

PHOTOGRAPHY 200A: LIGHTING TECHNIQUES

GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

This document contains the information for Photo 200A, Lighting, for Spring 2011. This data is provided to give students information that will help them complete assignments, anticipate grading, and help gain the maximum educational experience from the material.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this course are to provide the student with a working knowledge of the principles and techniques involved in controlling, modifying, and creating artificial light and lighting set-ups for both color and black & white photography.

Following completion of the course with a grade of “C” or higher the student will be able to identify and use the photographer’s primary light generation and modification tools for both location and studio use and will understand the effect of light characteristics and lighting angles to better use existing natural light. They will be familiar enough with the school’s equipment to easily work in the upper level classes that require studio lighting such as Portraiture, Fashion, Advertising, etc.

COURSE CONTENT

The course covers lighting concepts, techniques, and equipment used in all phases and types of photography. Emphasis is on understanding how to control and manipulate lighting equipment used both in the studio and on location to achieve the desired effect on the final photographic image. The class will also consider controlling the image to work with existing light, controlling and modifying light to enhance or create the desired image, and using light purposefully to impart the desired emotional, special, and physical qualities to the finished photographic product whether it is a commercial product shot or a portrait or fashion shot of people or an artistic still life. Most of the assignments will work with smaller table-top subjects of various surface qualities to allow the student to work in a small space and even set up simplified lighting in their own homes. Some, however, will use people or large objects. All of the assignments can be completed using the school’s studio and lighting equipment.

COURSE FORMAT AND SCHEDULE

Photo 200A nominally consists of a lecture class plus a lab class per week. Officially it is 2 hrs per lecture to 6 hrs of lab. However having the computers and studios available we may well work in and out of lecture/lab/demo methodology as it seems best for the material. Generally at the first of the semester we will be very heavy on lecture time. By mid semester it will be about even and by the end it will be heavy on the lab side.

Obviously lecture classes are crucial since that is when the core material will be presented to you. Lab classes, however, are very, very important as well. That is when I will be available to help you with lab and studio work and you can learn from, interact with, and work with fellow-students. They are part of your class time and attendance will be noted so don’t shrug them off as unimportant. In class we will discuss working at your own digital darkroom for assignment work. We may also do one or possibly more shooting ‘field trips’ to practice some of the material.

I will be giving you plenty of lab class time (over the semester, well over half of your time). Lab class is time designed for you to work on completing your assignments. Generally it is for you to come and use our studios and computers and software where you can work under instructor supervision and is an important part of the learning process. You are expected to be here.

On occasion I may give you permission to use your “lab time” to go shooting for your project if I think it will be of value to you. I may also give you permission to go home

and use your own equipment. But if I do either of those things and you take advantage of them then be forewarned: there will be no acceptable excuses for being late with a project or for that submitted project to not exhibit all of the skills and craft we have, to that point, discussed in lecture or lab classes.

The only sources of information that you can absolutely rely on for upcoming topics, readings, assignments, etc are from me during lectures and on specific handouts concerning the topic or the event itself.

**THIS IS A
“WEB-ENHANCED”
CLASS**

You are now in the world of digital photography, a world heavily dependent on computers where your success will be dependent on your ability to use them in a number of functions. This class is being run as a “web-enhanced” class in which you will interface with the District’s Online Learning System, “Blackboard/Vista” to receive materials, turn in projects for grading, and other chores. Some of you may already be familiar with this program from other classes but I will go over it in detail early in the course.

You can access your area in Blackboard from any computer that has internet access. Its direct URL is <http://online.sdccd.edu>. Your Username is your CSID and your password is your birth date in mm/dd/yyyy format.

On Blackboard you will find copies of all handouts specific to assignments and projects as well as a copy of this course syllabus/outline.

