

PHOTOJOURNALISM PROJECTS

681

Spring 2020 MW 12:00-1:45 CA60

“There were two things I wanted to do.
I wanted to show the things that had to be corrected.
I wanted to show the things that had to be appreciated.”

– LEWIS HINE

It is a tremendous privilege to be able to share people’s lives and tell their stories. With this privilege comes a responsibility for fairness, accuracy, commitment and hard work. In photojournalism, one can choose to serve self or to serve humankind by illuminating the human condition. My hope is that you will choose the latter.

Welcome to Photojournalism Projects. In this course we will seek to strengthen your foundation of technical and journalistic skills, and help guide you into leveraging the power of visual storytelling to engage and affect your community.

Many photographs simply state fact as the photographer recorded it. Within this class we will create photographs – not just photographs but *idea photographs* – that tell stories, photographs that educate and reach into the social conscience. Not every documentary story uncovers social problems, however. Many documentary stories celebrate things that are right within a society or reveal unknown cultural and societal gems.

Effective documentary storytelling is impossible without a commitment on the part of the storyteller to become involved and spend enough time to get beyond the surface. Genuine life moments are KEY elements of documentary storytelling. The “parachute” approach, projecting an incomplete and stereotypical understanding of a given subject, is sadly prevalent in today’s media. The antidote is time and an unselfish commitment to truth – and this is what it will take to succeed in this class.

LONG-TERM PHOTOGRAPHIC ESSAY / DOCUMENTARY VIDEO

This will be an experience in [Slow Journalism](#). The heart and soul of this class will be a longterm photographic essay or documentary video. This project will involve: Research, Access, Storytelling and Final Presentation.

You must focus on the visual storytelling, and you may present your project as a documentary short film or photographic story/essay. Ask yourself: “What is the best way to tell the story?” The key is INTENTION. We’ll talk more about this in class.

→ We will stress the vital elements of compelling storytelling: Character, conflict, dramatic tension, unfolding action, and resolution. **No conflict = no story.**

The theme of the project is open. I advise you to look inward and think about two questions: What breaks your heart and what makes you come alive? The answers to these questions can lead you to a project that matters - to you and to your audience.

If you want direction, I’ll offer this: challenge a stereotype. Research and define that stereotype, and then create a documentary project that disrupts that stereotype.

PROFESSOR: CHAD HEARTWOOD
OFFICE: CA 211
chadheartwood@unc.edu
[Overburden Documentary](#)
[Farmsteaders Documentary](#)

♦ OFFICE HOURS:
Monday - 2:00-3:00

♦ Please try and meet with me during office hours, but if you cannot I will be happy to schedule an appointment.

♦ Required Text:
[One mind-blowing photography book of your choice.](#)

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

Final Doc Project - 300
Weekly shoots - 400
(worth 50 points each)
Proposal & Roadmap - 100
Beyond the Box Assign - 200

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 the success of this class. There will be demonstrations that cannot be redone.

BE ON TIME.

♦ IMPORTANT DATES:
[MLK DAY](#) - 01/20
SPRING BREAK - 03/07-15
LDOC - 04/24
FINAL EXAM - 04/28 12 PM

To quote a recent Mother Jones article, [*This Is What's Missing From Journalism Right Now*](#), “the most important ingredient in investigative reporting is not brilliance, writing flair, or deep familiarity with the subject (though those all help). It’s something much simpler—time.” And, unlike any other course you’ve had in our program, you have time. Make the most of it.

I want you to think critically, act creatively and create a story that connects with the audience in a compelling and unique way.

Weekly shoots: You will be turning in weekly shoots worth 50 points each. You will turn in a folder of your entire shoot that must total at least 500 frames each week or equivalent video footage - scenes, interviews, etc. You will present every frame in class in the order you made the images. We will critique, not the single image, but your approach, style, visual variety and how well you worked each situation. If video is the best medium through which to tell your story, then you will submit roughly edited scenes each week.

BEYOND THE BOX | Early in the semester, I will give you creative, conceptual assignments. Take risks!
Note: Waiting to the last minute does not count as taking a risk.

Expectations

I expect you to take risks. True growth occurs when we learn from the risks we take. **Do not mistake complacency for risk-taking.** Risk-taking is the relentless pushing of the boundaries, forcing yourself out of your comfort zone and exceeding expectations.

