San José State University  
Department of Art and Art History  
PHOT 40: Beginning Photography  
Section 06, Fall Semester 2018

Course and Contact Information

Instructor: Binh Danh  
Office Location: Duncan Hall (DH) 401C  
Telephone: (408) 924-xxxx (TBD)  
Email: binh.danh@sjsu.edu  
Office Hours: 1:30 PM to 2:30 PM, Tuesday and Thursday and by appointment □  
Class Days/Time: 3 PM to 5:50 PM on Tuesday and Thursday  
Classroom: Industrial Studies (IS) 219C  
Prerequisites: None  
Units: 3

Additional Contact Information

* E-mail is generally the best method of contact during non-office hours.  
* Please allow 48-hours for an e-mail response.  
* Emergency: 911  
* Campus Escort: 42222  
* Individuals with disabilities may contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC), Administrative Building 110, 408/924-6000, for a variety of formats such as Braille, large print, sign interpreters, assistive listening devices, audio tape and accommodations for physical accessibility.

Course Format

Activity and lecture

Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on my faculty web page at http://www.sjsu.edu/people/firstname.lastname and/or on Canvas Learning Management System course login website at http://sjsu.instructure.com. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU at http://my.sjsu.edu (or other communication system as indicated by the instructor) to learn of any updates.

Assignments, readings, handouts and other information will be located on Canvas where you may pick them up and print them out anytime you wish. Due to our efforts to make the Department of Art and Art History
"paperless," hard copies will not be handed out. You will find all class materials on Canvas. To access the site, go to: https://sjsu.instructure.com
Your login is your student ID#
Your password is case sensitive, so be sure to use lower/upper case where indicated.

Course Description

A beginning photography course which introduces students to basic aesthetic issues in image making (primarily in black and white), as well as photographic technique utilizing digital cameras, electronic image processing and printing. Requires a DSLR type camera and Adobe Lightroom.

Have you ever given a moment to consider how photography touches every part of your life from the day you were born to the family photographs on your cell phone, to the recent doctor's visit, or the powerful images from citizen journalists that sparked the Arab Spring or Black Lives Matter? Photography since its invention has changed our lives in almost every way. How does photography serve as evidence, as history, as research, and as art?

This course is an introduction to Fine Art Photography, with an emphasis on investigating personal, social, and aesthetic concerns with the camera. Class lectures will introduce you to contemporary and historical photographers and various philosophical and technical approaches to the medium. During the semester we will be covering technical foundations that include camera controls, exposure techniques, and black and white, and color digital printing. Class lecture, assignments, readings, and project critiques encourage lively and thoughtful dialogue among class participants.

Course Goals

• Students will gain awareness of the history of photography, photography in the fine arts, and how photographs are used in the mass media to sell, persuade, and exploit (visual literacy).
• Students will be able to analyze and critique photographic images as a way to inform their creative practice.
• Students will develop their visual perception and learn how to use the photographic medium as a form of creative expression.
• Students will explore how photography operates in their chosen majors.
• Students will learn how to use a DSLR camera.
• Students will learn how to edit, enhance, and sequence digital images in Adobe Lightroom, and prepare digital files to be printed as a photographic book.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

CLO1 - Gain an understanding and utilize photographic related vocabulary.

CLO2 - Become proficient in the manual functions of a DSLR, as means to properly expose an image

CLO3 - Relate the manual functions of a DSLR to creatively expose an image

CLO4 - Understand the role of light and lack thereof, in relation to a scene/subject
CLO5 - Learning how to make Adobe Lightroom work for you in your organizational and editing skills
CLO6 - Understand and properly use the provided printers as a vehicle for your final prints
CLO7 – Understand how imagery communicates and relays information to its viewer and creator
CLO8 - Prep for the next stepping stones in the photographical field
CLO9 - Gain an understanding of what Photography is, where it has come from, and where it is going
CLO10 - Develop a small body of professionally presented work as evidence of photographic knowledge

Required Texts/Readings

Online Reader available in Canvas course website
   Study guides of slide presentations
   Essay by Larry Sultan, “Pictures from home,” 1992
   “Artistic Criticism: How to Critique Art”

Other equipment / material requirements
-1 DSLR camera and Lens(s) (as well as full frame mirrorless cameras)
   Camera must be digital and allow manual control of exposure
   Canon Rebel series, Sony a6000, Nikon dx, Fuji x series are good beginner systems. Do some research.
- Laptop Computer
- Memory card (at least 16gb)
- Card Reader (unless laptop has one)
- USB Stick and External Hard Drive (you will be taking A LOT of images)
- Tripod (strongly recommended, but can be borrowed from check out window)
- Portfolio case/box/folder for storing and transporting images
- Paper is provided as part of tuition/lab fees
- Money for presentation materials like matting, framing etc (~$50)

Adobe Software Programs - Creative Cloud from this website: http://its.sjsu.edu/services/software/adobe/
   SJSU is providing all students, faculty, staff and administrators with free Adobe software for campus and home computers, and you must have an active SJSU One ID and password to qualify for ordering and downloading this software.

