

# COMM 4403-01: PHOTOJOURNALISM

Spring 2016 M-W 12:30 - 1:50

(CRN 10972)

ANTH G15 (Mac Lab)

## INSTRUCTOR: Christopher Renaud

Office Hours: M-T-W-TH 2:00 – 4:00 PM and by appointment Office: HUM 143  
Contact: [crenaud@westga.edu](mailto:crenaud@westga.edu) (preferred – NOT D2L) Phone: 678-839-4929

## REQUIRED MATERIALS:

- **Text:** *Photojournalism: The Professional's Approach, Sixth Edition*. Kobre, Kenneth. Burlington, MA: Focal Press. Softcover. ISBN-13: 978-0-7506-8593-1. Rental recommended, <\$20
- **Hard Drive** (at least 80 GB free space recommended) for **portable** and **semester-long storage** of your raw and edited images.
- Other required readings and materials will be distributed electronically.
- **OPTIONAL:** 1 Class 10 SD Card (16 GB or more recommended for majors in film/video) for use in camera

## COURSE OVERVIEW

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This hands-on skills course is a study of the history, news- and cultural values, practices and techniques of photography for convergent media, including close analysis of the aesthetic and societal impact of photographs.

Assignments will offer extended practice in the production of high-quality journalistic and documentary photographs appropriate for print and online news delivery, as well as the long-form photographic essay. We will also briefly consider, and contrast, the purposes of photography in marketing and other branding.

This course will approach photography as a serious craft and professional practice. We will use digital processing and editing tools, while acknowledging the photography's primary origins and development as a photochemical medium.

## COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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1. To understand and analyze photographs for their aesthetic, documentary, journalistic and rhetorical value, within contemporary and historical contexts.
2. To acquire and develop technical proficiency needed to shoot, edit and deliver publication-ready photographs, on deadline, in a digital convergence environment, using the camera in its manual modes.
3. To recognize and pursue the journalistic value of documenting stories visually amongst a variety of diverse groups within our community, including religious, ethnic and economic groups.
4. To increase sensitivity towards and examine the ethics of documentary and journalistic image-making.
5. To practice and develop critical communications skills in a workshop setting.

## SEQUENCE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Students will develop their understanding of the medium's function as a means of communication and creative expression.
2. Students will be able to produce content that aligns with industry standards for specific audiences.

## DEPARTMENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course meets Mass Communications Department Learning Objective #3

Students will demonstrate *ability to relate and/or apply* concepts, theory/research, and professional principles to analyze and synthesize information, create, develop, produce, and/or write convergence journalism, film and media arts, and/or public relations communications for converging digital, multi-media, and traditional media.

## ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING

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These assignments and our schedule will be detailed separate handouts.

5 points	Introductory assignment
5 points	Photographer Profile Presentation
10 points	How-To Series
10 points	Product Photography / Professional Portraits
10 points	Event Coverage Assignment
20 points	Final Project - Visual essay
10 points	Take Home Quiz (5) + Practice Midterm Exam (5)
10 points	Final Exam
10 points	Final Portfolio
10 points	Participation
<b>100 points</b>	<b>TOTAL 100 points = 100 percent</b>

## GRADE ALLOCATION

A = 90 - 100%    B = 80 – 89%    C = 70 – 79%    D = 60 – 69%    F = 59% or below

As in real life, our assignments and our schedule are subject to minor modification according to course needs. Adaptability is a critical professional skill. The world of the photojournalist changes constantly in response to events and opportunities, and this class, as gracefully as possible, will also.

**Your FINAL PROJECT and PORTFOLIO** will be due on electronically (at your Google Drive submission location, with sharing permission granted) at our **FINAL EXAM TIME**, which is **Monday, Apr 25, from 5:00-7:30 pm**. The organized electronic portfolio will include copies of all of your assignments. Backup your work. You are responsible for maintaining your Google Drive portfolio and for keeping separate copies of your work (on your own hard-drive) organized for this purpose and as backup.

## COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES

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**Participation (10%):** Your ability to participate centers directly, and will be evaluated, on:

- 1) Being on time and being actively “present” (participating in all class activities).
- 2) Keeping up with readings – ready to discuss.
- 3) Meeting deadlines.
- 4) Valuing and embracing the feedback process.

**Attendance:** You cannot participate if you do not attend class. **We will align with professional expectations of behavior, especially regarding attendance.** If you give yourself permission to miss a class or skip an assignment, you will find yourself behind and struggling to regain your velocity.

**Absences:** If you must unavoidably miss a session, please notify me via Gmail (do not phone or use D2L) as soon as possible *before* class at [crenaud@westga.edu](mailto:crenaud@westga.edu). That said, I will not weigh or adjudicate excused or unexcused absences. **You are simply present and active, or not.** Absences beyond one session will eat into your final grade at **-4% per absence**. It is your responsibility to determine what you have missed. Know that it is inevitably impossible for me to give a full reply to the question “Did/will I miss anything important?” The only real answer is “Yes.”

