

Photography III: Personal Directions in Photography (AP, HN, 1 credit, 2 credit)

River Hill High School Visual Arts Department

2012-2013 Course Syllabus

Course Description

In this course, students develop a body of work informed by research of contemporary and master artists, cultural exemplars, and peer dialogue. The portfolio reflects a breadth of experiences, concentration on a specific theme, and quality execution of artworks. Each student defends the portfolio in a personal artist's statement. This continues the development of the body of work begun in Photo I and Photo II: Portfolio Development, leading to the Advanced Placement examination.

The structure of Photo III is very different from past art classes. The primary direction of your work, including your time in class and at home, is determined by you. Your interests, influences, inspiration, and questions will guide the work you make. You will work more in groups in class and will be involved in group shooting work outside of class. You will be given guiding assignments throughout the year either individually or as a class as the artistic maturity, interests, and needs are assessed by the instructor.

Each assignment will require a rubric stating a student generated objective, a researched artist with images and description of their work posted online, a contact sheet analysis turned in, and final edited photos turned in online or in print form. All Photo 3 students will complete 7 independent shooting assignments towards their AP Concentration throughout the year ON TOP OF the 7 shooting assignments all Photo 3 students will complete.

If you fail to meet deadlines a meeting will be scheduled between the instructor, you, and your parent in order to assess your progress and continue your growth. Deadlines are critical to your success in this class.

Students choose what and how they wish to work. Students need to work on many diverse problems to encourage and ensure portfolio individuality. In the Breadth section students explore a variety of concepts and approaches in order to demonstrate their abilities and versatility with problem solving, ideas, and techniques. These experiences are also used to develop an approach for their concentration.

Students are encouraged to develop verbal and written literacy about their works (see attached grading rubric), and we use the AP scoring rubric for individual and group evaluation. Students are encouraged to examine their work and discuss how to move it from a middle-range piece to a high-level piece of artwork.

Materials

As an advanced photo student you will determine the materials and medium you work in, either digital or film. Students are expected to maintain a sketchbook, a binder with prints and negatives, as well as a digital portfolio. Pencils, pens, USB drives are expected every day of class, as well as any other materials students feel they need in order to stay productive for the entire period (personal computer, camera, etc). **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 pay for those materials in the future.**

Requirements for the Portfolio

There are three essentials to every portfolio:

1. The portfolio work will be of the highest possible quality.
2. The portfolio work will document a range of technical, formal, and expressive experiences.

3. The portfolio work will begin to focus on a particular interest, theme or problem.

In the building of the best possible portfolio, this course will focus on interpreting your own experiences, primarily through observation and experimentation. At the end of the term, the work in your portfolio should demonstrate your ability to do the following:

- Think creatively
- Think critically
- Take risks
- Interpret the world around you
- Experiment with techniques and concepts in a visual journal
- Create a composition
- Work in diverse media
- Depict light
- Depict space
- Handle color
- Draw what you see
- Respond to or reinterpret works of master artists and artists from other cultures
- Develop a series of thematically related works

Homework

This class is almost entirely based on work you do at home and then work with in class. If you do not shoot weekly and work well independently you will struggle to keep up with the expectations of this class. As this is an Advanced Placement course, a minimum of *three to four hours* of outside work is expected each week. You will be expected to turn in work, either digital or prints, every two to three weeks. As the long-term homework assignment allows for the greatest individual interpretation and creative problem solving, *the expectation is substantial*. Significantly, these are also the works that colleges tend to be MOST interested in because the homework problems have the greatest latitude for personal interpretation. Therefore these works are *primarily responsible for getting you into the college-level art program of your choice*. The homework is given more weight than individual class work assignments. Therefore, any student not submitting homework—or submitting hastily-prepared homework—will be unlikely to pass that marking period.

Thanksgiving break, Winter Break, and Spring Break are homework-free (AP students may need to prepare for May exams during Spring Break). 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 and Missed Work:

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.

Late work will be deducted 10% each day late.

Portfolio, Assessment, and Grading

We will assess each art problem while it is in progress and/or when it is complete. This may take the form of written reflections, individual critiques, peer commentary, or (most often) group critiques. Intelligent, thoughtful, and open-minded participation in the assessment process is *mandatory*, and *will* affect your marking period grade. Individual projects will not be assigned grades. However, if at any time you would like additional feedback or are unsure of your progress, please see me at any time. At the end of every marking period you will assess your own progress, reflecting on your finished works, your processes, and your participation. After completing the grade assessment, you will maintain and update your digital and print portfolio, your sketchbook, and your self-assessment to me for a letter grade. Submitted work *must* be in pristine condition. Insure that your work is not smeared, creased or torn; and in chronological order.

