

# JO537 Digital Fundamentals Spring 2012

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## Course Description

In JO537 Digital Fundamentals, students will refine editing and workflow, learn various lighting techniques, output high quality digital prints, add strong portrait work and a photo essay to their portfolio.

Students are required to use Apple's Aperture or Adobe's Lightroom to manage and edit photos and will also use Photoshop for image editing.

Students will complete six assignments during the semester in addition to an in-depth photo essay: The shooting assignments will broaden student knowledge and understanding of how to light a variety of situations. Students must create a layout for the final essay or produce a three to four minute multimedia piece. For each assignment students will be required to submit three images in digital and printed form. At the end of the semester students will print a class portfolio of their best assignment work (six images) and 10 prints from their final essay.

There will be continual class discussion on ethics in photojournalism and there will be class critiques of all assignments. All assignment work must be well tagged and captioned with complete and accurate information.

## **Field Trips**

Class input is welcome to exploit every opportunity to work and learn as a group inside and outside the classroom. We will meet at a photo studio for a workshop on studio lighting and will conduct other lighting workshops outside of the classroom when it's helpful.

## **Guest Lecture**

To conclude our class, a veteran photojournalist will join us for a class critique to give an open and honest professional assessment of your work, to offer valuable shooting tips and to share ideas on today's photo industry.

## **Class Schedule**

### **1/18 Review syllabus.**

Review Aperture: filing and archiving strategies for photo and video; tagging and toning and the importance of maintaining a singular library.  
Begin research on story ideas for photo essay (ideas due on 3/7)  
Discuss lighting options and lights available for use.

### **1/25 Lighting and shooting an interview**

Choose background, frame and light a set for an interview. Two-camera shoot is optional.

Homework: Assignment 1, shoot an interview (due 2/8)

### **2/1 Studio lighting workshop. Students will meet at a photography studio to learn lighting technique. Please wear colorful clothes!**

Students can review edit of interview on Vimeo in their own time.

Homework: Assignment 2, studio portrait (due 2/22)

**2/8** Assignment 1 due today  
Class critique of interviews  
Workshop on use of lighting with small flash for environmental portrait assignment.  
Homework: Assignment 3, environmental portrait – interior (due 2/29)

**2/15 Printing workshop.**

Learn how to print in order to deliver assignments in coming weeks.  
Review dodging and burning technique in Photoshop.  
Follow up on small flash use if necessary.

**2/22** Assignment 2 due today.  
Class critique of studio portraits.  
Workshop on the use of fill flash and lighting outside.  
Homework: Assignment 4, Environmental portrait – exterior (due 3/7)

**2/29** Assignment 3 due today  
Class critique of environmental portraits.  
Workshop on shooting tabletop for illustration.  
Homework: Assignment 5, Illustration (due 3/21)

**3/7** Assignment 4 due today  
Class critique of exterior environmental portrait.  
Discuss ideas for story. Review examples of strong photo essays.  
Story ideas, shooting schedule and permissions are due today.  
Students should begin work on their photo essays this week.

**3/14** SPRING BREAK!!!!!!! Have fun!

**3/21** Assignment 5 due today.

Class critique of illustration assignment.

Small flash lighting workshop with model.

Homework: Assignment 6 OR 7 – shoot a fashion portrait or light an interior (due 4/4).

**3/28** Review images from photo essay to date.

Review layout options for photo essay.

**4/4** Assignment 6 or 7 due today.

Class critique of assignment 6 or 7.

Editing workshop on photo essay images.

Cross-editing exercise.

**4/11** Guest Lecture

Review images for photo essay to date.

**4/18** No class due to Patriot's Day Holiday

**4/25** View rough draft of story.

Workshop on layout

**5/2** Final critique on photo essay and digital inkjet prints.

## **Assignments**

### **Assignment #1 - Shoot an interview. Due: 2/8**

Must be one minute in length. Use soft key light with fill to reduce shadow. Use hair light if separation from background is needed. Background may be lit - ambient light may be used. Color must be correct on subject. Use a pertinent and interesting background, avoid anything distracting or busy.

### **Assignment # 2 – Shoot a Studio Portrait. Due: 2/22**

Photograph a beautifully lit studio portrait of a person not in your demographic for your portfolio. Photograph must display student's lighting skills. It should be well framed and show the personality of your subject. Catch a moment when your subject reveals something about themselves. Use key light for drama with strong shadow (some detail is always encouraged) or shoot with soft or no shadow. Use hair light if needed. Hand in three distinctive shots.

### **Assignment #3 - Environmental portrait (interior). Due: 2/29**

Shoot a portrait for portfolio of a notable person. Shoot a variety of images that show off your lighting skills. Shoot some tight and shoot some with effective negative space. Your background must help explain what the person does, who they are and give a sense of place. Possible subjects could represent their profession, but must be visually interesting or work in a distinctive environment, whether in the arts, medicine, communication, the trades or in a service profession. Remember your background can make your image. Vary your framing, angle and focal length. Hand in three distinctive shots.

