

San José State University
Department of Art & Art History
PHOT116-01 (41991) Contemporary Issues in Photography - Fall 2021

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Jonathan Fung, Ph.D.
Office Location:	Zoom Office
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Email:	jonathan.fung@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	Tuesday/Thursday, 7:20-8:20PM and by Appointment
Class Days/Time:	Tuesdays, 8:00-10:45AM
Classroom:	Zoom Video Conferencing
Department Contact:	Website: www.sjsu.edu/art Email: art@sjsu.edu http://photo.sjsu.edu/faculty/jonathan-fung/
Prerequisites:	PHOT40
Unit	3.0

“I believe profoundly in the possibilities of democracy, but democracy needs to be emancipated from capitalism. As long as we inhabit a capitalist democracy, a future of racial equality, gender equality, economic equality will elude us.” Angela Davis

“The idea of freedom is inspiring. But what does it mean? If you are free in a political sense but have no food, what's that? The freedom to starve?” Angela Davis

Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on the [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.

COURSE FORMAT

Technology Intensive Course

This is a technology intensive course which requires your own laptop and internet connection for all class meetings. During required presentations you will connect your laptop to Zoom. You must have a computer camera or webcam and audio. Students must turn-on their computer camera or webcam during the entire class and unmute audio when asked to speak. Failure to do so will affect participation grade severely.

Assignments, Readings, Handouts

Course materials, including syllabus, assignments, readings, handouts, etc. can be found under our class name on the Canvas Learning Management System course login website at <http://sjsu.instructure.com/>. Canvas use is required and frequent. You are responsible for logging in regularly, downloading new materials, and posting in online class forums when assigned.

COURSE CONTENT AND OBJECTIVES

Course Description

“Examination and discussion of aesthetic trends and philosophies in photography and related media, their impact on the medium and society.”

Course Goals

Photo 116 is a seminar course that explores contemporary issues in photography and related media in the art world and beyond.

The course will consist primarily of viewing contemporary imagery while actively engaging in presentations and discussions regarding weekly readings about contemporary photographers, ideas and philosophies in the medium. We live in a society where photography influences our daily lives in numerous ways. While we consume vast amounts of imagery, we may not realize how adept we are at understanding visual culture. As a society we have developed ways of looking to understand the meanings and concepts behind a split-second flash of an advertisement, film, or photograph.

This seminar will explore the major trends and philosophies found in photography today, with a special emphasis on photography as a fine art. We will view many diverse images and examine how contemporary photographers use the medium, inventing new ways to express their interests and concerns on subjects as varied as landscape, autobiography, documentary imagery, traditional manipulation, mixed media, political issues such as identity, race, gender, class, sexual orientation, censorship, postmodernism, advertising, digital imaging and more. This broad knowledge base will help you develop your own artistic philosophy and shape the direction of your future artwork.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Course Learning Outcomes

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

CLO1 - Compare and contrast movements and philosophies in contemporary photography.

CLO2 - Identify various aesthetic trends pervasive in the art world during the last 20 years.

CLO3 - Understand and explain photography's multi-faceted influence on today's society.

CLO4 - Describe the emphasis/concerns of major artists in the field of contemporary photography and related media.

REQUIRED TEXTS/READINGS

Required Readings

Textbook: None - Readings will be uploaded to Canvas as downloadable PDF files.

Course Web Materials

PHOTO116 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.

Library Liaison

Gareth Scott

Email: gareth.scott@sjsu.edu

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library

4th Floor Administration Offices

Phone: (408) 808-2094

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

Additional Technology Requirements / Equipment

Student presentations will occur each week. I will give you permission to share the screen with me on Zoom. You will need a computer camera or a webcam and audio for every class.

On presentation days you should come prepared to present at the beginning of class. There will be very limited time for rescheduling presentations due to technical issues. To effectively present imagery it is helpful to have some knowledge of technical issues like image resolution and presentation applications such as PowerPoint, Keynote, or Google Slides.

