



**PHO 497: Urbanism and Photography
COURSE SYLLABUS: Spring 2016**

Instructor: Leigh Merrill, Assistant Professor of Art

Office Location: Journalism Building, Room 300

Office Hours: Tuesdays 2:00 – 3:30pm at TAMUC and by appointment on Wednesdays at the UCD

University Email Address: leigh.merrill@tamuc.edu

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Description:

In this course students will learn ways in which photographers have used the built environment as subject or backdrop for their work. Through projects, readings and discussion students will develop a portfolio of work examining the urban environment.

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:

There is no mandatory text. Supplementary readings will be assigned throughout the semester.

Student Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of this course students should be able to demonstrate the following:

- A portfolio of photographic work about the urban environment.
- A general understanding of contemporary photographers who work with the urban environment
- 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

Syllabus/schedule subject to change

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 and demo by instructor
- Critiquing of course assignments
- Discussion and presentation of readings about contemporary artists
- Studio time to work on assignments
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Participation is critical to your success in this course. Please come to class prepared to participate.

Grading

Projects: 70%

Final Project: 15%

Exchange Portfolio: 10%

Exam: 5%

A = 90%-100%

B = 80%-89%

C = 70%-79%

D = 60%-69%

F = 59% or Below

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 4 absences from any class meetings will result in a failing grade ("F") for the course and you will be dropped from the class.**

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Students will have access to computer labs with all the software needed to complete photographic assignments and exercises.

Students will need to provide the following:

- **Digital camera and media cards. Cameras are available for check-out.**
- **Tripod.** This may be helpful to have for some of the assignments.

- **All printing costs**

UNIVERSITY TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

- To fully participate in online courses you will need to use a current Flash enabled browser. For PC users, the suggested browser is Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox. For Mac users, the most current update of Firefox is suggested.
- You will need regular access to a computer with a broadband Internet connection. The minimum computer requirements are:
 - 512 MB of RAM, 1 GB or more preferred
 - Broadband connection required courses are heavily video intensive
 - Video display capable of high-color 16-bit display 1024 x 768 or higher resolution
- You must have a:
 - Sound card, which is usually integrated into your desktop or laptop computer
 - Speakers or headphones.
 - *For courses utilizing video-conferencing tools and/or an online proctoring solution, a webcam and microphone are required.
- Both versions of Java (32 bit and 64 bit) must be installed and up to date on your machine. At a minimum Java 7, update 51, is required to support the learning management system. The most current version of Java can be downloaded at: [JAVA web site http://www.java.com/en/download/manual.jsp](http://www.java.com/en/download/manual.jsp)
- Current anti-virus software must be installed and kept up to date.
- Run a browser check through the Pearson LearningStudio Technical Requirements website. [Browser Check http://help.college.com/LS_Tech_Req_WebHelp/en-us/#LS_Technical_Requirements.htm#BrowserSet](http://help.college.com/LS_Tech_Req_WebHelp/en-us/#LS_Technical_Requirements.htm#BrowserSet)

Running the browser check will ensure your internet browser is supported.

Pop-ups are allowed.

JavaScript is enabled.

Cookies are enabled.

- You will need some additional free software (plug-ins) for enhanced web browsing. Ensure that you download the free versions of the following software:
 - [Adobe Reader https://get.adobe.com/reader/](https://get.adobe.com/reader/)
 - [Adobe Flash Player \(version 17 or later\) https://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/](https://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/)
 - [Adobe Shockwave Player https://get.adobe.com/shockwave/](https://get.adobe.com/shockwave/)
 - [Apple Quick Time http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)

- At a minimum, you must have Microsoft Office 2013, 2010, 2007 or Open Office. Microsoft Office is the standard office productivity software utilized by faculty, students, and staff. Microsoft Word is the standard word processing software, Microsoft Excel is the standard spreadsheet software, and Microsoft PowerPoint is the standard presentation software. Copying and pasting, along with attaching/uploading documents for assignment submission, will also be required. If you do not have Microsoft Office, you can check with the bookstore to see if they have any student copies.
- For additional information about system requirements, please see: [System Requirements for LearningStudio](https://secure.ecollege.com/tamuc/index.learn?action=technical)
<https://secure.ecollege.com/tamuc/index.learn?action=technical>

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

Pearson LearningStudio (eCollege) Access and Log in Information

This course will be facilitated using Pearson LearningStudio, the learning management system used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to [myLeo](http://www.tamuc.edu/myleo.aspx). <http://www.tamuc.edu/myleo.aspx>

You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

It is strongly recommended that you perform a “Browser Test” prior to the start of your course. To launch a browser test, login to Pearson LearningStudio, click on the “My Courses” tab, and then select the “Browser Test” link under Support Services.

Pearson Learning Studio Student Technical Support

Texas A&M University-Commerce provides students technical support in the use of Pearson LearningStudio.

Technical assistance is available 24 hours a day/ 7 days a week.

If at any time you experience technical problems (e.g., you can't log in to the course, you can't see certain material, etc.) please contact the Pearson LearningStudio Help Desk, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The student help desk may be reached by the following means 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- **Chat Support:** Click on '*Live Support*' on the tool bar within your course to chat with a Pearson Learning Studio Representative.

- **Phone:** 1-866-656-5511 (Toll Free) to speak with Pearson Learning Studio Technical Support Representative.
- **Email:** helpdesk@online.tamuc.org to initiate a support request with Pearson LearningStudio Technical Support Representative.

Accessing Help from within Your Course: Click on the '*Tech Support*' icon on the upper left side of the screen inside the course. You then will be able to get assistance via online chat, email or by phone by calling the Help Desk number noted below.

Note: Personal computer problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, an Internet cafe, or a bookstore, such as Barnes & Noble, etc.