**REQUIRED TEXT AND
READINGS**

Required reading materials for this course are the current editions of:

1. **PHOTOGRAPHY** (This is the basic Textbook)
Barbara Upton, et al ... or the Bruce Warren book of the same name. Or
2. The basic text from the Photo 143 class

The information supplied in the course handouts, department handouts, lab handouts, and lectures, takes precedence over any other materials. If you have questions about this ASK!

**ADDITIONAL READING
MATERIAL**

In addition to the information listed as required, the following books would also be recommended as additional reading:

1. **NATURAL LIGHT** and **ARTIFICIAL LIGHT**
Ansel Adams
2. **THE NEW ZONE SYSTEM**
White, Zakia
3. **STUDIO TECHNIQUES** and **LIGHTING TECHNIQUES**
Kodak Technical and Reference Manuals
4. **LIGHTING SOLUTIONS**
Jack Neubart (Amphoto)

5. Any and all books on and about studio photography showing examples of good lighting techniques as you learn to analyze images for their lighting.

Other reading may be suggested throughout the class. Photography, especially commercial photography, is an art and craft that is often on the cutting edge of style and technology. To remain competitive you will need to stay current with the latest in equipment, technology, and, most importantly, style. I would highly recommend subscriptions to the major photo magazine such as “Photo District News” and the industry journal “Communication Arts.” It is expensive but contains the latest work by the top people throughout the whole spectrum of advertising graphics.

GRADING BASIS

This is a professional, college level course; in our program it is also an upper level advanced photography course that requires your attention, discipline, and some hard work to complete. You will be expected to perform on an advanced level and to come into the course able to perform all of the basic skills contained in the prerequisites. All work you perform as projects, tests, or other assignments, will be given a numeric grade determined by the instructor.

I will evaluate work based on the technical competence and skill elements involved, the aesthetics and composition of the finished shot, the quality of “concept” for the image, the use of lighting to achieve the stated objectives, and from a professional standpoint how you have followed directions. I’ll also grade on effort and growth and your willingness to “stretch.” The points and equivalent letter grades mean the following:

- ☛ **Work is nearing perfection for your level of experience and skill. It must be excellent in every regard from the composition to the shooting to the lighting to the output. (90-100 points = A)**
- ☛ **Above average. This is very good work with minimal issues or problems. (80-89 points = B)**
- ☛ **Average (70-79 points = C)**
- ☛ **Below average (60-69 points = D)**
- ☛ **Failing and unacceptable (0-59 points = F)**

Simply do what the handout requires and you are guaranteed to pass the course with an average grade.

EXAMS AND TESTS

Tests will be assigned specific points per question based on difficulty or type. A wrong answer gains zero points, a correct one gains all the points assigned that question. Partial correct answers will get points at instructor’s discretion. Points will be marked on the test as a fraction. For example, 95/100 means you got 95 points out of a possible 100 points for the assignment.

PROJECT HANDOUTS AND SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Class assignments will be described with complete instructions in Blackboard. There will be an accompanying written assignment sheet handout you can download. These instructions are very important and will be the final arbiter of what is minimally required for the project and any additional criteria (other than noted above) for the grading. The instructions/handout for each assignment will list all items to be turned in along with size and format details for the project to be considered complete.

Read each project handout carefully as the particulars may vary project to project.

CLASS GRADE COMPONENTS

During the course of the semester you will be assigned and perform various kinds of projects and work. Your grade will be based on the following criteria and approximate percentage breakdown:

- ◆ **90%** (approximately) on Photo Project Assignments, tests, etc.
 - ◆ **10%** (or roughly the equivalent of one project) on attendance, participation, conduct in class. (Refer to the section on attendance for further information on how this can effect your grade.)
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ATTENDANCE

Attendance is not just mandated by student policy, it is vital to your learning capabilities. The college has set very strict guidelines for instructors to follow relative to student absences and tardiness. The following rules will be followed closely.

- ◆ **Three (3) consecutive unexcused absences or five (5) total unexcused**
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absences in a semester will drop your grade one letter.

