

Photography IV: Theory & Practice

ART4271 – 001 CRN 32341

Spring 2011 Tuesday and Thursday 3:30 – 6:15 pm

Cinthea Fiss

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(my own website is: www.cintheafox.com and cintheafiss.com)

Visiting Assistant Professor
Coordinator of the Photography Area
Department of Art
Metropolitan State College of Denver

Office: Arts190

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 emphasizes critical thinking and intelligent image making through readings, presentations, and your idea development. You will investigate the use of photography as an expressive medium to position original artwork in relation to contemporary art. In this course you will be expected to create work that demonstrates your ability to use photography as an expressive medium with an understanding of how your images function in our culture. This course provides a foundation of historical and contemporary photographic *theory*. *You will utilize theory as a tool to understand and articulate your own art production.* Readings will include theorists' and critics' writings about art and culture. You will develop the skills to use this cultural analysis to interpret core concepts within your work and others', to discuss your work and that of others in theoretical terms. You will read analyses of historical debates; although many of these debates were presented in *History of Photography*, not all were accompanied by an analysis of the debates. You will then work to apply similar analysis to your own work, to see how your work can be discussed in terms of the various theories. Not all chapters will be easily related to your work. But hopefully by the end of the semester, you will be able to apply *any* debate to the concepts in your own work.

Required Textbook

Liz Wells, *Photography: A Critical Introduction*, Routledge; 4th edition (June 18, 2009) ISBN 0415460875

Digital Lab Supply Voucher

For Spring 2011, all students using the Digital Photography area of the Lab will be required to purchase a portion of pooled ink and lab supply from the bookstore. The cost of this pooled ink and lab supply is \$115.00 per student, per class. Each student will purchase their portion of the ink supply at the Bookstore in the Computer Sales Department on the 2nd Floor (upper level).

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 impact 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.

Attendance is always required on Lab Days. It is expected that you will be properly prepared to work during class time. If you are not prepared to work during supervised lab time you will be considered absent. If you leave

class for the day early and without permission you will be considered absent for the day - regardless of arriving on time at the start of class.

Due Dates

All assignments, including photographic projects, written reading notes, project descriptions and the weekly blog are due at the start of class on the day indicated on the assignment sheet. If the student is late so is the work. If work is late it will not be graded, or critiqued. The student will fail that component of the assignment and this will impact in a negative manner on the course grade. Incomplete and/or improperly resolved assignments are unacceptable. 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. *Ask me if you do not understand.* Class time and/or office hours are appropriate times to do this. Incomplete photographic projects will not be viewed during critique.

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.

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. You will be directed to apply the theories from the reading to your discussions of other's work. If you are confident in your critique abilities, 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's.

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. Your participation in critique is used to assess your comprehension of the reading and your ability to utilize theory as a tool to understand and articulate art concepts.

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, mp3 players and headphone usage are not permitted in class or the lab during class. Please turn them off!!
- Eating is not permitted in the classroom or in the lab. Go to the lounge or outside.

Assignments will include:

- Reading assignments from textbook, the Internet and from readings on reserve in the library or handouts and Reading Notes that analyze and synthesize the concepts presented in the readings
- On-line blog
- Four photographic projects that incorporate creative expression, theoretical concepts and advanced techniques in photography and presentation
- A final research project presentation using power point or other presentation method about the theories in your work and that of three other photographers
- Take home quizzes
- Periodic informal presentations of your research being conducted during the production of your photo projects

You are required to work at least 8 hours per week outside of class on assignments. You will NOT be able to complete assignments during class time alone.

Project Assignments are due at the beginning of class on critique days. Reading notes and all other written assignments are due at the beginning of class when due! Late work will NOT be accepted. An absence on a critique day will result in an "F" for that assignment, as critique is a major component of each assignment.

Supervised Lab

Only a few classes will include Supervised Lab Time. This time is for you to work under supervision in the darkrooms. This is the BEST time to ask me specific questions about your work, get feedback on your work in progress. Other than during office hours, this is the only time that I can help you with any technical issues. You are not given this time to shoot photographs. It is expected that you will have enough work to occupy the full class period. If you leave and have not been officially excused you will be marked absent for the day.

General:

You may bring drinks to class, but not into the darkrooms. Please, no eating in the darkrooms or the classroom!

You will need to dedicate significant class time to developing your photographic and critical thinking skills, not consuming meals. There is a lounge down the hall for eating, or go outside and get some fresh air. 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, your ideas and to review technical information. Call 303-556-3090 to schedule an appointment.

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 entire assignment is completed in full 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 in full as assigned and that there is minimal or no participation in the assignment critique.

Final class grade:

25% overall class participation throughout semester

25% first 3 photographic project assignments

25% final photographic project assignment

25% final research presentation

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.

