

**MVLA
2025-26
COURSE INFORMATION SHEET**

Course Title: Photo I
CTE Pathway Sequence (if applicable) NA
School: Los Altos High School
UC/CSU requirement: Yes/Yes
MVLA Graduation requirement: Yes
Textbook and/or other learning resources: None

Course Description/Student Learning Outcomes:

Photo I students will be required to understand the basic technical skills of digital and film based photography. Students will learn how to create interesting and captivating photographs by learning the elements of composition and how to create a visually successful photograph. Emphasis will be placed on the elements of art and principal of design as well as successful completion within a photographic frame and Composition.

Students will be introduced to the technical, conceptual and creative skills necessary to make digital and film based photographs. Students will explore photography as an art form and as a communication tool by critically looking at their work and the work of others. The course emphasizes technical skills, use of photography knowledge, creative development, and analysis of aesthetic images. Some project ideas include depth of field (learning how to control the use of the aperture), movement and motion (learning how to control the use of the shutter speed), and lighting (student will learn to understand the importance of light in regards to direction and intensity in photography).

Upon completion of the course students will have the basic knowledge of camera operations, traditional and digital techniques, the history of photography and contemporary photography.

The course will take a thematic approach in regards to skills, ideas, and subject matters. There will be lectures, demonstrations, discussions, slide presentations, studio work, student group work, and individual oral and written critiques/presentations. Group discussions of projects will enable students to articulate concepts using art vocabulary.

Students MUST come to class daily for the sole purpose of improving their photography skills and to be able to have access to studio work time in the darkroom and on the school provided laptops when creating in Adobe Photoshop.

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

1. Produce a black and white darkroom and a color digital print which demonstrate creativity, basic photography skills, art concepts, art elements, and principles of design.
2. Use photography and visual analysis to communicate ideas, thoughts, and feelings.
3. Analyze artworks.
4. Work in studio style classroom sessions.
5. Do oral and written critiques.
6. Do research projects in photo history.

Course Outline/Units of Study/[CTE Industry Standards](#)(If applicable to your course):

- Camera function in manual mode - DSLR cameras & 35mm SLR cameras
- Learning Adobe Bridge Photoshop and Camera Raw
- Darkroom techniques of printing BW contact sheets and final prints
- Technical plus creative elements of photography
- Historical & contemporary photography research

- Written project brainstorms & project reflections
- Written and oral critiques of photography

Assessment and Grading ([BP 5121](#) / [AR 5121](#)): To ensure that every student has an equal opportunity to demonstrate their learning, the course instructors implement aligned grading practices and common assessments with the same frequency.

1. Grading categories and their percentage weights: Non-weighted systems will be used. All assessment components are point based. Projects, critiques, proposals, artist statements are varied in points. The points will be added at the end of each semester for a letter grade.
2. Achievement evidence collected within each grading category: Students will be informed of the aligned quantity, weight, and due dates of assignments/assessments in each grading category as much in advance as possible.
3. Grading scales: 100% =A+, 99.99%-92.50% = A, 92.49%-90%=A-, 89.99%-87.50%=B+, 87.49%-82.50%=B, 82.49%-80%=B-, 79.99%-77.50%=C+, 77.49%-72.50%=C, 72.49%-70%=C-, 69.99%-67.50%=D+, 67.49%-62.50%=D, 62.49%-60.00%=D-, 59.99%-0.00%=F
4. Homework/outside of class practices ([AR 6154](#)): Students may need to work at home or make arrangements for extra studio/darkroom time with the instructor in order to complete projects. Students will be asked to bring objects or reference images from home for certain projects. Students will be required to photograph outside of class time for homework.
5. Excused absence make-up practices ([Education Code 48205\(b\)](#)): Make-up work will be assigned on an individual basis. Students must make contact with the teacher to make necessary arrangements for make-up work. It is the students' responsibility to determine missing assignments.
6. Academic integrity violation practices ([LAHS Academic Integrity Policy](#) / [MVHS Academic Integrity Policy](#)): The course will follow LAHS Academic Integrity Policy.
7. Late work practices: Students will not be able to make up work for unexcused absences. No late work will be accepted without prior approval by the instructor for excused absences.
8. Revision practices: Revisions are allowed with instructor approval.
9. Extra credit practices: Art based extra credit opportunities will be available for all students as announced throughout the year.
10. Additional grading practices: None
11. LMS Used: Canvas is the LMS that we will use in this class.

Instructors' email addresses:

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Additional information: