

# **CST 226 Digital Photography**

## **Syllabus**

### **Course Description**

CST 226 teaches use of digitally based image acquisition and manipulation tools to capture and modify photographic images for use in print and screen-based media. The course has two major instructional components: conventional photographic principles such as lighting, composition, subject matter, and how digital capture processes affect these and image adjustment and delivery. The class deals with aesthetic and storytelling aspects of photography.

### **Course Information**

**Instructor:** Christian Grossmann, [cgrossmann@csumb.edu](mailto:cgrossmann@csumb.edu)

**Lecture:** Wednesdays, 12-12:50pm Pacific

**Location:** Zoom - <https://csumb.zoom.us/j/89885619281>

**Office Hours:** Wednesdays, 1-1:30pm Pacific (after class) on same zoom

**Units:** 3

**Pre-req:** None

### **Course Outcomes**

This class is designed to teach you not only how to take great photographs, but to understand some of the history and context associated with the art form and technology of photography. Content will shift from informative lectures to technical demonstrations, allowing students to complete a series of smaller projects before moving into a more freeform creative project.

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:

- Have a general understanding of the history of photography and its implications for contemporary digital photography.
- Possess a strong compositional foundation for creating images.
- Be able to use a point and shoot or DSLR camera.
- Use Photoshop to edit photographs effectively
- Develop an understanding of how to make conceptually driven, experimental work with photography

### **Resources and Textbooks**

Readings will be assigned over the course of the semester. No required textbook.

### **Technology Requirements**

The following will be required:

- A digital camera that is not part of a multipurpose device (aka: no phone cameras) is required for this course. This means a point and shoot or DSLR camera. Details on the specifications of acceptable cameras are provided on Canvas.
- A laptop or tablet that can run design programs.
- Photoshop is the editing software we will be using in this course. You can download the Adobe Creative Suite on [CSUMB's Free Software page](#).
- If you are experiencing issues with any technology to access the course such as your Canvas account, or your CSUMB email, submit a [Help Desk Ticket Request](#).

## Course Requirements and Assignments

Expect to spend roughly 6 hours a week outside class working on this course. This course will be organized as follows:

1. Each week we'll explore a different aspect of photography, including lectures and practice.
2. Assignments will give you working experience with the concepts we're covering.
  1. **IN CLASS EXERCISES:** In-class assignments are outlined, completed, and turned in during class. They are opened when class begins. These assignments cannot be made up once they close. These are completion based, meaning assignments turned in on-time and done correctly will always receive 100%.
  2. **HOMEWORK:** Every week you will be assigned a homework assignment that requires you to apply skills covered in class or supplement a lecture. The assignment will open after class and closes before the next class. You can turn assignments in late with a 10% deduction for each day late, the next "day" starting immediately after the assignment is due. After 10 days the assignment will close and cannot be made up.
3. Scattered through the course we'll have a few quizzes.
4. Near the end of term, you'll be working primarily on a final project consisting of a thematic collection of your photos.

## Critiques

Being receptive to feedback as well as articulating your own thoughts about a project is an essential part of being a designer. There are two critiques in this course: A midterm critique and a final critique. The midterm is worth 20% of your total grade and the final is worth 30%. Treat these as you would an exam for a more traditional course. Come prepared, arrive on time, and be present for the entire class. Your success in these critiques is based primarily around your own personal progress, and you are required to display in-progress work as part of the exercise.

The final assessment schedule will begin on week 14 with final project critiques and complete during our Final Exam on Thursday May 15th, 2025 from 6:00 - 7:50 pm in Rm 118 in Building 506/BIT.

# Grading Policy

Students are responsible for all of the material presented in class. All assignments must be presented on the due date. See late policy below. Students are expected to meet with the instructor to review progress and discuss individual approaches.

