



ART 215: Photography: Portfolio of Perugia

Course Syllabus 2026 Summer Session I

Instructor: Philippa Stannard, MFA ATR

Credits: 3

Prerequisites: none

Class Meeting Days & Time: Monday and Wednesday 9:15 am 12:45 pm

Course Type: standard course

Course Fee: USD\$20

Course Description

This course will introduce students to the fundamentals of photography. No previous photographic experience is required. The focus will be to capture and record the students' experience in Italy through weekly photo walks around Perugia, an ancient Umbrian hilltop town, as well as to create a portfolio of these images. The class will explore the cultural phenomenon of photography and the role it plays in society. Students will learn basic concepts, processes, and techniques, including camera usage; exposure controls; manipulating and printing digital photographic images; and print presentation. At the end of the semester, all the photographs will be displayed at the Umbra Art Show.

"The question is not how to take a good picture, but how not to miss one." - Harold Feinstein

Learning Outcomes and Assessment Measures

Below are the course's learning outcomes, followed by the methods that will be used to assess students' achievement for each learning outcome. By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- *Demonstrate* a thorough and functional knowledge of the essential mechanisms of a camera. (Quiz, Assignments, Critiques)
- *Create* photographs with interesting and effective compositions, lighting, and points of view. (Critiques and Assignments)
- *Apply* appropriate edits to digital images. (Assignments)
- *Understand* the visual language of photography, and how it can be used to express and communicate ideas. (Quiz, Photography Assignments, Readings, Class Discussion)

Course Materials

Textbook: Joel Meyerowitz, *Seeing Things* (New York: Aperture, 2016).

Assessment

Attendance	10%
Photographic Assignments (3x25% each)	75%
Quizzes	7%
Oral and Visual Report on Photographer	8%

Grading

Students are reminded that it is their responsibility to note the dates of exams and other assignments. No

alternative exam dates will be offered and professors are not required to give partial credit for any late work (they do so at their discretion: the Institute's default policy is no extensions and a zero for any work turned in late). Students who book travel when they have an exam or other assessment will have to change their plans or accept a zero. Letter grades for student work are based on the following percentage scale:

Letter Grade Range	Numerical Score Equivalent	Student Performance
A	93% - 100%	Exceptional
A-	90% - 92%	Excellent
B+	87% - 89%	Superior
B	83% - 86%	
B-	80% - 82%	
C+	77% - 79%	Satisfactory
C	73% - 76%	
C-	70% - 72%	
D+	67% - 69%	Low Pass
D	63% - 66%	
D-	60% - 62%	
F	59% or less	Fail (no credit)

Please note: decimal numerals between 1-4 are rounded down while 5-9 are rounded up: e.g., expect 89.4 to be 89.0 while 89.5 to round up to 90.

Course Requirements

Grades are based on the following criteria.

Attendance (10%)

Attendance is an essential part of this course. You are allowed 1 unexcused absence without penalty, per Institute policy. If you attend all the other meetings, you will receive 10% for this part of your grade. There are no make-ups offered for attendance. See further information about attendance below.

Photographic Assignments (3x25% each = 75%)

Students will have three photographic assignments due during the semester. Each assignment will consist of taking many photos, placing these photographs in a folder in your device which we can view, compare, choose, and edit your best work. The photographs that you turn in for each assignment should be renamed in the following format: LastnameFirstname1.jpg , LastnameFirstname2.jpg etc. Please upload 3 of the 4 photographs to the appropriate folder on Google Drive. Please do not put your photographs in a folder. Please upload one photograph from each assignment to the prompt in Moodle. It will be graded by your peers. For each of the following assignments, there will be a full prompt in Moodle.

Assignment 1: Rule of Thirds and Exposure

- Four edited and optimized photographs.
- There are a lot of things to think about when taking a photograph. We're going to focus on the first and the most important, The Rule of Thirds. Each photograph you turn in should have important elements in the photograph that are on the Third Lines. This first assignment is your chance to put into practice all we've learned about your camera focus on what makes photographs memorable. Please pay special attention to composition and correct exposure in order to draw the viewer into the scene. The subject matter is open.