- ◆ Three unexcused tardies will be counted as an unexcused absence. Unexcused absences (and tardiness) WILL count against your grade.

If you anticipate a legitimate absence then tell me BEFORE or have a really good excuse and a pathetic voice when you call from your hospital bed!

ATTENDANCE IN LAB CLASSES

Unless the instructor *specifically* excuses you, missing a lab class is an unexcused absence. See above for the effect.

Labs are for the completion of your projects but I also sometimes use them for impromptu demonstrations of lighting or shooting or even printing techniques that I'll expect everyone to know and use. If I plan a demo I will tell you the week before. If I am NOT doing a demo you may use that time to sign up for the studio.

EFFECT OF FINALS

The final projects and final exam, will have a critical effect on your grade regardless of how well you have done up to that point.

If you do not take the final exam or do not submit an acceptable Final Portfolio Project, your maximum attainable grade for the course will be a "D" *regardless* of your other points earned to date.

FINAL GRADES

Your final grade will be determined by an average of the grades of the total projects and tests assigned. An assignment not turned in gets a 0 (Zero) which can have a significant effect on your final grade. Project grades may have "Half" grades awarded (e.g. A-, C+, etc.) but for a final grade I will round all of them to the nearest whole grade letter.

EXPECTED WORK LOAD

This is an upper level college course. As is common in college courses, it is expected that you will spend *at least* as much time out of class on assignments as you spend in class sessions and probably quite a bit more. As a general rule you will have two weeks to complete assignments but some easier ones that do not require limited studio or lab facilities may require you to shoot and complete them in a week.

Needless to say if your attendance patterns show that you are not taking advantage of the lab classes, open labs, and studio it will be difficult to convince me that insufficient time was allotted for the completion of an assignment—especially when most of the class was able to do it.

I do not mean to be hard-edged and unreasonable about this, but we have quite a bit of ground to cover and in a limited amount of time in order to meet the requirements of the course. It leaves both you and I with little maneuvering room time-wise.

Take advantage of our 6 studio shooting spaces, all different. Sign up for at least one session per week at the check-out room. With several studio classes going on if you snooze you loose...

DEADLINES

Deadlines are sacred in the industry and sacred in this class. Projects turned in late will automatically be deducted 10% of their possible points (basically equal to one letter grade), with an additional half point being deducted for **every school day** they continue late.

As noted above, a project will be returned ungraded if it is incomplete or incorrectly packaged and points deducted as above if that makes it late. However, the project must be corrected and resubmitted or it will achieve a grade of zero (0) points.

In Blackboard the deadlines for projects are clearly noted along with all instructioned

needed. Additionally I will give you one additional week from the deadline before the computer will no longer accept your submission and you receive a ZERO grade. Unless you are in the hospital with a medical emergency do not think of trying to weasel more time for projects. If you are having a problem, talk to me, but do so BEFORE a project is due, not after.

CLASS CRITIQUES

Following the grading of projects, they will be critiqued in class. This is NOT a forum to embarrass anyone but a chance to learn and let the entire class learn together from observances about other work. You are students and only expected to perform to student levels but you need to know where improvement could be made to make the image more professional and competitive. You need to develop a thick skin as I will be a LOT kinder than typical art directors.

Projects turned in late will not be included in the class critiques.

DROPPING THE CLASS

THIS SECTION IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR YOU TO READ AND UNDERSTAND! I completely understand that sometimes life gets in the way and for one reason or another you may have to drop the class. Pay attention to drop deadlines in the school's class schedules and calendars. And if you do decide to drop, don't just quit coming to class and assume I will drop you. I won't. I'm not your Mom. This is college not kindergarten. You must take responsibility for your decisions and actions and let records/admission know you have dropped the class. If you do not, then at the end of class the missed classes and assignments may give you a score equal to an "F" and that is what will appear on your transcript. See also the "Incompletes" section.

