

**INTRO TO DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY | SA 2652Y**

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Class Mondays 1:30 pm (Online Asynchronous)  
Office Hours By Appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This online OWL course is a comprehensive examination of digital photographic approaches and studio production in the context of contemporary art. Students will explore the creative and communicative potential of the camera, post-production environment, and modes of presentation and dissemination. Technical demonstrations and workshops will provide students with a wide range of versatile tools and approaches through which ideas may be explored and developed. Studio production and experimentation will be complemented by a series of online live lectures, readings, online forum discussions, and online critiques aimed at developing critical response skills, conceptual foundations, language appropriate for image evaluation and analysis, as well as a more thorough understanding of historical and contemporary discourses surrounding the photographic image in the context of art production. This is an introductory course intended to prepare students for further study and exploration with digital media. This course does not assume any previous experience of digital photography but does assume basic digital literacy skills. Each online module will begin with exercises and demonstrations that will outline and reinforce basic and essential skill sets before moving on to more advanced content.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** There are seven primary learning outcomes for this online Intro to Digital Photography class. By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Effectively use a digital SLR camera in manual and semi-manual shooting modes
- Understand and use various software applications for image processing, organization, and manipulation
- Understand the historical development of fine art photography in order to contextualize and locate their own contemporary art practices
- Engage in critical issues surrounding both historical and contemporary photographic discourses

- Articulate their ideas and intents in a clear and effective manner
- Analyze and provide constructive and critical feedback on the work of others
- Demonstrate appropriate vocabulary and strategies of assessment for photographic imagery

Prerequisite(s): [Studio Art 1601](#) or [Studio Art 1605](#), or the former VAS 1020 or the former VAS 1025, or permission of the Department.

*You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that you have not taken an antirequisite course. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as basis of appeal. If you are not eligible for a course, you may be removed from it at any time, and you will receive no adjustment to your fees. These decisions cannot be appealed.*

#### TEACHING METHODS AND DELIVERY:

This is an online OWL course. The variety of formats used in this online class includes technical and theoretical lectures, project work, personal reflections, group discussion, presentations and online modules. The teaching methodology is concerned with ingraining theoretical knowledge through practical experience. Students will also be required to spend a minimum of 5 hours/week developing techniques and strategies introduced in the course, conducting independent research, completing assigned projects, and preparing for discussions and presentations.

Students are expected to demonstrate an attitude of respectful criticality and active engagement at all times, and contribute to the creation of a collegial and productive learning environment. It is recommended that you read the [“Critique Strategies”](#) document.

#### Connecting with classmates

As part of this online course, you have been assigned to a group of 4-6 other students. You will connect with your classmates through VoiceThread and Discussion Forums as well as occasional real-time online class critiques and optional in-person workshops (see syllabus for dates).

Being a part of the group offers you the opportunity to discuss, share, reflect, and get feedback from other students regarding the course materials, readings, assignments, and projects.

#### Course Lessons

The course is divided into 13 lessons in the fall term and 12 lessons in the winter term; each lesson is designed to be a mix of recorded online lectures, reading text and linked articles, watching video tutorials, completing a short 'toolbox' technical assignments, and taking a quiz. Lessons are organized to move in a specific sequence and build upon one another, so it's

important that you complete each chapter as assigned, in the week in which it is assigned. Don't lag behind!

#### STUDENT COURSE LOAD: What to Expect

Each week's lesson will start with a "What to Expect" page. Here you will be given a brief overview of the lesson contents, readings, and assignments and the approximate time it will take you to complete them. Depending if you are already familiar with a technique or if you need more time to go through materials, you may find that it takes you less or more time than estimated. Use the time estimates and your understanding of how you work best to plan your week and give yourself enough time to get everything done as assigned.

You will start a new lesson each Monday at 1:30 pm. The lesson content, including linked articles, videos, quizzes, and 'toolbox' technical assignments and/or group assignments for the week are due on the following Monday at 1:30 pm. You must complete the week's lesson and assignments within the week unless otherwise posted. Late assignments will not be accepted.

**Class Time:** As an online course, the assigned modules will require 3 to 6 hours per week, in lieu of in-class time. Some classes will require you to login to our zoom meeting for a live lecture.

**Prep Time:** Assignments and projects will require an additional 3 to 6 hours per week. Refer to the "What to Expect" page at the beginning of each chapter to help you plan your time each week.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY/RECOMMENDED READINGS

There are several required and suggested readings and many other resources (video, audio interview, links, infographics, etc.) included throughout the course.

#### COURSE REQUIREMENTS & MATERIALS

- PC or Mac (iPad, tablet or phone not acceptable for this class)
- Access to Photoshop CC 2020 and Lightroom CC Classic; Students are responsible CC subscription cost (\$9.99USD per month)
- Strong internet signal, Web Camera and Microphone for Zoom Sessions
- Active UWO e-mail address
- All readings will be uploaded to OWL in PDF format
- DSLR camera with manual controls (If you are unsure as to whether or not a particular model will be suitable for the class, contact your instructor. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the particulars of their camera's interface, as individualized instruction in this area is not provided)

#### Module Projects

There are four module projects in this course and they are designed to incorporate ideas and

methods learned both in class and through independent research, practice and experimentation. Students are encouraged to challenge themselves to explore, personalize, and expand on the creative potential of these skill sets. Student performance will be evaluated in terms of technical proficiency, conceptual focus, synthesis/presentation, as well as work ethic/development. Emphasis will be placed on serious engagement with relevant and challenging ideas. Furthermore, students will be expected to think critically and respond to the historical and contemporary issues presented in class. For more information on the assessment of project work, see the departmental rubric included with this syllabus.