Assignment 2: Viewpoint and Focal Length

- Four edited and optimized photographs.
- In addition to getting a great composition (rule of thirds), and the correct exposure, the viewpoint or place where you are when you take the photograph can really add a lot of interest to a photograph. Photographs taken from below tend to make the subject appear bigger and more powerful, photographs taken from above can make the subject appear smaller and more childlike. Focal length can also make subjects appear bigger or smaller in

relation to their backgrounds. Keep in mind how your subject is related to your background. Get creative and have fun!

Assignment 3: Printed 13x19 inch Photograph, displayed in the Umbra Art Show.

- We will be putting all you've learned this semester into our last assignment. Please choose your best photograph from this semester, make sure it is edited and optimised as needed, printed and displayed.

Quizzes (7%)

Students will be assigned quizzes every week. The quiz will be on Moodle and it is not timed. Students can take the quiz as many times as they like, with the recorded grade being the highest grade they receive. There will be a combination of technical, methodological, and content questions. The content questions will help students zoom in on the most important ideas of the readings. The technical questions will help students learn the class's policies and administrative procedures. The methodological questions will test on skills that will pop up every week, like finding an author's argument and assessing sources.

Oral and Visual Report on Photographer (8%)

Photographers have done amazing things in the world with their work. They have used it to capture beauty, humor, and humanity in everyday life, as a way to document social injustice and push for change, and as a way to document the state of our world to inspire conservation and prevent climate change (among many other things). Students will choose a photographer and give a 10-15 minute presentation to the class documenting their photographer's work and how they use it to bring awareness to a specific issue. Please include at least 20 examples of their work, each piece taking up the entire slide. Please place your presentation (Google or Keynote) in the appropriate folder at the top of the course page. Please label it with your photographer's name and your name (example: AnselAdams_JoeSmith). Please ensure all sharing and editor permissions are turned ON. This way it can be easily accessed without losing class time logging in and out of various email accounts.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is expected and mandatory for classroom times and co-curricular activities. The first absence per course due to illness will be considered an excused "sick day" and does not require medical documentation. To receive additional excused absences due to illness, students are required to see a local physician or request a letter from an Institute-approved doctor documenting they should be excused from class for illness.

Unexcused absences will adversely affect a student's academic performance and will result in a reduction of the student's final course grade by 2% per absence up to a maximum of 10%. Excessive unexcused absences may result in a failing grade or disciplinary action. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of the number of absences or late arrivals for each course, and to ask the instructor when in doubt.

If students miss class, they are responsible for obtaining class notes from other students and/or for meeting the professor during office hours. Any work missed in class because of an excused absence may be made up within one week of the return to the class. Any work missed that was a quiz or other test must be made up outside of class time and will, in the interest of intellectual honesty, be a slightly different test than the one given in class.

Presence during mandatory field trips is especially important. Missing a mandatory field trip for a course, unless for a very serious reason that is communicated to Umbra staff in a timely manner, will lower the students' grade by half a letter grade (i.e., a final grade of a B+ would be lowered to a B).

Legitimate reasons for an excused absence or tardiness includes: death in immediate family, religious observances, illness or injury, local inclement weather, medical appointments that cannot be rescheduled.

Students who request an approved absence to observe a religious holiday must submit a formal request to the Institute's Director within one week after the add/drop period when course schedules, including any field trips, are finalized. No exceptions will be made after this deadline.

Except in the case of medical emergencies, absences are not accepted when tests are scheduled; tests cannot be made up. Furthermore, scheduled times and dates indicated for exams, quizzes, oral presentations, and any other graded assignments cannot be changed for any reason. Even if more sections of the same class are activated, students may only take exams during the scheduled times and dates for the section they are enrolled in.

Tardiness Policy

Students are expected to attend all classes punctually. Any student arriving up to 15 minutes late or leaving up to 15 minutes earlier than the scheduled class end time will be marked as tardy. Each incident of tardiness (late arrivals to or early departures from class) is 0.5% off the final grade. However, should a student arrive more than 15 minutes late or depart more than 15 minutes before the conclusion of the class, it will be recorded as an absence.

Students are also expected to remain in class during the time of instruction except for a reasonable amount of time to use the restroom. Students who leave class and do not return during the class session will receive an unexcused absence or late penalty.

