

# Collin College - Continuing Education

## COURSE SYLLABUS

### COURSE INFORMATION

**Course Number:** PHOT 6950

**Course Title:** Documentary Photography 1

**Course Description:** Creating a visual narrative to chronicle significant events, people, and places

**Suggested Course Prerequisite(s):** Digital Photography - Advanced, or equivalent experience using SLR camera in manual mode, either digital or film.

#### Course Resources:

#### Student Learning Outcomes:

Demonstrate an understanding of the value, and power of documentary photography; the ethics that govern documentary photography; the ability to produce a visual narrative; using camera techniques to tell a story; understanding of the difference between documentary photography, photojournalism, and street photography; understanding of pairing writing with documentary photography to clearly define a project or story; understanding of how art and documentary photography can coexist; understanding of how events that are historically, politically, or socially significant can make for meaningful documentary photography.

**Certification Notes:** Part of the Digital Photography Certificate series of courses

**Next courses recommendation:** Learning To See Creatively; Foundations in Photographic Style

#### Lesson Plan – by week or session:

Session 1: Introduce the history of documentary photography, and how it's defined. Introduce the ethics used in documentary photography. Introduce visual storytelling, composition, the elements of design, and color theory. Show the work of the following documentary photographers: Dorothea Lange, Lewis Hine, Kitra Cahana. The class will discuss the images viewed; I will point out techniques used to tell the story. Introduce camera lenses that are the best for documentary photography.

Session 2: Review the previous week's class, there will be a further look at the history of documentary photography. The class will review the work of the following: Steve McCurry, Gordon Parks, Vivian Maier. Images will be discussed and analyzed. Discuss how some documentary photographers pick a theme or a specific cause to execute, students will learn how to determine what to document visually. Discuss with students the stories they would like to tell using the camera as a vehicle to document social change, global warming, failures or victories as an example. Assignment: Present a story of survival in 5 images.

Session 3: Review previous weeks class, students will show project, ask about challenges with the assignment, answer questions. Introduce framing and how the technique can be useful in storytelling. Discuss the power of documentary photography in politics, and how these images can impact history. Discuss how documentary photography can change minds, lives and viewpoints. Review and discuss the following documentary photographer's work: Elliott Erwitt, Margaret Bourke-White, Nanna Heitman, Robert Frank. Discuss the stories these documentary photographers chose to tell and the execution. Challenge students on what makes the images so powerful. Assignment: Present 5 images documenting the story of the pandemic from the student's perspective.

Session 4: Review previous weeks class, students will show project, ask about challenges with the assignment, answer questions. Introduce students to diptychs, and triptychs, explain how these techniques can be instrumental in documentary photography. Introducing the work of David Hilliard, there will be a discussion on how David Hilliard documents utilizing triptychs, and diptychs to tell the story. Review, and discuss the following documentary photographer's work: Jacob Riis, Nan Golden. There will be a short video shown on Nan Golden's visual documentation of her life in pictures. Assignment: Present 3 stories with 3 different triptychs.

Session 5: Review previous weeks class, students will show project, ask about challenges with the assignment, answer questions. Discuss the importance of lighting, artificial, vs natural lighting. Introduce metering and discuss using exposure compensation to get desired results. Discuss deciding on a story to tell, explore what you feel passionate about, explore many different interests, concerns, that will make for a relatable, interesting story.

Review and discuss the work of the following documentary photographers: Mary Ellen Mark, Walker Evans, Letitia Battaglia, Sebastio Salgado, each of these photographers took a different approach on subjects that were near and dear to them to share with the world.

Assignment: Present 5 images telling a story on global warming

**Method of Evaluation:**

Unless otherwise stated, course completion is evaluated on the basis of attendance. Students must be in attendance 90% of the class time in order to be considered a successful completer of the course.

Students must be in attendance 90% of each course in a certificate series for successful completion and to earn a certificate as specified.

Students must complete all courses (core and no. of elective courses needed) to complete a certificate series within two years from start date of the first course taken.

**Refund Policy:**

Please refer to [www.collin.edu/ce/inforegistrar.html](http://www.collin.edu/ce/inforegistrar.html) for our refund policy. No refunds after the start time of the first class.

**Americans with Disabilities Act:**

Collin College will adhere to all applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to contact the ACCESS office, SCC-D140 or 972.881.5898 (V/TTD: 972.881.5950) to arrange for appropriate accommodations. See the current Collin Student Handbook for additional information.