



**EAST TEXAS A&M**  
UNIVERSITY

**ART 389, Independent Study: Advanced Photo**

COURSE SYLLABUS: Spring 2026

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

**Instructor:** Leigh Merrill, Professor of Art

**Office Location:** Wathena Fine Art Building, Room 223

**Office Hours:** 10:00 – 10:50am T&R (and by appointment via zoom)

**University Email Address:** leigh.merrill@etamu.edu

**Preferred Form of Communication:** email

**Communication Response Time:** 24 – 48 hours during weekdays

**COURSE INFORMATION**

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

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

**Course Description**

Independent Study. One to Three semester hours. Individualized instruction/research at an advanced level in a specialized content area under the direction of a faculty member. May be repeated when the topic varies. Prerequisite: Consent of a member of the Photography faculty.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

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

- A portfolio demonstrating proficiencies and craftsmanship in a specific area of interest.

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

### **Minimal Technical Skills Needed**

Students should be familiar with ETAMU's d2L Brightspace learning management system.

### **Instructional Methods**

This course will consist of a bi-monthly meetings to discuss the students progress. During the first week of class the student and professor will determine a bi-weekly meeting schedule. During the first 6 meetings, work in progress will be discussed, critiqued, and evaluated. During the final meeting, the final portfolio will be reviewed and discussed.

### **Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course**

Active class participation is critical to your success in this course. **This course will meet face-to-face but will utilize ETAMU's d2L Brightspace to share information about the course and for students to submit assignments.** Grades will be posted to d2L. Students should regularly log into D2L for this course.

The ability to work independently will be critical to success in this course.

## **GRADING**

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90%-100%. B = 80%-89%. C = 70%-79%. D = 60%-69%. F = 59% or Below

### **Assessments**

Progress Meetings: 50%

Final: 50%

## **TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

### **LMS**

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

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LMS Browser Support:

[https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser\\_support.htm](https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm)

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements>

## **ACCESS AND NAVIGATION**

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or [helpdesk@etamu.edu](mailto:helpdesk@etamu.edu).

**Note:** Personal computer and internet connection 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, Starbucks, a ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

## **COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT**

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

### **Technical Support**

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

### **Interaction with Instructor Statement**

#### **Interaction with Instructor Statement:**

Please contact me through email.

**Email:** [leigh.merrill@etamu.edu](mailto:leigh.merrill@etamu.edu)

**Office Hours:** 10:00 – 10:50 am T&R (and by appointment)

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# COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

## Course Specific Procedures/Policies

### **Attendance:**

Attendance is required for individual meetings, to be determined on student and instructor schedule.

**Due Dates:** All assignments, discussion, and projects 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.

**Coursework:** All work must be completed during this semester for this course only.

**AI usage:** Although AI has valid and important contemporary uses, the use of AI in this course should be discussed with the instructor. If AI is used for content generation, it should be properly acknowledged. Unacknowledged use of AI for content generation will be evaluated as academic dishonesty.

## 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. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](http://www.etamu.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx).

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

### ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.etamu.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

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<http://www.etamu.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

### **Academic Integrity**

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)  
[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.etamu.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.etamu.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf>

<http://www.etamu.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

### **Students with Disabilities-- 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:

#### **Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**

East Texas A&M University

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: [studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu](mailto:studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu)

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

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

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## **Nondiscrimination Notice**

East Texas A&M University 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.

## **Campus Concealed Carry Statement**

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.etamu.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

## **ETAMU Supports Students' Mental Health**

The Counseling Center at ETAMU, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit [www.etamu.edu/counsel](http://www.etamu.edu/counsel)

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## **COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR**

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events 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.

**Week 1** Review of Syllabus | Determine meeting schedule

**Week 2** Independent work towards proposal

**Week 3** Review of Proposal

**Week 4** Independent work

**Week 5** In-progress review #1

**Week 6** Independent work

**Week 7** In-progress review #2

**Week 8** Independent work

**Week 9** In-progress review #3

**Week 10** Independent work

**Week 11** In-progress review #4

**Week 12** Independent work

**Week 13** In-progress review #5

**Week 14** Independent work

**Week 15** Final Review

**Week 16** Self-Evaluation

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