

Fear is a liar.

PHOTO STORIES

MEJO 580.1

Fall MW 2:00-3:45 CA60

“You know, so often it’s just sticking around and being there, remaining there, not swooping out in a cloud of dust; sitting down on the ground with people, letting children look at your camera with their dirty, grimy little hands, and putting their fingers on the lens, and you let them, because you know that if you will behave in a generous manner, you’re very apt to receive it, you know.”

– DOROTHEA LANGE

All right, it’s time for the journey to begin. The incubation time is over. Time to come out of the cocoon and spread your wings. Remember, as always, attitude is everything. Our goals this semester are:

- 1) To develop the process of telling stories with images.
- 2) To develop skills in gaining access and connecting with your subjects.
- 3) To use picture stories as a tool to develop and improve all aspects of your photography.
- 4) To recognize the importance of preparation and organization in the picture story process (research and time management).
- 5) To begin to learn the intricacies of proposal writing to promote your own story ideas in publication settings and for grants.
- 6) To mindfully recognize one’s own privilege and to acknowledge and address issues of representation as we strive to tell stories that don’t harm others.
- 7) To continue developing your writing skills.
- 8) Simply...to continue learning, to continue seeking growth, and to continue our commitment to truthful CONTENT.

Weekly Projects (these are possible story prompts)

- ♦ Caregiver
- ♦ Farm Family
- ♦ 13
- ♦ Teacher
- ♦ Labor
- ♦ Living Wage
- ♦ Volunteer
- ♦ Coach
- ♦ Gender
- ♦ Religious Leader
- ♦ Idea Book

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[Overburden Documentary](#)
[Farmsteaders Documentary](#)

♦ OFFICE HOURS:
Tuesday -2:00-3:30
Or by appointment on Mondays

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

Weekly Story Projects = 400
Picture Package Project = 100
Team Essay =200
Final Project =300

Grade scale:
A = 93-100% / A- = 90-92%
B+ = 87-89% / B = 83-86%
B- = 80-82% / C+ = 77-79%
C = 73-76% / C- = 70-72%
D+ = 67-69% / D = 60-66%
F = less than 60%

♦ This syllabus is flexible.
Be prepared for change.

♦ ATTENDANCE IS VITAL TO
SUCCESS IN THIS CLASS.

♦ Cell Phones: Please mute
your cell phones for class.
BE RESPECTFUL.

♦ IMPORTANT DATES:
[LABOR DAY](#) - 09/03
FALL BREAK - 10/18-22
THANKSGIVING BREAK - 11/21-25
LDOC - 12/05
FINAL EXAM - 12/07 4 PM

→ I am giving you this list of possible story ideas ahead of time so you can work on the idea process. Be aware and listen when you are working on other stories. Take advantage of this time and you will have more time for shooting during the week it is due. You are on your honor to not start shooting the story until the week it is assigned.

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Long-term Projects

- ◆ Photographic Essay (High School sports team)
- ◆ The Final Project

In addition to these assignments there may be single-picture assignments and possible event coverage. Be prepared at all times for anything and everything. To clarify, bring your gear to class. Always be prepared.

Idea Book

You are required to maintain a list of possible story ideas. As I said earlier, be aware and listen when you are working on other stories. At some point in the semester you may be required to draw from the source for your weekly story. This is your opportunity to do the stories you want. Take advantage.

Grade Determination + Specifics

Grading may be done with the help of our Teaching Assistant (who you will meet in the first week of classes). We will do our 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 very minute class begins! 2) Any assignment not turned in will, obviously, receive zero points. 3) Reshoots. You will be allowed to reshoot 2 assignments, but not Sports Team Essay or your Final Project. Reshoots due date: TBD. 4) You must submit captions and metadata with every assignment. Captions must utilize AP style and contain quotes from your subjects.

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. The vital element that must be included in any assignment: Does this communicate to the viewer? Much of the feedback for your projects will occur during class critiques. If you want more feedback, be proactive during class and/or come see me for one-on-one feedback. Grading will be tough. Expectations are high.

