

Photography I GT: Introduction to Photography
Course Syllabus - 2015-2016
River Hill High School - Visual Arts Department

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Course Description

In this course, students apply the language of art in producing fine art photographs. River Hill's program is anchored in traditional black & white film photography. Students explore the optics, chemistry, and art involved in producing darkroom-based photography, then become able to apply these concepts and find parallels when learning about digital photography and image manipulation. Primary experiences will center around the use of a 35mm SLR (single lens reflex) camera, film processing, darkroom techniques, print manipulation, and the presentation of work. Experiences throughout the course will include composing, exposing, processing, enlarging images in the darkroom, and experiences in digital imaging. As a student in Photo I GT you will also explore extensions of assignment in a more in-depth or personal way - this may include additional photographs, independent explorations, or additional homework throughout the year.

Pre-requisite: Art I (with a grade of C or better)

Fundamental Experiences

1. Identify characteristics and appropriate use of equipment, materials, and processes in making both traditional black and white photographs and digital photographs.
2. Maintain a binder AND an online digital portfolio for idea generation as well as the collection and analysis of image characteristics and the portfolio of work.
3. Construct and practice the use of early photographic techniques, including pinhole photography and photograms.
4. Demonstrate the appropriate use of 35mm SLR (single lens reflex) camera to control exposure.
5. Utilize basic black and white photographic processes including composing, exposing, processing, enlarging images in the darkroom, and presenting images.
6. Demonstrate an understanding of the technical properties of digital images and apply skills and knowledge to the production of photographs.
7. Apply Photoshop tools to the creation and manipulation of photographic images.
8. Analyze and compare ways master photographers find and interpret subject matter to support an idea or theme through the use of the stages of description, analysis, interpretation, and judgment.
9. Recognize various conceptual approaches used by master photographers for personal and public audiences to elicit an emotional response to cultural situations.
10. Manipulate and modify a variety of conceptual and personal approaches master photographers use to compose their subjects.
11. Research requirements and qualifications necessary for entering a career which utilizes visual arts skills and behaviors.
12. Self-directed exploration of techniques and concepts in a personal and independent way
13. Employ proper health and safety precautions.

Required Materials

- **3-ring notebook (at least 1")** - This will help protect your photographic prints and negatives, which are VERY fragile and may be damaged easily. You will also store all handouts, notes, contact sheet reflections here. You may **NOT** share a binder.
- **Notebook paper** - for note taking. College ruled only, wide-ruled is disgusting. Graph paper also acceptable.
- **A usable #2 pencil every day!**

Course Objective: Photo I GT

RESPONDING: The synthesis of meaning, context, and process through interaction with, and connection to the visual world.

1. Independently understand and apply relevant vocabulary when responding to the visual world.
2. Independently research and interpret artistic intention, supported by relevant contextual information, content, and compositional choices in photographic works.
3. Analyze ways photographers use different tools, materials, processes, and techniques to solve visual problems and create meaning.
4. Select and analyze photographic works from various societies, cultures, and/or time periods that reflect universal themes in order to inform a personal aesthetic.
5. Analyze how the limitations imposed by and the development of technology influence criteria for evaluating photographic works..
6. Investigate various artistic skills and behaviors that are essential components to college and career success.

CREATING: The process of conceiving and developing new and/or personal ideas through art making.

1. Independently use a visual record to document a personal engagement with the artistic process.
2. Independently select and apply strategies to generate a variety of ideas in response to a given problem.
3. Investigate relevant historical and contemporary resources, media, and suggested mentor photographers in order to develop new ideas.
4. Select and apply a variety of approaches to photography, including experimentation, documentation, narrative, and imagination to develop personal solutions.
5. Select and apply formal qualities and compositional devices to organize personal solutions and communicate ideas in response to visual art problems.
6. Use a variety of tools, materials, processes, and techniques, including:
 - pinhole,
 - cliché-verre
 - photograms
 - analog darkroom photography
 - digital photography
 - digital imaging softwaresafely effectively, and with a focus on quality.
7. Persevere in problem solving through the evaluation of work in progress to identify areas that need of further development and refinement of quality.
8. Identify, analyze, and manage tasks to complete work in accordance with assignment criteria within a given time frame.

PRESENTING: The relating of personal artistic intent and choices through reflections, thoughtful presentation and/or exhibition of personal work.

1. Develop and maintain a digital portfolio of work in a professional format for the purpose of collaborating and interacting with others.
2. Begin to develop and share an artist's statement that reflects aesthetic choices and a personal direction over a period of time.
3. Collaboratively select work and prepare a thematic exhibition, including appropriate display materials.
4. Demonstrate the ability to engage in meaningful dialogue with peers for the purpose of giving and receiving feedback and building artistic community.