Content of the Class:

The course includes the following three components:

- A. Study of master artists and contemporary artists and trends. In addition to class work, students are expected to view work online, visit galleries and local museums in Baltimore and Washington on their own.
- B. A sketchbook/journal to be composed of visual ideas, notes, photos, plans, short assignments, quick drawings, and practice of various techniques. Colleges like to see a students' sketchbook to see how ideas are generated.
- C. Development of the student's portfolio for AP 2-D Design has three parts and will be maintained in print form and digitally online and stored on the school hard drive (with a backup at home):

Art Exhibitions

There are multiple opportunities for students to have their work exhibited both school and countywide throughout each school year. Following various class units, artwork may be selected to hang in the school lobby or various display cases. There are shows specifically focused on upper level students including the annual Junior/Senior Show that is juried and offers monetary and scholarship awards.

2-D Design Portfolio

Section I – Quality (one-third total score)

5 actual works that demonstrate mastery of design in concept, composition, and execution

Section II – Concentration (one third of total score)

12 slides: some may be details

A body of work investigating a strong underlying visual idea in 2-D design

Section III – Breadth (one third of total score)

12 slides: 1 slide each of 12 different works

Works that demonstrate a variety of concepts and approaches in 2-D design

Breadth

Examples of 2-D Breadth problems;

Media could include graphic design, typography, digital imaging, photography, fabric design, weaving, illustration, painting, or printmaking.

- Work that employs line, shape, or color to create unity or variety in a composition
- Work that demonstrates symmetry/asymmetry, balance, or anomaly

- Work that explores figure/ground relationships
- Development of a modular or repeat pattern to create rhythm
- Color organization using primary, secondary, tertiary, analogous, or other color relationships for emphasis or contrast in composition
- Work that investigates or exaggerates proportion/scale

Concentration

Examples of 2-D Concentration problems:

- Design and execute a children's book
- A series of identity products for imaginary business
- Political cartoons using current events and images
- Series of works starting with representational interpretations and evolving into abstraction.
- Exploration of pattern and design found in nature and/or culture
- Abstractions developed from cells and other microscopic images
- A personal family history communicated through symbols and imagery
- A series of fabric designs, apparel designs, or weavings on a theme
- Use of multiple modules to create compositions that reflect narrative or psychological events
- Series of landscapes that use color and composition to intensify artistic expression

Quality - (*Five Actual Works*) Assess your selected portfolio work and score it on the following criteria:

| | Poor | Moderate | Good | Strong | Excellent |
|---|------|----------|------|--------|-----------|
| Materials well used; Technique is excellent | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Inventive/Imaginative | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Evidence of thinking; Clear visual intent | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Purposeful composition | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Awareness of style and Format | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Sensitive/evocative | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

If you have not scored your work consistently in the 4 or 5 range, now assess what the strengths and weaknesses are, and how to rework the piece so it will score a 5. Explain your rationale in a paragraph below, considering:

1. Have you done anything special with the use of the art elements (line, color, shape, texture, value)?
2. What are some of the dominant shapes, expressive forms, color scheme, and textures that carry significance in this artwork?
3. Is the work ordered/balanced? Or chaotic/disturbing? What makes for the order of chaos? Would you use words such as unity, variety, contrast, balance, movement, and rhythm to describe formal characteristics of this work?
4. Describe the quality of execution and technique. What gives the work its uniqueness?
5. Does the work evoke any feeling? To what do you ascribe your feelings – the use of color, shape, technique, theme?
6. Is there symbolism used in the work to convey meaning other than what you want the viewer to think about? Did you successfully get your message across?
7. What is your general impression of the work? What did you want the viewer to think about? Did you successfully get your message across?

Discuss if the work is a significant success, why or why not, and support your judgment with evidence.

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.

Student Self-Critique

Upon completion of your work, fill out the following self-critique to be submitted with each assignment. Be sure to complete both the rubric section and the explanation section below.

| | Excellent | Average | Needs Work |
|--|---|---|---|
| Design Quality – The elements of art (line, color shape, texture, shape, form, space, and value) and the principles of design (rhythm and movement, balance, proportion, variety and emphasis, harmony and unity) are utilized successfully; there is strong evidence of the artist’s plan or organization of thought, and the basic assignment criteria are met or exceeded. | Uniquely utilizes given design concepts | Utilizes given design concepts | Insufficiently utilizes some design concepts |
| Creativity – The work is conceptually innovative, the materials used or the process of creating the work are inventive, or the work is simply quite original. | Work is distinctly original in terms of the concept, process, or materials used | Work demonstrates some originality of concept, process, or materials used | Work is clichéd, basic, or does not demonstrate inventiveness from the artist |
| Craftsmanship – Time and care are taken to create a piece that feels finished and is well made – it doesn’t seem to the viewer that the work was “slapped together in a hurry.” | Extraordinary or proficient level of craftsmanship | Sufficient level of craftsmanship | Mediocre or inferior level of craftsmanship |

Self Evaluation

Mark one box under each category above to describe the level of success in your own work. For example, next to Design Quality, do you believe your work is excellent, average, or needs work? Then, in the space provided, describe why you rated your work as you did in each category.

Here is how you can best reach us:

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