PHO 397: The Constructed Image
COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2014
W 5:00 – 8:50pm
Class Room: UCD313A

Instructor: Leigh Merrill
Email: leigh.merrill@tamuc.edu
Office Hours: By appointment, TR 2 – 3pm

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Description:
In this intensive seminar course, students will create staged, built, and digital composite photographs. Since photography's conception, photographs have been staged and altered - this method of working is an important aspect of both commercial and contemporary art photography. Students will gain a greater understanding of constructed images, manipulating and editing in Photoshop, will create an exchange portfolio as well as an individual portfolio of photographs by the end of the semester.

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:
There is no mandatory text. Supplementary readings will be assigned weekly throughout the semester.

Student Learning Outcomes:
At the conclusion of this course students should be able to demonstrate the following:
- A portfolio of work of photographs related to topics of this course. This portfolio will be built throughout the semester from course assignments
- A final project consisting of 10 – 15 images on a single theme related to The Constructed Image
- Knowledge of contemporary photographers working with constructed images
- Effective critiquing by participation in critical evaluation regarding your own work and the work of your peers
- Effective critiquing of readings and contemporary artists through participation in class discussions
- An exchange portfolio with the class

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

This course will consist of a series of photographic assignments and exercises to assist you in achieving the objectives of this course. Each class will consist of a combination of some or all of the following activities:
- Lectures by instructor on contemporary photographers

- Technical lectures by instructor on photographic techniques
- Studio time to work on assignments and student/ instructor meetings to discuss assignments
- Critiquing of course assignments
- Discussion and presentation of readings about contemporary photographers

Participation is critical to your success in this course. Please come to class prepared to participate.

Grading

Your grade will be a combination of your projects, participation in class, and an exam covering the artists and readings we have looked at in class.
Project 1: 15%
Project 2: 15%
Project 3: 15%
Exchange Portfolio: 15%
Final Project: 20%
Exam: 10%
Readings and Group Discussion/Participation: 10%

Attendance
Attendance is critical for your success in this course. We meet only once a week and therefor each class will cover a variety of material. Please contact the instructor in advance of any absence. **Note: A total of 3 absences from any class meetings will result in a failing grade ("F") for the course and you will be dropped from the class.**

TECHNOLOGY / MATERIAL REQUIREMENTS

Students will have access to computer equipment with all the software needed to complete photographic assignments and exercises.
Students will need to provide the following:
- **DSLR camera and media cards. Cameras are available from the 3rd Floor check out at the Journalism building on the Commerce campus. Note:** *Find the instruction manual and read it / make sure that the camera is in good working order.*
- **Tripod.** This will be helpful to have for some of the assignments. If you do not own one you can check one out from the 3rd Floor check out at the Journalism building on the commerce campus.
- **An external hard drive**
- **Printing costs**
- **Materials/Props for assignments**

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement:
    Please contact me through email:
Email: leigh.merrill@tamuc.edu
Office Hours: By appointment TR 2 -3pm (at the Commerce campus or via Skype if you are based out of the Dallas campus) please make appointments one day in advance.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures:

Procedures & Policies for Submission of assignments
A. *Due Date:* All assignments and exercises are due on the date and time given by the instructor. Any work that is late will be reduced by one full-letter grade. Assignments will not be accepted if they are more than one week late. All work handed in after critique will be considered late, including partially completed assignments. It is your responsibility to inform the instructor of any problems that might make a project late well before the due date.
Note: All images must have been shot, processed and printed this semester for this class only.

B. *Print Submission:* All work must be from files that were produced during this semester. No images from previous classes can be submitted. All printed assignments will be printed on 8 X 10 or larger inkjet paper and presented in a professional manner. Work must be handed in at the beginning of the critique designated for that particular assignment to be counted "on time".

University Specific Procedures:

ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

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Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu
Student Disability Resources & Services

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Academic Integrity and Plagiarism
Texas A&M University-Commerce does not tolerate plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. Conduct that violates generally accepted standards of academic honesty is defined as academic dishonesty. "Academic dishonesty" includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another and passing them off as one's own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material.