THE CONTENT: Idea, Storyline and flow, Focus, Connection to the viewer, Editing.

THE TECHNICAL: Toning quality, Workflow, Keywording, Metadata, Captions and Layout (if required).

Critiques

During class critiques we will discuss these specifics in relation to your stories/assignments. Our goal: to discover what makes a good picture, to uncover the highs and lows, the good and the bad, to prepare you to go out and make images that communicate the next time. Critiques are essential to growth. We may rank assignments in class during the critique (and the best will be displayed in the lab), but the final grade will be determined by me.

One reminder about critiques in class. 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 lose sight of how it could be better. Liken critiques to weight lifting. The act of lifting weights actually tears muscles. It hurts and it's not all that fun. But when the muscles heal they are stronger.

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Attendance

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 alone 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 binge-watch Game of Thrones). The only exception to this will be a serious medical condition.

Inclusive and Accepting Space

First of all, everyone is welcome here. Bigotry and sexism are not welcome here. We may have difficult discussions in this class, and as that happens I want everyone to be mindful of the power of words and how they can impact others. Simply, be thoughtful of others and be aware of your own privilege.

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

Seeking Help

If you need individual assistance, it's your responsibility to meet with the instructor. If you are serious about wanting to improve your performance in the course, the time to seek help is as soon as you are aware of the problem – whether the problem is difficulty with course material, a disability, or an illness.

Diversity

The University's policy on Prohibiting Harassment and Discrimination is outlined in the 2011-2012 Undergraduate Bulletin <http://www.unc.edu/ugradbulletin/>. UNC is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and does not discriminate in offering access to its educational programs and activities on the basis of age, gender, race, color, national origin, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Special Accommodations

If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in this course, please let the instructor know as soon as possible. If you need information about disabilities visit the Department of Disability Services website at <http://disability-services.unc.edu/>

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. If you have any questions about your responsibility or your instructor's responsibility as a faculty member under the Honor Code,

“Saturate yourself with the subject and the camera will all but take you by the hand.” ← DETAILS COUNT

— MARGARET BOURKE-WHITE

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ACEJMC

The School of Media and Journalism's accrediting body outlines a number of values you should be aware of and competencies you should be able to demonstrate by the time you graduate from our program. Learn more here:

<http://www2.ku.edu/~acejmc/PROGRAM/PRINCIPLES.SHTML#vals&comps>

No single course could possibly give you all of these values and competencies; but collectively, our classes are designed to build your abilities in each of these areas. In this class, we will address a number of the values and competencies, with special emphasis on:

- *understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- *demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- *think critically, creatively and independently;
- *write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- *critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- *apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

“In essence, we want the audience to witness the film subjects behaving ‘just as we do’, so they are ‘humanized’ before our eyes. But let’s be honest here, the ‘we’ that always goes unspoken, is white America. And in order to present these ‘others’ as human we need to present them in ways that are less foreign, less threatening, and frankly, more relatable to white Americans.

When we use film to build empathy for marginalized groups, we normalize whiteness by confirming the notion that whiteness is the lens through which others are viewed, understood and judged.”

FROM *BEYOND EMPATHY* BY SONYA CHILDRESS, DIRECTOR OF PARTNERSHIPS AND ENGAGEMENT, FIRELIGHT MEDIA

Once you know someone's story, it's impossible to hate them.

PROJECTS^{580.1}

Team Essay

This project is meant to further your skills in shooting sports: action, emotion and the culture of sports. This is an access-building exercise. Shoot practices, give some prints, BUILD A RELATIONSHIP WITH THE TEAM AND COACHES. This is the key to success.

Find a high school football team or volleyball team and follow your team through the playoffs. Football state championships is 12/8. If your team goes into the playoffs, you can continue the project. Volleyball state championships are on 11/3.

This essay is about intimacy, not just the action on the court. The goal is to reveal the camaraderie of the team, the action, the reaction, the leadership, the struggle, the defeat, the victory. It's up to you to find a team starting NOW and build that relationship. Pace yourself, you will also have other story assignments at the same time. If you wait to the last minute on this project, you will be up a creek.