Adobe Software is not required for this class, however SJSU students can download the Adobe Creative Suite for FREE. Follow the instructions at this link to download your free software:

<http://its.sjsu.edu/services/software/adobe/>

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

The following outlines requirements and assignments for the semester, which include:

1. Readings: Read assigned articles
2. Reflection Papers: Turn in weekly 1-2-pages reflection paper related to readings
3. Class Discussion: Participate in weekly discussions
4. Class Presentations:
 - I. Influential Artist Presentation (5 mins)
 - II. Comprehensive Topical Presentation (20 mins)
 - III. Arts Advocacy Presentation (12 mins)
5. Artist Statement: write a 1-page artist statement based on your 8 social justice images

1. Readings

Due to the contemporary nature of this course, there is no textbook that contains a current timeline of up-to-date information. Therefore, to gain a better understanding of the many issues we will explore in this class, specific reading assignments will be posted our Canvas Site prior to each weekly class meeting. These articles will be posted as easily downloadable PDF files.

You will be expected to read the articles and be prepared to discuss the issues in class. Keep in mind that class participation is a significant percentage of your grade, so making notes while reading will be very helpful to support you during our discussions.

While reading, examine whether you agree or disagree with the author, and why. Select issues that are most relevant and interesting to you for discussion in class. The articles offer a lot to investigate, so don't put the readings off until the last minute and turn them into a burden.

2. Reflection Papers

- Reflection Papers will be uploaded each week before class begins. You can create a blog or a vlog.

- Weekly articles can be found on Canvas, which will include 3 questions that will be posted by students presenting that week. *Students must upload article links and 3 questions one week prior to their presentation on the Canvas discussion board. Failure to do so will result in a 2-letter grade reduction.*
- Reflection Papers must be essay format, 1-page typed, 12-point font uploaded to Canvas before the start of class.
 - You must address the Reading Response Questions and quote/comment on specific material in the articles to indicate your understanding of the readings to receive full credit. Your opinions will make the papers stronger and more interesting, but responses must include reference to specific information found in the readings.
 - Class discussions will be based on the readings and responses. Your participation in the form of discussion is required and a significant part of your grade.
 - Have a second copy (digital or physical) for reference, to participate in class discussions using your responses from the readings. Taking notes and highlighting your readings can also prove helpful for reference during discussions.

3. Class Presentations:

I realize that public speaking can be intimidating, but it's a large part of this class, a good experience for you, and educational for the rest of us. Most careers will involve delivering presentations, so consider this a valuable learning experience for your future.

I. Influential Artist Presentations

- For the first two weeks of class, each student will give a 5-minute presentation on photographic artists who have most influenced their own work.
- This should be a very brief, well-organized, professional digital slide show (PowerPoint, Google Slides, or Keynote). If you plan to visit a website or two, practice ahead and know your way around the site.
- You may have heroes who are friends or commercial artists. For presentations, please stick with photographic fine artists who are historically significant to the medium. Stay away from commercial artists or friends. This also applies to the Comprehensive Topical Presentations.

II. Comprehensive Topical Presentation

- Each week, 2-3 students will research, provide at least 3 readings and 3 discussion questions for the class one week before, and present on the scheduled topic. Everyone is required to have finished each week's readings to effectively participate in the discussion led by the presenters. Failure to provide readings and discussion questions one week prior to the presentation will result in a one grade deduction.
- Each student will present on one topic. Carefully choose a subject that is of interest to you from the list of topics.
- Consider working as a team, rather than entirely on your own. Each student will research, compile, and give their own 20-minute presentation, but collaborative approaches such as panel discussions could be more interesting than separately prepared presentations. Either way, each of you must present 20 minutes of material. Communicate with the other student(s) presenting to make sure each of you present different artists and unique information to the class. There should be no overlap of information between the two presenters.
- Practice ahead of time. It's very important to research the artists you present, since your presentation is intended to educate the rest of us. A typical presentation will include 6-10 different photographers and last 20 minutes. A well-prepared presentation should not last longer than 20 your grade will suffer as a result. Your grade will also suffer if you have insufficient materials and minutes. If your presentation is disorganized and begins to run too far past 20 minutes, I will stop you. Practice and time yourself.

- The presentation will be given as a digital slide show and can include showing images you've collected from the Internet, books, and other sources. You can create a PowerPoint, Google Slides or Keynote presentation. Videos are optional and only 3 minutes of video will be allowed. Please arrive prepared to present on your chosen presentation day. *There will be an automatic reduction of two letter grades.*

III. Arts Advocacy

At the end of the semester each student will present their own photographic series of 8 images on a social justice issue selected and photographed this semester. The length of the presentation will be 12 minutes. concise and organized digital presentation. Include some likes and comments from posting all 8 images on Instagram at least 5 days before the assigned due date.

