

# Basic Photography Methods

## ART 1271-001

CRN: 32338

Spring 2011 Tuesday and Thursday 12:30 – 3:15pm

### Cinthea Fiss

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(my own website is: [www.cintheafox.com](http://www.cintheafox.com) and [cintheafiss.com](http://cintheafiss.com))

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and Coordinator of the Photography Area  
Department of Art  
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Office: Art190

Office hours:

By appointment ONLY:

To schedule an appointment call: 303-556-3090

Tuesdays 11:00 – 12:00, Thursdays 10:00 – 12:00 and Fridays 3-5pm

## Course Description

- This course introduces basic photographic problem-solving dealing with technical and aesthetic concerns. Students learn black and white film exposure, development and printing. *This course is oriented to the non-art major.* Techniques covered in this course include an in depth exploration of how to use your camera, black and white film processing, basic black and white printing, introductory lighting techniques, and other photographic techniques. These skills will be applied to the creation of photographically based artworks.

## Required Textbook

- A Short Course in Photography: an introduction to photographic technique  
By Barbara London and Jim Stone; Prentice Hall; 7th Edition  
ISBN-10: 0136031870 or ISBN-13: 978-0136031871, Upper Saddle River, NJ  
(Or 6<sup>th</sup> edition ISBN-10: 0131933809 or ISBN-13: 9780131933804)

## Required Supplies

- A manually operated 35 mm camera with a (built-in) light meter in working order
- **At least** 20 rolls of black and white film / 36 exposure  
(ISO 400 is recommended to start with but you should try other film speeds.)  
Check that it is **NOT** C-41 process BW film!!! First roll: Ilford HP5
- **At least** two boxes of 100 sheets of 8x10 Black and White paper  
(Multi-grade or Multi-contrast Resin coated (RC) GLOSSY is recommended to start out since it has the greatest range of contrast, deepest blacks, but you could try semi-matte, pearl, or matte)
- Archival Print File negative preservers (#35-B) at least 25
- 3 ring Binder for your negative sleeves and contact sheets
- Notebook for logging shots and/or logging enlarging exposures **and** for keeping notes
- 16 - 20 sheets of 11 x 14" white matt board
- 16 - 20 sheets of colormount or RC dry mounting tissue
- Portfolio case for final portfolio

## Class Format

- Technical skills will be introduced through assigned readings, class discussions, demonstrations, specifically designed assignments, lab time devoted to practicing new skills learned and group critiques.
- Conceptual skills will be built upon assigned readings, presentations, class discussions and group critiques.
- Presentations of photographic imagery related to assignments will further enhance technical and conceptual skills learned in the course.
- **Assignments require lab time outside of class.** You will NOT be able to complete all of your assignments during class time alone! Please allow a minimum of eight hours per week for homework and lab production time.

## Assignments

- 4 project assignments that encourage aesthetic exploration and creativity while practicing technical skills:
  1. camera functions as aesthetic practice
  2. style and content
  3. chance operations
  4. narrative / sequence
- 3 technical exercises:
  1. black and white contrast
  2. the zone system
  3. basic lighting techniques
- reading assignments from the textbook
- non-graded technical quizzes used as a teaching / learning tool
- final portfolio

Project Assignments are due at the beginning of class on critique days. Late work will NOT be accepted. An absence on a critique day will result in an "F" for that assignment.

## Attendance

**Attendance is required.** A **third** absence will lower your grade by one full letter (B to C, for example). Each absence beyond the third will lower the final grade by another full letter grade. **Six absences will result in an unconditional F.**

You are reminded that lateness is both rude and distracting. Please make every effort to be punctual. Excessive tardiness will prejudice your final grade. If you arrive after your name has been taken on the roll you are late. Three late marks equal one absence. Arriving more than 30 minutes late will be considered an absence.

It is expected that you will be properly prepared to work during lab days. Get a locker so that you always have your negatives and paper handy to print. If you are not prepared to work you will be considered absent. If you leave class early you will be considered absent for the day -- regardless of arriving on time at the start of class.