Academic Integrity

All forms of cheating (i.e., copying during exam either from a fellow student or making unauthorized use of notes) and plagiarism (i.e., presenting the ideas or words of another person for academic evaluation without acknowledging the source) will be handled according to the Institute Academic Policy, which can be found in the Umbra Institute Academic Policies and Conduct Guidelines.

Utilizing ChatGPT or other artificial intelligence (AI) tools for the generation of content submitted by a student as their own as part of any assignment for academic credit at the Institute constitutes a form of plagiarism.

Should the Institute become aware of a student's use of such platforms and services, the student will be subject to the same consequences and judicial proceedings as are in place for plagiarism (defined above).

Classroom Policy

Students are expected to follow the policy of the Institute and demonstrate the appropriate respect for the historical premises that the school occupies. Students are not allowed to use their cell phones or laptops while in class or during co-curricular events and activities, unless otherwise specified in the course syllabus or expressly permitted by the instructor for special learning. This policy also applies to earbuds, smart watches, and headsets. Students who do not respect these rules will be subject to disciplinary warnings and probation, be given an unexcused absence from class, and other disciplinary action including dismissal from the course.

Moodle

Please note that Moodle, *not this syllabus*, is the ultimate reference for due dates, assignment prompts, and course announcements. It is the student's responsibility to check the site regularly to be aware of announcements as well as to see and record all due dates for assignments.

Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments

WEEK 1

What Makes a “Good” Photograph?

Meeting 1: *Introduction to the course, composition, Presentation and Discussion of Images. Introduction to Assignment 1: Rule of Thirds and Exposure. Photowalk practicing Rule of Thirds and Exposure*

Meeting 2: *Discussion of Reading, Identifying your best images, Identifying your best images, editing by straightening, cropping, and fixing distortion. Photowalk: Rule of Thirds, Exposure*

Readings for the week:

Meyerowitz, Joel, 2016 *Seeing Things Aperture*, New York pp.1-13

Meyerowitz, *Seeing Things Aperture*, pp.14-19

WEEK 2

Photographers who find Beauty, Humor and Meaning in Everyday Life. Museum Visit

Meeting 1: *Discussion of Reading, Photowalk, Basic editing (straightening, perspective, cropping, curves, WB)*

Meeting 2: *Photographers who Find Beauty, Humor and Meaning in Everyday Life: Matt Stuart , Rinko Kawauchi , Christian Vielar , Arne Svenson , Fulvio Roiter , Inge Morath. Discussion of Reading, National Gallery Museum Visit*

Readings for the week:

Meyerowitz, *Seeing Things Aperture*, pp. 20-24

Meyerowitz, *Seeing Things Aperture*, pp. 25-31

WEEK 3

Photowalk, Photographers who use their work to promote Social Change, Assignment 1 Due

Meeting 1: *Discussion of Reading, Photowalk*

Meeting 2: *Photography for Social Change Highlight: Zanele Muboli, Gordon Parks, LaToyaRuby Frazier, Pete Eckert, Stephanie Sinclair, Rick Guidotti. Assignment 1 Due*

Discussion of Reading, Selective Editing, Working on Assignment 2, printing

Readings for the week:

Meyerowitz, *Seeing Things Aperture*, pp. 32-37

Meyerowitz, *Seeing Things Aperture*, pp. 38-43

WEEK 4

Viewpoint and Depth of Field, Photowalk, Photographers who use their work as a Tool for Environmentalism, Selective Editing and Masking.

Meeting 1: *Focal Length, Viewpoint and Reality. Photowalk*

Meeting 2: *Discussion of Reading, Photographers Benjamin Von Wong, Chris Jordan, Edward Burtynsky, Cristina Mittermeier, Thandive Murin, Paul Nicklen. Selective Editing*

Readings for the week:

Meyerowitz, *Seeing Things Aperture*, York pp. 44-49

Meyerowitz, *Seeing Things Aperture*, pp. 50-55

WEEK 5

Assignment Due. Printing

Meeting 1: *Printing work for Student Show*

Meeting 2: *Assignment Due, Grading*

Readings for the week:

Meyerowitz, *Seeing Things Aperture*, pp. 56-61