4. Artist Statement

For this assignment you will create a 1-page artist statement. An artist statement should briefly describe what your project is about and the meaning of your work. Be concise and descriptive! Personalize the artist statement and include passion. Include the what, why and how questions within 1-page.

5. Final Examination

Our Final Exam is scheduled by SJSU to take place on **Wednesday, December 8 at 7:15-9:00AM**. Please note that this is a different day and time than usual. Make appropriate arrangements now, so that you will be available to meet for our final exam critique. Participation in the final exam is mandatory, per SJSU regulations.

NOTE that University policy F69-24, "Students should attend all meetings of their classes, not only because they are responsible for material discussed therein, but because active participation is frequently essential to insure maximum benefit for all members of the class. Attendance per se shall not be used as a criterion for grading." SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. More details about student workload can be found in University Policy S12-3 at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>

GRADING INFORMATION

Course Grade Breakdown

Class Presentations

Influential Artist Presentation - 50 points

Topical Presentation – 150 points

Arts Advocacy Presentation – 100 points

Class Participation (class discussion, exercises, engagement) – 100 points

Written Reflection Papers & Artist Statement – 100 points

Total Possible Points: 500 points

Basis for Presentation Grading

Your presentations will receive a letter grade broken down into numerical value based on the following criteria:

1. Quality of Preparation: Did the presenter practice, well-organized, timely, and knowledgeable about

- the topic, resulting in an informative and professional-quality presentation?
2. Number of Artists: Did the presenter speak about the minimum number of 6 artists required? Did they present more or less than this amount?
 3. Relevance of Artists: Did the presenter include relevant artists, or were some of the artists chosen not very related to the topic, and/or commercial or unestablished artists?
 4. Relevance of Information: Was the information shared about each artist relevant to the weekly topic, engaging and/or expanding the ideas behind the articles and study questions? Or was the information under-researched and/or unrelated to the topic?
 5. Readings Review: Did both presenters review/summarize the main topics from the readings and lead the discussion together using the discussion questions? Remember, information must be organized so there is no overlap between presenters.

Grading Scale

All assignments have clear criteria and objectives to meet. All students shall be treated equitably. The criteria for determining a student's grade shall be as follows on a percentage of the total points:

Letter Grade	Grade Point	Percentage
A	4.0	93-100%
A-	3.7	90-92%
B+	3.3	87-89%
B	3.0	83-86%
B-	2.7	80-82%
C+	2.3	77-79%
C	2.0	73-76%
C-	1.7	70-72%
D+	1.3	67-69%
D	1.0	60-66%
F	0.0	0-59%

Presentations will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- [A+ to A-] Outstanding – Very Good:** Thoughtful and intelligent presentation delivered in a clear, organized, and engaging manner; sufficient number of relevant artists and sites chosen that relate clearly to topic; among the very best.
- [B+ to B-] Good - Above Average:** Shows potential, but not necessarily distinctive; roughly equal in quality to the majority of presentations given by other students (perhaps not well organized or too few artists, etc.)
- [C+ to C-] Average – Below Average:** Mediocre - achieves minimum requirements of the assignment, but not particularly clear, nor ambitious. Quality of work is below that of most other presentations given (too few or irrelevant artists chosen, presentation disorganized or appears to lack practice and planning, etc.).
- [D+ to D-] Unsatisfactory:** Does not satisfy the minimum requirements of the assignment; Generally unsatisfactory in all areas of evaluation.
- [F] Zero credit:** You missed your presentation and never made it up.

Class Participation

Your participation in the form of regular involvement in activities and discussions is not only required but mandatory. You are expected to attend all presentations, whether or not you are presenting. Failure to do so

could negatively affect your class participation grade. Your voice is critical to the success of this class. If you are experiencing extenuating circumstances it is your responsibility to make me aware of your situation when it occurs. Be proactive and communicate throughout the semester.

Late assignments will only be accepted under unusual, extenuating, or emergency circumstances.

Documented personal, family and health emergencies will be considered and evaluated. You must provide official documentation when you return to class after an absence. An excused absence or extension will be at the discretion of the professor.

