



FLOR ARTS 1107

Introduction to Photojournalism

CAPA FLORENCE PROGRAM

Course Description

The term “*photography*”, coined in the mid XIX century by Sir John Herschel, is a combination of the Greek “*phos*” (light) and the verb *graphein* (to write). Therefore, it means “to write with light”. It is a natural ambition of such a means telling stories and through its fragmented view, making (often) a better and deeper understanding of the world possible, beyond prejudices and commonplaces. Taking or making a picture implies the photographer’s willingness to approach people, lean on things, explore different points of view, rather than limiting her/his visual experience to a superficial glimpse. The course will introduce students to the use of a camera, through a develop of their technical skills with a special attention to compositional elements of an image and photography’s narrative possibilities. In order to gain this aim a particular care will be dedicated to the history of photography through the analysis (during slide shows in class or visits to exhibitions) of projects and images realized by famous photographers since the early years. To make long things short, the matter of the course will be learning and practicing (during frequent field trips) photography as a language, to create personal visual tales of each student’s experience of a new, unknown reality.

Course Aims

Learn how the camera can be used as a tool of documentary record, cross cultural understanding, artistic expression and self-discovery. Become conscious of how photography is a language able to express, through its peculiar features, each one’s experience.

Requirements and Prerequisites

-This course is recommended for communications, journalism and social science students.

-Basic photography experience and knowledge will be helpful but not needed, since the students will be introduced to the basic principles of photography.

-A digital camera with a resolution of at least 8 megapixels with an optical zoom or a fixed focal length lens (50 mm equivalent), preferably a DSLR (Digital Single Lens Reflex), i.e. a camera whose focusing system lets the photographer see in the viewer exactly what the lens will take, with manual functioning and interchangeable lenses

Learning Outcomes

- a. Learn how to use manually a camera a camera and therefore understand the relation between technical skills and creative purposes
- b. Know the heritage of photojournalism through a continuous reference to the history of this specific field of photography, the analysis of projects realized by famous photographers of past and present, visits to exhibitions and use of web sources, such as the websites of the main photo agencies (Magnum, Vu, VII and others)
- c. Learn how photographing is not limited to the act of shooting but includes certain visual choices that precede it, the editing and sequencing work and the pictures’ interaction with a text
- d. Learn that photography, particularly in the field of photojournalism, is a language that, since the beginning of the digital revolution, has deeply extended and changed its perspectives
- e. Learn the importance cohesion, as far as content and form are concerned, in a photographic project, and its effects upon a narrative work
- f. Became able to use a camera to go beyond the clichés, try to understand, through its photographic description, the place we live in by paying attention to it, without being blinded by fears or common places,

Class methodology

The instructor will guide the students to photograph manually, initially though theoretical lectures in class, immediately followed by on the field sessions. As explained above a particular attention will be payed to projects created by famous

photographers since the early years and to the analysis of works by contemporary artists. Frequent field trips will take place during the course, with a double intent: pushing the students to a practical learning of their cameras' functioning in order to use them to develop their peculiar creativity; making them know Florence and realize a personal representation their reaction to a new town.

Field Component(s): CAPA provides the unique opportunity to learn about the city through direct, guided experience. Participation in the field activity(s) for this course is required. You will actively explore the Global City you are currently living in. Furthermore, you will have the chance to collect useful information that will be an invaluable resource for the essays/papers/projects assigned in this course. During the course the students will be led by the teacher on field trip to places that, far from representing the beautiful but usual cliché of Florence, defines its daily or alternative identity: The former mental institution of San Salvi, the public park named Cascine, Scandicci and its recently reshaped Piazza della Resistenza projected by the American architect Richard Rogers. Therefore they will be accompanied behind the postcard and given the chance of getting in touch and describing otherwise unknown sides of a town that is not only the cradle of renaissance. Besides the field trips some lessons will be dedicated to visits to exhibitions, photo archives (such as the Fosco Maraini, if available) and galleries whose attention for photography is progressively increasing. Students are strongly encouraged to participate in co-curricular program activities, available on Canvas¹

Mid-Term & Final Exams

The mid-term exam consists of:

- A. A technical test consisting of 10 to 15 short questions with open answers on topics questions about technical issues (Photographic technique) explained during the course (approx. 30 minutes)
- B. Critique of assignment n. 2 (a minimum of 12 images plus a written statement)

The final exam consists of:

- A. Critique of the final project (topic to be chosen by the student and submitted to the teacher; a minimum of 15 images introduced by a written statement)

Grade Breakdown and Assessment of Learning Outcomes			
Learning Outcomes	Assessment task	Grade %	Due Date
b), c), d), e)	Class participation/Small group discussion	10%	Weekly
a), c), e), f)	Assignment 1	15%	Week 4
a), c), e), f)	Assignment 2	15%	Week 7
a), c), e), f)	Assignment 3	20%	Week 9
a)	Mid Term Test	10%	Week 6
All	Final Exam	30%	Week 14

