

# FOUNDATIONS IN PHOTOJOURNALISM

MEJO 180.2

Fall 2019 MW 12:00 - 1:45 CA 60

**"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 journalism communication.
4. To help you understand the all-important contribution of the idea to the photograph - the critical element that separates the picture taker from the picture maker.
- 5) To mindfully recognize one's own privilege and to acknowledge and address issues of representation in the journalism industry.

## 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. Learning 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. You will have the opportunity to reshoot two of your assignments.

PROFESSOR: CHAD A STEVENS  
OFFICE: CA 211  
chadstevens@unc.edu  
[Overburden Documentary](#)  
[Farmsteaders Documentary](#)

◆ OFFICE HOURS:  
W - 10:00-11:30  
Or by appointment.

◆ Required Texts:  
[National Geographic](#)  
[Photography Field Guide: Secret to Making Great Pictures](#)  
by Burian and Caputo

(Feel free to be used!)

◆ 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.

◆ 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%

Assignments = 550 points  
Final Project = 400 points  
Participation = 50 points

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

◆ IMPORTANT DATES:  
[LABOR DAY - 09/02](#)  
[FALL BREAK - 10/17-20](#)  
[T-DAY BREAK - 10/27](#)  
[LDOC - 12/04](#)

→ "What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make."

- JANE GOODALL

# FOUNDATIONS IN PHOTOJOURNALISM

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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 - please communicate) 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” or “stage” pictures. No “posing” subjects.

## 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)
- Portable Harddrive to archive your photography
- Camera Flash Card, at least 16 GB (these are not available from Checkout)

While enrolled in this course you will have access to a Canon Rebel kit available through the MEJO equipment room. The Equipment Room is located in the Park Library, 2d floor of Carroll Hall. Students are strongly encouraged to make an advance reservation for items at <https://equipmentroom.mj.unc.edu/help> & more information are at <https://guides.lib.unc.edu/mejo-equipment-room/>. One Card is required to borrow equipment.

## 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. Please communicate with me if circumstances arise that require you to miss class.

## PhotoNights

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.

## 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.

One reminder about critiques in class. I want involvement from everyone and the critiques need to be constructive. Remember, you are not your work. You are a full, holistic being, and the work you create is only one facet of who you are, so by separating your self worth from your work can lead to productive feedback sessions. 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.

# FOUNDATIONS IN PHOTOJOURNALISM

## Exercises and Assignments

You will complete three shooting exercises, six shooting assignments, a written picture story proposal, a photographer presentation, 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	Credit only
02 Depth of Field, Motion and Flash	In Class	Credit only
<b>Assignments</b>		
03 F22	In Field	Credit only
04 Composition	In Field	100
05 Light	In Field	100
06 Moment	In Field	100
07 Feature	In Field	100
08 Sports Package	In Field	100
Photographer Presentation	In Class	50
<b>Final Project</b>		<b>400 - Total</b>
09 Story Ideas and Proposal		100
09 Story Edit		50
09 Final Picture Story		250
<b>Participation - Critiques</b>		50

## Grade Determination

The grading will be rigorous, but I will do my best to match my grading to your learning. You will turn in full shoots, and it will be quite easy to see how much effort you put into the assignment. How much you experiment, explore and try will be considered in the grading. The best way to get a good grade in this class is to invest considerable time and effort on each assignment. A sure way to get a low grade is to wait to the last minute and not give the assignment - not to mention the people you are photographing - the attention deserved.

Grading will be done with the help of our Teaching Assistant. 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 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.

# FOUNDATIONS IN PHOTOJOURNALISM

Although this is a subjective world (how do you define quality?), there still must be a final say, and that is where we come in. 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 and connection. We will define all of this during class.

Grades can get in the way of deep learning, and true learning requires an environment in which one can experiment and make mistakes (If you're going to fail, fail creatively!) Recognizing this, you will have the opportunity to reshoot two of your assignments. These will be due in the last few weeks of class. See the semester schedule.

## Quizzes

There may 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 prepared 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.

## 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. My preferred pronouns are he/him/his.

"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

# FOUNDATIONS IN PHOTOJOURNALISM

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## 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://disabilityservices.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, please see the course instructor or Senior Associate Dean C. A. Tuggle, or you may speak with a representative of the Student Attorney Office or the Office of the Dean of Students.

## 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.

# FOUNDATIONS IN PHOTOJOURNALISM

## SEMESTER SCHEDULE ←

Class	Topics
01 AUG 21 W	Review syllabus, intros and purchase books
02 AUG 26 M	DUE: Visions and discussion
03 AUG 28 W	The Camera/Exposure, Digital workflow, ASSIGN: F22
04 SEPT 02 M	NO CLASS - LABOR DAY
05 SEPT 04 W	Digital Workflow - Exposure/Lenses and Depth of Field
06 SEPT 09 M	DUE: f22/Critique
07 SEPT 11 W	Composition
08 SEPT 16 M	Quiz: Camera, Exposure, Depth of Field, Readings
09 SEPT 18 W	DUE: Composition/Critique
10 SEPT 23 M	Light & Portrait
11 SEPT 25 W	Intro to the Picture Story
12 SEPT 30 M	DUE: Light and Portrait/Critique
13 OCT 02 W	The Moment
14 OCT 07 M	TBD
15 OCT 09 W	DUE: The Moment/Critique
16 OCT 14 M	The Feature Picture
17 OCT 16 W	DUE: Picture Story Ideas
18 OCT 21 M	The Picture Story continued
19 OCT 23 W	DUE: The Feature Picture
20 OCT 28 M	DUE: Picture Story Proposal
21 OCT 30 W	Motion, Blur, Panning
22 NOV 04 M	Sports Package
23 NOV 06 W	Photographer Presentations
24 NOV 11 M	Photographer Presentations
25 NOV 13 W	More on Photo Stories
26 NOV 18 M	DUE: Sports Package/Critique
27 NOV 20 W	Flash
28 NOV 25 M	DUE: 10 Images from your Story
29 NOV 27 W	NO CLASS: Thanksgiving Break
30 DEC 22 M	RESHOTS DUE
31 DEC 04 W	DUE: Picture Story Edit 1
FINAL EXAM	4 PM FRIDAY DEC 13: Final Project - Project Reviews