

PHOTOGRAPHY 245: NATURE & LANDSCAPE

GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

COURSE INFORMATION

This document contains the information for Photo 245, Nature and Landscape Photography, for Spring 2008. This data is provided to give the student information that will help them complete assignments, anticipate grading, and help gain the maximum educational experience from the material.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the course are to provide the student with a working knowledge of the principles and techniques involved in the production of professional level nature and landscape photography. Following completion of the course with a grade of “C” or higher the student will be able to

- Plan a photographic field trip to gather photos including scouting locations and planning logistics and budgets.
- Identify and select the proper photographic tools for various shooting situations and professional end uses for the photographs and photographic prints. And
- Prepare a portfolio and promotional package to present to art buyers, art and marketing directors, and curators/screeners for display.

The goal is to produce professional, sellable images to satisfy the commercial needs of publishers, journals, magazines, calendars, as well as stock agencies.

COURSE CONTENT

The course covers the planning and execution of Field photography designed to produce professional quality nature and landscape photography. This includes...

- Material on budgeting and travel planning, location scouting, and site/view/weather/time appraisals for future shooting.
- Demonstrations of various cameras, formats, and other photographic tools and techniques used in the acquisition of professional nature and landscape photography.
- Presentations of examples of nature and landscape images from foundational work in painting through various approaches and “schools” of photography. These will include both fine art approaches and professional approaches used to produce work for sale and commercial applications.
- Information on creating promotional materials and the marketing of landscape work both for the purposes of selling art and selling commercial imagery.

Although titled “Landscapes” we will also be discussing other “scapes” such as cityscapes, seascapes, urban landscapes, and variations such as macro and nature details.

FIELD TRIPS

Nature and Landscape Photography entails making photographs out in nature. So the class will revolve around a series of field trips where the course materials can be both demonstrated and put into supervised practice. Supervised Field trip time will count towards classroom time.

The Field trips may include the following:

- 1 or more “day trips” to locations ranging from close by to those involving 2-3 hour drive times. These will usually be done on a weekend day. Optional.
- 1 or more weekend overnight trips to regional locations such as Anza-Borrego State Park. Optional

For Spring 2010, the planned longer field trips will be to:

- 1 three-day trip to Owens Valley, CA . This area also contains lots of trails and access to the Eastern slope of the Sierras, the famous Alabama Hills, and the ancient bristlecone pines, all famous shooting locations for landscape photographers. The trip will be Friday through Sunday.
- 1 four-five day trip to Death Valley National Park or other National Park. Some of the most famous landscape photos ever done have been in these locations. The trip will be Thursday through Sunday.

Specific trip handouts will be given prior to each trip in plenty of time to plan the logistics in accordance with class materials. A separate Handout will be provided to show typical costs involved in these trips.

You will be able to reduce costs substantially by carpooling and sharing room expenses. Most of the trips involving staying overnight at a location can be accomplished by either camping or using local lodging facilities however one of the weekend overnight trips, if we take it, will be specifically car-camping based.

Specific dates or date-range windows will be provided in advance in a handout to facilitate your planning. These trips are not all mandatory. However they will contain important demonstrations, materials, exercises, and opportunities for project completion directly tied to the class so you should plan on coming along on at least one of the longer ones.

REQUIRED TEXT AND READINGS

Minimum required reading materials for this course are the current editions of:

1. **PHOTOGRAPHY** (Textbook)
Barbara London

The information supplied in the course handouts, department handouts, lab handouts, and lectures, takes precedence over any material in the text. If you have a question about this ASK!

ADDITIONAL READING MATERIAL

Other reading may be suggested throughout the class. There are lots of books showing examples of good Landscape Photography. I would especially recommend “**The Art of Seeing**” by **Freeman Patterson**. I will have a recommended reading list available on my web site and on Blackboard.

On the web become familiar with the site www.luminous-landscape.com. It offers an incredible array of resources devoted to landscape and nature photography.

CAMERA REQUIREMENTS

Professional grade landscapes have been produced with virtually every camera format from 35mm to 8x10 and now digital. Interesting and artistic landscapes have been done with plastic cameras, pinhole cameras, indeed virtually any type of camera in existence. We will be discussing pros and cons and the use of virtually all of these formats, however you may take the class using any of them or a variety of them if available. But you will need to be able to control your camera sufficiently to achieve your intended ‘vision’ for the final images.