Overall grade

100%

DESCRIPTOR	ALPHA	NUMERIC	GPA	REQUIREMENT/EXPECTATION
Outstanding (High Distinction)	A	93+	4.0	Maximum grade: In addition to description for grade "A-", the student shows detailed understanding of materials about which he or she can show independent analytical ability. This means the ability to question an issue from different perspectives and evaluate responses in an objective manner.
Excellent (Distinction)	A-	90 - 92	3.7	Student shows understanding of literature beyond the textbook/class hand-outs/class notes, and the work shows a high level of independent thought, presents informed and insightful discussion and demonstrates a well-developed capacity for evaluation.
Very good (High Credit)	B+	87 - 89	3.3	Shows evidence of a capacity to generalise from the taught content, or the material in literature, or from class lectures in an informed manner. Also, the work demonstrates a capacity to integrate personal reflection into the discussion and an appreciation of a range of different perspectives.
Good (Credit)	B	83 - 86	3.0	The work is well organised and contains coherent or logical argumentation and presentation.
Good (Credit)	B-	80 - 82	2.7	Student shows understanding of literature beyond the textbook and/or notes, and, there is evidence of additional reading.

Average (Good Pass)	C+	77-79	2.3	The work demonstrates a capacity to integrate research into the discussion and a critical appreciation of a range of theoretical perspectives. Also, the work demonstrates a clear understanding of the question and its theoretical implications and demonstrates evidence of additional reading.
Adequate (Pass)	C	73 - 76	2.0	Shows clear understanding and some insight into the material in the textbook and notes, but not beyond. A deficiency in understanding the material may be compensated by evidence of independent thought and effort related to the subject matter.
Below Average (Borderline Pass)	C-	70-72	1.7	Shows some understanding of the material in the textbook and notes. A deficiency in any of the above may be compensated by evidence of independent thought related to the subject matter.
Inadequate (Borderline Fail)	D+	67 - 69	1.3	Fails to show a clear understanding or much insight into the material in the textbook and notes
Poor (Fail)	D	60 - 66	0.7 - 1.0	Besides the above for D+, student has not shown interest or engagement in the class work or study.
Poor (Fail)	F	<60	0	Shows little or no understanding of any of the material
Incomplete	I			Please see CAPA policy in the Faculty Handbook.

Dress Code

No requirements

Course Materials

Recommended Reading(s):

- Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*
- S.Sontag, *On Photography*
- R. Barthes, *Camera Lucida*
- Henri Cartier Bresson, *The Mind's eye*
- Geoff Dyer, *The Ongoing Moment*
- Stephen Shore "The Nature of Photographs: A Primer"
- Alex Webb and Rebecca Norris Webb *on Street Photography and the Poetic Image*
- Robert Adams, *Beauty in Photography*
- Georges Perec *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces*
- John Berger *Ways of Seeing / Another Way of Telling / The Shape of a Pocket*

Note: the above listed readings are mandatory and can be downloaded from the **Modules** section in CANVAS

Dvd

Zana Brisky, "*Born into Brothels*"

John Maloof, "*Finding Vivian Maier*"

Neal Broffman "*Hot Spots: Martin Parr in the American South*"

From an idea of William Klein "*Contacts*"

Tim Hetherington and Sebastian Junger, "*Restrepo*"

Wim Wenders and Juliano Ribeiro Salgado, "*The Salt of the Earth*"

The Genius of Photography

Laura Israel, *Don't blink: Robert Frank*

Internet Resources:

www.magnumphotos.com

www.viipphoto.com

www.agencevu.com

www.mediastorm.com

www.loeildelaphotographie.com

lens.blogs.nytimes.com

Weekly Course Schedule

WEEK 1	
Lesson Number 1	Date
Meet	Classroom 2
Venue	CAPA – Via Pandolfini n. 20
In–class activity	Introduction to the course - Check of the students' cameras
Out–of–class activity	Visit (if possible) to photostores downtown
Assignments	Assignment n. 1: Urban Landscape – A description of a street, a quarter, the first impact of Firenze on each student. At least 12 images and a written statement. The critique will be held on session n. 4 (February 7)
Readings	From Henri Cartier Bresson's " <i>The mind's eye</i> "
Notes	Always bring the camera in class

WEEK 2	
Lesson Number 2	Date
Meet	Classroom 2
Venue	CAPA – Via Pandolfini n. 20
In–class activity	Technique: the functioning of a camera (basic skills : exposure, depth of field, etc.)
Out–of–class activity	If possible, on the field session to practice the cameras' functioning
Assignments	Assignment n. 1: Urban Landscape – A description of a street, a quarter, the first impact of Firenze on each student. At least 12 images and a written statement. The critique will be held on session n. 4 (February 7)
Readings	Handout about technique
Notes	Always bring the camera in class