Recommended Student Materials

- **USB drive** - It is recommended that you have a personal USB drive in order to keep a safe copy of all digital work. Your work will be stored on the schools server, but I recommend having your own copy. The Art Department cannot be responsible for lost work.
- **Apron or smock.** Highly recommended this if you want to keep your clothes looking their best! (The Photography teachers all wear them.)

Studio Materials

Photographic materials are particularly expensive. In the past, a \$60.00 studio fee was attached to this course in order to defray costs. We no longer require students to pay studio fees, and provide students with all necessary materials. However, the art department provides 35mm film, 8" x 10" photographic paper, and darkroom chemistry and digital lab maintenance at a cost of about \$60 per student.

Personal expenses can incur due to the following: Accidents due to carelessness, improper use of materials, or students who wish to develop their portfolio beyond the requirements of the course.

If any of the materials we provide - including cameras and equipment that are borrowed - are lost, exposed, damaged, or otherwise become no longer able to serve their purpose, then the student must cover the cost of those materials.

Cameras

We will be using 35mm film "single lens reflex" (SLR) cameras with manual exposure control. Students are NOT required to have their own cameras for this course. The photo department currently has about 50 cameras which may be signed out and borrowed to complete assignments. However, there are about 130 students taking photography courses this year, so - if at all possible, it could be a great benefit for a student to have her or his own camera. Ask friends and family - there may be a camera you can borrow for the year! You can also purchase your own camera to use - please talk to your instructor or see our department website for a guide on what to look for.

Studio Guidelines

All students are expected to observe and adhere to all policies defined in the Student Handbook regarding lateness and conduct. Lateness will not be tolerated. As a studio class, attendance and promptness are critical to the success of the student in Photo I. Students will abide by all darkroom and safety procedures. Students are expected to maintain the studio and darkroom. Students are responsible to be where they are assigned during the class period. Students are expected to participate in all class discussions and activities. See space use contract for further details.

Digital devices should be kept on SILENT mode during the school day (not vibrate). Only with teacher permission are you able to use your own digital device during class time. See student handbook for further details.

Portfolio, Assessment, and Grading

A record of your work will exist in your binder (negatives, prints, and notes), as well as digitally online, and should be maintained regularly. These will be reviewed quarterly.

A student's grade will be based upon daily in-class work, homework, tests and quizzes, and assignments. Assignments will be evaluated based upon the following components:

- 1. Presentation** – Neatness and respect for your work should be evident in the appearance of a completed assignment. The entire appearance of artwork turned in should be purposeful and of the highest quality.
- 2. Design** – Thoughtfulness to the composition and its relationship to personal ideas.
- 3. Studio Skills** – Proper handling and use of equipment, responsible use of time, respect for others and their work, clean-up, and class participation.
- 4. Objectives** – Meeting the criteria or objectives for the specific assignment.

This system will allow the teacher and the student to evaluate specific strengths and identify areas that need improvement.

Grades will be based upon percentages:

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

Homework

Most of the work (probably about 70%) you do for this course will be done in class. The primary purpose of homework will be to help us make the best use of our class time, equipment, and facilities. For example, all shooting assignments are to be done outside of class time unless specifically stated otherwise, so that your in-class time can be spent processing the film and creating prints. Other work that may be assigned as homework include brainstorming assignments, readings, reviewing for quizzes/exams, research, and work on long-term assignments. GT students will also have additional components for the Photogram and Pinhole units to complete, as well as two additional rolls of film (along with contact sheet, and prints) due - one for 3rd quarter and one for 4th quarter. These extra rolls will be based on a theme developed by the student in discussion with the instructor.

It is in the student's best interest to use their regular class time wisely to complete assignments. If in-class time is not used wisely, more out-of-class work may be the result. It is the student's responsibility to record homework assignments.

Thanksgiving break, Winter Break, and Spring Break are homework-free. Homecoming weekend and Prom weekend as well as 2 other weekends of the year will be homework-free. As assignments for this class are often independently driven, ongoing, and involved these homework-free times do not preclude ongoing or long-term work. Students that need extra time may find working during these breaks necessary.