Statement on Accommodations for ADA eligible students:
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library, Room 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148

Statement on Student Behavior:
All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenet of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See Student's Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct)

All students must show respect toward the instructor and the instructor's syllabus, presentations, assignments, and point of view. Students should respect each others' differences. If the instructor determines that a student is not being respectful towards other students or the instructor, it is the instructor's prerogative to ask the student to leave, to refer the student to the department head, and to consider referring the student to the Dean of Students who may consider requiring the student to drop the course. Please refer to pages 42 – 46 of the Texas A&M University-commerce Student guidebook's Codes of Conduct for details.

Student Conduct/Citizenship
All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook). Students are expected, at all times, to recognize constituted authority, to conform to the ordinary rules of good conduct, to be truthful, to respect the rights of others, to protect private and public property, and to make the best use of their time and effort toward the educational process.

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

The Instructor reserves the right to make adjustments and changes to this calendar. Any changes will be relayed to students via either verbal discussion in class or via email.

Week 1 - August 27
> Introductions
> Review of Syllabus
> **Lecture:** Intro to the Constructed Image
> **Readings:** Please read and make notes by September 3:
> - *TBA*

Recommended event: PDNB gallery exhibition *The Most Important Photograph Ever Made.* This exhibition includes the Niepce photograph *View From the Window at Le Gras* from the Harry Ransom Collection. Exhibition closes August 30th

Week 2 - September 3
> **Lecture/Discussion:** Fabricated to be Photographed
> **Assignment:** Project 1: Fabricated to be Photographed
> **Readings:** Please read and make notes on the by September 10:
> - *TBA*

Recommended event: Geof Kern at PDNB Gallery. Opening reception Sept. 6, 6 -8pm
> **TAMUC Faculty exhibition. Opening reception Sept. 2, 5 – 7pm**

Week 3 – September 10
> **Lecture/Discussion:** Still Life
> **Demo:** Photoshop (raw processing, basis workflow, editing tools and beyond)

Week 4 – September 17
> **Critique:** Project 1 Fabricated to be Photographed
> **Readings:** Please read and make notes by September 24:
> - *TBA*

Week 5 – September 24
  Lecture/Discussion: Staged and Cinematic Images
  Assignment: Project 2: Staged and Cinematic Images

Week 6 – October 1
  Demo: Photoshop (manipulation and compositing images)

Week 7 – October 8
  Critique: Project 2 Staged and Cinematic Images
  Readings: Please read and make notes by October 8:
    • *TBA*

Week 8 – October 15
  Lecture: Digital Composites
  Assignment: Project 3 Digital Composites
  Demo: Photoshop (continued compositing of images, manipulations)
  Readings: Please read and make notes on the by October 22:
    • *TBA*

Week 9 – October 22
  Lecture: Physical and Metaphysical
  Demo: Photoshop (continued compositing of images, manipulations)

Week 10 – October 29
  Assignment: Exchange Portfolio
  Demo: Photoshop (continued compositing of images, manipulations)
  Open Studio Time

Week 11 – November 5
   Critique: Project 3 Digital Composites
  Assignment: Final Project

Week 12 – November 12
  Demo: Photoshop
  Open Studio

Week 13 – November 19
  Lecture: Review of Artists for exam
  Due: Files for Exchange Portfolio Due for Cover Page
  Assignment: Group creation of Exchange Portfolio Cover Page

Week 14 – November 26
  Exam: Constructed Images Photographers / Photoshop
  Exchange Portfolios Due and exchanged

Week 15 – December 3
  Critique: Final Project

Camera Resources:
Competitive Camera, Dallas
Fort Worth Camera
Arlington Camera
Adorama, http://www.adorama.com
B&H Photo, http://www.bhphotovideo.com
Freestyle, http://www.freestylephoto.biz
Calumet Photo, http://www.calumetphoto.com

You can also find cameras at Costco, Walmart and other local retailers. Additionally online retailers such as amazon can be retailers to look at.

A good resource to compare cameras is DP Review: http://www.dpreview.com/

External Hard Drive Resources
I have found Western Digital to be a good brand and reliable for external hard drives.
NewEgg, http://www.newegg.com
Fry's Electronics
Best buy, circuit city or other local electronics supplier
Harddrives and flash drives are sold at many retailers, electronic and computer stores.

General Photographic resources:
https://www.aclu.org/free-speech/know-your-rights-photographers