CONTACTING THE INSTRUCTOR

You may leave the instructor, David King an E-mail (preferred) or phone message as follows:

- Email: **dking@sdccd.edu**
 - Office Phone (V-414B): 619-388-3649 (though this is FAR less reliable than email)
 - Appointments to discuss the course and your work can be arranged as required.
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STUDIO USE

We now have three very workable studios that can be divided into two shooting areas. However because more than one class may be giving studio assignments, **scheduling becomes critical**. The studio is to be used **ONLY** for the completion of class assignments. Doing any commercial work in the school studio or with the school's equipment will result in a loss of studio or equipment check-out privileges. The Lab maintains a scheduling calendar for studio use that strictly governs studio availability. **It is first come-first-served on the sign up sheet**. You may only sign up a week in advance.

PLAN AHEAD!!!!!! I will provide reasonable time for assignments, but will have little sympathy for those who wait for the last moment and then cannot get on the schedule.

STUDIO PROTOCOL

If you use it, you will be held responsible for cleaning it and putting it back as you found it within the scheduled time. We do not have a studio maid or janitor. An infraction of this rule (and common courtesy) will result in an immediate loss of studio privileges for the remainder of the class and you will have to figure some other location for completing your assignments.

You are also responsible for not breaking stuff! When you first enter the studio check equipment for breakage or functionality right away and report ANY problems

immediately. We'll then look to see who LAST used it to address replacement. If a bulb dies a natural death, let the lab know immediately and they will replace it.

This handout will serve as fair warning of these rules. (Other rules and the use of the studio and its equipment will be covered in class and may posted on the studio wall.

You will be expected to follow those rules or lose your studio privileges and perhaps have to pay for broken equipment. When in doubt, ASK!!!!

So plan your shoot before you get there. Unless you are following someone else, arrive a little early to minimize set-up time, give yourself plenty of clean-up time; make sure your model (if you are shooting people) and/or your props arrive on time.

And as importantly, be willing to help each other, especially at the overlap period.

LAB USE

Lighting students may use either film or digital technologies although some assignments will require color. If you are using film you may work in the assigned darkroom.

Darkroom Lab Protocol. The Student lab is a "public" lab meaning lots of people are working in there at the same time. No one student, no matter what level they are on, is entitled to act as if the lab were set up just for them. And no student will be allowed to act in a manner offensive to other students using the lab. In the warm days lots of students quickly overwhelm the air conditioning. Please arrive clean and not directly from your exercise routine flushed with endorphins and dripping with sweat. If we have complaints about odors, splashing chemicals, using too much space, disrespect for the others in the lab, etc., then the lab tech has authority to ask you to leave. Repeated complaints may lose your lab privileges for the rest of the semester.

Computer Lab Protocol. As with the darkroom, this is a public area and the computers are set up to allow us the maximum efficiency as classroom computers not as individually owned machines. They are also there to allow students to work on projects, not for personal play time. If others around you are trying to work respect their space and their need to concentrate by not engaging in loud conversations.

Equipment Care. Take care of the equipment as if it were yours. If you break it, it IS yours because you will have to pay to replace it. If you start to set up and discover something is broken, tell the lab tech immediately. If not, it will be considered a fair assumption that you broke it.

Personal Work. The lab class is still part of class and designed primarily to give you time and facilities to complete your projects and assignments. If you have finished your assignments however, then during my class you may use that time for other work. Other instructors may have different rules about this.

Photography covers a wide range of genre and types of images, some of which may be controversial. Keep in mind the above rule: no student will be allowed to produce work that is offensive to others working in the lab. And before anyone raises it, this is not a first Amendment issue; it is a rule laid down by the people who are providing educational facilities for you to use unless you abuse the privilege.

Attendance in Lab. A reminder! You are required to receive a certain amount of instruction over the course of the semester and that number is derived including the lab classes. However, this is, to some degree, your own time to work on and produce your assignments and practice the techniques involved in this level of photography. Skipping out on Lab is only hurting yourself and in some cases only hurting your grade.

