

MCOM 4399 - Independent Study

Advanced Storytelling through Photography

Tuesdays 12:30 - 1:30 p.m.

Instructor: Anita Brown

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Office Hours: MW 9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m., and by appointment

Course Description: Photographs tell stories in ways that words cannot. The focus of this course is to gain a better understanding of the art of storytelling, to utilize photography as a means of creating stories that reflect real life and culture, and to gain a better understanding of theoretical application within photojournalism and photography. You will engage in the medium of photography, critically analyze examples of photojournalism and literary journalism, and learn about the theories and historical significance that your photography references. This class combines application of advanced photography techniques in photographic assignments, fieldwork, critiques, and an examination of the history and theory of photography and storytelling.

Student Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Competency: Writing and Storytelling

- a. Write correctly and clearly using the formats and compelling storytelling styles appropriate for the audiences and purposes for public relations/integrated communication or multimedia journalism.
- b. Generate a personal artist statement that concisely presents your work.
- c. Gain a better understanding of the art of storytelling through the use of critique and analysis of literary journalism.

2. Competency: Analysis and Systematic Inquiry

- a. Legal and Ethical Principles
 - i. Demonstrate an understanding of and be able to apply the First Amendment and other legal principles for public relations/integrated communication and/or multimedia journalism
 - ii. Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and issues for public relations/integrated communication and/or multimedia journalism.
- b. Gain a deeper understanding of the cultural impact of the medium of photography in an art historical context, and you will be able to locate your own work in relation to that tradition.
- c. Engage in the language of photographic critique for an in-depth analysis of images, the theoretical application, and the significance of the story.

3. Competency: Mediated Presentation

- a. Apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information using tools and technologies appropriate for public relations/integrated communication or

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multimedia journalism.

- i. Expand your understanding of how to manipulate a camera with agility and create the pictures you want to make, in terms of advanced theoretical application of form and content.
- ii. Advance your photography skills in a variety of advanced techniques and application.
- iii. Produce photojournalistic pieces that combine advanced photography techniques and theoretical application for the purposes of storytelling.

Evaluation and Grade Calculation

Photo assignments (10 - 100 points each)	1000
Reading reactions (5 - 50 points each)	250
Personal artist statement	100
Final portfolio & journal	150
1. Journal - 50	
2. Portfolio - 100	
Final Project (3 parts)	200
3. Proposal - 50	
4. Rough pictures - 50	
5. Final product - 100	

Earned Point Range	Percent	Letter Grade	Standard
1530 - 1700 points	90% - 100%	A	Excellent
1360 - 1529 points	80% - 89%	B	Above Average
1190-1359 points	70-79%	C	Average
1020 - 1189 points	60-69%	D	Below Average
1019 points and below	59% and below	F	Poor

Assignments Overview

1. **Photo Assignments** - Throughout the semester there will be a total of 10 photography assignments that require you to take images following guidelines and themes for the material that we are covering within the week. You will be required to submit 6 images total - a final image that you feel is the best that is accompanied by a well-written caption, and five additional images. You should utilize the techniques that we are covering, theoretical application for storytelling, knowledge of photo composition and lighting, and knowledge of image caption writing.
2. **Reading Reactions** - Throughout the semester you will have 5 selected readings from The Art of Fact and each reading will be accompanied by a reading reaction. When reading, you should focus on aspects of the story that deal with visual stimulation, imagery usage,

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and artistic expression that could be used within a photograph to help tell the story. Each reading reaction will need to cover: your thoughts on the imagery in the story, how the imagery could translate well into a photojournalistic piece, how you would compose an image using the advanced photography technique we are currently discussing to tell the story, and your thoughts on the writing itself.

3. **Personal Artist Statement** – After you have submitted your final project pitch, you will be required to write a one-page personal artist statement. This statement should act as the abstract for your project and reflect the story you are wanting to tell, why this story is important to tell, and how will be accomplishing your goal.
4. **Final Portfolio and Journal** – Throughout the semester you should upload images you particularly like to a blog website or another digital journaling tool. In addition to the photo, you should write your own personal statements and thoughts about the image and the story that was told. Your journal will be your own reflections, but it should touch on things such as: what you like about the image, what you dislike, what you like about the story, if you feel that the image is successful in telling the story, how well you did with the advanced photography techniques, etc.
5. **Final Project** – For your final project, you will bring together journalistic storytelling and advanced photography skills to create a visually strong and contextually interesting photo story of the topic of your choice. The theme of your photo story must be something that tells an interesting story and you **MUST** receive permission from any business or individual you feature in your story. This is an assignment that you are urged to work on throughout the semester. There will be three parts: the proposal, rough images for critique and guidance, and the final, publish-ready story.

