

Queens College
Senior Photography Thesis
Fall 2023

Art Department / Photography & Imaging
PHOTO 377
Klapper 140

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Hours: By Appt
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Course Description:

The final semester of the BFA in Photography & Imaging program will be a culmination of all previous work completed by students to develop a thesis with well-defined, imaginative ideas represented by a strong and cohesive body of work. Students will exhibit advanced digital and analog techniques, combined with a creative vision and a personal aesthetic in the production of a final portfolio for their thesis exhibition. In addition to creating a final portfolio, students will produce professional materials for printed and online promotional purposes and presentations. There will be discussions of historical and contemporary photography as well as gallery and museum visits. Readings will cover early and contemporary theory and analysis of photography. Students will learn knowledge of professional exhibition procedures and artistic practices and how to prepare for the job market, graduate school, and other future endeavors.

Course Objectives:

At the close of this course the successful student will create and host a professional website of their work and create several pieces of content for that site including an artist statement, a bio, a CV, and an organized portfolio. Students will establish a social media presence to disseminate their work as well as learn best practices in introduction and correspondence for conducting themselves professionally in the photography world. They will expand their vocabulary to include the proper terminology for creating and critiquing photographs. Students will use this vocabulary to engage in meaningful critique of their images and the images of their peers. They will demonstrate the ability to think creatively, form project ideas, and follow those ideas from conception to realization. Students will become familiar with the historical and contemporary critical and theoretical discourse surrounding photography through readings and discussion.

Course Requirements:

Students will be expected to complete all assignments on time and to the best of their ability. Students are expected to attend every class but life does happen so you get 3 absences, after that, additional absences will likely result in missed material and thus a lower grade. Be on time please; tardiness is as bad as absences; I will begin class a few minutes late to give everyone time to get settled in - do not abuse this. This is a small section so this course will run more like a seminar than a regular course. Most of your assignments will be given online leaving our meeting time for discussion. We will meet

as a group twice a month depending on schedules and will meet at the end of the semester for your final presentations.

Reasonable Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should register with the Special Services Office by emailing QC.SPSV@qc.cuny.edu. For more information about services available to Queens College students, visit the Office of Special Services website: <https://www.qc.cuny.edu/studentlife/services/specialserv/Pages/default.aspx>.

CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity:

Only your own photos, images and/or writing are permitted for use in projects. The unauthorized use of images and compositions that are not your own is considered plagiarism. Academic Dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension, and expulsion as provided at <https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/legal-affairs/policies-procedures/academic-integrity-policy/>.

Course Website:

Please check our course website every week for updates to the syllabus or schedule, links to information and resources, and a student gallery page where we will showcase your work throughout the semester.

Assignments (1-2 pgs., double spaced, submitted as Teams or Google doc):

1- *Artist Statement*

A concise paragraph or two that describes your work, influence, and purpose as an artist.

2- *CV*

Stands for "Curriculum Vitae" - like a resume except more about your academic and artistic accomplishments.

3- *Artist Biography*

A written narrative of your education and major professional accomplishments

4- *Cover Letter*

A piece of narrative writing used to introduce yourself, express interest in a certain job, and lay out your skills and experience.

5- *Organized Portfolio(s)*

You will organize your different bodies of work into portfolio folders in preparation for loading them to your website.

6- *Website*

Claim a domain, hosting, and create a professional website populated with all the written content and organized portfolios.

Grades:

Written assignments – 30%

Organized Portfolio – 30%

Website and Final Presentation– 40%

Printing:

Although there is no print requirement for this course you can create prints with the program's printers. You can utilize the Klapper Imaging Lab in Klapper Hall 108 to print files for this course. The prints will be paid for through your M&T fee. Students will be required to submit your files to the lab to be printed.

Field Trip:

We will take a field trip into Manhattan to visit a museum or gallery to be determined. While I recommend you visit with the group when I am there you can visit the museum or gallery on your own. It is required that you make the visit sometime during the semester.

