

Capturing Barcelona through Photography

COURSE DETAILS

Course Designator and Number: BCLA 3015

Number of Credits: 3

Language of Instruction: English

Contact Hours: 45

Instructor: On-Site Faculty

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will explore digital photography as a tool to view different aspects of Spanish society (and ourselves within that society) through various photographic exercises and assignments. Students will receive the tools to read photography and construct an idea through images. At the end of the course the students will produce a portfolio of the work done. Lectures will cover the History of Photography, with a special attention to photo-reportage, Italian photographers, technical aspects related to photography production. The course introduces technical process of digital photography, from camera operation and the essential techniques of image capture with camera, image management with imaging related software. Classroom discussions and assigned readings will help student develop the critical skills used to understand how photographs function aesthetically and conceptually as how they are used in contemporary society and culture.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Analyze images, including identifying social issues as depicted through photographs
- Edit photos digitally
- Express ideas through the use of visual language (sequence of images, publications, etc.)

- Read a photobook
- Evaluate visual communication
- Understand basic history of photography

Developmental Outcomes

Students should demonstrate: responsibility & accountability, independence & interdependence, goal orientation, self-confidence, resilience, and appreciation of differences.

Methodology

The course is both lecture- and discussion-based. Students are encouraged to participate in class debates in order to better their understanding of photography and the stories it tells. The readings are essential to following the course, as they will provide the basis for discussions and lectures. Multimedia activities will also be prioritized to increase the spectrum of perspectives given in class.

Through this combination of readings, class discussion, case analyses, group projects, field trips, and invited experts, students will gain a deeper understanding of the following topics:

- A. Field studies: These are classes on site. For this class, students will be creating images on the streets of Barcelona. That will be the material for work on the elaboration of the zine/dummy.
- B. Self-guided field studies: With the pictures they have taken, students will participate in editing group sessions to discover the different possibilities of, and meanings for, the narrative.
- C. Lectures: Lectures provide the theoretical and technical aspects of the course's contents.
- D. Class discussion: Class discussions facilitate students' ability to analyze course materials, apply concepts, compare events, and express their analytical views on the theories and processes discussed in the course.
- E. Student presentation: Students will present the outcomes of their self-guided field study in the form of a book dummy or zine.
- F. Reader: The reader is a complementary source of information for students.

Field Components

CAPA provides the unique opportunity to learn about the city through direct, guided experience. Participation in field activities for this course is required. Students will actively explore the global city in which they are currently living. Furthermore, they will have the chance to collect useful information that will be an invaluable resource for the essays/papers/projects assigned in this course.

Required Readings/Materials

- Smart phone (mandatory)
- Laptop (mandatory)
- SD card (mandatory)

- SD card reader (mandatory)
- Adobe Photoshop (recommended)
- Adobe Bridge (recommended)
- Adobe InDesign (recommended)

Grading

Grading Rubric

Letter grade	Score or percentage	Description
A	93–100	Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
A-	90–92	Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
B+	87–89	
B	83–86	
B-	80–82	Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
C+	77–79	
C	73–76	
C-	70–72	Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.
D+	67–69	
D	60–66	
F	0–59	Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.

Summary of How Grades Are Weighted

Assignments	Percentage of grade
Class participation/ small-group discussion	25%
Midterm exam	25%
Project (oral presentation and short paper)	25%
Final exam	25%
Overall grade	100%

Assessment Details

Participation Grade

This is weighted heavily in this class because of the analysis and critique of student photos (both their own and those of their peers) which happens on a regular basis. Through the constant showcasing of work, students interact with peers and the faculty in a very meaningful way. This critique is in addition to the required active participation in the course activities and field studies.

Field Components

Students are strongly encouraged to participate in co-curricular program activities such as the following:

1. Site visit to FotoColectania exhibition in Barcelona
2. Site visit to Palau de la Virreina "Centre de la Imatge" exhibition in Barcelona
3. Site visit to Mecànic in Gràcia neighborhood in order to read numerous photobooks

Midterm & Final Exams

The midterm exam consists of short questions with open answers on topics covered in class to date (90 minutes).

The final exam consists of two parts: test questions + photo description.

COURSE CONTENT

Unit 1

Course Introduction

- Bring camera to class
- Welcome, overview, and presentation of all the different aspects of the course (activities, policies, assessment methods, etc.)
- The digital workflow from camera to output
- Field trip shooting outside the classroom
- Assignment #1: First view of Barcelona. Shoot at least 16 images, due next class. Suggested images: public transportation of Barcelona metro and buses.

Unit 2

Introduction of History of Photography: the invention of photography and its development until the 20th century

- Lecture and open debate; critique and work evaluation for Assignment #1
- Discovering authors: Richard Avedon, Alec Soth, Joan Colom, Paolo Pellegrin
- Check assignment from #1 (16 images of Barcelona streets)

Unit 3

Presentation of Assignment #2—Urban Landscape: Your neighborhood in Barcelona and your everyday life as a citizen of the city. At least 15 selected pictures and a research paper (300 words) about the issue due the next week (February 11)

- Discovering authors: Ansel Adams, Martin Parr
- Assignment #3—Street Photography: Aspects of tourism in the center of Barcelona. The case of Las Ramblas and Sagrada Familia. At least 15 selected pictures required and a presentation paper due for the next class (February 18).
- Field trip shooting in the streets of Barcelona

Unit 4

Critique and work evaluation of Assignment #3

- Presentation of assignment #4—A photo essay on a specific issue: The role and the culture of food in Catalonia. Suggested visit to tavernas and food markets. 15 selected

pictures in a PowerPoint or PDF presentation and a research paper (400 words) about the issue due next week.