Deadlines, Missed Work, and Redoing Assignments

Assignment deadlines are set at the discretion of the instructor when the assignment is given. It is the student's responsibility to make up any missed work due to excused absences, and to collect daily objectives, handouts, notes, assignments, etc. Students are also responsible for scheduling appointments with the teacher to discuss make-up work. If a student is absent on the day an assignment is due, the assignment should be handed in on the following day. A student may choose to redo an assignment, with teacher approval, if they are unhappy with the grade. If the original grade is a result of not using time appropriately, lack of effort, or not meeting due dates you will not be allowed to redo an assignment. Students have one month from the original due date to turn in a revised work for full credit. Hawktime is an optimal time during the day to complete work and work in the art room. **Late work can still be turned in for 50% credit up until the end of the quarter.**

Academic Integrity

Issues related to ownership of imagery, copyright law, and fair use will be addressed in class. All work created in classes is expected to be wholly created by the student or significantly altered in its presentation to meet an assignment. If you submit work that makes use of photographs, published images, and/or other artists' works, you must show substantial and significant development beyond duplication. This may be demonstrated through manipulation of the formal qualities, design, and/or concept of the original work. It is unethical, constitutes plagiarism, and often violates copyright law to simply copy an image (even in another medium) that was made by someone else. Violation may result in referral to the Honor Council and loss of credit.

Field Trips

You are expected to attend a field trip this year—one in the fall or in the spring. You will be given advance notice to ensure that you can arrange to miss your classes that day and/or take the day off from your after-school job or after-school obligations. We usually return to school by 2:10 p.m. I cannot emphasize **enough** the importance of seeing art beyond River Hill High School. As a member of a photo class, you are declaring your passion for art, and with that, you have a responsibility to educate yourself about art in the world. Therefore, you should view these field trips as not merely a diversion, but rather a profound educational experience.

National Art Honor Society

The National Art Honor Society encourages and supports outstanding artistic scholarship, service to the school and community, artistic endeavors, and good citizenship. Student members of this organization exemplify these standards, and work to promote an awareness of art and to support the education process at River Hill High School and in the community. Membership is open to all students who have completed Art 1. Past NAHS activities have included: mural painting, Coffeehouse, gallery and painting trips, public sculpture projects, elementary art days, coffeehouses, postcard exchanges. NAHS members are eligible for scholarships at many art colleges and universities. The first meeting open to members will be in September; an announcement will be made in class.

Topics and Assignments

Students can expect three to four major assignments during each marking period. These assignments will have guiding themes that will be open to personal interpretation and investigation. One quarter long assignment will be a presentation on a Master Photographer. There will be three major topics (outlined below) that will be covered during the first part of the semester. There will also be occasional quizzes and a midterm exam to assess student understanding of the concepts.

Topic One: Capturing an Image: Light and Light Exposure

A brief historical and technical background Camera Obscura
Creating a Pinhole Camera

Topic Two: Introduction to the SLR Camera

The camera body, shutter, lens, and film
First Shots and the Principles of Composition
Research Assignment: Master Photographers

Topic Three: Making and Refining the Image

Film development, the negative, and making a print

Additional Topics that will be covered during this course:

- Composition: Applying the Elements and Principles of Art and Design
- Digital Workflow and Studio Practices -Portraiture -Collage -Text and Image
- Bookmaking -Digital Issues -Careers in Photography -Critical Response to Photography

Course Outline	Points
Sunprints / Camera Obscura	
Photograms	100
-creating camera-less images	
-understanding the enlarger	
-using the Digital Lab	
GT - a series of 3 additional Photograms (narrative, thematic)	100
Pinhole Photography	150
-historical considerations	
-camera construction	
-image positive and negative	
GT - one Pinhole photograph taken at home	100
Darkroom Quiz.	50
Snapshots and Composed Photographs	50
-what makes a photo art or a snapshot	
Camera Parts and Functions	30
-Light Metering	
-understanding how the camera lens, body, and film work together to make an image	
Camera & Metering Quiz	50
Group Shooting	100
-understanding the camera and metering	
Mapping Your World	100
Documenting the Principles of Composition	
-shooting and processing negative	
-image enlarging	
Photo Restoration	100
-learning Photoshop to restore old photographs	

Isolation/Intimacy/Time/Memory: Aperture & Shutter Speed	100
-creatively control movement and focus	
-technically control light and camera settings	
Midterm	
Show Me the Light	100
-using natural and artificial light	
-utilizing different times of day	
-utilizing the bulb setting and bracketing	
GT - One roll due for 3rd quarter	100
- artist inspiration for each one -	
Hoaxes	60
-digital issues	
-manipulating	
Feldman's Method: critically looking at photography	50
-in-class review	
Masters of Photography	200
-presentation on master work	
-shooting in the style of a master	
GT - One roll due for 4th quarter	100
- artist inspiration for each one -	
Portrait without a Face	100
-what else can be a portrait	
-learning to edit	
Introduction to Digital Photography	50
-quiz	
-photography in the world	
Digital & Film Panorama	100
-narrative exploration	
-figure in the environment	