Equipment:

Check all equipment to ensure good operation, especially jump drives and portable hard drives. Lost images, corrupted disks, etc. are not acceptable excuses for missed assignments. BACK UP EVERYTHING OFTEN.

Required Reading:

- *Photography: A 21st Century Practice* by Mark Chen; Chelsea Shannon
We will not read the entire text; I will provide the chapters required as PDFs. No need to purchase unless you would like to have a copy.

Recommended Reading:

- *The Essence of Photography: Seeing & Creativity* by Bruce Barnbaum
- *Classic Essays on Photography* by Alan Trachtenberg (edited)

Schedule (subject to change):**Week 1: 8.31****Discussion (in-person)**

course outline, review syllabus, schedule in-person meetings

Week 2: 9.7**Assignments**

Artist Statement – Read Chapter 9 *Content and Concept* and 9.5 *Craft, Composition, Content, and Concept* from *Photography: A 21st Century Practice*

Assignment #1A – Four C Profiling Yourself

Week 3: 9.14

Discussion (in-person or zoom)

Discuss Chapter 9 *Content and Concept* and 9.5 *Craft, Composition, Content, and Concept* from *Photography: A 21st Century Practice*

Week 4: 9.21

Assignments

Read Chapter 14 *Words* from *Photography: A 21st Century Practice*

Read Chapter 5 *The Artist Statement and The Critic* from *Photography: A 21st Century Practice*

Assignment #1B – Create outline for artist statement, create 1st draft of artist statement.

Week 5: 9.28

Assignments

Cont. work from week 4 assignments

Week 6: 10.5

Discussion (in-person or zoom)

Discuss Chapter 14 *Words* from *Photography: A 21st Century Practice*

Discuss Chapter 5 *The Artist Statement and The Critic* from *Photography: A 21st Century Practice*

Discuss CV and bio

Assignment #1B - Review and revise 1st draft of artist statement

Assignment #2 - Draft CV

Assignment #3 - Draft bio

Week 7: 10.12

Assignments

Read Chapter 10 *Development and Presentation* and Chapter 10.5 *Money* from *Photography: A 21st Century Practice*

Read Chapter 3 *Presentation Tools & Techniques for Artists* from *Photography: A 21st Century Practice*

Assignment #2 - Review and revise 1st draft of CV

Assignment #3 - Review and revise 1st draft of bio

Week 8: 10.19

Assignments

Watch: *Waste Land*

A film by Lucy Walker documenting a project by Brazilian photographer Vic Muniz

Take notes for discussion next week.

Assignment #4 - Research jobs in photography (indeed.com, monster.com, NYFA, CAA) find one that you would consider a great job. Draft a cover letter for that job.

Week 9: 10.26

Discussion (in-person or zoom)

Discuss *Waste Land*

Assignment #4 - Review and revise cover letter

Week 10: 11.2

Assignments

Assignment #6 - Research photo websites for best practices, choose 3 to share.

Research website platforms (hosts) – Wix, Squarespace, Wordpress, Icompendium, etc.

Choose platform – watch training videos to learn how to create your website.

Week 11: 11.9

Discussion (in-person or zoom)

Discuss best websites, various menu options, website platforms. Create site map.

Assignment #6 - Claim account with chosen host, claim domain name, choose theme or template - create pages/menu.

Assignment #5 - Discuss organizing your work for website – separating your work into distinct portfolios, editing, sequence.

Week 12: 11.16

Assignments

Website setup – choose site style: font, colors, background, galleries.

Finalize portfolios, organize files into folders - upload to website.

Finalize artist statement, CV, and bio – upload to website.

Establish social media presence - LinkedIn, Instagram, TikTok, etc.

Week 13: 11.23

Assignments

NO CLASS

Week 14: 11.30

Field Trip: **TBD**

Workday – cont. website build out

Week 15: 12.7

Assignments

Workday – finish up adding content to website in prep for final crit.

Week 16: 12.14

Discussion (in-person)

LAST DAY OF CLASS

Final Crit

Each student will show a hosted website with required written and visual content.