

PHOTO STORIES
MEJO 580-001
M/W 8:00 – 9:45am
Carroll 21

Instructor: Phyllis B Dooney
Email: Phy919@email.unc.edu

OFFICE HOURS

M/W 9:45 - 11:15am

By appointment; please reach out and schedule at least a day or two beforehand.

NOTES

This syllabus is flexible.

Be prepared for change.

Show up for each other. Be on time.



Photo © Trent Parke

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Advanced course in photojournalism content gathering, history, ethics and storytelling. Students create advanced newspaper and magazine assignments.

OBJECTIVES

My goal is to create an environment for you to realize your potential in visual storytelling. However, YOU must be proactive and make the most of the opportunities. It's easy to tell the difference between simply meeting requirements and taking initiative to get better. Take ownership of your growth. Although this is a subjective world, there 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?

- **CONTENT:** Idea, storyline and flow, focus, MOMENTS, connection to the viewer, editing, content variety, visual surprises.
- **AESTHETIC:** Composition, point of view, use of light and color, perspective, creativity, visual variety.
- **TECHNICAL:** Toning and picture quality, presentation, keywording, metadata, captions.

How do you succeed in this class? Number one: SPEND THE TIME. Number two: ATTITUDE. Treat every shoot as an opportunity. Do not make excuses, take responsibility for your work. Bury your pride. Now is the time to learn – and learning often involves failure. Manage your time. Be on time. Participate and contribute honestly in critiques. Help each other!

Much of the feedback for your projects will occur during class critiques (and 'edits' or 'updates'). If you want more feedback, be proactive during class and/or come see me for one-on-one feedback. Grading will be rigorous. Expectations are high.

EXPECTATIONS

I expect you to take risks. Risk-taking is relentless pushing of boundaries and exceeding expectations. Every time that you pick up your camera you have an opportunity.

- 1) **I expect your best effort** on all work, and I expect you to take the time necessary to do great work and build your portfolio. Roughly speaking, C effort is 1 shoot per week. A-B is 3-4.
- 2) I expect **images that are technically advanced**. I expect images to be properly focused, exposed, toned and presented. I also expect polished, accurate captions.
- 3) I expect images to **communicate and connect beyond the literal**.
- 4) I expect **professionalism in all areas** including presentation, ethics and caption writing.

READING

Check Sakai for supplementary assigned reading materials – we will discuss them in class on "Reading Group" days. Groups will be assigned to guide the discussion on those designated days.

CRITIQUES

Our goal: to discover what makes a compelling photo story, to draw attention to the strengths and weaknesses in your edit, and to prepare you to go out and make images that communicate more powerfully the next time. Critiques are essential to growth. Be honest, thoughtful and constructive. When receiving a critique of your work, appreciate it – you want feedback in order to grow. Don't be so connected to your work that you lose sight of how it could be better. We are each other's best critics and supporters. We will all experience the arc of not-so-great results along with highlight moments.

PORTFOLIOS

Portfolio 1: "4 Photo Stories." Through March 2nd, you will be working on your biweekly story assignments. Each completed story should be uploaded to our class cloud folder on the due date, before class begins, edited, with sequenced file names, embedded captions and copyright. These assignments are not graded individually but if you miss a story deadline or do not meet all of the criteria outlined, -3 points will be deducted from your PORTFOLIO 1 grade. These assignments are evaluated in their totality, in PORTFOLIO 1 (approx. 15 images), due on March 16. You are allowed 1 reshoot which can be submitted in place of a previous story within the portfolio. It is critical that you solicit constructive and meaningful feedback during the critiques for these – that is where you will hone your vision for a successful PORTFOLIO 1. Portfolio 1 should include a 400 - 500 word 'reflection' with your final submission.

Portfolio 2: "High School Sports Team." Find a local high school sports team to cover through April 8. This will result in PORTFOLIO 2. Start forging relationships and shooting as soon as possible in the semester – students cannot overlap in their team choice. 'Updates' are not graded individually but if you miss a story deadline -3 points will be deducted from your PORTFOLIO 2 grade. Edit should be 10-15 images, with sequenced file names, embedded captions and copyright, and a 300 - 400 word artist statement.

Portfolio 3: "Final Project." This is your story, your visual inquiry. Start forging relationships and shooting as soon as possible in the semester. The more time you spend on it, the richer, more complex and intimate it will be. 'Updates' are not graded individually but if you miss a story deadline -3 points will be deducted from your PORTFOLIO 3 grade. Edit should be 12-16 images, with sequenced file names, embedded captions and copyright, and a 400 - 500 word artist statement. Upon consultation, permission may be granted for multimedia work.

>> Data Management. It is necessary to have all of your files and work backed up in at least two locations: an external hard drive (for example, <http://a.co/d/9Q84UvM>) and a cloud). A thumb drive will not be adequate. You will also use this small external hard drive to transport images to and from class. Make sure to check that the connector (USB or USBC) is compatible with your laptop (or get an adaptor). Also be sure that whatever drive you buy is Mac compatible and [format it for your Mac](#) before you put anything on it! *It is up to you not to lose your work; lost images will not count.*

>> Online Submissions. Though you need to be shooting in RAW, upload your final edits to the class portal (in a labelled subfolder, IE: "Surname_Story1") according to these specifications: JPGs, 300dpi, 2000 pixels (longest edge), Adobe RGB color space. Sequence your edit by renaming your files like so: 01_Surname_Story1_055, 02_Surname_Story1_078, etc.