We do have cameras available for check out but not enough to have you check out a camera for the entire semester. All check-outs are on a first-come-first served basis.

Normal check-outs are for 48 hrs or a weekend however, again on a first-come-first-served basis you may check out a camera for the duration of a field trip if that is longer.

If you are using a professional camera such as a field or view camera or many medium format cameras you will also need a light meter. Even shooting digital a light meter is an invaluable aid. We will discuss the uses of various types in class.

You will need a good, sturdy tripod, the best you can afford and carry. We will also discuss various types of tripods and tripod heads in class.

WEB ENHANCEMENT

This is a web enhanced course. That means we will be using Blackboard/Vista and the district's servers to provide some of the downloadable course content such as printed and video documents. We will also use it as a place to submit projects and to provide grading information. We will have a class period to cover all of this but all computer needs can be done from any computer with web access or any of the computers in the classroom.

Professional landscape photography is designed for reproduction and today that means producing an electronic file. This will be how the normal projects will be completed and turned in. The final portfolio will be a print portfolio but will need an electronic contact sheet to be turned in on Blackboard.

WORK LOAD

Landscape Photography ought to be fun since you get to go to beautiful or interesting locations and do what you love. But to do it professionally requires a lot of work, attention to details including non-photographic details, and a huge amount of self discipline resulting in a prodigious output from which can be selected the few "killer" shots to sell. Since no director is there to guide you, you have to know on your own what is needed and what will result in revenue. It is a LOT of work. This class will reflect that reality.

GRADING BASIS

This is a professional, college level course. It is also an upper level photography course that requires your attention, discipline, and some hard work to complete. All work you perform as projects, tests, or other assignments, will be given a numerical point value determined by the instructor. The points are based on the relative difficulty or complexity of the assignment or test.

I will evaluate work based on the technical competence and skill elements involved, the aesthetics of the finished shot, and the use of natural (or in some cases additional artificial) lighting to achieve the stated objectives. I'll also grade heavily on your effort and growth and your willingness to "stretch." Successful professional landscape photographers require no less commitment and passion than any other genre of photography. I'll expect to see that level of commitment in the class.

POINTS AND GRADES

Materials you are assigned or given to produce for the class will be graded and given either a numerical grade or a letter grade.

- **Tests** will be assigned specific points per question based on difficulty or type. A wrong answer gains zero points, a correct answer gains all the points assigned that question. The percentage of correct-to-possible points will determine your grade as noted for your final grade below.
 - **Photo Projects** will be graded technically, aesthetically, and also professionally for such elements as following directions accurately and turning it in on time. They will be awarded a letter grade defined below.
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- **Written Assignments** will also be awarded a letter grade.

The handout for each assignment will list all items to be turned in to be considered complete. **This includes the handout itself.** Without the handout the project is incomplete.

LETTER GRADE MEANINGS

All projects will be graded and awarded a certain number of points. Grades are not entitlements and are not given based on student wishes or desires but are earned based on student performance. This is an upper level class. I will expect to see all basic and intermediate level tools and techniques demonstrated to that appropriate level. Pay careful attention to the descriptions of each grade and take them to heart.

- A. **An "A" is given for *Excellent* work.** "A" work is free of flaws and technically perfect in its production and presentation for its given level of progress. It took the assignment specifics and elevated them and is as good as could possibly be expected for this level of class. **(90-100 points)**
- B. **A "B" is given for *Superior* work.** "B" work is very good but might contain a few very slight issues. However it is above average quality and is of a quality acceptable for commercial display and viability. **(80-89 points)**
- C. **A "C" is given for *Average* work.** "C" work is competent but not professional grade, it may show a reasonable composition but has a number of flaws or issues that make it less than professional or unacceptable for commercial display. It followed the assignment to the letter but all effort ended there. **(70-79 points)**
- D. **A "D" is given for *Below Average* work.** It is filled with flaws both technical and aesthetic and is above failing mostly because it got turned in on time and more or less followed instructions. **(60-69 points)**
- F. **An "F" is given for *Failing* Work.** It did not follow the instructions or, even if it did, is so poorly done it does not even rise above poor work on a basic level. **(0-59 points).**

Getting a good grade is easy: do EXCELLENT work, show up, get involved, and dedicate yourself to improving your work and being as good as you can possibly be.

