment
Web  www.photography-now.net / www.50statesproject.net

Lesson 5
Meet In Class/Outdoor
Lecture  Introduction to Printing. How to handle the printer. Camera color balance what to choose and when. If possible short field trip to Mercato Centrale area or SMN Train Station
Lab  Adobe Photoshop Introduction: Curves. Review of 2nd assignment
Assignments  Mid Term Review: start selecting the best 8 images to be printed for the mid term test. Given 3rd assignment: A Story (at least 6 images printed due by)

Lesson 6
Meet In Class
Lecture  How to compose your pictures and choose your subject. "Photo Editing" Elements (demo) – technical review (next lesson mid term test: 10 to 15 questions about technique) – Introduction of assignment n. 3 (A story) – due by (6 printed images)
Lab  Adobe Photoshop Introduction, Masks. Printing. (Print the best 8 images taken so far)
Assignments  Check technical handouts

Lesson 7
Meet In Class
Lecture  Midterm review and critique (your best 8 images, to be printed)
Lab  Midterm review and critique – Mid term test: 10 to 15 questions about photographic technique
Assignments  Final Project Paper

Lesson 8
Meet In Class/Studio
Lecture  Project Proposal Review. Studio Session – Return of your corrected tests – Movie: Born into brothels, by Zana Brisky
Lab  Photoshop: Color Balance, Black and White
Assignments  Final Project first series of pictures. / 5th assignment

Lesson 9
Meet In Class/Outdoor
Lecture  How to improve your composition. Introduction to printing. Presentation of the instructor's work
Lab  Final Project pictures selection and retouching. Printing. Review of 3rd assignment (A Story, 6 images printed at least)
Assignments  Final Project

Lesson 10
Meet In Class/Outdoor
Lecture  Final Project pictures editing/retouching. Printing. / Field Trip to San Salvi (former mental institution of Florence)
Lab  Final Project Pictures Critique, print.
Assignments: Final Project

Lesson 11
Meet In Class.
Lecture: Final Project Pictures Critique. If possible visit to exhibition
Lab: Final Project pictures editing/retouching. Printing.
Assignments: Final Project

Lesson 12
Meet SMN Train Station
Field Trip: Field Trip to Lucca
Note: Lucca Digi Photo Festival (exhibitions ticket € 5,00, Train round ticket € 10,20)
Assignments: Final Project

Lesson 13
Meet In Class
Lecture: Exhibition's selection.
How to organize your Portfolio.
Lab: Final Project pictures editing/retouching. Printing.
Assignment: Final Project

Lesson 14
Meet In Class
Lecture: **Final Portfolio Review.**
Lab: **Final Portfolio Review.**
Assignments: n/a