

Fall 2011

PGY1220C: Commercial Photography I

12:00 - 1:45 • Tuesday & TBA • August 23 to December 6

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Welcome to Commercial Photography! The NWF State College catalog describes this course as follows: *A beginning course that introduces students to the procedures and aesthetics of developing photographic illustrations for industrial and advertising use. Students will gain experience using the camera, electronic lighting, and digital applications of their work. It is recommended that students take PGY1801C at the same time or prior to taking this course.* It is important to note and understand that most of your in-class work will be done at a scheduled time outside of the posted class time due to the blended nature of the class.

This gives you a hint of what we are going to try to do this semester. What I want you to experience is the thought processes involved in planning and executing high-quality photographic illustration of a number of subjects. As graphic designers, you will need to rely heavily on your ingenuity and creativity. You will need to be able to create photographic illustrations on your own, or rely on someone else to create them. If someone else creates them, they get paid.

In this course, you will learn the controls of a high quality camera. Making great photographs means knowing how to control the camera. You will discover that you want this control—it will allow you to do things that you cannot do with an automatic camera. Therefore you must understand how these machines work—the camera, light meter, and high power lighting equipment. You must understand how this kind of equipment affects image quality, and how you can control them to their best advantage.

Studio photography is an exacting process that requires a great deal of interest and care. What may seem “good enough” to you now will hopefully not be acceptable by the end of the semester. The studio photographer creates highly idealistic imagery. It sizzles with perfection and detail. This high level of concern for technical and aesthetic issues makes the imagery speak for itself. You notice it. It sticks out in a crowd of imagery that we are barraged with each day. Because it does this, it serves its purpose.

The purpose of excellent studio images is communication. Communication that is sophisticated and complex. An excellent photograph of a product will create an aura of quality, even if the product doesn't deserve that kind of reputation! Putting products, people, food, etc, into creative artistic contexts communicates to the viewer a visual framework in which we can think about and remember. If it is done well, that context is a favorable one.

So how do you create a favorable artistic context in which to place a product? The first rule is that it be visually stimulating. Simply placing a can of Coke in front of a white background and photographing it creates little mystique. Sometimes it is what we don't see in a product shot that creates it. Unusual vantage points, close ups, images that move in and out of focus or that capture motion sweeten this visual context. Images that are successful are images that present the subject in new and unusual ways.

Throughout the semester you must crave and seek out the new and unusual. If you don't, your work will be unimpressive. You will need to be ready to bring in your own items to photograph. In this class and out, your creativity and ingenuity will govern your success. Don't worry about trying to find expensive or rare items to photograph. Many times you may find yourself photographing wing nuts! It is critically important that you approach this class as an inventor and experimenter, because that is how it's done in the real world!

You will find yourself asking “What are the rules about how to do this type of thing?” It is true that there are some basic concepts relating to lighting and camera functions that many photographers follow. Breaking these “rules” is how you will discover something new. I will not give you recipes and ask you to execute them. It is important to involve me in your process as you plan and shoot!

WARNING: The lighting equipment is very powerful. It is critically important that you follow my instructions and your own common sense when you are using it.



Equipment/Supplies:

(1) Several blank CD-R discs for storing your work. USB memory keys work but are slow and somewhat unreliable. You are required to maintain the integrity of your data. Failure of a disk will not be considered excuse for late work. You **MUST** back up your own data. The computers may occasionally crash, as all computers do, so save early and often so that you don't lose several hours work!

(2) The textbook for the course is the Adobe Photoshop CS5 for Photographers.

(3) It is recommended that you have access to a good quality computer and Adobe Photoshop outside of class time. Open lab time will be available, but limited. If you are a major in our department, you should consider buying the complete Adobe Creative Suite of applications. A good choice would be either the "Design Standard" or "Design Premium" bundle. These are available at a highly discounted price through the NWFSC Store, or online from academic software vendors. Do **NOT** buy software from illegitimate super discount vendors. Many times you will receive illegal bootleg copies, and you may have problems with the software itself, or the serial numbers provided. Specific recommendations for computers are available. Generally, the Apple Macintosh® is the standard of our industry. It is largely a myth that "Macs are more expensive."

Attendance Issues:

Attendance in this course is extremely important as it is a hands on learning experience, not a lecture based course. You will be allowed two absences. After that, any additional absence will result in an immediate excessive absence report, which may result in your withdrawal from the course, or an automatic one letter grade drop in your final grade per absence. An excused absence may be given upon consultation with me but only in case of illness or emergency. **YOU WILL NOT PASS THIS COURSE** if your attendance becomes a problem. If you have more than four absences of any kind by November 1 (the last day for a W grade or to change to audit), you should withdraw from the course. If we get to the end of the semester and you have an excessive number of absences, you will receive an "F."

Note that showing up late for the class, leaving

early, or only staying for ten minutes does not constitute attendance. Attendance will be taken at random times during the class period, and it is your responsibility to ensure that you were recorded as present if there is any question in your mind.