Course Requirements

A. Required Readings:

1. Text: *The Art of Fact*; Kevin Kerrane & Ben Yagoda
2. Handouts and other materials as assigned

B. Required Materials/Programs:

1. Memory card for DSLR camera
2. DSLR camera – your own or the school's. If you use the school's, you are required to take and pass a DSLR camera test.
3. Flickr.com account for submitting photography assignments
4. Adobe Photoshop

Assignment Policy

1. Assignments do have deadlines and these deadlines need to be met. You will need to submit each assignment via Canvas before the due time.
2. Assignments and due dates may be changed at the instructor's discretion with fair notice to students.
3. No make-up tests or quizzes will be allowed after tests close on Canvas.

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4. Students must complete all assignments to pass the course. This does not mean that merely completing all assignments guarantees the student will pass the course.
5. Spelling, grammar, and neatness count.

Expectations: We all approach courses with certain expectations. I expect you to:

1. Work hard – learning requires constant reading, researching, thinking, discussing, and working with your classmates and me. Everyone has something important to contribute. My job is to present new information and prepare a climate in which you can contribute your own special knowledge. Your job is to be prepared to contribute.
2. Participate – you must be an active part of the course to succeed. You will also have to give effort outside of class.
3. Display Classroom Courtesies
4. Talk, debate, ask questions, and challenge yourselves and each other, but stay on topic.
5. Limit use of cellphones, tablets, or other device use during class. I understand emergencies and the need to take a call or text. If this must happen, be discreet, don't disturb others, do not let it get in the way of your learning, and **DO NOT** abuse this.
6. I use Canvas and email to communicate, post assignments and readings, present feedback and provide a space for you to communicate with your classmates. I expect you to check both daily and stay aware of what is coming up.
7. Communicate - If you have a problem with anything throughout the semester... getting an assignment in on time, needing to be absent from a class, getting your book, checking out equipment, or anything I'm doing as a professor... talk to me about it.
8. Hold me to the same standards and expectations that I hold you to.

Attendance and Tardiness Policy: Critique and lectures are a vital part to the learning process in this course, therefore you are expected to attend our weekly meetings. If you do not attend the meetings, you cannot participate in discussions and critiques. If you need to miss a meeting for whatever reason, let me know within a reasonable amount of time so that we can plan to reschedule or utilize other meeting tools.

Academic Honesty Policy: Students will adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty. Anyone caught cheating will earn a "0" for that assignment and will be subject to academic and disciplinary action. Plagiarism (the use of written and oral words or ideas of another person, including another student, without the expressed acknowledgment of the speaker's or writer's indebtedness to that person) will not be tolerated. This includes the use of papers or other materials previously submitted to instructors in other classes, as well as video and audio recordings. Students caught plagiarizing will fail this class and be subject to academic and disciplinary action. **PLAIGIARISM WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.**

Course Withdrawal: The last date to withdraw from classes without penalty is **November 5, 2018.**

I. University Policies

A. UT Tyler Honor Code:

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1. Every member of the UT Tyler community joins together to embrace: Honor and integrity that will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do. Students Rights and Responsibilities To know and understand the policies that affect your rights and responsibilities as a student at UT Tyler, please follow this link:
<http://www.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php>

B. Campus Carry:

1. We respect the right and privacy of students 21 and over who are duly licensed to carry concealed weapons in this class. License holders are expected to behave responsibly and keep a handgun secure and concealed. More information is available at <http://www.uttyler.edu/about/campus-carry/index.php>

C. UT Tyler a Tobacco-Free University:

1. All forms of tobacco will not be permitted on the UT Tyler main campus, branch campuses, and any property owned by UT Tyler. This applies to all members of the University community, including students, faculty, staff, University affiliates, contractors, and visitors. Forms of tobacco not permitted include cigarettes, cigars, pipes, water pipes (hookah), bidis, kreteks, electronic cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chewing tobacco, and all other tobacco products. There are several cessation programs available to students looking to quit smoking, including counseling, quitlines, and group support. For more information on cessation programs please visit www.uttyler.edu/tobacco-free.

- D. Academic Honesty Policy:** Students will adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty. Anyone caught cheating will earn a “0” for that assignment and will be subject to academic and disciplinary action. Plagiarism (the use of written and oral words or ideas of another person, including another student, without the expressed acknowledgment of the speaker’s or writer’s indebtedness to that person) will not be tolerated. This includes the use of papers or other materials previously submitted to instructors in other classes, as well as video and audio recordings. Students caught plagiarizing will fail this class and be subject to academic and disciplinary action. (See next section for University Policy)

E. Student Standards of Academic Conduct

1. Disciplinary proceedings may be initiated against any student who engages in scholastic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.
 - a) “Cheating” includes, but is not limited to:
 - (1) copying from another student’s test paper;
 - (2) using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test;