Did I mention, you should begin NOW!

The Final Project

Your final project has the potential to be the best work of your documentary career...so far. Make it count. Make it relevant. Make it something you care about.

Our theme for your final project: *One tank of gas*.

It's critical that we tell stories within our own community. You can find a story as close as a short walk or you can tell a story that is within one tank of gas away.

If it's overwhelming to you to find a focus and a story to tell, I challenge you to look inward and ask yourself the following questions: What do you care about? What is a wrong you want to right in this world? What is a hope you want to bring to light? What is an issue you are curious about? What are you drawn to? What kinds of stories may you have a unique and personal ability to get access to? In what ways can you make the world a better place through the work you do? Begin by answering these questions, and see where this takes you.

You will be required to write a one-page proposal concisely stating the story you intend to tell and how you plan to approach it. Convince me that you can do it. You will be required to have an actual person who is willing to work with you on the project for the proposal stage.

Your final project should reflect 14 weeks of work. For the Shoot deadlines, you will be turning in low-res exports of your ENTIRE shoots, which we will review as a team in class. No deleting or re-ordering. The goal is to see how you are shooting and working situations. Take these shoot deadlines seriously.

TEAM ESSAY

FINAL DUE: 11/12
DIGITAL SLIDESHOW OR
MULTIMEDIA
CAPTIONS MUST BE INCLUDED
NO RESHOOTS
NO LATE ALLOWANCES

FINAL PROJECT

STILLS OR MULTIMEDIA
IDEA LIST DUE: 09/17
PROPOSAL DUE: 10/01
SHOOT #1: 10/24
SHOOT #2: 11/14
SHOOT #3: 11/26
SHOOT #4: 12/03
FP EDIT: 12/05
FINAL DUE: 12/07
NO LATE ALLOWANCES

EACH DEADLINE WILL BE
GRADED

YOU HAVE FREEDOM TO
EXPLORE UNIQUE PRESENTATION
OPTIONS IF YOU DESIRE,
BUT YOU MUST FIRST TALK TO
ME FOR APPROVAL.

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SEMESTER SCHEDULE ←

Class	Topics
01 20180822 W	Review syllabus, intros / How ideas evolves / ASSIGN: Story 1
02 20180827 M	What is a picture story?
03 20180829 W	DUE: Story 1 Edit 1
04 20180903 M	NO CLASS - LABOR DAY
05 20180905 W	DUE: Story 1 / ASSIGN: Story 2
06 20180910 M	Lecture Composition & Final Project
07 20180912 W	DUE: Story 2 Edit 1
08 20180917 M	DUE: Final Project Ideas
09 20180919 W	DUE: Story 2 / ASSIGN: Story 3
10 20180924 M	DUE: Team Essay Edit 1
11 20180926 W	DUE: Story 3 Edit 1
12 20181001 M	DUE: Final Project Proposal & Pitch Session
13 20181003 W	DUE: Story 3 / ASSIGN: Story 4
14 2018108 M	Lecture
15 20181010 W	DUE: Story 4
16 20181015 M	Lecture
17 20181017 W	NO CLASS - FALL BREAK
18 20181022 M	Lecture
19 20181024 W	DUE: Final Project Shoot 1
20 20181029 M	Lecture
21 20181031 W	DUE: TEAM ESSAY (rough edit)
22 20181105 M	Lecture
23 20181107 W	DUE: Midterm Elections Package Assignment
24 20181112 M	DUE: TEAM ESSAY
25 20181114 W	DUE: Final Project Shoot 2
26 20181119 M	Lecture
27 20181121 W	NO CLASS - THANKSGIVING DAY BREAK
28 20181126 M	DUE: Final Project Shoot 3
29 20181128 W	RESHOOTS DUE
30 20181203 M	DUE: Final Project Shoot 4
31 20181205 LDOC	DUE: Final Project Edit 1
32 20181207	FINAL EXAM MEETING 4 PM: Final Projects DUE