## Grade Distribution

Your grade is organized in the following way:

Activity	Grade Percentage
<b>Assignments, In-Class exercises, &amp; Homework</b>  Each assignment grade will drop a letter grade for every day they are late.	40%
<b>Attendance</b>  You will lose your 10 participation points if you go over 3 unexcused absences.	10%
<b>Midterm Critique</b>	20%
<b>Final Project</b>	30%

## Grading Scale

If you show up and do all the work adequately, you will earn a B-minus-grade (satisfactory) in this class. A B-grade is reserved for above average/good work. To earn an A-grade, you must do consistently excellent work demonstrating hard work, creativity and expertise. This allows you to get an honest evaluation in this class, and rewards those who are willing to work harder and put more energy and creativity into their work.

A	100%	94%	Extraordinarily high achievement. Unusually complete command of the course content; outstanding level of scholarship
A-	93%	90%	Excellent achievement. Very thorough command of the course content; very high level of scholarship
B+	89%	87%	Very good achievement. Significantly above average understanding of materials and thorough command of course material
B	86%	83%	Good achievement. Signifies mastery and fulfillment of all course requirements; Solid, acceptable performance
B-	82%	80%	Fair achievement. Acceptable performance on most, but not all, aspects of the course
C+	79%	77%	Not wholly satisfactory achievement. Marginal performance on some aspects of the course
C	76%	70%	Marginal achievement. Minimally acceptable performance on most aspects of the course
D	69%	60%	Unacceptable work. Little or no command of most aspects of the course
F	59%	0%	Unacceptable work. Little or no command of the course objectives

Students must earn a D or above to receive course credit.

## Late Work

Specifications for each assignment will be given on Canvas. Assignments are generally due before the next class session. You are responsible for turning in work on time, as posted. **Any assignments or activities not received by the due date will be considered late and a reduction of total points will be enforced at the rate of 10% for every day it is late.**

Sometimes personal situations will arise and, on occasion, students may not be able to meet assignment deadlines. Should that occur, students are required to contact their instructor BEFORE the deadline itself. Some reasons will be accepted, such as military deployment or illness, but others, such as family vacation, will not. With the exception of fully documented medical (or similar) reasons, the decision to accept late work is at the sole discretion of the instructor.

# **Classroom Expectations**

## **Attendance:**

Attendance at lectures is required. While the instructor understands that things may come up, every lecture you miss regardless of the reason counts as an absence. You will be required to mark yourself present at the beginning of each class. If you forget, it will be marked as an absence. Students are expected to show up to class on time and conduct themselves professionally.

## **Devices:**

You are welcome to use your electronic devices in class for note taking, research, or experimentation. Please do not text, email, web surf, or use social media outside of class context. If these become a distraction for you or your peers, their use will be restricted.

## **Participation:**

The instructor values your skills, experience, and interests. Your views are important and we want to hear them. Involvement in the readings, discussions, critiques, class collaborations, and final presentations are part of your participation grade and critical for each student and the class to thrive.

## **Collaboration and Respect**

We encourage collaboration and building a community of collaborators. Don't be afraid to ask for and offer help! Explaining what you have learned to fellow students can help solidify what you've learned. This class requires a significant amount of student collaboration, both in class and online. Discussions should be civil and based on mutual respect.

Students doing collaborative projects must plan out and document what their roles and accomplishments are in the project so as to be graded individually in terms of both their technical and conceptual skills. The instructor must approve all collaborations before the assignment is due.

## **Communication**

Be honest and clear about where you are at, what you know and need to know, and what you've accomplished (or not). Ask for what you need to succeed. Bring up issues before they become problems, and allow us all to work together as a team to solve them.

## **Support**

We each bring different strengths and weaknesses. Working collaboratively, we support and teach each other in areas where we are not as strong.

## **Consultation**

Students are encouraged to consult with the instructor whenever necessary throughout the semester. Short consultations are best handled by email. Consultation will be more productive if you prepare a brief written agenda outlining the issues you want to discuss.

## **Announcements and Communication**

Announcements will also be used to share required information to the class, so you should check that regularly. The Instructor Q&A discussion is the best way to ask general questions. Please email if you have a personal question or concern.