CLASS GRADE COMPONENTS

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

- ◆ **90%** on Photo Project Assignments, Written Assignments, tests, etc.
 - ◆ **10%** on attendance, participation, conduct in class and your individual progress and effort. (Refer to the section on attendance for further information on how this can effect your grade.
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EFFECT OF FINALS

The final projects and/or final exam will have a critical effect on your grade regardless of how well you have done up to that point. They usually are worth at least twice a normal project grade.

- ◆ 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.
 - ◆ If your Final Project achieves less than 60% of the possible points your maximum attainable grade will be a "D"
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- ◆ If your final Written Exam achieves less than 60% of the possible points your maximum attainable grade will be a "D"
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FINAL GRADES

Your final grade will be determined by your cumulative points as a percentage of the total possible points. That percentage will yield a letter grade based on the following table:

90% - 100%	=	A
80% - 89%	=	B
70% - 79%	=	C
60% - 69%	=	D
0% - 59%	=	F

Actual project numbers often reflect partial grades on projects to give you a better indication of how you are doing. For the final course grade, the computer only allows me to input whole grade letters. Depending on what the actual percentages are, I MAY round up but I will not round down.

TRACKING YOUR PROGRESS

The grades are tracked in your Grade Book in Blackboard. Checking there will show you the points scored on a particular assignment. But it will also show you the points you have accumulated thus far (based on the projects I have graded) and what your grade **would be** if you did no more work at that point. As more projects are graded the final score obviously goes up as you build toward the final grade.

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 absences in a semester allows me to automatically drop you from the class. I won't do that (see below on dropping the class) but it WILL cost you a letter grade.
- ◆ Unexcused tardiness 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 tell the nurse to have a pathetic voice when you call from your hospital bed! Attendance is a factor in your grade and it can be enough to lower you a letter grade. And here is something really important for you to understand relative to attendance...

DROPPING THE CLASS

Once you are on the roster, I will expect YOU to take responsibility for whether or not you continue in class. If you decide to drop, or need to drop because timing and scheduling is unworkable, YOU must take the initiative to let the school admissions office know that you have dropped. I WILL NOT DO IT FOR YOU simply because you are no longer showing up. Why is this important? Because if we get to the final grade roster and your name is still on it I must input a grade or the computer will not accept my input. That grade will most likely be an "F" since it takes very few missed assignments to drop the grade to that level. To avoid that, follow through on your own decisions and let the school know if you must drop. It would be nice to let me know so I don't keep calling your name, but you MUST let the school know or risk failing a course with the attendant hit on your GPA.

TARDINESS

Tardiness is rude, an insult to me, disrespectful to your fellow classmates, disruptive of the class, and will effect the attendance part of your grade. If you have some work-related reason for continuing tardiness make an office appointment and discuss it with me ASAP. Otherwise show up on time. If you come in late, do not expect me to take time to re-present material already covered or to answer questions designed to fill in the blanks you missed by being late.

ATTENDANCE IN LAB CLASSES

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

Labs are for the work on and toward the completion of your projects but I also sometimes use them for impromptu demonstrations of equipment or techniques that I'll expect everyone to know and use from then on as appropriate. All of the computerized image prep and submission into Blackboard can be accomplished using the darkroom and/or class computers.

ATTENDANCE ON FIELD TRIPS

This is a field trip-based class. Issues involved in field shooting are discussed on those trips. However, photo trips can become expensive. You can save a lot of money by car-pooling and, if an overnight trip, room sharing or even camping. Early in the class you ought to start sorting out travel companions. (If you ride with someone else be sure to share fuel at the very least.)

Due to sometimes conflicting work schedules for students, the shorter day trips are optional. Regarding the longer 3-4 day trips, plan on doing at least one of them. Optional assignments will be given for those that cannot attend.