**Sooner or later everyone feels blocked, uninspired, or afraid to show what they do or don’t have ready.** Ours is a deadline driven world. It is always preferable that you make the deadline. This class will be a **safe place** for you to experiment, so don’t hesitate to take risks and to work outside of your comfort zone. This is how we grow as individuals and professionals. **Late work will be penalized**, at my discretion. However, **if your assignment is not finished, your best choice is to still come to class.**

**About Workshops:** Most of our class time will be spent in **active conversation** rather than lecturing. Your success in the course will hinge on whether you “**buy in**” with your own motivation. Your **participation grade** will be determined based on your active participation / engagement in class, including the ideas behind our readings and exercises, analyzing photos and work-in-progress (your own and others).

**Giving and receiving feedback is one of the most important skills we’ll practice** in this class. It’s crucial for honing ideas and helping you produce the best work possible. It’s also an essential skill in every media industry. Meaningful discussion relies on balance of **candor** and **respect**.

**Making work while learning new skills requires some risk:** Seek a strong personal investment during creation, followed by a practiced distance during analysis. It’s not always easy, but its crucial. Embrace the idea of evaluating your own work with the same objectivity as you would someone else’s, to clearly identify its strengths and weaknesses. Together (during in-class feedback) we’ll highlight successes and analyze areas of improvement to make the best work possible.

## **COURSE VALUES (= professional values and expectations).**

**Being “Present”:** Invest in what’s happening right now in the room. Doing things unrelated to the class during class-time (*e.g. emailing, surfing the web, “multi-tasking,” not paying attention, sleeping,*) **will** directly affect your participation grade.

**Cell Phones:** **You have a direct impact on the classroom culture.** Using a cell phone is fundamentally incompatible with being “present” in the classroom. **THERE WILL BE NO USE OF CELL PHONES IN THIS CLASS.** Turn them off before you enter the room and put them completely away. If I **see** your cell phone you will be considered absent for the day.

**Food and Drink:** These are new facilities with expensive equipment. **No food or drink will be allowed in the classroom, edit suites or studio at any time.** No exceptions.

**Equipment Checkout:** We will follow the checkout guidelines and policies posted outside G-10, which will also be provided in a separate handout. **Late returns of equipment** have an impact on the entire department, and will affect your ability to checkout equipment for this and other Mass Communications classes. Assignments are not complete until borrowed equipment is returned, and thus impact your grade.

## MY ROLE

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I am **fundamentally committed** to helping you understand concepts, principles, software and techniques – both professionally and by personal inclination. My method is to 1) to assign exercises and projects that teach you both technical skills and their purposeful application, 2) to provide interesting examples and context, and 3) offer frank, benevolent feedback and 4) to facilitate lively in-class discussions.

I am available and ready to help you when you need it - especially the harder you work and the more ambitious your goals. Ask. Seek. Question. Aim high. Stay in the game. I will be there for you.

## UNIVERSITY & COURSE POLICIES

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Policies applying to all courses at UWG can be found at the following link:

[http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common\\_Language\\_for\\_Course\\_Syllabi.pdf](http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf)

### Americans With Disabilities Statement

If you are a student who is disabled as defined under the Americans With Disabilities Act and requires assistance or support services, first please seek assistance through the Center for Disability Services. **A CDS Counselor will coordinate those services, and provide you with the necessary documentation to give to me.** Students who need accommodations for learning or who have particular needs **should then share these concerns or requests with me early in the term (no later than week 3 of the course).** See the above link.

### Classroom Etiquette

Exercising personal freedom is an appealing part of adult life. In order to create an atmosphere where individual expression and social interchange are respected, please observe the following guidelines: (1) address each other with respect; (2) contribute to discussions often, without dominating them; (3) stay focused on the topic being discussed. Side-chatter is distracting for everyone, especially myself, and is wasted energy; focus that energy into the discussion. Disruptive behavior in the classroom is not acceptable.

### Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty will NOT be tolerated in this or any other UWG course. It will result in failure on assignment(s) as well as possible disciplinary sanction(s) as stipulated by university rules. See the link above.

### Equal Opportunity Statement

No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, religion, creed, national origin, age, or disability, be excluded from employment or participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity conducted by The University of West Georgia.

### Affirmative Action Statement

The University of West Georgia adheres to affirmative action policies to promote diversity and equal opportunity for all faculty and students.

### Contacting You

You are expected to have access to your westga.edu account for all communication regarding the course. While you may find my contact information or other students through D2L-CourseDen, **I will reply to your regular my.westga.edu (Gmail) account, not D2L.**

### Contacting Me

If you have questions, don't hesitate to ask them in class. It's best to get clarification in there, where everyone can benefit. With a class of this size, it's best if you ask your peers before e-mailing questions about assignments. **If you need to contact me, do not use D2L. E-mail me from your westga account at [crenaud@westga.edu](mailto:crenaud@westga.edu).**

**Open Drop ends at midnight, Jan 13. Last day to withdraw with a grade of W, March 3<sup>rd</sup>.**