

Photography I: Introduction to Photography

River Hill High School

Visual Arts Department

Course Syllabus: 2012-2013

Course Description:

In this course, students apply the language of art in producing fine art photographs. River Hill's program is anchored in traditional black & white film photography. Students explore the optics, physics, and chemistry involved in producing darkroom-based photography, then become able to apply these concepts and find parallels when learning about digital photography and image manipulation. Primary experiences will center around the use of a 35mm SLR (single lens reflex) camera, film processing, darkroom techniques, print manipulation, and the presentation of work. Technical skills evolve through the introduction of pinhole photography and contact printing. Experiences throughout the course will include composing, exposing, processing, enlarging images in the darkroom, and experiences in digital imaging.

Pre-requisite: Art I (with a grade of C or better)

The fundamental experiences of this course are to:

- 1. Identify characteristics and appropriate use of equipment, materials, and processes in making both traditional black and white photographs and digital photographs.**
- 2. Maintain a sketchbook/visual journal AND an online digital portfolio for idea generation as well as the collection and analysis of image characteristics and the portfolio of work.**
- 3. Construct and practice the use of early photographic techniques, including pinhole photography and photograms.**
- 4. Demonstrate the appropriate use of 35mm SLR (single lens reflex) and/or range finder cameras to control exposure.**
- 5. Utilize basic black and white photographic processes including composing, exposing, processing, enlarging images in the darkroom, and presenting images.**
- 6. Demonstrate an understanding of the technical properties of digital images and apply skills and knowledge to the production of photographs.**
- 7. Apply Photoshop tools to the creation and manipulation of photographic images.**
- 8. Analyze and compare ways master photographers find and interpret subject matter to support an idea or theme through the use of the stages of description, analysis, interpretation, and judgment.**
- 9. Recognize various conceptual approaches used by master photographers for personal and public audiences to elicit an emotional response to cultural situations.**
- 10. Manipulate and modify a variety of conceptual and personal approaches master photographers use to compose their subjects.**
- 11. Research requirements and qualifications necessary for entering a career which utilizes visual arts skills and behaviors.**
- 12. Employ proper health and safety precautions.**

Recommended Student Materials:

- **9" x 12" hardbound or spiral bound sketchbook of good quality.** (Tablet or tape-bound sketchbooks are discouraged, as they tend to fall apart quickly, which increases the probability of lost and damaged work.) Should you choose to not purchase a sketchbook (which are available from art supply stores or bookstores), there will be opportunities at the beginning of the school year for you to learn how to make one on your own.
- **USB drive ("thumb" or "jump" drive).** It is recommended that you have a personal USB drive in order to keep a safe copy of all digital work. Your work will be stored on the schools server, but I recommend having your own copy. The Art Department cannot be responsible for lost or damaged work.
- **3-ring notebook.** This will help protect your photographic prints and negatives, which are VERY fragile and may be damaged easily.
- **Apron or smock.** Highly recommended this if you want to keep you clothes looking their best! (The Photography teachers all wear them.)
- **A usable #2 pencil every day!**

Studio Materials:

Photographic materials are particularly expensive. In the past, a \$60.00 studio fee was attached to this course in order to defray costs. We no longer require students to pay studio fees, and are currently in the practice of providing students with all necessary materials. However, the art department still pays that \$60.00 per student to purchase 35mm film, 100 sheets of 8" x 10" photographic paper, and to supplement the cost of darkroom chemistry and digital lab maintenance.

Personal expenses can incur due to the following: Accidents due to carelessness, improper use of materials, or students who wish to develop their portfolio beyond the requirements of the course.

If any of the materials we provide - including cameras and equipment that are borrowed - are lost, exposed, damaged, or otherwise become no longer able to serve their purpose, then the student must cover the cost of those materials.

Cameras:

We will be using 35mm film "single lens reflex" (SLR) cameras with manual exposure control.

Students are NOT required to have their own cameras for this course. The photo department currently has about 36 cameras which may be signed out and borrowed to complete assignments.

However, there are about 100 students taking photography courses this year, so - if at all possible, it could be a great benefit for a student to have his or her own camera. Ask friends and family - there may be a camera you can borrow for the year! You can also purchase your own camera to use - please talk to your instructor or see our department website for a guide on what to look for.

Studio Guidelines:

All students are expected to observe and adhere to all policies defined in the Student Handbook regarding lateness and conduct. Lateness will not be tolerated. As a studio class, attendance and promptness are critical to the success of the student in Photo I. Students will abide by all darkroom and safety procedures. Students are expected to maintain the studio and darkroom. Students are responsible to be where they are assigned during the class period. Students are expected to participate in all class discussions and activities.

Portfolio, Assessment, and Grading:

A record of your work will exist in your sketchbook, in a binder (negatives and prints), and digitally online, and should be maintained regularly. These will be reviewed quarterly.