Course Web Materials
- PHOT40 Course materials on-line on the SJSU Canvas site for the course at:
   https://sjsu.instructure.com. Your Username is your 9-digit SJSU ID number, and your password is your SJSU-One account password.
PHOT 40 Course Website. Available at http://arth.sjsu.edu/, select Course Web Pages. Access through User: and Password: (login instructions to be announced in class).

Optional Resources include: Electronic Resources links to writing guides and Internet sites will posted to the Course Website and/or to Canvas.

Library Liaison

Peggy Cabrera : https://libguides.sjsu.edu/prf.php?account_id=157124
Email: peggy.cabrera@sjsu.edu
King Library 4th Floor
Phone: (408) 808-2034

Art and Art History Resources: https://libguides.sjsu.edu/Art

Course Requirements and Assignments

“Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.”

Attendance

This course is technique-intensive, and attendance is required at all lecture and critique sessions. Do not schedule appointments, work, or any other commitment during this class, as they will not be excused.

Critiques and Assignments

As one of the essential elements in the study of art, critiques will play a vital role in this course. We will have a critique for each project, and attendance at critiques is mandatory. You are required to show up for critiques prepared with your finished work. Your assignment will be graded following the critique, and late assignments will only be accepted under unusual, extenuating, or emergency circumstances. Additionally, you must be prepared to engage in discussion about your work as well as the work of your classmates in a manner that is educational, analytical, and objective. Participating in critique discussion is as essential as showing up for the critique, and your level of participation will be considered in your final grade.

Four Projects:

- Project 1 10%
- Project 2 15%
- Project 3 15%
- Project 4 15%

Final Portfolio 30%
Participation 15%

100 % (100 point)

The criteria to earn an excellent grade:

- Technical proficiency in subject matter with the camera, Adobe Lightroom, and image presentation
- A thorough understanding and creative interpretation of all assignments
- Often going beyond the minimum shooting requirements for each assignment
- Exhibiting thorough verbal engagement in critiques and class discussions.
- Punctual daily attendance
- Respect for the studio/photo classroom, cleaning up after yourself, and helping your peers do the same
- Evidence that you have challenged yourself above and beyond the status quo

Additionally, the following criteria will be applied to evaluate individual projects:
- Exposure/Quality Focus – Good exposures that are neither under nor overexposed, subject in focus (as required), no camera shake
- Adobe Lightroom Technique – Good tonal range, including white highlights and detail in the shadow areas
- Artistic Merit – Composition, visual impact, subject interest
- Originality – Uniqueness of idea and vision, original concept, creative in thought and appearance
- Evidence of shooting beyond the realm of the SJSU campus and community

**Numeric grade equivalents:**

- 93% and above A
- 92% - 90% A-
- 89% - 88% B+
- 87% - 83% B
- 82% - 80% B-
- 79% - 78% C+
- 77% - 73% C
- 72% - 70% C-
- 69% - 68% D+
- 67% - 63% D
- 62% - 60% D-
- below 60% F

**Please note:** Except in cases of documented emergencies, incomplete grades are not given in this course.

“All students have the right, within a reasonable time, to know their academic scores, to review their grade-dependent work, and to be provided with explanations for the determination of their course grades.” See University Policy F13-1 at [http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13-1.pdf](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13-1.pdf) for more details.

**Additional Note:**
This syllabus is subject to change, in the event of unforeseen circumstances, or in the case that changes will significantly enhance the quality of the course. Students will collectively have the opportunity to shape the ways in which the course unfolds.

**Department Advising**
For information about majors and minors in Art & Art History, for change of major/minor forms and a list of advisors: [http://www.sjsu.edu/art/](http://www.sjsu.edu/art/) or the Art & Art History department office in ART(H)/(PHOT) 116, 408-924-4320, art@sjsu.edu

**Classroom Protocol**
Students are expected to be punctual for class and actively engaged during all class meetings. Cell phones, smart phones, or other devices that detract from full attention should turn off or silenced.

**University Policies**
Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs’ [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/).

