

Fear is a liar.

# PHOTO STORIES

MEJO 580.1

Spring MW 8:00-9:45

“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 building trust with people you photograph.
- 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) Simply...to continue learning, to continue seeking growth, and to continue our commitment to truthful CONTENT.

## CLASS AND COVID-19

We are officially designated a remote learning class. This means that this class will take place on Sakai and Zoom. Please see the schedule for details on which platforms we will use on a particular day. Primarily we will meet via Zoom for most class sessions. I will utilize Sakai for some class content, scheduling, supporting materials and assignment turn-ins and peer and instructor feedback.

Fieldwork: We are here to tell stories, and with flexibility and thoughtfulness, we will find ways in which to tell the best visual stories we can - given the parameters put on us because of the pandemic. I want to give you the freedom to tell the kind of story you want to tell that is within your comfort zone. That means we are going to have options on how we approach the final project. See the Final Project section of the syllabus for more details.

## Communication

→ Since a significant portion of this course will be virtual, it is important to note that communication is key in online learning. You will be expected to maintain consistent communication with your classmates and the instructor throughout the duration of the course - as detailed in Lessons, Zoom or in-person meetings.

PROFESSOR: CHAD HEARTWOOD  
OFFICE: CA 211  
MOBILE: 740-818-8812  
chadstevens@unc.edu  
[Overburden Documentary](#)  
[Farmsteaders Documentary](#)

♦ **ZOOM OFFICE HOURS:**  
T - 1:00-2:30

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

Grade scale:

A = 95-100% / A- = 90-94.9%  
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:  
WELLNESS DAYS FOR OUR CLASS:  
02/15  
04/05  
LDOC: 05/05  
FINAL EXAM: TBD

# PHOTO STORIES

**Lessons:** You'll find the the structure of the course in the Lessons section. Within the Lessons you will find PDFs of class presentations, reading, links to complimentary content (which you are expected to explore) assignments and discussion points. You will need to complete all the sections in all of the Lessons.

**Forums:** We will use the Forum environment to post your assignments, respond to assignments and offer feedback.

**Messages:** My email at [chadheartwood@unc.edu](mailto:chadheartwood@unc.edu). My hours will be flexible, and I will respond as quickly as possible.

## Participation

You will be required to participate in all assignments and forum interactions. Your participation will be evaluated on your consistent, thoughtful contribution to class discussions (Zoom and Sakai) and assignments. Deadlines are serious, and you are expected to meet all deadlines or have points deducted. You must have a voice in this class and contribute to this community of learners.

## Zoom Protocol

The key to having an engaged class is participation from all of us. Just as when we meet in person, the class is always better when everyone participates, the same is true for our Zoom class meetings. If possible, I'd like everyone to have their video on during our Zoom classes - with exceptions of course. Just like an in-person class, you may need to leave the room. All good. You can turn off video if you need to take a moment.

You must go here to sign up and access your pro account: <https://unc.zoom.us/>

If you have questions, you can let me know, but you may have more efficient results by contacting IT here: <https://help.unc.edu/sp>

## Face Coverings

You must adhere to the university's guidelines regarding face covering, social distancing and other measures to combat the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

## Projects and Assignments

In addition to the following 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.

We will have three short term photo story assignments.

### *Photographic Essay (Zipcode)*

You will be assigned a zipcode in our/your geographic area to document. We will base the zipcode on your transportation options and your geographic location. The goal is to capture the soul of that area. More on this later.

### *Final Project*

Key word is flexibility. My expectations are still high, but we have to meet this assignment in these times with thoughtfulness and flexibility. To that end I offer you several approaches to the Final Project. Historically in this class the final project has been a traditional moment-driven photo story. Here are options for your approach to the final project:

# PHOTO STORIES

---

1) **Moment-driven Photo Story.** This is a viable option *IF* you have access to a character/collaborator who is willing and feels safe working with you on a project of this nature. And I want you to feel safe in all situations as well. Health and safety are the first consideration. Consider story topics that would lead you to photographing in outdoor environments, ie., farm stories (there are a lot of issues to explore in this), environmental stories, etc.

2) **Creative non-fiction.** With a foundation in **non-fiction** storytelling, this option is flexible and is only limited by what you can imagine doing. This approach is the most flexible and potentially safest option. We will discuss possibilities as our class progresses.

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.

Your final project should reflect many 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 working situations. Take these shoot deadlines seriously.

## Idea Book

I recommend you 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 your idea book for an assignment. This is your opportunity to do the stories you want. Take advantage.

## ASSIGNMENT POINTS (See Course Schedule - last page of this syllabus - for more detail)

### 100 - PARTICIPATION

- Sakai Forum participation / Fellow student feedback
- Guest Speaker prep and interaction
- In-Class Exercises
- Zoom and Sakai class engagement and discussion

### 200 - Single Assignments

- 100 - Story 1
- 100 - Story 2
- 100 - Photographic Essay (Zipcode)
- 50 - Final Project Shoot 1
- 50 - Final Project Shoot 2
- 50 - Final Project Shoot 3
- 50 - Final Project Rough Edit
- 200 - Final Project Final Edit

---

### 1000 - TOTAL

### Grade Determination + Specifics

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

← DETAILS COUNT

— MARGARET BOURKE-WHITE

# PHOTO STORIES

---

Grading will be done with the help of our Teaching Assistant (who you will meet soon). 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 the Zipcode 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. Moments. Composition and Light.