Policy for Reporting Problems with Pearson LearningStudio

Should students encounter Pearson LearningStudio based problems while submitting assignments/discussions/comments/exams, the following procedure **MUST** be followed:

1. Students must report the problem to the help desk. You may reach the helpdesk at helpdesk@online.tamuc.org or 1-866-656-5511
2. Students **MUST** file their problem with the helpdesk and obtain a helpdesk ticket number
3. Once a helpdesk ticket number is in your possession, students should email me to advise me of the problem and to provide me with the helpdesk ticket number
4. At that time, I will call the helpdesk to confirm your problem and follow up with you

PLEASE NOTE: Your personal computer/access problems are not a legitimate excuse for filing a ticket with the Pearson LearningStudio Help Desk. You are strongly encouraged to check for compatibility of your browser **BEFORE** the course begins and to take the Pearson LearningStudio tutorial offered for students who may require some extra assistance in navigating the Pearson LearningStudio platform. **ONLY** Pearson LearningStudio based problems are legitimate.

Internet Access

An Internet connection is necessary to participate in discussions and assignments, access readings, transfer course work, and receive feedback from your professor. View the requirements as outlined in Technology Requirements above for more information.

myLeo Support

Your myLeo email address is required to send and receive all student correspondence. Please email helpdesk@tamuc.edu or call us at 903-468-6000 with any questions about

setting up your myLeo email account. You may also access information at [myLeo](https://leo.tamuc.edu).
<https://leo.tamuc.edu>

Learner Support


Go to the following link [One Stop Shop](http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/onestopshop/)- created to serve you by attempting to provide as many resources as possible in one location.
<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/onestopshop/>

Go to the following link [Academic Success Center](http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/academicSuccessCenter/)- focused on providing academic resources to help you achieve academic success.
<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/academicSuccessCenter/>

FREE MOBILE APPS

The Courses apps for phones have been adapted to support the tasks students can easily complete on a smaller device. Due to the smaller screen size course content is not presented.

The Courses app is free of charge. The mobile Courses Apps are designed and adapted for different devices.

	App Title:	iPhone – Pearson LearningStudio Courses for iPhone Android – LearningStudio Courses - Phone
	Operating System:	iPhone - OS 6 and above Android – Jelly Bean, Kitkat, and Lollipop OS
	iPhone App URL:	https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/pearson-learningstudio-courses/id977280011?mt=8
	Android App URL:	https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.pearson.lsphone

Once downloaded, search for Texas A&M University-Commerce, and it should appear on the list. Then you will need to sign into the myLeo Mobile portal.

The Courses App for Android and iPhone contain the following feature set:

- View titles/code/Instructor of all Courses enrolled in online
- View and respond to all discussions in individual Courses
- View Instructor Announcements in individual Courses
- View Graded items, Grades and comments in individual Courses
- Grade to Date
- View Events (assignments) and Calendar in individual Courses
- View Activity Feed for all courses
- View course filters on activities
- View link to Privacy Policy

- Ability to Sign out
- Send Feedback

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement:

Please contact me through email.

Email: leigh.merrill@tamuc.edu

Office Hours: By appointment on Wednesday at the UCD (and at the Commerce campus on Tuesdays from 2:00-3:00pm)

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. Work must be handed in at the beginning of the critique designated for that particular assignment to be counted "on time".

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See current Student Guidebook).

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: [Netiquette](http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html)
<http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>

ADA Statement

Students with Disabilities

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

Email: Rebecca.Tuerk@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

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** Introductions
 Review of Syllabus
Lecture: Intro to Urbanism and Photography
Assignment: Project 1
Readings: Please read and make notes for Week 2
- *New Topographics: photographs that find beauty in the banal*, Sean O'Hagan, The Guardian February 8 2010
 - *Our Sprawling Supersize Utopia*, David Brooks, Worlds Away Exhibition Catalog, 2008
 - *New Topographics: Photographs of a Man-altered Landscape*, William Jenkins, International Museum of Photograph, George Eastman House, 1975
- Week 2** **Lecture/Discussion:** New Topographics Then and Now
Group exercise/demo
- Week 3** **Critique:** Project 1
Assignment: Project 2
Readings: Please read and make notes on the by Week 4:
- *Todd Hido: Art of Darkness*, Justin Berton, American Suburb X, February 1, 2006
- Week 4** **Lecture/Discussion:** Project 2
Group exercise/demo
- Week 5** **Critique:** Project 2
Assignment: Project 3
Readings: Please read and make notes on the by Week 6:
- *The Theater of the Street, the Subject of the Photograph*, Philip Gafter, The New York Times, March 19, 2006
- Week 6** **Lecture/Discussion**
- Week 7** **Critique:** Project 3
Assignment: Project 4
Readings: Please read and make notes on the by Week 8:
- *Building Pictures*, exhibition essay, Karen Irvine, Curator, Museum of Contemporary Photography Chicago, 2008
 - *A Conversation with Beate Gutschow, Natasha Egan, Lesley Martin, and Akiko Ono*, LS/S, Aperture, 2007

- *Deconstructing constructions: James Casebere's Work 1975-2010*

Week 8	Lecture: Project 4 Technical Demo
Week 9	NO CLASS - Spring Break
Week 10	Assignment and Discussion: Exchange Portfolio Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Ruscha vs. Street View</i>, Rob Walker, The Design Observer, August 2011
Week 11	Critique: Project 4 Lecture: Project 5 Assignment: Project 5 Assignment: Final Project
Week 12	Project 5: In-class shooting session: Bring your cameras
Week 13	Project 5: class project work time
Week 14	Lecture: Review for exam Due: Files for Exchange Portfolio cover sheet In Class creation of Exchange portfolio cover sheet
Week 15	Critique: Final Project
Week 16	Exam Exchange Portfolios