### Course Schedule

**PHOT 40: Beginning Photography, Fall Semester 2018**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</th>
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| 1    | Tues. Aug 21 | Class orientation and summary, syllabus, attendance, materials list, etc. Lecture  
  | Thurs. Aug 23 | • Why make photographs?  
  |                 | • Socrates: “The unexamined life is not worth living.”  
  |                 | • Install Adobe Lightroom  
  |                 | • Bring your DSLR (with charged battery), manual, gray card, and memory card. Read your camera’s manual from cover to cover.  
  |                 | • Explore Adobe Lightroom  |
| 2    | Tues. Aug 28 | Lecture topics:  
  |                 | • Short history of photography (from film to digital)  
  |                 | • DSLR and Adobe Lightroom  
  |                 | • **Project 1 (Finding pictures):** Must have at least 200 photos ready by next class  
  | Thurs. Aug 30  | Homework readings:  
  |                 | • Essay by Stephen Shore, “Form and Pressure,” 2011  
  |                 | • Roland Barthes’ Ch 10: Studium and Punctum  
  |                 | Film and activity:  
  |                 | • “Dorothea Lange: Grab a Hunk of Lightning”  
  |                 | • Adobe Lightroom  
  |                 | Homework reading:  
  |                 | • “Artistic Criticism: How to Critique Art”  |
| 3    | Tues. Sept 4 | Lecture  
  |                 | • Photo conversation part 1: Strategies for critique sessions  
  |                 | • Roland Barthes: Stadium and Punctum  
<p>|                 | • Group work: Critiquing photos  |</p>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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| Thurs. Sept 6 | Homework readings:  
• Essay by Larry Sultan, “Pictures from home,” 1992  
• Roland Barthes’ Ch 28: The Winter Garden Photograph  
Lecture  
• Photo conversation part 2: Strategies for critique sessions  
• Your family photos |
| 4 Tues. Sept 11 | Outputting your photos: Book, Slideshow, Print, and Web  
Lecture  
• Defining Landscape Photography  
• Defining Documentary Photography |
| Thurs. Sept 13 |  |
| 5 Tues. Sept 18 | Critique Project 1: Group 1  
Thurs. Sept 20 | Critique Project 1: Group 2 |
| 6 Tues. Sept 25 | Salt Stained Exhibit fieldtrip  
Art Object Gallery  
592 North 5th Street  
San Jose, CA 95112  
Lecture  
• Defining Portraiture Photography  
• Film: "Disfarmer: A Portrait of America"  
• Assignment: "What inspires you with creative?" presentation |
| Thurs. Sept 27 |  |
| 7 Tues. Oct 2 | Workday and individual meetings  
Thurs. Oct 4 | Workday and individual meetings |
| 8 Tues. Oct 9 | "What inspires you with creativity?" presentation, Group A  
Thurs. Oct 11 | "What inspires you with creativity?" presentation, Group B |
| 9 Tues. Oct 16 | Workday and individual meetings, TBD  
Thurs. Oct 18 | Independent workday (I will be out of town for my exhibition at Philips Museum of Art.) |
<p>| 10 Tues. Oct 23 | Critique Project 2: Group 1 |</p>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs. Oct 25</td>
<td>Critique Project 2: Group 2</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Tues. Oct 30</td>
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<td>Lecture</td>
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<td>• Defining Directorial Photography</td>
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<td>Thurs. Nov 1</td>
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<td>Lecture</td>
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<td>• Discussion of ethics and photographic imaging</td>
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<td>• Film: &quot;Jill Kilbourne: Killing Us Softly: Advertising’s Image of Women&quot;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Homework: Writing assignment</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Tues. Nov 6</td>
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<td>Workday and individual meetings</td>
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<td>Thurs. Nov 8</td>
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<td>Workday and individual meetings</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Tues. Nov 13</td>
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<td>Critique Project 3</td>
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<td>Thurs. Nov 15</td>
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<td>ATC presentations at Student Union Meeting Room 1</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Tues. Nov 20</td>
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<td>Lecture Project 4: Mimicking the style of a known photographer</td>
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<td>Thurs. Nov 22</td>
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<td>Thanksgiving: No classes</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Tues. Nov 27</td>
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<td>Workday and individual meetings</td>
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<td>Thurs. Nov 29</td>
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<td>Workday and individual meetings</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Tues. Dec 4</td>
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<td>Critique Project 4: Group 1</td>
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<td>Thurs. Dec 6</td>
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<td>Critique Project 4: Group 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>Mon. Dec 17 2:45PM to 5PM</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Final Critique</td>
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