

# BEGINNING PHOTOJOURNALISM 180.2

Spring 2014 TR 1:00 - 2:50 CA 60

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

## Course Objectives

1. To help you learn how to effectively use your 35mm cameras.
2. To help you understand what makes a good photograph in terms of (1) content; (2) composition/aesthetics; (3) technical quality.
3. To help you acquire and develop the intellectual, technical and analytical skills of visual communication.
4. To help you understand the all-important contribution of the idea to the photograph — the critical element that separates the picture maker from the picture taker.

## Major topics we will cover...

- ◆ Camera mechanics
- ◆ Equivalent Exposure
- ◆ Idea generation
- ◆ Caption Writing
- ◆ Depth of field
- ◆ Light
- ◆ Composition/Design
- ◆ Portraits
- ◆ Picture Stories
- ◆ Story research and proposal
- ◆ Action/Motion
- ◆ Ethics, Laws
- ◆ Building a beginning portfolio
- ◆ Photojournalism History

In addition to these subjects, guest speakers may visit to talk about their work in the communications photography field. Some flexibility in the schedule has been worked in to accommodate speakers and other events that may arise.

The key to success in this class is consistency. Keep working and working hard. Push the boundaries. And keep up with all assignments. This is a labor-intensive course. Learn through action.

## Photography Assignments

All assignments are due at the beginning of class on their due date. You must be present to receive a grade. Any assignments turned in after that will receive a grade of 0. This will be strictly enforced with no exceptions. You will have the opportunity to reshoot 2 of your assignments.

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◆ OFFICE HOURS:  
Tuesday - 3:30-5:00 pm

◆ Please contact me for a specific appointment time.  
I am happy to do it.

◆ Required Texts:  
[National Geographic Photography Field Guide: Secrets to Making Great Pictures](#)

[Photojournalism: A Professional's Approach](#)  
by Ken Kobre

◆ This syllabus is flexible.  
Be prepared for change.

◆ ATTENDANCE is vital to the success of this class.  
There will be demonstrations that cannot be redone.  
BE ON TIME.

◆ Your final grade will be determined out of a 1000 point scale:

Assignments = 550  
Final Project = 400  
Participation = 50

◆ Cell Phones: Please turn off your cell phones for class.  
BE RESPECTFUL.

◆ IMPORTANT DATES:  
MLK DAY - 01/20  
DROP DATE - 01/22  
DROP WITH "W" - 03/12  
SPRING BREAK - 03/08-16

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Weekly photography assignments receive the most weight toward your final grade. Take them seriously. One zero on these assignments could be disastrous. If you must miss a class (for legitimate excuses cleared by me first) you must turn in your assignment the day it is due to receive a grade.

Each assignment will be discussed in class and critiqued (See Critiques below). When appropriate, a handout will be provided outlining the requirements for the assignment. And, when feasible, practical demonstrations will be performed to guide you along the way.

Important – no photographs taken before the semester begins will be accepted. You cannot begin shooting an assignment until I give out the assignment sheet in class. Also, this is a documentary photography class. That means - except for still lifes and portraits - you may not “set up” pictures. No “posing” subjects.

HONOR CODE –Students will operate within the requirements of the honor code. All work must be your own, must be done specifically for this class, and should be done with the high level of honesty and integrity that this University demands.

## Required Equipment and Materials

- 35mm Single Lens Reflex (SLR) digital camera that allows you to manually set the f/stops and shutter speeds
- A lens (a 50 mm is a good and relatively cheap general lens, but others are possible)
- The school has some equipment available for checkout (a Canon Rebel kit). Other equipment is available, if available. Checkout will be done by Matt Bachman (office on the second floor): hours are posted.
- Portable Harddrive to archive your photography
- Camera Flash Card, at least 4 GB (these are not available from Checkout)

**NOTE:** It is required that you have your own DSLR camera body and basic lens by the time you take the J480 and above courses.

## Attendance Policy

Here's the deal folks, the field of journalism is going to require more of your mind, body and spirit than you can even fathom at this point. The rewards are great, but the demands are high. It is critical that you attend every class. You CANNOT miss a class in order to shoot an assignment. You must be in class to present your work for critique. Turning in an assignment on the server does not count as a turn-in. Part of your completion of the assignment is the critique. You will be allowed 2 un-excused absences; after that 2 percentage points will be deducted from your FINAL GRADE. If your semester average is 91% and you miss 3 classes, your final average would be 89%. Etcetera. Use your 2 wisely (save them for any unfortunate illnesses, not to watch Breaking Bad). The only exception to this will be a serious medical condition.

## PhotoNight

PhotoNight is a monthly speaker series that is held usually on the last Tuesday of every month. Presentations are from 7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Attendance at PhotoNight is considered part of the class and is mandatory and will be recorded. Attendance will count according to the guidelines above. Our first PhotoNight is on Jan. 28, and we have the honor of hosting a screening of the award-winning documentary film, Gideon's Army. The filmmaker will host a Q&A afterward.