Unit 5

Composition, rules, and tips. Field trip shooting in the streets of Barcelona. Modernism and its surroundings. Bring your camera

- Computer basics (Mac); Adobe Bridge
- Downloading image files to the computer. File size, resolution. Digital file formats: RAW, tiff, jpeg. Saving and storing files; backing up your files. Introduction to Camera Raw workflow and editing
- *Discovering William Klein* book
- Editing the pictures from assignment in class—bring your computer

Unit 6

Exhibition in Foto Colectania

- Field Study: Foto Colectania. Address: Passeig Picasso, 14 08003 Barcelona

Unit 7

Critique and Work Evaluation of Assignment #4

- Presentation of Assignment #5: The food market of La Concepció and Santa Caterina (portraits and reportage)
- At least 15 selected pictures in a PowerPoint or PDF presentation, and a research paper (400 words) about the issue, due March 18

Unit 8

Genres in Photography: War Photography. The civil War in Barcelona

- James Nachtway documentary film
- Discovering authors: James Nachtway, Robert Capa and Gerda Taro, Susan Maiselas, Paolo Pellegrin, and Moises Saman, among others
- Editing pictures from Assignment #5 in class—bring computer

Unit 9

Meet at Palau de la Virreina Centre de la Imatge to attend the exhibition *SURVIVAL PROGRAMMES: The Exit Photography Group*

- Field Study: Palau de la Virreina Centre de la Imatge, Address: La Rambla, 99 08002 Barcelona

Unit 10

Presentation of Assignment #6: A photo diary of your trip to Sitges

- 15 selected pictures and a paper with reflections on the task
- Presentation of Assignment #7: A photo essay on an issue individually chosen by each student (for example, a soccer game, a protest demonstration of students, a concert, the problem of waste, etc.) At least 15 selected pictures in a PowerPoint or PDF presentation with a research paper about the issue chosen and your work
- Discover contemporary photography through the eyes of different photographers: Luc Delahaye, Taryn Simon, Philip Lorca DiCorcia, Niccolo Degiorgis, Christopher Anderson, Alisa Resnik, and Anders Petersen, among others

Unit 11

Critique and work evaluation of Assignment #6

- Meet with photographer Myriam Meloni to discuss her work on human rights

Unit 12

Basic digital post-production class I

- Bring laptop and digital files (Photoshop & Adobe Bridge or Lightroom are recommended)

Unit 13

Different possibilities of sequence

- Analysis of narrative through cinema. Practicing with editing: Suburbia, Bach's work
- Open debate; review for midterm exam

Unit 14

Midterm evaluation: Multiple choice + image analysis

Unit 15

Editing Session I

- Required: Each student should bring at least 30 pictures shot in the previous three weeks, printed on 7x10cm printer-quality paper

Unit 16

Outcomes: Exploring El Raval and the Gothic Area: Two worlds divided by Las Ramblas

- How to get your work published
- Lecture and group debate

Unit 17

Special Guest: Photographer Myriam Meloni

- Open debate

Unit 18

Critique and work evaluation for Assignment #7

- Editing pictures from the assignment
- How to present your work: Portfolio, video, CD, internet
- The topic has to be chosen between: a) A Day in Park Güell B) Port Olímpic: the essence of coastal and entertainment tourism C) El Carmel: a barrio of immigrants D) Montjuich: The mountain beyond the Olympics and the Miró museum

Unit 19

Editing session II

- Required: Bring NEW pictures shot in the previous two weeks, printed on 7x10cm printer-quality paper (students should bring at least 30 NEW images as well as the previous selected images)
- Student presentations and open debate

Unit 20

Introduction to InDesign

- Bring laptop and digital files (InDesign is mandatory)
- Create a document / Size / Tools / possible layouts
- Montjuich: The mountain beyond the Olympics and Miró museum

Unit 21

Outdoor practice: Shoot/Shoot/Shoot III & Final Editing Session

- Bring camera, images on paper, laptop, and digital files
- Photo shoot of El Poble Español
- Montjuich: The mountain beyond the Olympics and the Miró museum

Unit 22

Final Editing Session

- Bring images on paper, digital files, and laptop
- Start production of the dummy
- Montjuich: The mountain beyond the Olympics and the Miró museum

Unit 23

Review Class and Final Debate

- Evaluation I: presentation of works
- Review content of the previous sessions; receive explanation of the exam; problem-solving
- Final debate
- Prepare for finals

Unit 24

Final Critique

- Students must submit all assignments in a presentation as a portfolio and explain their work

POLICIES

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to be on time and attend all classes while abroad. Many instructors assess both attendance and participation when assigning a final course grade. Attendance alone does not guarantee a positive participation grade; the student should be prepared for class and engage in class discussion. See the on-site syllabus for specific class requirements.

University of Minnesota Policies & Procedures

Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:

Scholastic Dishonesty

Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.

Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an "F" or "N" for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask.

Student Conduct

The University of Minnesota has specific policies concerning student conduct. This information can be found on the Learning Abroad Center website.