WEEK 3	
Lesson Number 3	Date
Meet	Classroom 2
Venue	CAPA – Via Pandolfini n. 20
In–class activity	None
Out–of–class activity	Field trip to the Train Station /San Frediano / San Lorenzo Market – Topic: street photography - Shooting practice on the field
Assignments	Assignment n. 1: Urban Landscape – A description of a street, a quarter, the first impact of Firenze on each student. At least 12 images and a written statement. The critique will be held on session n. 4 (February 7)
Readings	Excerpt from Geoff Dyer's <i>The Ongoing Moment</i>

Notes	Charge the camera's batteries
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WEEK 4

Lesson Number 4	Date
Meet	Classroom 2
Venue	CAPA – Via Pandolfini n. 20
In–class activity	Critique (not individual) of assignment n. 1 – The students' projects will be reviewed during a class' slide show
Assignments	Assignment n. 2: Human Landscape / Portrait – 12 images at least and a written statement, due by session n. 7 (March 7). The topic is people . The photographer will have to create a visual project related to portraying people (as individuals or as groups). The instructor will explain in depth the content of the project in class
Readings	Excerpt from Roland Barthes' <i>Camera Lucida</i>
Notes	You are expected to participate actively to the critique

WEEK 5

Lesson Number 5	Date
Meet	Classroom 2
Venue	CAPA – Via Pandolfini n. 20
Out–of–class activity	Field trip to Mercato Centrale/San Frediano or visit to an exhibition (if available)
Assignments	Assignment n. 2: Human Landscape / Portrait – 12 images at least and a written statement, due by session n. 7 (March 7).The topic is people. The photographer will have to create a visual project related to portraying people (as individuals or as groups). The instructor will explain in depth the content of the project in class
Readings	Handout about technique and chapter titled <i>The adventure of a photographer</i> from Italo Calvino's <i>Difficult Loves</i>
Notes	Charge the camera's batteries

WEEK 6

Lesson Number 6	Date
Meet	Classroom 2
Venue	CAPA – Via Pandolfini n. 20
In–class activity	Mid Term Exam: technical test (10 to 15 short questions with open answers) - View of the movie: <i>Finding Vivian Maier</i> by John Maloof or <i>The Salt of the Earth</i> by Wim Wenders and Juliano Ribeiro Salgado
Assignments	Assignment n. 2 (Human landscape / People – a minimum of 12 images and a written statement – due on session 7)
Readings	Excerpt from John Berger's <i>Another Way of Telling</i>
Notes	Check your notes and the <i>Phototechnique.pdf</i> available on Canvas

Week 7: Mid Term Break

WEEK 8	
Lesson Number 7	Date
Meet	Classroom 2
Venue	CAPA – Via Pandolfini n. 20
In–class activity	Mid Term Exam – 2nd half: critique of assignment n. 2
Assignments	Assignment n. 3 (A Story – a minimum of 12 images and a written statement – due on session 10, November 18)
Readings	Excerpt from John Berger’s <i>Another Way of Telling</i>
Notes	You are expected to participate actively to the critique

WEEK 9	
Lesson Number 8	Date
Meet	Classroom 2
Venue	CAPA – Via Pandolfini n. 20
In–class activity	Presentation of the instructor’s work and introduction of assignment n. 3 “A Story” (critique on session 10, March 24). The instructor will explain its content in class
Out–of–class activity	None
Assignments	Assignment n. 3 (A Story – a minimum of 12 images and a written statement – due on session 10)
Readings	Excerpt from Stephen Shore’s <i>“The Nature of Photographs: A Primer”</i>
Notes	Always bring the camera in class

WEEK 10	
Lesson Number 9	Date
Meet	Classroom 2
Venue	CAPA – Via Pandolfini n. 20
Out–of–class activity	Field Trip to Cascine Park
Assignments	Assignment n. 3 (A Story – a minimum of 12 images and a written statement – due on session 10)
Readings	Excerpt from <i>“Alex Webb and Rebecca Norris Webb on Street Photography and the Poetic Image”</i>
Notes	Make sure to charge the batteries of your camera before the field trip

WEEK 10	
Lesson Number 10	Date

Meet	Classroom 2
Venue	CAPA – Via Pandolfini n. 20
In–class activity	Critique of Assignment n. 3 (A Story – a minimum of 12 images and a written statement)
Assignments	Start thinking about the final assignment (a minimum of 15 images accompanied by a written statement)
Readings	Excerpt from Robert Adams' <i>Beauty in Photography</i>
Notes	You are expected to participate actively to the critique - Final project proposal due on lesson 11 – Note: make up class. The lesson takes place on Friday