Classroom Protocol

All students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner conducive to a university learning environment. This includes being on-time to class. You will be expected to be on time, engaged and present throughout class meetings, critiques, lectures, shooting assignments and lab. Students are encouraged not only to engage with their instructor regarding their work, but also with the other students within the class. *Participation in group critiques is both expected and mandatory.*

Laptop and Cell Phone Etiquette

Cell phones, or other devices that detract from full attention should be turned off or silenced. Texting or using your phone or laptop for personal use is not allowed. *Failure to follow the laptop and cell phone etiquette will affect your class participation grade severely.*

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> 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 a change of major/minor forms and a list of advisors: <http://www.sjsu.edu/art/> or the Art & Art History department office in ART 116, [408-924-4320](tel:408-924-4320), art@sjsu.edu

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](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>”

Academic integrity - Your commitment, as a student, to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The University Academic Integrity Policy F15-7 requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. Visit the Student Conduct and Ethical Development website for more information.

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting

accommodations must register with the Accessible Education Center (AEC) to establish a record of their disability.

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs and other resources for student use are available in:

- Academic Success Center at <http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc/> located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall
- Academic Technology Computer Center at <http://www.sjsu.edu/at/hd/> on the 1st floor of Clark Hall
- Associated Students Computer Services Center at <http://as.sjsu.edu/asccsc/> on the 2nd floor of the Student Union
- Student Computing Services at <http://library.sjsu.edu/student-computing-services/student-computing-services-center>
- Computers at the Martin Luther King Library for public at large at <http://library.sjsu.edu/reserve-studymeeting-room/computers-king-library>
- Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college

A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include DV and HD digital camcorders; digital still cameras; video, slide and overhead projectors; DVD, CD, and audiotape players; sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

SJSU Peer Connections

Peer Connections' free tutoring and mentoring is designed to assist students in the development of their full academic potential and to inspire them to become independent learners. Peer Connections tutors are trained to provide content-based tutoring in many lower division courses (some upper division) as well as writing and study skills assistance. Small group and individual tutoring are available. Peer Connections mentors are trained to provide support and resources in navigating the college experience. This support includes assistance in learning strategies and techniques on how to be a successful student. Peer Connections has learning commons, desktop computers, and success workshops on a wide variety of topics. For more information on services, hours, locations, or a list of current workshops, please visit Peer Connections website at <http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu> for more information.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the Writing Center website at <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter>. For additional resources and updated information, follow the Writing Center on Twitter and become a fan of the SJSU Writing Center on Facebook. (Note: You need to have a QR Reader to scan this code.)

Accommodation to Students' Religious Holidays

University Policy S14-7 states that San José State University shall provide accommodation on any graded class work or activities for students wishing to observe religious holidays when such observances require students to be absent from class. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor, in writing, about such holidays before the add deadline at the start of each semester. If such holidays occur before the add deadline, the student must notify the instructor, in writing, at least three days before the date that he/she will be absent. It is the responsibility of the instructor to make every reasonable effort to honor the student request without penalty, and of the student to make up the work missed.

Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material

University Policy S12-7, requires students to obtain instructor's permission to record the course and the following items to be included in the syllabus:

- “Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You must obtain the instructor's permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or distribute the material.”
 - It is suggested that the green sheet include the instructor's process for granting permission, whether in writing or orally and whether for the whole semester or on a class by class basis.
 - In classes where active participation of students or guests may be on the recording, permission of those students or guests should be obtained as well.
- “Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. You may not publicly share or upload instructor generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent.”

SJSU Counseling and Psychological Services

The SJSU Counseling and Psychological Services is located on the corner of 7th Street and San Carlos in the new Student Wellness Center, Room 300B. Professional psychologists, social workers, and counselors are available to provide confidential consultations on issues of student mental health, campus climate or psychological and academic issues on an individual, couple, or group basis. To schedule an appointment or learn more information, visit Counseling and Psychological Services website at <http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling>

Student Food Shelves

SJSU students in need of immediate food assistance have access to a number of small, self-serve "shelves" around the main campus. At these informal pantries there is no registration process. Students can stop in and take items as needed. For free food notifications you can follow @SJSUFreeFood on Twitter.