In unusual situations like acute illness, death in the family etc., you may receive an "Incomplete" as your grade. Incomplete grades are made up outside of normal class attendance in open lab settings during the semester following receipt of the "I" grade. You must inform me of your situation and discuss your options. Incomplete grades are not automatic. See the NWF State College catalog for detailed descriptions of the college policies related to grading, attendance, etc.

You are expected to attend all class meetings. "I don't have anything to do" does not equal an excused absence. It is evidence that you are not participating in the course in a manner appropriate for an art student. Each and every class session is designed for you to have the freedom to explore the creative process with the tools at hand. Even if you have the software at home, you are still required to come to class. This is a basic college policy.

Course Requirements:

This is an art class. Your grades are based on your instructor's professional judgment of the success or failure of your concepts, aesthetics, and effort in completing assignments. In this class you will be graded at two intervals. There will be a midterm and a final portfolio. The midterm portfolio will consist of the first two projects, and the final portfolio will consist of the last two. The midterm portfolio is due **March 1**. The final portfolio will be due **April 26**. Many times a student falls between grades. Rounding up or down will be determined by class participation. Class participation includes participation in discussions and interaction with instructor. **YOU MUST COMPLETE ALL ASSIGNMENTS IN ORDER TO PASS THIS COURSE.**

Your graded work will be placed in the designated area of the studio. If you are uncomfortable with this, I can hold it in the office until you choose to pick it up. Graded work will be retained for approximately 4-6 weeks into the following semester. If it is not picked up in this time period, it may be recycled. **ALL PROJECTS MUST BE TURNED IN BURNED TO A CD IN THE PROPER FILE FORMAT. PLEASE BURN YOUR CD HERE IN OUR MACHINES AND TEST IT BEFORE**

TURNING IT IN!

In case of a campus emergency (power outages, hurricanes, war, famine, bee swarms, faculty illness) on a due date, the due date will be pushed back to the next available class session. If the College is closed for an extended period of a week or more, an adjustment of the course schedule will occur and you will be made aware of it the first day back. Late work will receive a 1 grade penalty—note the final project is due the last day of class, and therefore, cannot be turned in late.

Students are responsible for adherence to all College policies and procedures, including those related to academic freedom, cheating, classroom conduct, and other items included in the NWF State College Catalog and Student Handbook. Students should be familiar with the rights and responsibilities detailed in the 2011-12 NWF State College Catalog and Student Handbook. Plagiarism, cheating or any other form of academic dishonesty is a serious breach of student responsibilities and may trigger consequences which range from a failing grade to formal disciplinary action. Use of another person's images or designs constitutes plagiarism in this course. Only use your own images! Downloading any imagery from the internet for use in a project is strictly prohibited and will result in failure of the course. All of your work must be 100% originally produced by you. If you are unsure of what this means, consult with me immediately.

As a courtesy to other students and the learning process, students may not bring children with them to class sessions. Health and safety concerns prohibit children from accompanying adult students in any lab, shop, office or classroom or other college facility where potential hazards exist. If a child-related emergency means you must miss class, let me know when you return.

If you have special needs for which accommodations may be appropriate to assist you in this class, please contact the Office of Services for Students with Special Needs in Building C-1 on the Niceville Campus, or call 729-5372 (TDD1-800-955-8771 or Voice 1-800-955-8770). If you have special needs, you also must speak with me directly in the first week of class so that I fully understand and can create a plan to address your needs.

Due to the nature of our facility and the sensitivities of our students, please refrain from wearing colognes or perfumes to class.

What do your grades mean?

A= Work turned in on time. Work that clearly exceeds the basic expectations of the assignment. Work of unusual quality or quantity and seriousness of effort.

B= Work turned in on time. Work that exhibits a clear attempt at exceeding the basic expectations of the assignment. Work exhibiting better than average quality or quantity and seriousness of effort.

C= Work of average quality and quantity. Work that satisfies essential basic requirements. Work that would benefit from further effort from student and more student interaction with instructor.

D= Work that is clearly not exhibiting the basic requirements of the assignment in either quality or quantity. An increase in effort is clearly needed and closer interaction with instructor is strongly suggested.

F= Work that fails to meet the lowest expectations for the assignment. This may be due to a simple lack of effort or may suggest that the student pursue other career goals.

Due Dates:

Portfolio 1 (Projects 1 & 2): October 11

Portfolio 2 (Projects 3 & 4): December 6

Scheduling Conventions:

This class is blended in that it would be impossible for all of the students to use the studio during normally scheduled class times. This REQUIRES you to be able to schedule studio time outside of the normal class meeting time. The studio is generally available between 9am and Noon MTWRF and Noon to 5pm on TRF. There may be adjustments to this schedule as the semester goes on in order to fit the needs of our students and availability of the lab assistant. If you cannot schedule shooting outside of the scheduled class time, you will need to withdraw from the course. Please do so if necessary as soon as possible. This class is not required for either of our degree programs, so another elective may be selected.

At the beginning of the semester some class members will be able to use the studio during the scheduled class time. Later in the semester, the studio will be shared with students in Multimedia.

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