SYLLABUS

JAN 8: **WELCOME!** Lecture: *Ingredients of a 'successful' photograph*. Review syllabus. Assign Story 1 and reading groups.

JAN 13: Lecture: Picture Stories

JAN 15: **DUE: Story 1 Edit 1**

JAN 20: NO CLASS (MLK)

JAN 22: **DUE: Story 1 (CRITIQUE)**. Assign Story 2.

JAN 27: Excursion: Photobooks (meet Alice Whiteside at Sloane).

JAN 29: **DUE: Story 2 Edit 1**. Assign Story 3.

FEB 3: **DUE: Final Project Ideas**. Screening.

FEB 5: **DUE: Story 2 (CRITIQUE)**.

FEB 10: **DUE: Story 3 Edit 1**. Assign Story 4.

FEB 12: **DUE: Reading Group 1**.

FEB 17: **DUE: Story 3 (CRITIQUE)**.

FEB 19: Visiting Artist: John Edwin Mason.

FEB 24: **DUE: Story 4 Edit 1**.

FEB 26: Lecture.

MARCH 2: **DUE: Story 4 (CRITIQUE)**.

MARCH 4: **DUE: FINAL PROJECT Update 1**.

MARCH 9: NO CLASS (Spring Recess)

MARCH 11: NO CLASS (Spring Recess)

MARCH 16: **DUE: Portfolio 1 (PRESENT edit of stories 1 - 4 (1 reshoot))**

MARCH 18: **DUE: Reading Group 2**.

MARCH 23: **DUE: TEAM ESSAY Update 1 (CRITIQUE)**.

MARCH 25: Visiting Artist: Julie Platner.

MARCH 30: Screening.

APRIL 1: **DUE: FINAL PROJECT Update 2 (CRITIQUE)**.

APRIL 6: Lecture.

APRIL 8: **DUE: Portfolio 2 (PRESENT TEAM ESSAY)**

APRIL 13: Visiting Artist: Ed Kashi.

APRIL 15: **DUE: FINAL PROJECT Update 3**.

APRIL 20: **DUE: Reading Group 3**.

APRIL 22: **DUE: Final Project Artist Statement**.

>> FINAL << MAY 1, 4pm (Carroll 21): DUE: Portfolio 3 (PRESENT FINAL PROJECT)

ATTENDANCE + CLASS POLICY

While in class, all *cell phones need to be silenced* (vibrate does not count as silent) and put away. All class computer screens must be on sleep mode unless we are working on them. Laptops must stay in your book bags; note taking should be done with paper and pen. We will practice this kind of attentiveness ("active listening") and respect in class. Screens are like second hand smoke; they are not simply distracting to you, *they disturb those around you*. This class policy is not flexible and will affect your grade.

You will be allowed 1 unexcused absence; after that 1 percentage point will be deducted from your FINAL GRADE. If your semester average is 91% and you miss 3 classes, your final average would be 89% and so forth. Students may seek an official excuse for absence(s) from the [University Approved Absence Office](#) (UAAO). UNC-Chapel Hill's 2020 attendance policy stipulates that "No right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any class meetings, except for these University Approved Absences."

You must be in class to present your work for critique. Late assignments will receive a reduced grade. No assignment will be accepted if it is turned in more than 24 hours after its deadline – a grade of 0 will be recorded. This will be strictly enforced. If you must miss a class (cleared by UAAO) you should turn in your assignment the day it is due to receive a grade.

We need each other. Part of your grade evaluation will include participation. The success of this class depends in large part on the quality of class discussion. I distinguish between attendance and participation. In addition to warming a chair twice a week, I expect everyone to be *active participants in the class* – ask questions, offer your opinions, and challenge. This includes discussions during critique and on reading materials.

RUBRIC

PORTFOLIO 1 (STORIES 1 - 4)	20%
PORTFOLIO 2 (TEAM ESSAY)	20%
PORTFOLIO 3 (FINAL PROJECT)	35%
READING GROUP	10%
EFFORT, ATTENDANCE, PARTICIPATION	15%

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

- 1) Assignments are due before class begins (bring to class).
- 2) Any assignment not turned in will, obviously, receive zero points.
- 3) You will be allowed to reshoot 1 of Story 1 -4 only.
- 4) You must submit captions and metadata with every assignment. Captions must utilize AP style and, where appropriate, contain quotes from your subjects.
- 5) On multi-week projects, you must have work for each deadline or lose points.
- 6) You must upload final Portfolios 1 - 3 to our class portal in addition to presenting them in class.

GRADING SCALE

>92%=A; 90-92=A-; 88-89=B+; 83-87=B; 80-82=B-; 78-79=C+; 73-77=C; 70-72=C-; 68-69=D+; 60-67=D; <59=F

HONOR CODE

The Honor Code (<https://catalog.unc.edu/policies-procedures/honor-code/>) forms a bond of trust among students, faculty, and administrators. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill operates under a system of self-governance, as students are responsible for governing themselves. As such, our University is transformed into a powerful community of inquiry and learning. The Honor Code embodies the ideals of academic honesty, integrity, and responsible citizenship, and governs the performance of all academic work a student conducts at the University. Acceptance of an offer of admission to Carolina presupposes a commitment to the principles embodied in our century-old tradition of honor and integrity.

SEEKING HELP

If you need individual assistance, it is 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 on the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office's webpage (<https://eoc.unc.edu/our-policies/ppdhrm/>). 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 Accessibility Resources & Services site at <https://ars.unc.edu/>.

ACCREDITATION

The Hussman School of Journalism and Media'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 about them here: <http://hussman.unc.edu/accreditation>. 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.