## Due Dates

All assignments are due at the start of class on the day indicated on the assignment sheet. If you are late so is your work. Work will not be accepted unless you arrive with it. Work delivered by anyone else will not be accepted. Due dates coincide with critiques and your work will not be critiqued unless you are in attendance on the relevant day. If work is late it will not be graded, or critiqued. The student will fail that component of the course and this will impact in a negative manner on the course grade. Incomplete and/or improperly resolved assignments are unacceptable and will be treated the same as late work.

It is the student's responsibility to complete each assignment in a timely manner. It is the student's responsibility to resolve each assignment in accordance to the written instructions given. In addition, it is the student's responsibility to confirm and/or clarify a point prior to resolving an assignment. Class time and/or office hours are appropriate times to do this. Incomplete work will not be given "suggestions" during critique. If the student requires additional explanation, this will be offered at the end of critique- if time is available, or in office hours.

## Please Note

I cannot accept assignments that contain any work from other courses. Opinions on such work may be sought in office hours. If your intent is to re-interpret an idea from another class you must disclose this fact before making the work to verify that it is acceptable. Do not guess or assume my position regarding use of previously existing material. Ask. Lack of disclosure or other deceit will result in a failing grade for the assignment.

# Breakdown of Letter Grades

## Assignment Grades:

**A** = Superior

The grade A indicates that work is superlative and surpasses expectations for the assignment, that critique participation is exceptional, often leading discussions with full interest in other students' ideas and work.

**B** = Above Average

The grade B indicates that work is extraordinary and goes beyond the minimal requirements of an assignment, that critique participation is exemplary and fully respectful of other students' ideas.

**C** = Average

The grade C indicates that work is completed as assigned, that participation in the critique is regular and fully respectful of other students' ideas.

**D** = Below Average

The grade D indicates that work is completed, but is not completed as assigned, that participation in critique is sporadic or minimal.

**F** = Failure

The grade F indicates that work is not completed as assigned and that there is minimal or no participation in the assignment critique.

## Final class grade:

30% overall class participation throughout semester

40% four project assignments

30% final portfolio

**A** = Superior. The student demonstrated a determined attitude. The student conscientiously explored the stated requirements of the class and that class participation was exceptional, often leading discussions with full interest in other students' ideas and work. The student showed a strong desire to learn and produced high quality work on time, every time.

**B** = Above Average. The student went beyond the stated requirements and produced effective work and that class participation was exemplary and fully respectful of other students' ideas.

**C** = Average. This is the grade received by fulfilling the stated requirements of the class. The student demonstrated an understanding of skills and concepts and applied them, with thought, to their work and that class participation was regular and fully respectful of other students' ideas. The student produced competent work.

**D** = Below Average. Weak work, some basic skills acquired but little or no consideration of their application relative to the stated requirements of the class and that class participation was sporadic or minimal. The student did not demonstrate a strong desire to learn.

**F** = Failure. Missing and/or incomplete work, poor attitude, and a general disregard for the stated requirements of the class, and/or six or more absences and that there was minimal or no participation in class critiques and discussions.

## Critique

A major component of the course is the ongoing development of an ability to comment upon work made by oneself and one's peers. It is beneficial to receive such comments as they can accelerate ideas and act as motivation for future work. To give such discussions the name "critique" is problematical. The name has negative connotations and can strike fear into the heart of some students. If you are confident in your abilities, then please show patience to your classmates as they search for their words and ideas. If you are hesitant to talk about your ideas and opinions, remember that we are all life-long learners, and your voice is as valuable as any other is.

**Your participation in critique is important. It will be considered as a component of your assignment grade and your final grade.** You are not expected to talk constantly, but you are expected to be attentive and aware.

## Disclaimer

Please note: This course may be discussing, reading or viewing content of a sexual nature and content may express diverse political points of view.

## Course Policies

- The student must create work during the semester that they are in the class.
- Any assignment completed for this course cannot be submitted for any other course.
- Cell phones, mp3players and headphones are not permitted in class or the lab during class. Turn them off!!!