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- (3) failure to comply with instructions given by the person administering the test;
 - (4) possession during a test of materials which are not authorized by the person giving the test, such as class notes or specifically designed “crib notes”. The presence of textbooks constitutes a violation if they have been specifically prohibited by the person administering the test;
 - (5) using, buying, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program;
 - (6) collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or other assignment without authority;
 - (7) discussing the contents of an examination with another student who will take the examination;
 - (8) divulging the contents of an examination, for the purpose of preserving questions for use by another, when the instructor has designated that the examination is not to be removed from the examination room or not to be returned or to be kept by the student;
 - (9) substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for oneself to take a course, a test, or any course-related assignment;
 - (10) paying or offering money or other valuable thing to, or coercing another person to obtain an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program or information about an unadministered test, test key, home solution or computer program;
 - (11) falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other academic work offered for credit;
 - (12) taking, keeping, misplacing, or damaging the property of The University of Texas at Tyler, or of another, if the student knows or reasonably should know that an unfair academic advantage would be gained by such conduct; and
 - (13) misrepresenting facts, including providing false grades or resumes, for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit or injuring another student academically or financially.
- b) “Plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to, the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another’s work and the submission of it as one’s own academic work offered for credit.

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- c) “Collusion” includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any section of the rules on scholastic dishonesty.
 - d) All written work that is submitted will be subject to review by plagiarism software.
- F. The **U-T Tyler Writing Center** provides professional writing tutoring for all students in all disciplines. If you wish to use the Writing Center, you should plan for a minimum of two hour-long tutorials per assignment: the first to provide an initial consultation and drafting plan, and the second to follow up. Be prepared to take an active role in your learning, as you will be asked to discuss your work during your tutorial. While Writing Center tutors are happy to provide constructive criticism and teach effective writing techniques, under no circumstances will they fix, repair, or operate on your paper. Location: BUS 202. Appointments: 903-565-5995.

G. Disability/Accessibility Services:

1. In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) the University of Texas at Tyler offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychological disabilities. If you have a disability, including a non-visible diagnosis such as a learning disorder, chronic illness, TBI, PTSD, ADHD, or you have a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment, you are encouraged to visit <https://hood.accessiblelearning.com/UTTyler> and fill out the New Student application.
2. The Student Accessibility and Resources (SAR) office will contact you when your application has been submitted and an appointment with Cynthia Lowery, Assistant Director of Student Services/ADA Coordinator. For more information, including filling out an application for services, please visit the SAR webpage at <http://www.uttyler.edu/disabilityservices>, the SAR office located in the University Center, # 3150 or call 903.566.7079.

H. Grade Replacement/Forgiveness and Census Date Policies:

1. Students repeating a course for grade forgiveness (grade replacement) must file a Grade Replacement Contract with the Enrollment Services Center (ADM 230) on or before the Census Date of the semester in which the course will be repeated. (For Fall, the Census Date is Sept. 11.) Grade Replacement Contracts are available in the Enrollment Services Center or at <http://www.uttyler.edu/registrar>. Each semester’s Census Date can be found on the Contract itself, on the Academic Calendar, or in the information pamphlets published each semester by the Office of the Registrar.
2. Failure to file a Grade Replacement Contract will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. Undergraduates are eligible to exercise grade replacement for only three course

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repeats during their career at UT Tyler; graduates are eligible for two grade replacements. Full policy details are printed on each Grade Replacement Contract.

3. The Census Date (Sept. 11th) is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions of which students need to be aware. These include:
 - a) Submitting Grade Replacement Contracts, Transient Forms, requests to withhold directory information, approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit.
 - b) Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census Date)
 - c) Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a "W" grade)
 - d) Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment
 - e) Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid

I. State-Mandated Course Drop Policy:

1. Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the census date (See Academic Calendar for the specific date).
2. Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Enrollment Services Center and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Enrollment Services Center if you have any questions.

J. Student Absence due to Religious Observance:

1. Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor of such absences by the second class meeting of the semester.

K. Student Absence for University-Sponsored Events and Activities:

1. If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time, the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.

L. Social Security and FERPA Statement:

1. It is the policy of The University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer

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programming so that all students have an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; grades will not be transmitted electronically.

M. Emergency Exits and Evacuation:

1. Everyone is required to exit the building when a fire alarm goes off. Follow your instructor's directions regarding the appropriate exit. If you require assistance during an evacuation, inform your instructor in the first week of class. Do not re-enter the building unless given permission by University Police, Fire department, or Fire Prevention Services.

N. UT Tyler Resources for Students:

1. UT Tyler Writing Center (903.565.5995), writingcenter@uttyler.edu
2. UT Tyler Tutoring Center (903.565.5964), tutoring@uttyler.edu
3. The Mathematics Learning Center, RBN 4021, this is the open access computer lab for math students, with tutors on duty to assist students who are enrolled in early-career courses.
4. UT Tyler Counseling Center (903.566.7254)