

Photography in Florence

UNH Course Code: PHT301FLR

Subject Area: Photography

Level: 300

Prerequisites: None

Language of Instruction: English

Contact Hours: 45

Recommended Credits: 3

Description:

Learn how the camera can be used in a foreign environment as an exciting tool of documentary record, cross-cultural understanding, artistic expression and self-discovery. After an introduction to the fundamentals of photography, both traditional and digital, your camera will be constantly trained on the city of Florence itself, its architecture, history, people, and rich culture. As you develop your technical, compositional and critical skills as a photographer you will create a portfolio of images that will both showcase and celebrate your whole unforgettable study abroad experience.

Your in-class workshops will develop your practical and theoretical skills, and your photographic trips throughout the streets, squares and gardens of the city center will be complemented with a guided in-depth visit to the Florentine museum of the famous Alinari Brothers, the world's oldest photographic firm, with a spectacular archive of 3,500,000 photographs.

Throughout the course your instructor will frequently deliver critical reviews of your work, but you will also be actively involved in analyzing and evaluating your own work and the work of others in a collaborative atmosphere of constructive reflection and criticism. You'll have the opportunity to post your work on the CEA blog in order to record and display your experiences.

Required Supplies:

You may choose to work with traditional or digital photography. Either way, it is **absolutely mandatory** that you bring a 35 mm SLR (single lens reflex) camera (digital or traditional). Digital cameras **must** have a minimum of 4 mega pixels. Traditional cameras **must** be able to be loaded with 35 mm films. Your camera **must** have a manual mode and at least a 50 mm lens (or a zoom including the 50 mm focal length). It **must** be functioning and, particularly if old and unused for a long time, **has** to be reviewed professionally before you leave the U.S. Do not bring any film with you as it is frequently destroyed by airport security scans. You will also be required to spend between \$200 and \$250 on film and developing if your camera is not digital.

Learning Objectives:

- to comprehend and practice the basic operation and role of cameras in the creation of photographic images
- to develop a more advanced understanding of the role of light and shadow in the creation of visual form and texture
- to become critically aware of the basic problems of communicating ideas and meaning through the photograph

Photography in Florence Q&A:

PLEASE NOTE: THIS COURSE DOES NOT INCLUDE ANY WORK IN A DARKROOM.

Q: What kind of camera is suitable for this course?

A: An ordinary digital camera without manual mode will NOT suffice! Your camera MUST be either a digital

single lens reflex camera (full manual functions, minimum of 4 megapixels), or a 35mm single lens reflex camera (full manual functions) and/with 50mm or equivalent lens (or a zoom lens including the 50 mm).

Q: Do I need to bring my camera's instruction manual?

A: Yes!

Q: Can I share a camera during this course?

A: No. It will be impossible to get your work done properly if you don't have constant access to your own camera.

Q: What kind of film is recommended if I do not have a digital camera?

A: I recommend color slides / transparencies. It is better that you do not buy them in the US since they can be fogged and damaged by the x-ray machines at the airport. Instead, you should wait to buy them here in Florence (we will go to the photo store together during the first lesson.)

Q: How much will I need to spend on film and developing?

A: You will be required to spend between \$200 and \$250 on film and developing during this course, if you have a non-digital SLR camera. If you have a digital SLR, you will be required to buy only CDs for your assignments.

Q: Is there a darkroom?

A: No. This course focuses on shooting and interpretation, and does not include the use of a darkroom or hands-on developing.

Q: What happens if I arrive without the right camera but I am enrolled on the course?

A: If you don't have the right kind of camera you will have a chance to purchase one after you arrive, as your professor will guide you in your purchase.

Instructional Format:

Class meets once a week for 2 hours 45 minutes each time. Some of our meetings will be in class for critiques, slide shows and presentations, but we will spend a large proportion of our time out and about taking photographs. At all times I hope for a continuous and fertile exchange between teacher and students of notions and ideas, answers and questions, suggestions, doubts and, above all, practical examples.

If you require any special accommodations, please contact your instructor.

Form of Assessment:

The creative aspect of the course is fundamental: I will give some assignments, and you will keep a technical journal (in which you have to write class notes, assignments, etc), and you will keep a second journal which will be equally important: it should be a "creative" journal in which you can freely document your feelings and impressions by writing, drawing and inserting images. It can also record other aspects of your life here in Florence (it might include theatre or cinema tickets, or receipts). In addition you will sit two examinations that will check your understanding of some technical and theoretical points. However, you must complete all grading assessment categories to receive a grade for this course. In addition, your work and behavior in this course must fully conform to the regulations of the [CEA Academic Integrity Policy](#) to which you are subject.

Appealing a Grade:

Any grade dispute you encounter in this course must immediately be discussed with the instructor and definitively resolved before the last week of class. Only end-of-term assignments graded after the end of your program are subject to CEA's formal grade appeal procedure. For more information, see [CEA Academic Policies](#).

Students wishing to appeal the grade of an end-of-term assignment must do so within the 30 day period following the official release of grades by submitting the "Grade Appeal Form" to the Academic Dean. The appeal procedure and the grade re-evaluation it requires does not guarantee a change in grade, and could result in an increase or decrease in the final grade given. Any change is subject to a ruling by the course instructor, in consultation with the Academic Dean, and must be based on the academic evidence provided to support the appeal. The instructor's ruling on this matter is final.

Upon receiving the results of the review and decision by the instructor, the Academic Dean will inform the student of the result of the appeal. The grade received by the student as a result of the Grade Appeal is final and may not be appealed further.