## Course Requirements

Your grade for individual projects and for a final portfolio will be an evaluation of creativity AND craftsmanship. Creativity is your individual and unique approach to the assignment. Craftsmanship is your level of mastery of the technical aspects of photography, including presentation. Other factors that will affect your grade include participation in class discussions, ability to respond to criticism and relate to suggestions for improvement to your work.

## Supervised Lab Days

A significant number of classes will be "supervised lab days." This time is for you to work under supervision in the darkrooms. It is very important that I observe your lab skills. You are not given this time to shoot film!! It is expected that you will have enough lab work to occupy the full class period. ***If you leave early you will be marked absent for the day.***

## General

You may bring drinks to classroom, but not into the darkrooms. Please, no eating in the darkroom or the classroom. This is a very expensive and time-consuming class. Materials are costly. You do not want to ruin your photographs with food and grease stains from the tables. This is a college level, academic course, not snack time. If you need to eat, leave the classroom. There is a lounge down the hall for eating, or go outside and get some fresh air.

There will be two darkroom orientations scheduled during our class time. If you must be absent for either orientation, it is your responsibility to attend a similar orientation offered for another class. You will not be allowed to use the lab without having completed each orientation. The lab manager can help you find another class orientation if necessary.

Each assignment will build on the level of competence you reached during the previous assignment, so it is extremely important that you understand and complete all work along the way. Please feel free to ask questions about new material or for a review of old. I am available during outside of class during my office hours to discuss your work, your grades, and your ideas and to review technical information.

## SYLLABUS POLICIES – Metro State Art Spring 2011 – REVISED 1/5/11

### Art Department Policies

1. The Art Department requires students who do not attend **all** sessions of a course in the first week of the semester to drop that course. Non-attending students **may** be dropped as a courtesy, especially if there are students on the waiting list, but it is the **student's responsibility** to drop the course to avoid incurring tuition and fees. (See deadline below.)
2. Permission of instructor is required to register for **any** Art class after the first meeting.
3. All students (including UCD students) must meet Art Department prerequisites, as stated in the College Catalog, before enrolling in a course. Do not ask your instructor to waive a prerequisite.
4. The Art Department does not accept audit or Metromeritus students in studio courses. They are accepted in art history courses on a space available basis, with permission of the instructor.
5. Students enrolled for at least **two** studio classes may sign up for a locker at the Art Department office, AR 187. Lockers will be assigned on a first come, first served basis. Please provide a copy of your MSCD student ID and current class schedule for our records. There is no charge for lockers, but you must provide your own lock. Students with one studio class may share a locker; you are responsible for finding your own locker partner, and both of you must come in together.

You may keep your locker for Summer 2011 if you are registered for at least one studio class for that semester.

6. Advising appointments are available with faculty members or the program assistant through the Art Department office, AR 187, 303-556-3090. We do not make same-day appointments. Walk in advising is not available during the semester.
7. Students are advised to check their MetroConnect email regularly. This is the official means of communication from the college and will be used to notify you of class cancellations, etc.

### Registration

Students must be officially registered for a class to attend that class. It is essential that students register in a timely manner because classes added after the census date are not eligible for COF funding. For this reason, late enrollments will not be approved except in extreme circumstances. It is the student's responsibility to verify that she or he is officially registered for all classes.

### Waiting Lists

Students are absorbed in order until the first class meeting; after the first meeting permission of instructor is **required** to be absorbed. If your instructor is absorbing you from a waiting list, he or she must notify the Art Department to register you for the class. There is no guarantee that all students will be absorbed and students **MUST DROP** a waitlisted class as any other class IF the intention is not to attend. While you are wait-listed you should attend all class sessions, with permission of the instructor. You are advised to use the Web or kiosk system daily to check if you have been enrolled in the class. You are not charged tuition and fees for a class while you are on a wait list. If you are absorbed into a class from the wait list, you must pay for the class to avoid being assessed the 4% service charge. It is your responsibility to obtain a printout of your class schedule to determine if you have been absorbed. This is YOUR ONLY OFFICIAL NOTICE. When possible, the Art Department will notify you by email as a courtesy, but **DO NOT RELY ON NOTIFICATION**. Students cannot be absorbed from waiting lists if there is a time conflict with another class or if the addition of the course will result in an overload. Note: Wait-list classes do not count toward the total enrollment for your financial aid disbursement. Please contact the Financial Aid Office if you have any questions.