PROJECT SUBMISSION

Each photo project assignment will include a handout explaining in detail the requirements for that project. If you miss the class handout, you can download another one on my website (listed below) or on Blackboard or email me to send you another copy electronically. **Read each project handout carefully for the specific instructions to be followed for that project.**

All non final portfolio work for individual assignments will be turned in electronically to Backboard. I will provide you with very specific and details instructions for doing this. These will be an important but also small part of the final grade. The primary work required will be in the form of a final portfolio of work. This portfolio may be in any form or format which you think best conveys your vision to the images chosen however ALL images in the portfolio will need to be presented together AS a portfolio not simply a pile of independent prints. We will discuss this thoroughly in class.

Also, make sure that *all* items included are labeled with your name, class, and project data. Any allowable exceptions will be spelled out when an assignment is given. Failure to follow these instructions will be reflected in the project grade up to and including being considered incomplete. General rule: If I can't read it, or if it is not labeled or packaged properly, it does not exist...

All projects are to be turned in by the end of the class period on the on the due date if that is a lab class or at the start of a lecture class for a critique.). If it is for a critique, I will usually provide the first 15 minutes of class to finish up mounting and assembling your work for presentation.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

You may be required to produce a written report on a selected landscape photographer or landscape approach. You will need to get instructor approval of your chosen topic.

This assignment will also be turned in online. You can draft and edit it in your favorite word processor then block copy it into Blackboard. Or you can enter it

directly into Blackboard but that has very few editing tools.

You will also be expected to gather and correlate data from the various field trips to be used in budgeting future photo trips.

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 point being deducted for **every school day** they continue late.

A project will be returned ungraded if it is incomplete and points deducted as above. However, the project must be corrected and resubmitted or it will achieve a grade of zero (0) points.

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 and buyers.

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

EXTRA CREDIT

From time to time I may offer an extra credit question on a test or suggest an extra credit assignment. Failure to answer or turn in these tasks will have no effect on your grade. You cannot lose points by not doing an extra credit component. However, you might gain some points that could help your grade. And even if your grade does not need any help, you might gain the extra bit of data to make you more competitive in the field.

CONTACTING THE INSTRUCTOR

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

- Email: dking@sdccd.edu **BE SURE TO NOTE THE CLASS** in the subject line or I may delete it accidentally thinking it is more SPAM.
 - Phone: my office at school is 619-388-3649 but do not count on my ever getting it.
 - Office Appointments can be arranged as required
 - My website where you can download class assignments, handouts, and other tech data is www.ndavidking.com .
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LAB USE

The “Lab” day is designed as time for you to use the facilities and take advantage of having an instructor present to help you in your work toward fulfilling class assignments. You may use our facilities or, if you clear it with me in advance, may work in your own darkrooms or at your own computers. Just be sure and clear it with me first. If you do use City College facilities there are some guidelines for you to understand and follow.

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 another student using the lab.

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 in 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. **The only time you will be excused from lab is with instructor permission.**

USING DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

It is clear that photography is moving rapidly toward the digital arena. Sooner or later most work will be done, both in the acquisition and in the production, via digital means. However, learning to master the traditional film/wet lab techniques will put you several steps up the ladder toward mastering the digital world.

Nevertheless, if you have and want to use digital equipment for acquisition or output you may do so. This will likely relieve some space stress in the lab classes. However, that does not automatically excuse your time during lab time. If you want to use that time to work on digital prints, be sure to clear that with me BEFORE hand.

If you are producing digital output however, please note that it still has to be a good print and subject to the same criteria as traditional B&W or Color prints would face. Bad digital printing is still bad printing and will be graded accordingly.

BLACK AND WHITE OR COLOR?

In the photographic arena landscape was traditionally a black and white photo world. But especially for merchandising, work is increasingly done in color. You may follow your own vision here and produce work to suit your personal and evolving style and aesthetic.

For your final portfolio if you are doing a print-based portfolio, I would expect B&W film-based prints to be archivally made on fiber paper. (For project prints and certainly for contacts that is not required.) For Digital Prints, the final portfolio will be archival inkjet or lightjet prints in color or black and white (grayscale).

We will also discuss other presentations acceptable for this final portfolio including books and electronic media.

BEHAVIOR ON FIELD TRIPS

When we go on a field trip we are representing San Diego City College and the Photo program. Any behavior that is inappropriate will result in your expulsion from the field trip. Remember we are guests, often we have been granted special prices or admissions because of our school status, please act with all due respect for the places and people who have welcomed us into their areas.

