

# INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

131

## JOUR 131

Intro to Digital Photography  
Online/Zoom Hybrid  
Summer Fun Edition

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**Have your camera with you at all times!** I'd even say sleep with it under your pillow, but it may not be that comfortable.

### Optional (but highly recommended) Text

LIFE Guide to Digital Photography: Joe McNally. There may be some copies in the bookstore, or order from Amazon: [https://www.amazon.com/LIFE-Guide-Digital-Photography-Everything/dp/1603201270/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?dchild=1&keywords=life+photography+mcnally+book&qid=1588729222&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/LIFE-Guide-Digital-Photography-Everything/dp/1603201270/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=life+photography+mcnally+book&qid=1588729222&sr=8-1)

**This class is in the online/hybrid format** (synchronous, as the university calls it). Therefore, we need to meet regularly via Zoom. I will be sending out an email survey to determine schedules and arrange the best meeting times. Though I will factor in flexibility, these meetings are critical to the learning process, especially when it comes to demonstrations and discussions about your photographs and the photographs of others.

*To be a photographer: "You need a heart, an eye, a mind, and a magic box."*

— Carl Mydans

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Introduces non-photojournalism majors to the processes and aesthetic values of digital photography, including light, composition, captured moments, journalistic storytelling, and ethics. Lecture concepts applied through people-oriented photography assignments and class critiques. High quality point-and-shoot or DSLR camera required.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES/OUTCOMES

- Examine, identify and operate the parts of the digital camera related to ISO, aperture, shutter speed, exposure, lenses, flash, and focus mechanisms.
- Apply lighting, composition, and color techniques that demonstrate the technical structure and aesthetic appeal of an effective photograph.
- Practice capturing expressive moments in photographs of people.
- Develop intellectual, technical, and analytical skills to make photographs of people and events that communicate compelling stories.
- Apply key principles of digital workflow, editing, toning, designing, and output using Photo Mechanic, Photoshop, and InDesign software.
- Practice gathering and composing written captions to increase the story value of the photographs.
- Through critiques of photography projects, students assess the value of a photograph and explain (and defend) their reasoning behind what is effective and what needs to be improved.
- Identify notable professional photographers and demonstrate an awareness of the societal impact of their photography through written reports and oral presentations.
- Examine the ethical standards of photojournalism and compare these standards to other forms of photography.

## Topics discussed (not in order and subject to change)

- Camera mechanics • Exposure Triangle • Depth of field • Light • Composition
- Capturing Moments • Color • Portraits • Texture • Picture packages • Electronic Flash • Idea generation • Caption writing • Photographic history, contemporary practice, and practitioners • Action/Motion • Features • Events • Ethical boundaries in photojournalism • Digital processing and workflow using Photo Mechanic, Photoshop, and InDesign • Sports photography • The photograph as a metaphor •

## PROJECT IDEAS (subject to adjustments)

- Light • Composition • Texture • Color • Action/Motion • Memorial Day theme
- Portraits • Reaction/Interaction/Emotion • Word • Choice • Community Life

## PHOTOGRAPHY ASSIGNMENTS

Photography assignments receive the most weight toward your grade in this class. Each assignment is discussed in class, and a handout will also be provided outlining its requirements. If it is feasible, practical demonstrations will be performed to aid in completing the assignments. Also included with the assignment will be the date the assignment is due. Some assignments will be processed during class time on the day they are due. For these projects, you are responsible for having your memory card ready at the beginning of the Zoom session with the images on it and prepared to download and process once the session begins. Late assignments will result in 10 points being deducted for each 48-hour period of time they are late. Points can also be deducted if you are not present during our class critiques. The purpose of this policy is to maintain fairness and equality for all members of the class, but everyone will have the opportunity to reshoot one assignment for any reason. The purpose of the re-

**GRADE BREAKDOWN**

Assignments – 88%  
Quizzes/Exercises – 12%

You will receive a point grade based on a 100-point scale for each assignment. Your course grade will be calculated and given on a 100 point scale:

**GRADING CRITERIA**

Though there is a more specific grading criteria outlined in the individual assignments, in general, your performance in this course will be evaluated based on:

- Fulfillment of assignment requirements
- Effectiveness of your idea
- Technical quality
- Creativity/Storytelling quality
- Accuracy, clarity, depth and relevance
- Meeting the deadline

90-100 - A • 80-89 - B  
70-79 - C • 60-69 - D  
59-Below - F

**IMPORTANT DATES**

6/1 – Last day to drop a class; last day to switch from audit to credit  
5/25 – Memorial Day  
6/5 – Last day of class

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

In compliance with University policy, students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact the Student Accessibility Resource Center located in Downing Student Union, 1074. The phone number is 270.745.5004 [270.745.3030 V/TTY] or email at [sarc@wku.edu](mailto:sarc@wku.edu). Please do not request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a faculty notification letter (FNL) from The Student Accessibility Resource Center.

shoot is to give you an opportunity to better a grade of an assignment you shot or to make up an assignment that you didn't hand in because of a missed deadline, sickness or other emergency.

