

Nature and Conservation Photography

Spring 2006; LEC: Fri. 1030-1145; BBC 105

ACT: 6 Sundays on the Monterey Bay Coast; Time: TBA

LEC Code: 27314; ACT Code: 27318

SYLLABUS

CATALOG DESCRIPTION: Still photography of nature and illustrative conservation subjects in both color and black and white. Theory critique sessions supplemented with field experience.

Prerequisites: Photo experience or instructor consent. Lecture 2 hours/Activity 2 hours. 3 units.

May be repeated for a total of 6 units.

THE “REAL” PREREQUISITE: (1) A desire to improve your photographic skills; (2) A desire to get outdoors, away from computer screens, musty libraries, and stacks of boring homework assignments; (3) A desire to explore nature and beautiful landscapes [i.e., If you like the cool early morning exploratory walks and fresh air when camping, you’ll like this field course experience]; and (4) A “go with the flow” type of personality (i.e., a person that doesn’t get “pushed out of shape” when the moon doesn’t rise at exactly 6:02 p.m. as scheduled, etc.).

SATISFIES DEPARTMENT FIELD COURSE REQUIREMENT: Undergrads may take Env. S. 166 to fulfill *3-6 units toward the Department’s field requirement*; graduate students (with their advisor and Graduate Coordinator approval) may also take this course to satisfy the “Application Science” component of their M.S. program.

STATEMENTS REGARDING PLAGERISM AND DISABILITY: See separate handout.

COURSE EMPHASIS: Nature Photography is a broad field of photography that includes scenics (e.g., landscapes), plants, animals, birds, and insects. It sometimes encompasses human-made structures (such as old barns, fences, windmills, etc.) or human-induced changes in the natural environment. This semester's emphasis will be on landscape photography and the "art of seeing," particularly dawn and dusk landscape photography of the spectacularly beautiful Monterey Peninsula.

FIELD TRIP SCENES AND SITES: See separate handout: “Field Trip Scenes and Sites.”

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- (1) To introduce students to photographic **field techniques** important for nature photography;

I don’t need more photographs . . . I just need a few more GOOD photographs.

John Sexton
Internationally Respected Photographer &
Master B&W Printmaker

- (2) To introduce students to the **art** of photographing nature (i.e., to take you beyond merely shooting "snapshots" into the realm of "seeing" as a professional photographer).

The camera is an instrument that teaches people how to see without a camera.

Dorothea Lange
U.S. Photographer Famous for her
Photographs of the Great Depression

- (3) To illustrate how photography can be used as tool for the **appreciation** and **conservation** of nature.

As photographers, we can all use our photography to inform our fellow citizens about what's worth protecting. It's up to us to ensure that this world continues to offer beauty and sound ecological conditions for our children's future.

Rob Sheppard, Editor
Outdoor Photographer

FIELD AND TECHNIQUE SKILLS TAUGHT: See separate handout: "Field and Technique Skills Taught."

COURSE OUTLINE: See separate handout: "Course Outline"

BOOKS & SUPPLIES TO BUY:

- (1) Shaw, John. 1994. Landscape Photography. New York: Amphoto Publishers.
- (2) Hope, Terry. 2000. Landscapes: Developing Style in Creative Photography. N.Y.: Silver Pixel Press.
- (3) Steakley, Douglas. 2000. Pacific Light: Images of the Monterey Peninsula. Carmel: Carmel Publication Company.

[Steakley's book is important since most of your field trip sites will be picked from this book, and the challenge you have in this course is to produce equal or better photographs taken by this photographer. Believe me, most of you will be able to do it by the end of this course].

EQUIPMENT: Each student must use their own equipment. Most students use 35mm, but other size formats such as 2 1/4 x 2 1/4, 2 1/4 x 3 1/4, or 4 x 5 are acceptable. Formats smaller than 35 mm, such as half-frame 35mm, 110, etc. are not acceptable. Some students may want to purchase some additional equipment. A lecture early in the semester will discuss equipment and the merits and limitations of certain specialized equipment. Certain kinds of equipment, such as macro lenses, telephoto lenses, zoom lenses, etc. can usually be rented for short periods of time, such as weekends. Renting additional equipment is an option, not a requirement. Non-adjustable cameras (e.g., "Point-and-shoot" and most "digital" cameras) may not be used since you cannot manually control f stops, shutter speeds, focusing, etc. I repeat, film and/or digital cameras may be used, but only if you can manually control f stops, shutter speeds, and focusing. If you don't

have the proper kind of camera, or can't afford to buy one, don't forget that family members (e.g., moms, dads, aunts, uncles, grandmothers, grandfathers, brothers, or sisters) often have exactly what you need, and are more than willing to loan that camera that is gathering dust in the closet. Lots of past 166 students have gotten their equipment this way.

TYPICAL FIELD TRIP MORNING: Discuss the morning's assignment while carpooling to your destination; arrive 1 hour before dawn; scope out the site for the image you wish to shoot; set up your camera; sip coffee or tea, and munch on a bagel while waiting for the "magic light" to appear; when the glow of dawn begins, shoot like crazy to capture the magical light reflecting off the land and/or sea; **BACK IN YOUR WARM BED BY 9:00 OR 10:00 A.M. IN OTHER WORDS, YOU WILL STILL HAVE MOST OF THOSE SIX SUNDAYS FOR STUDY, WORK, PLAY, OR SLEEP.** [Dusk photography would simply mean arriving one hour prior to dusk. Again, most of those six Sundays would still be free for your personal activities].

MEDIUM: Most student projects will be done in 35mm color transparencies (slides), because of cost, ease of presentation, and because it is the manner in which most landscape photographers still submit their work for review and publication. Students can also submit black and white prints or digital images. See other handouts for detailed required guidelines for submission of projects.

PROJECT GUIDELINES: See separate handouts.

EVALUATION: *No exams; no papers to write; no "Turabian;"* merely some photographic field assignments capturing the legendary beauty and intimate landscapes of the Central California coast, and one mini and one major photo project focused on other geographic locations. See separate handout entitled, "Term Evaluation" for specifics.

<u>Fieldwork (with instructor & class)</u>	= 50%
<u>Mini Field Project</u>	= 10%
<u>Final Field Project</u>	= <u>20%</u>
<u>Seminar Performance (classroom)</u>	= <u>20%</u>
	100%

OFFICE & HOURS: My office is WSQ 115. Office hours: _____(TBA). Office hours are on a self-appointment basis. There is a sign-up sheet on my office door. Please be sure to sign up several days in advance of your desired appointment date. Please contact me by e-mail only: kleeary@comcast.net. This way, I guarantee you a same day (within 24 hours) response, or I will buy you a cup of coffee or tea.

Note: If all goes as planned, this should be one of the most spiritually rewarding, as well as technically & artistically challenging classes that you ever take in college.