SJSU Cares

For campus resources to help you deal with situations outside of the classroom that may take away from your academic success, go to SJSU Cares: http://www.sjsu.edu/studentaffairs/current_students/sjsucares/

Emergency phone numbers

Emergency: 911; Escort Service: 42222

Local and Online Resources

Websites of Local Museums and Galleries:

San Jose Museum of Art: <http://www.sjmusart.org>

San Jose Institute for Contemporary Art: <http://www.sjica.org>

MACLA: Movimiento de Arte y Cultura Latino Americana: <https://maclaarte.org/>

De Saisset Museum (Santa Clara University Campus): <http://www.scu.edu/desaisset>

Triton Museum: <http://www.tritonmuseum.org>

Cantor Arts Center - Stanford University Art Events: <http://museum.stanford.edu/>

SF Camerawork: <http://www.sfcamerawork.org/>

Minnesota Street Project: www.minnesotastreetproject.com

Carmel's Center for Photographic Art: <http://www.photography.org>

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art: <http://www.sfmoma.org>
 Yerba Buena Center for the Arts: <https://ybca.org/>
 Pier 24: www.pier24.org
 Fine Art Museums of San Francisco: www.famsf.org

News on Bay Area Art Exhibits and Performances

SF Gate News, art section: <http://www.sfgate.com/art/>
 SF Art Dealers Association: <http://www.sfada.com>
 Bay Area Gallery Listings: <http://sfbayareagalleryguide.com/>
 Online edition of SJ Metro weekly newspaper: <http://www.metroactive.com/arts/>

Online Resources for Presentations

SJSU Photography Library Research Guide: <https://libguides.sjsu.edu/Photography>
 Index of 300,000 artists & photographers, links to worldwide museums: <http://www.artnet.com>
 Photo bookstore and gallery in Santa Fe, great selection of artists:
<http://www.photoeye.com/> and their artist index <http://www.artphotoindex.com/api/>

Excellent Bay Area photo organization, check for upcoming events: <http://www.photoalliance.org>

Aperture Foundation (some content requires library card or subscription): <https://aperture.org/>
 LensCulture photo organization and online magazine: <https://www.lensculture.com/>
 American Suburb X, Archive of artists, interviews, essays: <http://www.americansuburbx.com/>
 Photo History links by College of DuPage professor Jeff Curto:
<http://photohistory.jeffcurto.com/photo-history-links>
 Bios and links to photographers: <http://the-artists.org/artistsbymovement/photography>

PHOT116-01 (41991) Contemporary Issues Course Schedule - Fall 2021

Schedule is subject to change with fair notice. Notice will be given verbally in class and sent via email.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	Tues 8/24	Class Introduction and Overview of Semester <i>Choose topics and dates for your presentation</i> Read “Photography Now” articles, write Reading Reflection Paper and engage in class discussion.
2	Tues 8/31	Class Discussion of “Photography Now.” DUE: First Reflection Paper (Canvas)
3	Tues 9/7	DUE: Influential Artist Presentations (5 mins each) Upload Presentation to Canvas before Class
4	Tues 9/14	DUE: Influential Artist Presentations (5 mins each) Upload Presentation to Canvas before class
5	Tues 9/21	“Two theorists who made a difference: Roland Barthes and Susan Sontag” DUE: Reflection Paper (Canvas)
6	Tues 9/28	Topical Presentation: Effects of COVID-19 and the Pandemic DUE: Reflection Paper (Canvas)
7	Tues 10/5	Topical Presentation: Racial Justice & Equality DUE: Reflection Paper (Canvas)

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
8	Tues 10/12	Topical Presentation: Multiculturalism: Issues of Self, Gender, Ethnicity and Identity DUE: Reflection Paper (Canvas)
9	Tues 10/19	Topical Presentation: Truth, Fabrication and Manipulation in Photography DUE: Reflection Paper (Canvas)
10	Tues 10/26	Topical Presentation: Landscape Photography & Environmental Issues DUE: Reflection Paper (Canvas)
11	Tues 11/2	Topical Presentation: Photojournalism & Documentary How to Write an Artist Statement DUE: Reflection Paper (Canvas)
12	Tues 11/9	Workshop artist statement & pitch Assignment 3 concept DUE: Reflection Paper (Canvas)
13	Tues 11/16	Topical Presentation: Politics in Art: Censorship & Government funding Assignment 3: Arts Advocacy Artist Statement Due DUE: Reflection Paper (Canvas)
14	Tues 11/23	Topical Presentation: The Future of Photography DUE: Reflection Paper (Canvas)
15	Tues 11/30	Last day of regular classes DUE: Assignment 3: Arts Advocacy (Canvas) Critique Assignment 3: Arts Advocacy
16	Wed, Dec 8 7:15-9:00AM	Final Exam Finish critiquing Assignment 3: Arts Advocacy Celebrate your class accomplishments!