

Env. S. 166

Dr. Gary A. Klee

Nature and Conservation Photography

Fall 2008; 4 units

LEC: Fri. 10:00-11:45; Clark 224; Code: 47998

ACT: 6 Sunday Field Trips; Code: 48008

## 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 4 hours. 4 units. **May be repeated for a total of 8 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 *4-8 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, lighthouses, 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 a 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) Fitzharris, Tim. 2007. National Audubon Society Guide to Landscape Photography. Richmond Hill, Ontario: Firefly Books. (Required Purchase).
- (2) Butcher, Clyde. 2007. America the Beautiful: The Monumental Landscape. Venice Florida: Window of the Eye, Inc. (Required Purchase).\*

*\*Order this book **TODAY**. I paid \$75.00 for this book. You can get a 40% discount if you write directly to Clyde Butcher's studio and say that you are a student in this class. Write to Venice Gallery & Studio, 237 Warfield Ave., Venice, FL 34285. (941) 486-0811.*

- (3) Gartside, Tim. 2003. Digital Landscape Photography. Boston: Muska & Lipman Publishing. (Optional Purchase).

*\*The first two books are to be purchased by both film and digital shooters. My philosophy: Any serious nature and conservation photographer must understand the benefits and drawbacks of all the tools of the trade:—both film and digital.*

**Warning:** A major component of your seminar grade is having these books before you, having studied them, and being prepared to discuss them. Showing up to class without these books is one sure way to have your seminar grade end up in the "trash can." Finally, if you can't afford these books, you certainly can't afford this class. Drop the course now!

**EQUIPMENT:** Each student must provide their own equipment. **Students may use either digital or film cameras.** Many students use 35mm SLR film cameras, 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 35mm, 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 (i.e., "Point-and-shoot" digital or film 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, ISO #s, and focusing.** You are also required to have a tripod and cable or remote shutter release. 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.

**ACTIVITY:** Students are required to put in an average of 4 hours per week of field work. Six scheduled Sundays will be with the instructor in the field. Plus there is a Mini and Final field project that will require extensive time and travel (e.g., Death Valley). Fortunately, these remaining hours are flexible as to when and where you do your field work. Topics and geographic locations must first be approved by the instructor. Students are required to do dawn and dusk photography, which often means getting up 2 hours before sunrise and remaining in the field until 2 hours after sunset.

**MEDIUM:** Most students these days use digital cameras. Keep in mind, however, that digital shooters must submit all work on CDs with associated prints. Other students prefer shooting 35mm color transparencies (slides), because of cost, ease of presentation, and because it is the manner in which many landscape photographers still submit their work for review and publication. Students can also submit black and white prints. See other handouts for detailed required guidelines for submission of projects.

**PROJECT GUIDELINES:** See separate handouts.

**EVALUATION:** See separate handout entitled, "Term Evaluation" for specifics.

<u>Fieldwork (with instructor &amp; class)</u>	= 50%
<u>Mini Field Project</u>	= 10%
<u>Final Field Project</u>	= 20%
<u>Seminar Performance (classroom)</u>	= 20%
	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. **Important: You must be signed up at least 2-3 days prior to your visit, so that I can better plan out my day's activities. If you are not signed up, I may take off for other work.** Appointments are in 10 or 15 minute blocks. You may sign up for more than one consecutive time period. Please contact me by e-mail only: kleegary@comcast.net. This way, I guarantee you a same day response (within 24 hours), or I will buy you a cup of coffee or tea.

Note: If you put your heart and soul into this class (i.e., give it serious effort), this could be one of the most spiritually rewarding, as well as technically & artistically **challenging** classes that you ever take in college.

### **TESTIMONIALS FROM PAST STUDENTS:**

*“Quite possibly the most spiritually enriching journey into the realm of landscape photography, for both the novice and professional student. It will change the way you view the world.”*

Catherine Cox  
Environmental Studies Major, Sp. 2007  
Water Conservation Specialist, SCV Water district

*“EnvS 166 was the spark that ignited my passion for photography.”*

Minh Nguyen  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Place Winner, Pentax Camera Travel Contest, 2008**  
**Business Management Major, Fall 2006**

*“Outstanding Review of the basic photographic skills plus a whole lot more.”*

Gina Guzman  
Photography Major, Spring & Fall 2007

*“A fun, challenging, and inspiring class with fantastic field trips and beautiful scenery. One of my favorite classes at SJSU.”*

David Alderman, Masters Candidate  
Bren School of Environmental Science and Management (class of 2009); 166 Class of Fall 2006

*“By far one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences I have ever had at SJSU. Great class, great views, what more could one hope for!!”*

Dennis Rothenberg  
Environmental Studies Major  
166 Class of Fall 2005

*“Learn the fundamentals of technique, composition, and light utilization both in classroom and on fieldtrips.”*

Jonathan Kroeker  
Environmental Studies major/Photo Minor, Fall 2005

*“The effort you put into this class is nothing compared to the rewards you receive.”*

Jennifer Ang  
Marketing Major/Photo Minor, Spring 2007

*“This class teaches you how to see things from a whole new perspective. You’ll never look at nature the same. It comes in very handy in my career.”*

Teri Rogoway  
Environmental Studies Major, Spring 2005  
Coordinator of Interpretive Programs  
Santa Clara County Open Space Authority

*“Beautiful coastal field trips that will give you opportunities to build your portfolio and to discover a skill that can be used your entire college career.”*

Dawn Moya  
Environmental Studies Major, Fall 2006

*“If you like photography and like to have fun, you owe it to yourself to take this course.”*

Duo Li  
Business major, Spring 2006  
**First Place Winner = \$5,000 prize**  
**Canon Photography Parks Contest, 2007**