A penalty of 5% per day will be deducted from module projects that are submitted late, or those not presented in the required format. Studio projects, presentations, and written work will be considered incomplete and late if items on the Due Date Checklist included with each module project description are missing from the submission package. It is the student's responsibility to remain informed as to submission details and requirements. Module projects submitted more than two weeks late without official documentation (see UNDERGRADUATE POLICIES section for details) will not be accepted, and will receive a grade of zero.

#### Grading Breakdown

(7) Toolbox Assignments: total 20%

Module #1 Project: 15%

Module #2 Project: 15%

Module #3 Project: 15%

Module #4 Project: 15%

(3) Quizzes - total 10%

Participation: 10%

BASED ON THE STUDENT'S SUCCESS IN MEETING THE ABOVE CRITERIA GRADES WILL BE ASSESSED ON THE FOLLOWING:

#### Visual Arts Studio Grading Rubric

90-100 (Outstanding, A+)- The studio work shows significant originality and exhibits a high degree of critical engagement. Sophisticated analysis and synthesis involving complex theoretical and conceptual thinking are demonstrated. Mastery of complex ideas is immediately evident. The studio work has originality, clarity and ambition. The project is treated with sensitivity and subtlety of thought. The quality of the background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is exemplary.

80-89 (Excellent, A)- The studio work shows originality and exhibits a high degree of critical engagement. The work is clearly focused and intelligently presented. Mastery of complex ideas is demonstrated. The studio work has clarity and ambition. The quality of the studio production immediately engages the viewer. The studio work has been sufficiently developed and demonstrates mastery of techniques so that results are compelling. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is impressive.

75-79 (Very Good, B+)- The studio work shows above average analysis, critical thinking and independent thought. It demonstrates a clear awareness of the parameters of the assignment and a very good attempt to respond creatively to them. The work demonstrates reasonable depth and/or breadth and engages in a production that is appropriate to the level of the course. The quality of studio work engages the viewer and demonstrates above-average mastery of techniques. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is very good.

70-74 (Good, B)- The studio work shows a satisfactory attempt at analysis and critical thinking. It shows a good attempt to respond to assignment parameters. The work demonstrates some depth and/or breadth, making references to appropriate course material/art context. The studio production engages the viewer and demonstrates a sufficient mastery of techniques. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is satisfactory.

60-69 (Competent, C) - The studio work demonstrates adequate engagement with the project. It shows an attempt to respond to assignment parameters but does so at a very basic level that

lacks creativity. Engagement with studio production demonstrates basic mastery of techniques. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is competent.

50-59 (Marginal, D)- The studio work shows less than adequate engagement with the topic and with the material covered by the course. The studio work waivers in its attempt to respond to assignment parameters and tends to be simplistic. Engagement with studio production demonstrates less than a basic mastery of techniques. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is less than satisfactory.

Below 50 (Unacceptable, F)- The studio work demonstrates a failure to comprehend/engage the topic. The studio work is incomplete and lacks redeeming creative merit. The work clearly does not meet the minimal requirements of the assignment. Background preparation and research, engagement with process and outcome of the studio production is unacceptable.

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## Recordings

All of the remote live learning sessions for this course will be recorded. The data captured during these recordings may include your image, voice recordings, chat logs and personal identifiers (name displayed on the screen). The recordings will be used for educational purposes related to this course, including evaluations. The recordings may be disclosed to other individuals under special circumstances. Please contact the instructor if you have any concerns related to session recordings.

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation, or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor.

## VISUAL ARTS POLICY STATEMENTS

Student Conduct: All students will conduct themselves in a manner that will be consistent with the maturity and academic integrity expected of university students. Student conduct shall be consistent with the general laws of the community and with University regulations. Students shall show regard and respect for the rights, safety, and property of all members of the

University community and are expected to act in a responsible manner within the University and the community at large.

**Attendance:** A student who misses more than 15% of the course hours, without written corroboration for health or bereavement, can be debarred from writing final exams, or participation in final studio evaluations. Note that if a student consistently is absent from a 3-hour class for 1 hour, they will exceed the 15% cutoff and can be debarred.