### Semester Dates

Martin Luther King holiday, <b>no</b> classes; campus open	Monday, January 17 <sup>th</sup>
Census Day – all registration adjustments must be complete	Wednesday, February 2 <sup>nd</sup>
Presidents Day – classes <b>will</b> meet, campus open	Monday, February 21 <sup>st</sup>
Spring Break, no classes, campus offices open, no advising hours	March 21 <sup>st</sup> - 27 <sup>th</sup>
Cesar Chavez Day - classes <b>will</b> meet, campus open	Thursday, March 31 <sup>st</sup>
Finals Week; no advising appointments	May 9 <sup>th</sup> – 14 <sup>th</sup>
Grades available on the Web	Friday, May 20 <sup>th</sup>

### No Credit Withdrawal Policy

Students will be expected to know and observe the MSCD regulations regarding No-Credit Withdrawal (NC). It is the student's responsibility to withdraw from a course. Students who withdraw after the census date will receive an NC on their transcripts. NC stands for No Credit and does not impact the student's grade point average; no refund is given with an NC. NC deadlines for part-of-term (modular) classes vary. NC deadlines are given below:

### Drop and NC Deadlines:

Full term classes only – for other parts of term consult the registrar's office.

Last Day to Drop with 100% Refund	Monday, January 24 <sup>th</sup>
Last Day to Drop and Have Classes Deleted From Academic Record, with 50% Refund	Wednesday, February 2 <sup>nd</sup>

Faculty signatures are no longer required for an "NC" before the deadline. Student requests for an "NC" notation in a given course will not be granted after the published deadline. Students who have questions about tuition and fees refund deadlines should contact the Office of Student Accounts at 303-556-6188.

### **Incompletes**

The Incomplete (I) notation **may** be assigned when a student, who was achieving satisfactory progress in a course and who had completed at least 75% of class assignments, is unable to take the final examination and/or did not complete all class assignments due to unusual circumstances such as hospitalization. Incomplete work must be completed within one calendar year **or earlier, at the discretion of the faculty member**. If the incomplete work is not completed within one year, the "I" notation will convert to an "F." For the complete policy, please see the current college catalog.

### **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:**

Metropolitan State College of Denver is committed to making reasonable accommodations to assist individuals with disabilities in reaching their academic potential. If you have a disability which may impact your performance, attendance, or grades in this class and are requesting accommodations, then you must first register with the Access Center, located in the Auraria Library, Suite 116, 303-556-8387.

The Access Center is the designated department responsible for coordinating accommodations and services for students with disabilities. Accommodations will not be granted prior to my receipt of your faculty notification letter from the Access Center. Please note that accommodations are never provided retroactively (i.e., prior to the receipt of your faculty notification letter.) Once I am in receipt of your official Access Center faculty notification letter, I would be happy to meet with you to discuss your accommodations. All discussions will remain confidential. Further information is available by visiting the Access center website [www.mscd.edu/~access](http://www.mscd.edu/~access).

### **Accommodations for Religious Beliefs**

Students at Metropolitan State College of Denver (MSCD) who, because of their sincerely held religious beliefs, are unable to attend classes, take examinations, participate in graded activities or submit graded assignments on particular days shall without penalty be excused from such classes and be given a meaningful opportunity to make up such examinations and graded activities or assignments provided that advance written notice that the student will be absent or unable to participate in a given assignment for religious reasons is given to the faculty member during the first two weeks of the semester.

Nothing in paragraph one of this policy shall require MSCD faculty members to reschedule classes, repeat lectures or other ungraded activities or provide ungraded individualized instruction solely for the benefit of students who, for religious reasons, are unable to attend regularly scheduled classes or activities. However, presentations, critiques, conferences and similar activities involving individual students shall be scheduled to avoid conflicts with such students' religious observances or holidays provided that reasonable advance notice of scheduling conflicts is given to faculty members. Because classroom attendance and participation is an important aspect of learning, MSCD students should not register for courses if regularly scheduled classes or activities routinely conflict with their religious observances or holidays (e.g., conflicts resulting in weekly absences for an entire semester).