### **Assignment # 4 - Environmental portrait. (exterior) Due: 3/07**

Photograph a person of notoriety in an outside environment. Use strong natural light – and fill shadows with flash or fill light to make sure subject is well-lit. Hand in three distinctive images.

**Assignment #5 - Shoot Illustration. Due: 3/21**

Photograph object(s) - shoot artwork for story to illustrate concept or document process, or to show object in interesting light. Use highly visual and original ideas. Images must be pertinent, graphic and well lit. Text is allowed in the caption or on the image. Submit three distinctive images.

**Assignment # 6 - Fashion portrait. Due: 4/4**

Show trends in footwear, glasses, clothes, accessories, personal electronics, jewelry and adornment. Strong lighting and color required. Submit three distinctive images. For example – trends in exercise wear – show a person working out by the Charles River; colorful wellies splashing in a puddle lit with a strobe; umbrellas photographed on a very windy day; 'London Fog' – the corporate army marching out of South Station during the morning commute. Submit three distinctive images.

Or

**Assignment # 7 - Interior lighting. Due: 4/4**

Light interior - shoot for sports (basketball, swimming, gymnastics, etc) action, dining, architecture. Use lighting where needed for accent. The goal of this assignment is to define interior architecture. Submit three distinctive images.

**Photo Essay**

The photo essay is a long form story that should consist of at least three shoots and three reviews. You will come up with a strong visual story idea and build your story over time. You will submit ten strong images, both digitally and printed along with either a layout or a 3-4 minute multimedia piece.

**Final Due: 5/2**

**Grading:**

Assignments 1- 6 will each be worth 10% and the photo essay will be worth 40% of your final grade.

## Learning Outcomes

Students will learn:

classic forms of portraiture, features and extended photo essay

thesis preparation for long form story telling

strong visual narrative skills

professional shooting and editing skills

to understand the importance of moment in photojournalism

documentary process including what to photograph, approach to topic, and boundaries of photographing people

legal issues including copyright, libel, plagiarism, first amendment rights and current issues concerning ethics of shooting and editing documentary images

to work with lighting in the studio (including three-point lighting) and in the field

how to capture a visual narrative in a portrait for a news story

to prepare images for publication and to produce strong portfolio images

to develop a strong digital workflow

how to write proper captions, keywords, and copyright

how to layout photo essay to tell a visual story with photos captions, copy and headline

how to make high quality ink jet prints for portfolios and display

## Required Reading

Students are required to read the New York Times and the Times' Lens Blog on a daily basis.

## Course Requirements

All students are required to have a digital SLR with a hot shoe flash, an external hard drive (500 gig minimum). Students will also need to purchase about 100 sheets of Epson photo paper. You can choose luster, glossy or matte, but please be consistent throughout the class. Premium luster is a good choice.

## Prerequisite

Students must have a working knowledge of photography. Undergraduates who have not taken JO305 or JO312 need the instructor's permission to enroll as this class requires students to work in a professional manner guided by industry standards.

## Evaluation

Each student will be evaluated on photography skills, presentations and class participation. Skill sets to be evaluated include the photographer's technical abilities as well as capacity to convey an unambiguous story.

## Grading

Shooting assignments are worth 10% of total grade and photo-essay is worth 40% of final grade. Grades are not rounded up.

Grades	Quality Points
A	3.87
A-	3.67
B+	3.33
B	3.00
B-	2.67
C+	2.33
C	2.00
C-	1.67
D	1.00

## **Class Policies:**

All assignments are due on or before deadline. Students will lose one grade for every week that the assignment is late unless a doctor's note is provided stating that you were unable to do your work. There will be no excused absence from class without a doctor's note. Students lose half a grade for each unexcused absence.

Students will also lose points from their final grade for being late to class.

Students are expected to use resources that are available to them. It is student's responsibility to read manuals and attend lab sessions to make sure they understand how to properly do assigned work and use required software.

Students are required to follow the workflow outlined in class. This means using Aperture or Lightroom to manage, tag and star photos.

Students must ensure the time stamp on their camera is correctly set.

Students must be familiar with the College's rules for plagiarism and copyright infringement: <http://www.bu.edu/academics/academic-conduct-code/>

Penalties for breaking these rules range from receiving no credit for an assignment or for the course, to expulsion from the university.

Students must take extreme care not to: misrepresent the facts of a story, to electronically alter the meaning of an image or sound, to use the work of others without permission or to not give credit to work created by others.

Any falsification of captions or any file information will lead to a failing grade for the assignment or the course and may then be sent to the Academic Affairs Committee for a disciplinary hearing for conduct violation.

Students must be familiar with the college's policies on group work. If students have any questions on the above policies they should immediately seek clarification from me.

Students are required to shoot raw files for all assignments (exception for sports).

Text messaging, use of cell phones or checking e-mail is not permitted during class.

Students may not re-use any content created for this class for credit in other classes without express written permission.

Students may not submit photos not shot for this class.

Recording of Classes - BU Policy:

Please note that classroom proceedings for this course might be recorded for purposes including, but not limited to, student illness, religious holidays, disability accommodations, or student course review. Note also that recording devices are prohibited in the classroom except with the instructor's permission.