**Prerequisites:** You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that you have not taken an antirequisite course. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as basis of appeal. If you are not eligible for a course, you may be removed from it at any time, and you will receive no adjustment to your fees. These decisions cannot be appealed.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism, which may be defined as “The act or an instance of copying or stealing another’s words or ideas and attributing them as one’s own,” will not be tolerated. (Citation excerpted from Black’s Law Dictionary, 1999, 7th ed., p. 1170). This includes presenting the visual or aural work of another creator as your own. Visual or Aural Plagiarism may involve both hand-based media such as drawing, painting, printmaking and sculpture, as well as digital media such as photography, video and sound. It includes work subsequently manipulated or transferred between different media, as well as self-plagiarism – work submitted for assignments previously produced and graded for another course. Similar to textual plagiarism, all student work involving the visual or aural work of others must be appropriately cited/identified whether in print or orally. Failure to do so will lead to similar academic penalties as those identified in Western’s Academic Calendar.

**Medical Policy:** Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. See course outline for specific arrangements regarding less than 10% of assignments.

**Mental Health:** “Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western [http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental\\_health/](http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.”

**Student Conduct:** All students will conduct themselves in a manner that will be consistent with the maturity and academic integrity expected of university students. Student conduct shall be consistent with the general laws of the community and with University regulations. Students shall show regard and respect for the rights, safety, and property of all members of the University community and are expected to act in a responsible manner within the University and the community at large.

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/code\\_of\\_conduct.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/code_of_conduct.pdf)

Normal Building Access (September 1st to April 30th) (Subject to change):

The John Labatt Visual Arts Centre will be closed at 10:00pm each night Monday to Friday. There will be no after-hour access for undergraduate students. The Centre is open weekends 12:00pm-5:00pm unless otherwise posted; access by side entrances only. Students should be prepared to vacate the building promptly at 10:00pm and 5:00pm. You must also sign-in with the building monitors when working in the workshop areas outside of regular office hours.

For the 2020-2021 academic year the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre will be available by card access only for students who have in-person classes in the building.

Permission re: Promotion:

You grant permission for Western University to reproduce your name, information describing your artwork, representations of your work and any other information you have provided for the purpose of display, promotion and publicity either now or in the future.

By installing your artwork in the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre, you grant Western University an irrevocable, perpetual, royalty-free world-wide licence to photograph your artwork and use such photograph(s) for the promotion of your artwork and/or Western University, including, without limitation, advertising, display, editorial, packaging, promotion, television, social media, the Department of Visual Arts website, flickr, Twitter, Instagram etc.). Students wishing to not have their work photographed should not exhibit it in the Visual Arts Centre, Artlab Gallery or Cohen Commons. As the area is open to the public, students, faculty, staff and other visitors will not be prohibited from photographing your artwork while on exhibit at the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre.

You otherwise retain all ownership in your artwork.

Artwork Installation Liability Release:

You understand that the area where your artwork will be hanging or displayed is unsupervised and is in a part of the building that may be open to the public, day and evening, whether or not the building is open. Western University accepts no responsibility for damage to, or loss of, artwork at any time while on display or while being transported to or from the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre. By displaying your artwork in the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre, you accept all risk of loss or damage to your artwork. Western University does not provide insurance for the artwork on exhibition. If you wish to insure artwork, it is your responsibility to do so.

Removal:

Western University reserves the right to dispose of artwork not picked up by April 15th of each year.

Academic Sanctions:

In instances of non-payment of prescribed tuition and other fees, the University shall seal the academic record. When an academic record is sealed, the student will not be able to: a) view grades; b) register in future courses; c) receive transcripts or a degree diploma; d) obtain admission or readmission.

The above prohibitions shall be in force until such time as indebtedness to the University, including payment of fee for removal of the seal, has been cleared to the satisfaction of the



University.

[http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?PolicyCategoryID=1&Command=showCategory&Keywords=academic%20sanctions&SubHeadingID=169&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#SubHeading\\_169](http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?PolicyCategoryID=1&Command=showCategory&Keywords=academic%20sanctions&SubHeadingID=169&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#SubHeading_169)

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## Accommodation Policies

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities.

## Academic Consideration for Student Absence

Students will have up to two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an on-line portal to self-report an absence during the term, provided the following conditions are met: the absence is no more than 48 hours in duration, and the assessment for which consideration is being sought is worth 30% or less of the student's final grade. Students are expected to contact their instructors within 24 hours of the end of the period of the self-reported absence, unless noted on the syllabus. Students are not able to use the self-reporting option in the following circumstances:

- for exams scheduled by the Office of the Registrar (e.g., December and April exams)
- absence of a duration greater than 48 hours,
- assessments worth more than 30% of the student's final grade,
- if a student has already used the self-reporting portal twice during the academic year

If the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence are not met, students will need to provide a Student Medical Certificate if the absence is medical, or provide appropriate documentation if there are compassionate grounds for the absence in question. Students are encouraged to contact their Faculty academic counselling office to obtain more information about the relevant documentation.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty.

For Western University policy on Consideration for Student Absence, see Policy on Academic Consideration for Student Absences - Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs and for the Student Medical Certificate (SMC), see: [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf).

### Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the Western Multicultural Calendar.

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### IMPORTANT DATES (2021/2022):

- Nov. 1st – 7th, 2021 (Fall Reading Week) or Feb. 19th to 27th, 2022 (Spring Reading Week)
- No classes: Between Dec. 9th, 2021 and Jan. 2nd, 2022
- Final day of classes Fall semester December 8th, 2021
- Final day of classes April 1st, 2022