WEEK 11

Lesson Number 11	Date
Meet	Classroom 2
Venue	CAPA – Via Pandolfini n. 20
Out–of–class activity	Field Trip to San Salvi, former mental institution of Florence
Assignments	Final Assignment
Readings	Excerpt from “ <i>Alex Webb and Rebecca Norris Webb on Street Photography and the Poetic Image</i> ”
Notes	Make sure to charge the batteries of your camera before the field trip – Today final project proposal due

WEEK 12

Lesson Number 12	Date
Meet	Classroom 2
Venue	CAPA – Via Pandolfini n. 20
In–class activity	View of the movie titled <i>Born into Brothels</i> or <i>Hot Spots</i> (about Martin Parr's work) - If possible individual meeting to talk about the final project proposal
Assignments	Final Assignment
Readings	Excerpt from Italo Calvino's <i>Invisible Cities</i>
Notes	Always bring the camera in class

WEEK 13

Lesson Number 13	Date
Meet	Classroom 2
Venue	CAPA – Via Pandolfini n. 20
In–class activity	Selection of the students' work for the final review

Out-of-class activity	Visit to an exhibition if possible (Fosco Maraini Archive at Palazzo Strozzi, Fondazione Marangoni or Thetys Gallery) or photographic session if needed
Assignments	Final assignment
Readings	Excerpt from "Alex Webb and Rebecca Norris Webb on Street Photography and the Poetic Image"

WEEK 14	
Lesson Number 14	Date
Meet	Classroom 2
Venue	CAPA - Via Pandolfini n. 20
In-class activity	Final Exam: Critique of Final Assignment
Notes	You are expected to participate actively to the critique

Student Responsibilities

Refer to the *Academic Handbook* for a complete outline of all academic policies. This page contains a summary only.

Attendance

CAPA has a mandatory attendance policy. Students are also expected to participate actively and critically in class discussions, and the participation portion of the class will be graded accordingly. Students must read assignments BEFORE the class, and come in on time. Attendance is mandatory and is taken at the beginning of every class. Unauthorized absence from class will result in a reduction of the final grade and ultimately in a F for the course.

Unexcused absences

The instructor for the course may lower the student's participation grade based on the number of absences. For custom programs, some will follow our absence policy (like when CAPA sponsors visa) and some will not; see academic director for details.

Excused absences

Any student seeking to be excused from class on the ground of a verifiable illness (i.e. doctor's note) or a family emergency, must email the DAA (greverdito@capa.org) in advance of their class. The CAPA staff will then email the relevant Faculty member. Note that calling the CAPA Center (055-2466439) is acceptable only if you do not temporarily have access to the internet. An e-mail is still required as quickly as you can get access to the internet again. If a doctor's note is written to excuse a student from class, the student cannot use that time for personal travel. Please note: excused absences will NOT be granted to accommodate visiting friends or family. Students absent due to extenuating circumstances that have been approved by the Director of Academic Affairs in advance of the missed class, including family emergency or verifiable health-related incapacity, remain responsible for meeting all class requirements. Faculty shall offer such students reasonable assistance in making up missed work (e.g. share handouts).

Class Participation

Participation is a vital part of your grade: students are expected to participate orally in seminars and in online forums and discussions in a critical and evaluative manner; to interact with the faculty and fellow students with respect and tolerance; and to actively engage in discussion. Derogatory or inflammatory comments about the cultures, perspectives or attitudes of others in the class will not be tolerated.

Academic Integrity

The faculty expects from you, the student, a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic course depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student, it is imperative that a student demonstrates a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work and class behavior. Plagiarism and cheating will result in dismissal from the program. See the Handbook of CAPA Academic Policies for more information and resources on plagiarism.

Use of electronic equipment in class

All devices such as laptops, I-pods, I-pads, netbooks, notebooks and tablets, smartphones, cell phones, etc. are **NOT** allowed unless you have express permission from the faculty or you have been instructed to do so. If you require an accommodation to use any type of electronic equipment, inform the Director of Academic Affairs or the Resident Director at the beginning of Term.

Late Submission

Late submission of papers due, projects, journal entries, pieces of homework and portfolios is only permitted with prior approval. A request must be made to the relevant Faculty member no later than two days prior to the due date. Late submission without prior approval will result in a full alpha grade penalty. In either case, work cannot be submitted after feedback has been provided to the rest of the class on the relevant assessment or one week after the due date whichever comes first, after which point a grade of F will be given for the assessment.

Behavior during Examinations

During examinations, you must do your own work. Unless specifically instructed by the lecturer or instructor, talking during an exam is not permitted, nor may you compare papers, copy from others, or collaborate in any way. Any failure to abide by examination rules will result in failure of the exam, and may lead to failure of the course and disciplinary action.