You cannot begin shooting an assignment until I distribute the assignment sheet – no previous work will be accepted. You will be learning so much, and with hard work your pictures will show it, so you should see a difference between your previous photographs and what you shoot during this May Term!

The key to success in this class is to work consistently from day one and keep up with the assignments.

**Zoom Zoom**

My first Zoom class experience this past semester was an interesting one, and I am sure it was for you as well if you took classes in the Spring. I learned some important lessons, so you are the lucky first recipients of the etiquette principles I am now implementing in my classes that include Zoom.

1. You need to be in a quiet space so you can turn on your mic for discussion.
2. You need to have your camera on at all times during the session.
3. Find a place where you can sit down comfortably and not have to move around; movement causes distraction.
4. Referring to the first three principles, during Zoom time, your full attention needs to be on the class activity/discussion. Resist the urge to check email, peruse Yahoo, text friends, pay bills, etc. I realize conducting class in front of a computer presents a temptation challenge. If you crave sweets like me, it's like someone putting a bowl of candy in front of your face, then proclaiming, "Though Shalt Not Eat." It's about discipline, and ultimately, respect, for your fellow classmates, your teacher, and for the general integrity of the class.
5. Related to #4, also do not engage in other non-computer-related activities, like fixing yourself meals, exercising, engaging in conversation with family members or roommates, etc. Take care of these things before or after our session.

While considering this etiquette and putting it to words, I realized that these principles are really no different from what I would expect in a traditional classroom. The only difference is that aside from the cell phone distraction, there are so many other distractions that present themselves in a home/Zoom environment. So, let's be pioneers in adhering to this policy and therefore making this an enjoyable and successful experience!

**QUIZZES**

We will have quizzes that will cover material from Zoom lectures/discussions, handouts, and assignment sheets. These quizzes will be posted on Blackboard. Knowing and understanding the material covered in the quizzes will better prepare you to make effective pictures.

**BLACKBOARD**

All class materials and grades will be posted on Blackboard. Make sure you are checking Blackboard at least twice daily for announcements/emails.

**Required Materials**

- Point-and-shoot camera, 18 megapixels (ask me about this) or higher or a DSLR camera
- At least one 8 gigabyte or higher compact flash card or SD card
- Computer capable of running Adobe software and supporting a microphone and camera (for Zoom sessions)
- Remote/Wi-Fi capability to access Blackboard and Zoom
- Hard drive/USB storage to back up your image files (this could be your computer hard drive)

**ACADEMIC (Dis)HONESTY**

All work should be yours and should be performed within the time frame outlined in each assignment.

University policies (taken from the student handbook):

"To represent ideas or interpretations taken from another source as one's own is plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious offense. The academic work of a student must be his or her own. Students must give the author(s) credit for any source material used. To lift content directly from a source without giving credit is a flagrant act. To present a borrowed passage after having changed a few words, even if the source is cited, is also plagiarism.

"Disposition of Offenses: Students who commit any act of academic dishonesty may receive from the instructor a failing grade in that portion of the course work in which the act is detected or a failing grade in the course without possibility of withdrawal."

**TITLE IX SEXUAL MISCONDUCT/ASSAULT POLICY**

Western Kentucky University (WKU) is committed to supporting faculty, staff and students by upholding WKU's Title IX Sexual Misconduct/Assault Policy: <https://wku.edu/eoo/documents/titleix/wktitleixpolicyandgrievanceprocedure.pdf>.

Discrimination and Harassment Policy (#0.2040): <https://www.wku.edu/policies/docs/251.pdf>.

Please note that while you may report an incident of sex/gender based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct to a faculty member, WKU faculty are "Responsible Employees" of the University and MUST report what you share to WKU's Title IX Coordinator or Title IX Investigator. If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you confidentiality, you may contact WKU's Counseling and Testing Center at 270-745-3159.

**Note:** This syllabus is subject to changes as needed.

**RESULTS**

As you might observe from the above syllabus and class discussion, we are packing quite a bit into this class. This class requires you to devote a lot of time and energy to improve as a photographer. But this is okay, hard work can actually be enjoyable if you have a concrete goal in mind. There are few courses out there where you get the satisfaction of seeing the fruits of your labor in such an immediate and tangible way. If you apply yourself, you will soon be able to see a potential photograph and know exactly how to capture it. You will be telling stories with photographs and taking a valuable skill into your future. I am looking forward to working with you on this!

**AEJMC PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND COMPETENCIES:**

This class will cover several of the values and competencies outlined in the ACEJMC accreditation guidelines. They are:

- Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.
- Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society.
- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work