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

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 th
Last Day to Drop and Have Classes Deleted From Academic Record, with 50% Refund	Wednesday, February 2 nd
Last Day to Withdraw and Receive "NC"	Monday, April 4 th

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.

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.

Student Conduct:

The Department of Art enforces the Student Conduct Code, which may be found in the Student Handbook and online at http://www.mscd.edu/policies/student_code_of_conduct/student_conduct_code.shtml. The Department will not tolerate any proscribed behavior either on campus or at the Center for Visual Art.

Academic Dishonesty:

Academic dishonesty is a serious offense at the College because it diminishes the quality of scholarship and the learning experience for everyone on campus. An act of Academic Dishonesty may lead to sanctions including a reduction in grade (up to and including a permanent F for the course), probation, suspension, or expulsion. Academic dishonesty includes cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, submitting the same paper or work for more than one class, and facilitating academic dishonesty. For definitions and more information, see the Student Handbook which is available online through Metro-Connect.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all sessions of courses for which they are registered. Each instructor determines when a student's absences have reached a point at which they jeopardize success in a

February 10, Thursday

2nd Blog Due

Lab Time (or TBA)

February 15, Tuesday

critique NO PUSHpins (*unless appropriate to concept*), no big holes in the wall

Homework: begin photographic project #2 (self-directed: photograph anything you want)

February 17, Thursday

critique NO PUSHpins (*unless appropriate to concept*), no big holes in the wall

3rd Blog Due

February 22, Tuesday

Written Photographic Project #2 Description due

Discussion about Chapter 2 Surveyors and surveyed: photography out and about

Reading notes due

Lecture for next reading assignment (Chapter 3 'Sweet it is to scan...' personal photographs and popular photography)

Homework: Begin reading Chapter 3 'Sweet it is to scan...' personal photographs and popular photography) and continue to work on photographic project #2

February 24, Thursday

Lighting demo / refresher

Supervised Lab Time

4th Blog Due

March 1, Tuesday

Discussion about Chapter 3 ('Sweet it is to scan...' personal photographs and popular photography)

Reading notes due

Lecture for next reading assignment Chapter 4 (Subject as object: photography and the human body)

Homework: begin reading Chapter 4 (Subject as object: photography and the human body) and continue to work on photographic project #2

March 3, Thursday

Supervised Lab Time

5th Blog Due

March 8, Tuesday

Critique photographic project #2

Homework: begin photographic project #3 (self-directed: photograph anything you want)

March 10, Thursday

Critique photographic project #2

6th Blog Due

March 15, Tuesday

Written Photographic Project #3 Description due

Discussion about Chapter 4 (Subject as object: photography and the human body)

Reading notes due

Lecture: next reading assignment Chapter 5 (Spectacles and illusions: photography and commodity culture)

Homework: begin reading Chapter 5 (Spectacles and illusions: photography and commodity culture)

March 17, Thursday

Supervised Lab Time
7th Blog Due

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

March 29, Tuesday
Supervised Lab Time

March 31, Thursday
Discussion about Chapter 5 (Spectacles and illusions: photography and commodity culture)
Reading notes due
Lecture for next reading assignment Chapter 6 (On and beyond the white walls: photography as art)
8th Blog Due
Homework: begin reading Chapter 6 (On and beyond the white walls: photography as art) and complete photographic project #3

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

April 5, Tuesday
Critique photographic project #3
Homework: begin final photographic project (self-directed: photograph anything you want)

April 7, Thursday
Critique photographic project #3
9th Blog Due

April 12, Tuesday
Discussion about Chapter 6 (On and beyond the white walls: photography as art)
Reading notes due (possibly on blog)
Lecture for next reading assignment Chapter 7 (Photography in the age of electronic imaging)
Homework: begin reading Chapter 7 (Photography in the age of electronic imaging) and continue to work on final photographic project

April 14, Thursday
Written Final Project Description due
Supervised Lab Time (hand out instructions for final research project)
10th Blog Due

April 19, Tuesday
Supervised Lab Time

April 21, Thursday
Discussion about Chapter 7 (Photography in the age of electronic imaging)
Reading notes due
11th Blog Due

April 26, Tuesday
Supervised Lab Time

April 28, Thursday
Supervised Lab Time
12th Blog Due

May 3, Tuesday
Critique final photographic project
Written Artist's Statement Due

May 5, Thursday Last Day of Classes
Critique final photographic project

[Finals Week; no advising appointments May 9th – 14th]

May 10 or 12 (depends on finals' schedule) Final Exam
Presentation of your final research project during official finals time
Post research on blog

Spring 2011
Letter of Understanding

I, _____ (please print name legibly)

affirm that I have read the attached syllabus and understand the policies for ART 4271

Photography IV: Theory and Practice, 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: _____