## Critiques

Our goal: to discover what makes a good picture, to uncover the highs and lows, the good and bad, to prepare you to go out and make images that communicate the next time. Critiques are essential to growth. I want involvement from everyone and the critiques need to be constructive. You can be tough without tearing each other apart. Find the balance, and, when in doubt take the higher road. When receiving a critique of your work, you need to maintain a similar balance. There is fine line between defending your position and making excuses. Don't be so connected to your work that you

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lose sight of how it could be better. Critiques are like weightlifting. The act of lifting weights actually tears muscles and breaks them down. It hurts and it's not all that fun. But when the muscles heal they are stronger.

## Exercises and Assignments

You will complete three shooting exercises, six shooting assignments, a written picture story proposal, and your final project... The Picture Story. Each assignment will have written captions and a written self-evaluation. Here's the grading breakdown:

Exercises		Possible Points
01 Vision	In Class	NA
02 Depth of Field, Motion and Flash	In Class	NA
Assignments		
Portfolio 1		
03 F22	In Field	50
04 Composition	In Field	100
05 Light	In Field	100
06 Moment	In Field	100
Portfolio 2		
07 Feature	In Field	100
08 Sports Package	In Field	100
Final Project		<b>400 - Total</b>
09 Story Ideas		50
09 Story Edit		50
09 Final Picture Story		300
Participation - Critiques		50
Total		<b>1000</b>

## Grade Determination

I will do my best to be fair and accurate, but to do this there must be some very specific guidelines and boundaries. Here they are:

- 1) Assignments are due at the minute class begins (and on the server by the designated time) on the due date!
- 2) Any assignment not turned in will receive zero points.
- 3) Class participation is critical to success in this course.

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Although this is a subjective world (how do you define quality?), there still must be a final say, and that is where I come in. I am the editor. Your work will be evaluated on image quality, technical skills, content, ethics and aesthetics. Remember this is a journalism course, and the key is communication. We will define all of this during class. The grading will be stringent but geared to match your progression through the semester.

## Quizzes

There will be quizzes in this class covering information discussed in class and from your text. These quizzes will be given at the beginning of class and cannot be made up. I will not always announce the quizzes, so you need to be prepare yourself for each class by going over the class/lab materials and readings from the previous weeks. Knowing and understanding this material will better prepare you to make better pictures.

## How do you succeed in this class?

- Be on time ... be prepared to learn, participate and contribute ▪ Listen and respect what I and your fellow students say
- Manage your resources - your money and your time. It is not easy but not impossible
- Be honest. Admit your errors. No excuses
- Be positive
- Bury your pride. Now is the time to learn, and most learning occurs in difficult times. Do not fear failure
- Help each other

## What can you expect from me?

- Honesty – I will be honest and direct
- I will be available during office hours and flexible for other appointments
- I want you to succeed
- As you might observe from the above syllabus, this class requires much work. But that's OK; hard work can actually be enjoyable if you have a tangible goal in mind and you have fun doing it. If you apply yourself, you will soon be able to see - see like you've never seen before. You will be telling stories with photographs and taking a valuable skill into your future. I am looking forward to working with you this semester!

“If one does not lie back and sum up and say to the moment, this very moment, stay you are so fair, what will be one’s gain, dying? No: stay this moment. No one ever says that enough.”

FROM THE DIARY OF VIRGINIA WOOLF, WRITTEN ON NEW YEAR’S EVE 1932

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## SEMESTER SCHEDULE

Class	Topics
01 20140109 R	No Class - Review syllabus, purchase books
02 20140114 T	Introductions and Vision
03 20140116 R	The Camera/Exposure, DUE: Iconic Photographers presentation
04 20140121 T	Digital Workflow - Exposure/Lenses
05 20140123 R	Depth of Field
06 20140128 T	DUE: f22/Critique
07 20140130 R	Composition
08 20140204 T	Quiz: Camera, Exposure, Depth of Field, Readings
09 20140206 R	DUE: Composition/Critique
10 20140211 T	Light
11 20140213 R	The Portrait
12 20140218 T	DUE: Light and Portrait/Critique
13 20140220 R	The Moment
14 20140225 T	Intro to the Picture Story
15 20140227 R	DUE: Picture Story Ideas
16 20140304 T	DUE: The Moment/Critique
17 20140306 R	DUE: Portfolio 1 and the Picture Story Proposal
18 20140311 T	NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK
19 20140313 R	NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK
20 20140318 T	MIDTERM EXAM / The Feature Picture
21 20140320 R	More on Photo Story
22 20140325 T	DUE: The Feature Picture / Motion, Blur, Panning
23 20140327 R	Sports Package
24 20140401 T	The Picture Story continued
25 20140403 R	DUE: Sports Package/Critique
26 20140408 T	DUE: 10 Images from your Story
27 20140410 R	TBD
28 20140415 T	RESHOOTS DUE / DUE: Picture Story Edit 1
29 20140417 R	Flash
30 20140422 T	The Picture Story continued
31 20140424 LDOC	DUE: The Picture Story/Critique
32 20140429	FINAL EXAM MEETING