A student's grade will be based upon daily in-class work, homework, tests and quizzes, and assignments. Assignments will be evaluated based upon the following components:

1. **Objectives** – Meeting the criteria or objectives for the specific assignment. Ex. An assignment may include specific preparation/brainstorming. Please note that photographs without test strips will not be accepted!
2. **Studio Skills** – Proper handling of equipment, responsible use of time, respect for others and their work, clean-up, and class participation.
3. **Craftsmanship / Presentation** – Neatness and respect for your work should be evident in the appearance of a completed assignment.
4. **Design** – Thoughtfulness to the composition and its relationship to personal ideas.

This system will allow the teacher and the student to evaluate specific strengths and identify areas that need improvement.

Grades will be based upon percentages:

A=90-100%; B=80-89%; C=70-79%; D=60-69%; E=0-59%

Homework:

Most of the work (probably about 70%) you do for this course will be done in class. The primary purpose of homework will be to help us make the best use of our class time, equipment, and facilities. For example, all shooting assignments are to be done outside of class time unless specifically stated otherwise, so that your in-class time can be spent processing the film and creating prints. Other work that may be assigned as homework include sketchbook assignments, readings, reviewing for quizzes/exams, research, and work on long-term assignments.

It is in the student's best interest to use their regular class time wisely to complete assignments. If in-class time is not used wisely, more out-of-class work may be the result. It is the student's responsibility to record homework assignments.

Thanksgiving break, Winter Break, and Spring Break are homework-free (AP students may need to prepare for May exams during Spring Break). Homecoming weekend and Prom weekend as well as 2 other weekends of the year will be homework-free. As assignments for this class are often independently driven, ongoing, and involved these homework-free times do

not preclude ongoing or long-term work. Students that need extra time may find working during these breaks necessary.

Deadlines, Missed Work, and Redoing Assignments:

Assignment deadlines are set at the discretion of the instructor when the assignment is given. It is the student's responsibility to make up any missed work due to excused absences, and to collect daily objectives, handouts, notes, assignments, etc. Students are also responsible for scheduling appointments with the teacher to discuss make-up work. If a student is absent on the day an assignment is due, the assignment should be handed in on the following day. A student may choose to redo an assignment, with teacher approval, if they are unhappy with the grade. If the original grade is a result of not using time appropriately, lack of effort, or not meeting due dates you will not be allowed to redo an assignment. Students have one month from the original due date to turn in a revised work for full credit. Hawktime is an optimal time during the day to complete work and work in the art room.

Late work will be deducted 10% each day late.

Topics and Assignments:

Students can expect four to five major assignments during each marking period. These assignments will have guiding themes that will be open to personal interpretation and investigation. One semester long assignment will be a presentation on a Master Photographer. There will be three major topics (outlined below) that will be covered during the first part of the semester. There will also be occasional quizzes and a midterm exam to assess student understanding of the concepts.

Topic One: Capturing an Image: Light and Light Exposure

A brief historical and technical background Camera Obscura
Creating a Pinhole Camera

Topic Two: Introduction to the SLR Camera

The camera body, shutter, lens, and film
First Shots and the Principles of Composition
Research Assignment: Master Photographers

Topic Three: Making and Refining the Image

Film development, the negative, and making a print

Additional Topics that will be covered during this course:

-Composition: Applying the Elements and Principles of Art and Design
-Digital Workflow and Studio Practices -Portraiture -Collage -Text and Image
-Bookmaking -Digital Issues -Careers in Photography -Critical Response to

Photography

Contact Information:

Phone: 410-313-7120 (between 7:00am – 3:30pm)

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Department Website: <http://www.riverhillart.org>

Website: <http://cecilrhhs.weebly.com>

Website: <http://appelrhhs.weebly.com>

Course Outline (Subject to adjustment)

Sunprints / Camera Obscura	
Photograms	100pts
-creating camera-less images	
-understanding the enlarger	
-using the Digital Lab	
Pinhole Photography	150pts
-historical considerations	
-camera construction	
-image positive and negative	
Darkroom Quiz.	50 pts
Snapshots and Composed Photographs	50 pts
-what makes a photo art or a snapshot	
Camera Parts and Functions	30 pts
-Light Metering	
-understanding how the camera lens, body, and film work together to make an image	
Camera & Metering Quiz	50 pts
Group Shooting	100 pts
-understanding the camera and metering	
Ordinary/Extraordinary:	100 pts
Documenting the Principles of Composition	
-shooting and processing negative	
-image enlarging	
Photo Restoration	100 pts
-learning Photoshop to restore old photographs	
Slice of Life: Aperture & Shutter Speed	100 pts
-creatively control movement and focus	
-technically control light and camera settings	
Midterm	
Show Me the Light	100 pts
-using natural and artificial light	
-utilizing different times of day	
-utilizing the bulb setting and bracketing	
Hoaxes	100 pts

- digital issues
- manipulating

Feldman's Method: critically looking at photography -in-class review	50 pts
Masters of Photography -presentation on master work -shooting in the style of a master	200 pts
Portrait without a Face -what else can be a portrait -learning to edit	100 pts
Introduction to Digital Photography -quiz -photography in the world	50 pts
Digital & Film Panorama -narrative exploration -figure in the environment	200 pts
Constructed Reality -staging photographs -activating the photographic environment	100 pts