I am here as your guide. My goal is to create an environment in which your potential can explode. However, even though I may open the doors, it is YOU who must walk through. Take ownership, yet be open, be a humble learner.

As your teacher in this capstone course, I do have some core journalistic expectations. Here they are:

- 1) I expect you to create content that is technically advanced. By this point in your training, your technical skills should be nearly intuitive. I expect images to be in focus (with rare exception), exposed well and toned correctly.
- 2) I expect images and footage to communicate and connect.
- 3) I expect you to be striving to make images and footage that contain one, or preferably all, of the key elements of a successful photograph: **MOMENT, LIGHT, COMPOSITION.**
- 4) I expect you to think creatively and independently when approaching any assignment/project, and I expect content to reflect this creative and independent thinking.
- 5) I expect professionalism in all areas including presentation, ethics and caption writing.

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 and/or shoots are due at the very minute class begins! 2) Any assignment not turned in will, obviously, receive zero points.

Although this is a subjective world (how do you define quality? See Robert Pirsig’s *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*), there still must be a final say, and that is where I come in. I am the editor. The critical elements that must be included in any assignment: Are you pushing yourself? And does this **communicate** to the viewer? Remember, it’s not about you. It’s about the people in your stories and the audience.

Graduate Students

Graduate students will lead one class in the semester. I will work with you to determine a topic that dovetails coursework and your interests.

Required Equipment and Supplies

You will need a digital 35mm SLR camera with manual controls and interchangeable lenses. Best case scenario would be a HD/SLR camera, allowing you to shoot video. Although you can check out through the school, you **MUST** start acquiring your own gear if you plan to survive out there. If you checkout from the school, realize you are responsible for any lost, damaged, or stolen equipment, and your access to gear will be limited.

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.

You will definitely need buy your own CF or SD cards - as large as possible. Also you need two harddrives for your personal photography archive, video and Premiere projects. One is for backup. I suggest you get at least 1TB drives and USB 3.0 or USB-C (depending on your laptop). Harddrive failure will not be accepted as an excuse for not completing projects.

Excuses

Storytelling is problem solving. You will be faced with many challenges in the field – in this class and beyond. It will be up to you in each moment to make it a learning opportunity. Nothing worth anything is easy. Be prepared and realize the one thing you can control is your attitude.

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

"The human species thinks in metaphors and learns through stories."

MARY CATHERINE BATESON ←

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

In policy 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 <https://ars.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 Hussman School of 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.

PHOTOJOURNALISM PROJECTS SCHEDULE ←

Class	Topics
01 JAN 08 W	Review syllabus, Conflict, Ideas / Review 50 Ideas
02 JAN 13 M	DUE: Idea Pictures + Discussion
03 JAN 15 W	DUE: Beyond the Box Assignment #1 (f22) / Project Ideas V2
04 JAN 20 M	NO CLASS - MLK DAY
05 JAN 22 W	DUE: Beyond the Box Assignment #2 (one frame) / Roadmaps
06 JAN 27 M	DUE: Beyond the Box Assignment #3 (public domain video)
07 JAN 29 W	TBD
08 FEB 03 M	DUE: Roadmaps
09 FEB 05 W	DUE: Shoot 1
10 FEB 10 M	DUE: Proposals / The Depictive Level
11 FEB 12 W	DUE: Shoot 2
12 FEB 17 M	The Image Deconstructed presentation
13 FEB 19 W	DUE: Shoot 3
14 FEB 24 M	Graduate Student Presentation
15 FEB 26 W	DUE: Shoot 4
16 MAR 02 M	Sharing Power in storytelling
17 MAR 04 W	DUE: MIDWAY REVIEW (Shoot 5)
18 MAR 09 M	SPRING BREAK
19 MAR 11 W	SPRING BREAK
20 MAR 16 M	Photo Book day
21 MAR 18 W	DUE: Shoot 6
22 MAR 23 M	Graduate Student Presentation
23 MAR 25 W	DUE: Shoot 7
24 MAR 30 M	TBD
25 APRIL 01 W	DUE: Shoot 8
26 APRIL 06 M	TBD
27 APRIL 08 W	DUE: Shoot 9
28 APRIL 13 M	TBD
29 APRIL 15 W	DUE: Rough Cut V1 (Shoot 10)
30 APRIL 20 M	Feedback
31 APRIL 22 W	DUE: Rough Cut V2
FINAL EXAM	12 PM TUESDAY APRIL 28 Final Project DUE