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

Take this sheet with you as a check list when you buy your original supplies. I assume you may have some of these supplies left over from the other classes; please feel free to use those items. This should be viewed as a bare minimum supply list as you may well use more!

EQUIPMENT

CAMERA	35mm or larger with adjustable focus, aperture, and shutter; if it won't do this it won't work for the class. You will also need to be able to fire a strobe/flash from a PC connector or adapter on your camera.
LIGHT METER	A hand held meter is HIGHLY recommended.
SHUTTER CABLE RELEASE	9" to 12" long or an electronic remote release if your camera requires. Important!!!
TRIPOD	The absolute best you can afford to buy. Don't leave home without it.
CAMERA FILTERS AND MOUNTS	Especially for film shooters... A minimum set would include: Medium or Dark Yellow (K2, K3, G15) and Red (25A). Size for largest lens plus step-up adapters for others.
PORTFOLIO CASE	Large enough to hold 16x20 matted prints. Please do NOT go over 20x24 in size at least to turn in for projects as they are almost impossible for me to handle.

EXPENDABLE SUPPLIES

<p>FILM and DIGITAL</p> <p><i>You may shoot with any film you wish. However I'd recommend you wait for class discussions before purchasing as there may be information about specific assignments that suggest certain characteristics over others.</i></p> <p><i>If you are shooting digitally, you will need sufficient flash card capacities for our shooting trips and/or you may need the resources to down-load images to other storage to free up your cards. We will discuss these needs in detail in class.</i></p>	<p>10-15 rolls 7-10 rolls (35mm or equivalent frames in other formats)</p>
<p>OTHER EXPENDABLES</p> <p>Since this is an upper level class you all know the drill by now for what it takes to produce prints for a semester. It typically takes about \$300 for film-based print supplies though digital could be significantly less.</p>	<p>Paper, neg sleeves, mat board, etc.</p>

TRAVEL/FIELD TRIP COSTS

<p>I will provide a separate breakdown of these estimated costs. At this point if you attend both longer field trips they could range from \$400 (camping only) to whatever your budget would allow for nice lodging and fancy meals.</p> <p>For research on costs here are the URLs for my recommended lodging:</p>	<p>Gas, lodging, meals, supplies</p>
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<i>PROJECT / ASSIGNMENT LIST BY TITLE</i>
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This is a quick checklist of a possible and very *tentative* project list by title and/or quick description. The individual project handouts will give you the precise instructions and requirements for the completion of the assignment. **Be aware that this is only a preliminary guideline.** As the class progresses and special class-wide needs or abilities surface, the instructor may remove, add, or substitute a different assignment for one of those listed below to address those needs or to explore those strengths. NOTE: It is also not necessarily in the order they will be assigned!

Week	1 st Class	2 nd Class	Assignments / Notes
1	Intro to Course; guidelines, grading, and other ground rules.	Review of Exposure issues relevant to Landscape Photography	
2	Intro to calibrating film and digital systems	Intro to Dynamic Range Control: Zone System, Grad Filters, and HDR	Exercise: Calibrate system
3	Discussion of various aesthetic approaches to Landscape Imagery: Contextual, Isolation, documentary, Surreal, Metaphorical	Lecture: Planning Photo Trips	
4	HDR for dynamic Range	Shooting for Stock	
5	Final Prep for Death Valley	On the road to DV	Tentative: Field Trip to Death Valley
6	Petit Landscape	Panoramas and Mosaics	
7	Isolation: close ups, macros, and shallow depth of field	Depth of Field enhancement	
8	Discuss Written Report Assignment		Death Valley Samples Due
9	Critique DV shots.		
10	S P R I N G B R E A K		BE SAFE!!!!
11	Lecture on Portfolios: prints, binders, books, electronic		Tentative: Field Trip to Owens Valley
12			
13			
14			Owens Valley Samples Due
15			Reports Due
16			Final Portfolio Contacts Due
17	FINAL PORTFOLIO DUE FOR CRITIQUE AND GRADING	(I'll grade the final as we view it in class)	HAVE A GOOD SUMMER!!!!