CELL PHONES

When you come into class there is a simple rule regarding cell phones:

Unless you are a medical doctor on-call or a parent with a sick child at home (AND tell me that is the case)...

TURN THE *#%@*^@ THING OFF ! ! ! ! !

You will be able, despite your fears to the contrary, to actually survive for the class duration without getting a call (or making a call). It is an amazing historical fact that just a few years ago you actually had to wait until you got home to have access to a telephone and yet most of those students managed to survive the ordeal. You can survive for a few hours! Let your friends know your class schedule and when you are NOT available for calls. **THIS INCLUDES TEXTING!!!**

WORK QUALITY AND GRADES

Most of the assignments are based on the application and practice of specific techniques and/or use of equipment. You can satisfy the assignment and collect your "C" by simply meeting the technical requirements and following the instructions. (No, you do not get extra credit for doing what you are supposed to do anyway. In the professional arena that makes the work average, not excellent.)

However, to properly take advantage of the educational opportunity provided, and to move the work into that "excellent" category, you should treat EVERY assignment as if it were an assignment from a client and with which you might create a stand-out piece for your portfolio.

My recommendation is that you treat the specifics of the assignment as the bare minimum required of you and then do everything you can to make the resultant image something truly expressing your abilities and creativity, in short, something to form the basis of your starting portfolio.

When you leave school and seek either a secondary school or employment as a photographer, that portfolio is your only meaningful credential. Take advantage of this opportunity by creating a viable sales tool for yourself.

Take the assignment specifics as a starting point. Do what you are asked, then make it better. Carry the concept to a higher level and adopt an attitude that demands you to produce the best possible work you can every time. Settling for "OK." or waiting to do stuff at the last minute then hurrying through, or sleep-walking through an assignment you think is easy is also easy to spot and will get you an average grade. In the real world it will get you quickly into bankruptcy and an absence of work.

I do not grade on the curve, I grade based on what I perceive to be YOUR potential and whether or not you are working to live up to it through your class work.

INAPPROPRIATE LANGUAGE AND DISTRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

This is a college, so it pains me to even have to bring this up. Experience, however, has made it clear it needs to be part of the official written material for you to have. The rules are simple and instructors have been granted complete authority in this matter: if you use inappropriate or offensive language or engage in any type of behavior that disrupts the educational purpose of the class, you will be ejected from the classroom. Period. End of story.

This is a zero-tolerance policy. Do it once and you are gone for the rest of the day. Do it twice and you will have to clear it with Dean Mario Chacon before you will be allowed to re-enter the classroom. It would be unwise to even think about testing this policy in my class.

**USE OF COMPUTERS
DURING CLASS**

If it is a lab class you can use the computers the same as you would the darkroom. However if I am lecturing I will expect you to pay attention and not be working or playing on the computers. That is both rude and disrespectful to me and to the rest of the class. If you do it I will treat that day, since you were not paying attention to class, as an unexcused absence in the grade book. Three of those will cost you a letter grade. And I may simply unplug your station or lock it from the teacher's station. Or if when I view your screen on the instructor's station it seems interesting or really juicy, I may simply pipe it up through the projector for all to see and enjoy.

INCOMPLETES

School policy is VERY clear on this: an incomplete is to be given ONLY in cases of medical emergencies arising at the last part of the class. They are not given for vacation time, party time, or ANY reason other than a legitimate medical emergency. You have made a commitment to the school, to me, and to yourself to register for and attend this class from the start to the finish. If you cannot do that or do not want to do that then now is a good time to drop when there are others who would dearly like to register and devote the proper time to it.

**PROBLEMS WITH THE
INSTRUCTOR**

It happens sometimes. There may be a personality conflict, or you feel the instructor did not give you proper credit on something or perhaps unfairly singled out an image of yours during a critique. Any number of things in a venue as dynamic as a creative skills class can lead to a student feeling they have a problem with the instructor. If it should happen, then there is a set protocol and "chain of command" for you to follow to address the situation.