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. We will do feedback at times in Zoom sessions and at other times in Sakai.

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.

One reminder about critiques in class. 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.

## Equipment and Supplies

Coronavirus has forced us to change our system. The checkout process will be similar to last semester. You will check out a "kit" (not all will be alike) and you will be able to checkout additional gear throughout the semester. Please go here to learn more about Hussman gear checkout for this semester:

<https://guides.lib.unc.edu/mejo-equipment-room/videos>

When you want to checkout additional equipment, you will email the Park Library at [parkadmin@listserv.unc.edu](mailto:parkadmin@listserv.unc.edu)

*Required to purchase on your own (if you don't already own):*

TWO Harddrives: at least 1TB, more if you can afford it. (one is to be a mirror of the original... **Backups are CRITICAL!!!**). Depending on your laptop you should buy **USB-C**, **USB 3.0** or **Thunderbolt**. SD or CF cards, depending on the camera body you'll be using.

# PHOTO STORIES

---

## 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.

## 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 (in person, Zoom or Sakai) to present your work for critique. Turning in an assignment alone does not count as a full turn-in. Part of your completion of the assignment is the feedback you offer other students. You will be allowed 2 un-excused absences; after that 2 percentage points will be deducted from your FINAL GRADE. Use your 2 wisely. But please communicate with me if issues arise that require your absence from class.

## 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.

## Diversity

The University's policy on Prohibiting Harassment and Discrimination is outlined in the 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/>

## 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:

# PHOTO STORIES

---

- \*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

## SEMESTER SCHEDULE

Class	Topics & Activities	Platform
01 JAN 20 W	Review syllabus   Picture Hunt (in class)   ASSIGN: Single - Self Portrait	Zoom
02 JAN 25 M	DUE: Self Portrait   Finding Ideas   ASSIGN: Story 1	Zoom
03 JAN 27 W	What is a Picture Story?	Zoom
04 FEB 01 M	DUE: Story 1 Edit and Review (feedback due on fellow student edits in forums)	Sakai
05 FEB 03 W	Building trust and gaining access   Editing Exercise: Breaking News	Zoom
06 FEB 08 M	DUE: Story 1	Zoom
07 FEB 10 W	The Idea Photograph   Story Idea Exercise   ASSIGN: Single - Feature Single	Zoom
08 FEB 15 M	Wellness Day	No Class
09 FEB 17 W	DUE: Feature   Story Editing + Exercise   ASSIGN: Final Project Ideas	Zoom
10 FEB 22 M	DUE: Final Project Ideas   Proposals   ASSIGN: Proposal   ASSIGN: Story 2	Sakai
11 FEB 24 W	<b><i>GUEST SPEAKER: Maddie McGarvey, freelance photojournalist</i></b>	Zoom
12 MAR 01 M	DUE: Story 2 Edit and Review   ASSIGN: Project Implicit Hidden Bias Test + Readings	Zoom
13 MAR 03 W	DUE: Project Implicit Hidden Bias Test + Readings   Discussion	Zoom
14 MAR 08 M	DUE: Story 2   More Depth on Composition	Zoom
15 MAR 10 W	TBD	Zoom
16 MAR 15 M	ASSIGN: Single - Spring Equinox	Sakai
17 MAR 17 W	TBD	Zoom
18 MAR 22 M	DUE: Single - Spring Equinox   Photographic Essay   ASSIGN: Zipcode Essay	Zoom
19 MAR 24 W	DUE: Final Project Proposal   Essay Editing Exercise	Zoom
20 MAR 29 M	ASSIGN: Final Project shoots due in 2 weeks	Sakai
21 MAR 31 W	<b><i>GUEST SPEAKER: Carolyn Van Houten, The Washington Post, Photographic Essay</i></b>   DUE: Zipcode Essay Rough Edit with partners via Sakai	Zoom
22 APR 05 M	Wellness Day	No Class
23 APR 07 W	<b><i>GUEST SPEAKER: Jeff Camarati - UNC Sports</i></b>	Zoom
24 APR 12 M	DUE: Final Project Shoot 1	Sakai
25 APRIL 14 W	DUE: Zipcode Essay	Zoom
26 APRIL 19 M	Long exposures   ASSIGN: Night	Zoom
27 APRIL 21 W	DUE: Final Project Shoot 2   Team editing	Zoom
28 APRIL 26 M	DUE: Night	Sakai
29 APRIL 28 W	DUE: Final Project Shoot 3   Team editing	Zoom
30 MAY 03 M	DUE: Final Project Rough Edit   Team editing	Zoom
31 MAY 05 W	LDOC: TBD	Zoom
FINAL EXAM	FINAL PROJECT DUE	Zoom