Certain ART courses require drawing from nude models. Alternate assignments are available with advance notice **except** in ART 2644 Life Drawing I, ART 3244 Life Drawing II, ART 4244 Life Drawing III or ART 4266 Figure Painting.

Any MSCD student who believes that an MSCD faculty member has violated this policy is entitled to seek relief under Section V of the MSCD Equal Opportunity Grievance Procedure.



February 1, Tuesday

Collective Nouns faculty lecture series at CVA <http://www.metrostatecva.org/events.shtml>  
Meet at CVA at 12:30 (or earlier if possible)

*[Last Day to Drop and Have Classes Deleted From Academic Record, with 50% Refund Wednesday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>]  
[Census Day – all registration adjustments must be complete – Wednesday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>]*

February 3, Thursday

Lecture on Printing Contact Sheets  
Printing orientation to Darkroom F (DO NOT MISS THIS CLASS!)  
Contact sheets demo

February 8, Tuesday

Lecture on Enlarging, Dodging and Burning  
Enlarging Demo  
Bring negatives and paper to print

February 10, Thursday

Supervised Lab Day  
Homework: Continue shooting and developing film for assignment #1

February 15, Tuesday

Supervised Lab Day  
Contrast Technical Exercise explained

February 17, Thursday

Supervised Lab Day  
Homework: Complete assignment #1

February 22, Tuesday

**Critique: Assignment #1 is due**  
Homework: read *Photography* by London and Stone  
Chapter 9: Seeing Like a Camera

February 24, Thursday

Lecture presentation: Assignment #3: Style and Content  
Homework: read *Photography* by London and Stone Chapter 7: Lighting  
email "personae" information for Assignment #2 to [cfiss@mscd.edu](mailto:cfiss@mscd.edu)

March 1, Tuesday

Lighting Demo

March 3, Thursday

Supervised Lab Day: Be prepared to work!

March 8, Tuesday

Supervised Lab Day: Be prepared to work!

March 10, Thursday

Supervised Lab Day: Be prepared to work!

March 15, Tuesday

**Critique: Assignment #2 is due**



March 17, Thursday  
Presentation and introduction to assignment #3: Chance Operations

**[Spring Break! LAB IS CLOSED, no classes, no advising hours March 21 - 27]**

March 29, Tuesday  
Supervised Lab Day: Be prepared to work!

March 31, Thursday  
**Critique: Assignment #3 is due**

*[Last Day to Withdraw (Full Semester Classes) and Receive "NC" Wednesday Monday, April 4<sup>th</sup>]*

April 5, Tuesday  
Presentation and introduction to assignment #4  
Narrative and sequence in photography  
Zone System technical exercise explained

April 7, Thursday  
Zone System technical exercise

April 12, Tuesday  
Supervised Lab Day: Be prepared to work!

April 14, Thursday  
Supervised Lab Day: Be prepared to work!

April 19, Tuesday  
Supervised Lab Day: Be prepared to work!

April 21, Thursday  
Supervised Lab Day: Be prepared to work!

April 26, Tuesday  
**Critique: Assignment #4 is due**  
Homework: read *Photography* by London and Stone  
Spotting and Dry Mounting

April 28, Thursday  
Portfolio Assignment explained  
Finishing Demonstration

May 3, Tuesday  
Lab Day to print for your final portfolio

**May 5, Thursday Last Day of Classes**  
Finish your final portfolio  
**Final portfolio is due at end of class**

*[Finals Week; no advising appointments May 9<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>]*

May 10 or 12 (depends on finals' schedule) Final Exam  
Finals: portfolio review – return portfolios



SPRING 2011  
Letter of Understanding

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (please print name legibly) affirm that I have read the attached syllabus and understand the policies for Basic Photography Methods ART1271, taught by Cinthea Fiss. I further acknowledge that should a dispute arise regarding the content of the attached, the issue of my notification in advance of course requirements and policies have hereby been disclosed.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_