The first step is the instructor themselves. Common courtesy demands, and efficient resolution depends on your first making an appointment and talking to them about your issues. Do not be intimidated by this. We really are here to help you learn and if something is standing in the way we will do all we can to correct it including, if it is necessary, helping to get you into another section of the class.

If, after meeting with the instructor you feel the issues was not resolved to your satisfaction the next step is the Chairperson of the Department. Currently that is **June Richards**. She will ask if you have spoken with the instructor and if not you will be sent back down to try that first.

If after meeting with the Chair you still feel the situation is unresolved then you can make an appointment with the Dean of the Arts and Humanities School. Currently that is **Trudy Gerald**. She too will ask if you have worked your way up the chain of command.

If you still have not received satisfaction then the Dean can recommend the next steps for you to take. This may involve a group meeting to mediate the situation.

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES
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EQUIPMENT

CAMERA	35mm or larger or DSLR with adjustable focus, aperture, and shutter. if it won't allow you to manually control it, then it won't work for the class. You will also need to be able to connect and fire a strobe/flash from a PC connector or adapter on your camera.
LIGHT METER	A hand held meter that reads flash exposure is HIGHLY recommended. However for the in-studio use you can check them out.
SHUTTER CABLE RELEASE	9" to 12" long. (Or electronic remote) You NEED this!
TRIPOD	For out of studio shooting, get the absolute best you can afford to buy. Don't leave home without it. In the studio you can use the camera stands or tripods.
PORTABLE FLASH	We will be doing "Fill Flash" projects so you will need access to a portable flash unit for a couple of weeks later in the semester..
STUDIO STYLE LIGHTING EQUIPMENT	As a professional, you will be expected to have your own lighting and grip equipment. The class will give suggestions for starting your own "kit." To complete some of the assignments you will need to own or have access to at least some basic lights. Studio work can be done in the school studio but we have only VERY limited lighting to check out.

TOPICS BY WEEK:

Note that this table is only a rough guideline of how the class may go. Depending on the dynamics and specific needs (or speeds) of a particular class, the sequence of topics may be modified on the fly. When a lecture ends early you may use the rest of the time for lab work.

Week	1 st Day	2 nd Day	Assignments / Notes
1	Introduction to class ground rules and protocols. Final Portfolio	Introduction to the studio: rules and equipment use	Assign final portfolio
2	Introduction to lighting Equipment	Lecture/Demo: PR/Headshot	PR Headshot
3	Introduction to Medium and Large format cameras.	Lab/Studio time	
4	Lecture/Demo: Solid and textured Surfaces	Lab/Studio time PR Shot Due	Solid and Textured Surfaces
5	Critique PR Shot Lab/Studio time	Lab/Studio time	
6	Lecture/Demo: Reflective/Polished Items. Intro Light tents.	Lab/Studio time Solid Textured Due	Reflective
7	Critique Solid/Texture Lab/Studio time	Lab/Studio time	
8	Lecture/Demo Transparent items	Lab/Studio time Reflective Due	Transparent
9	Critique Reflective Lab/Studio time	Lab/Studio time	
10	Lecture/Demo Jewelry	Lab/Studio time Transparent Due	Jewelry
11	Lecture/Demo: Food	Lab/Studio time Jewelry Due	Food
12	Critique Jewelry Lecture on Final Portfolios	Lab/Studio time	
13	SPRING BREAK		
14	Lecture: Products on Location	Lab/Studio time Food Due	Non Field Trip... Demo Location Products
15	Food Critique	Lab/Studio time Location Product Due	
16	Lab/Studio time	Lab/Studio time	Portfolio "contacts" due
17	FINAL PROJECTS DUE FOR CRITIQUE AND GRADING		