Form of Assessment:

Class Participation	10%
Midterm Exam	15%
Assignment 1	20%
Assignment 2	25%
Assignment 3 (Final exam)	30%

Class Participation (10%): The grade will be calculated to reflect your participation in class discussions, your capacity to introduce ideas and thoughts dealing with the texts, your ability to interpret different uses of literary language and to express your analysis in intellectual, constructive argumentation. When determining your class participation grade, traditional criteria such as material preparation, completed reading before class, and collaborative group work are also evaluated. But it is the active, meaningful and informed verbal and written contribution that you make that is most important to your overall participation grade. Whereas attendance and punctuality are expected and will not count positively towards the grade, laxity in these areas will have a negative effect on your grade. The instructor will use the following specific criteria when calculating your class participation grade:

Criteria for Assessing Class Participation	Grade
You make major and original contributions that spark discussion, offering both critical and analytical comments clearly based on readings and research and displaying a working knowledge of theoretical issues.	A+ (9.70–10.00)
You make significant contributions that demonstrate insight as well as knowledge of required readings and independent research.	A-/A (9.00–9.69)
You participate voluntarily and make useful contributions that are usually based upon some reflection and familiarity with required readings.	B/B+ (8.40–8.99)
You make voluntary but infrequent comments that generally reiterate the basic points of the required readings.	C+/B- (7.70–8.39)
You make limited comments only when prompted and do not initiate debate or show a clear awareness of the importance of the readings.	C (7.00–7.69)
You very rarely make comments and resist engagement with the subject, attending class having manifestly done little if any preparation.	D (6.00–6.69)
You make irrelevant and tangential comments disruptive to class discussion, a result of frequent absence and complete un-preparedness.	F (0–5.90)

Midterm exam (15%): A test on photographic technique (exposure and its variables, depth of field, the functioning of a SLR camera, issues explained in session 1 and 4) consisting of 10 to 15 questions.

Assignment 1 (20%): Fifteen images at least and a written statement (the title of the first assignment is “Urban landscape”: your quarter, the street where you live, the first impact of Firenze on you). I will pay attention to the quality and consistence of your images more than to their number. I am not looking for a lot of snapshots, but for evidence of your involvement.

Assignment 2 (25%): Fifteen images at least and a written statement (the issue is “Human landscape, portraying unknown people”: you are required to observe people around you, their behaviour, aspect and to save your impressions about them. It will be a way, hopefully, to shorten the distance between you and the environment, to make you deal with the necessity of reacting quickly and secretly to unknown persons’ movement, behaviour).

Assignment 3 (Final exam) (30%): Eighteen images at least and a written statement. Title “A story”. The theme, quite ambitious, is exploring as a witness Firenze and waiting and / or searching for a story. It will be a way to

experiment the narrative power of photography. The project is inspired by Italo Calvino's books "Invisible cities" and "Difficult Loves".

CEA Grading Scale				
Letter Grade	Numerical Grade Low Range	Numerical Grade High Range	Percentage Range	Quality Points
A+	9.70	10.00	97.0 - 100%	4.00
A	9.40	9.69	94.0 - 96.9%	4.00
A-	9.00	9.39	90.0 - 93.9%	3.70
B+	8.70	8.99	87.0 - 89.9%	3.30
B	8.40	8.69	84.0 - 86.9%	3.00
B-	8.00	8.39	80.0 - 83.9%	2.70
C+	7.70	7.99	77.0 - 79.9%	2.30
C	7.00	7.69	70.0 - 76.9%	2.00
D	6.00	6.99	60.0 - 69.9%	1.00
F	0.00	5.99	0 - 59.9%	0.00
W	Withdrawal			0.00
INC	Incomplete			0.00

CEA Attendance Policy:

Every student is expected to attend all scheduled class sessions on time and be thoroughly prepared for the day's class activities. In compliance with NEASC and UNH accreditation requirements, CEA instructors compile regular attendance records for every course and take these records into account when evaluating student participation and performance.

- In this course, a maximum of one (1) day of absence due to sickness, personal emergency, inevitable transport delay and other related impediments will be tolerated.
- Your final course grade will drop one full letter grade (e.g. A+ to B+) for missing two days of class, regardless of the reason for the absence.
- If your absences exceed two (2) days of class, you will automatically fail this course (e.g., B+ to F; miss three (3) or more days to receive an "F").

Furthermore, to comply with immigration and financial regulations, you must maintain full-time student status and attend at least 12 hours of class every week. Consequently, the Dean and Program Director will dismiss from all CEA courses, programs, activities and housing any student who fails to maintain full-time status.

The following further **required readings** will also come from the items stored on the course folder found on the CEA *Course Information for Students* share drive, which can be accessed from any PC in the student computer room:

- Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*, 1978.
 Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, 1982.
 Susan Sontag, *On Photography*, 2001.
 Adams, Robert, *Beauty in Photography*, 1996.
 Langford, Michael, *Basic Photography*, 8th ed., 2007.

Required Movies:

These are available in the CEA Resource Center.

- Lisbon Story*, Wim Wenders, 1994
Born into Brothels, Zana Brisky, 2004
La Fotografia Italiana (5 DVD), 2009
La jetée, Chris Marker, 1983
Contacts, based on an idea by William Klein, 2000-2004

Web Sources

www.mediastorm.org
www.magnumphotos.com
www.viipphoto.com
www.agencevu.com
www.lalettredelaphotographie.com
www.50states.net

Required Supplies:

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Required Supplies/Fees:

You will be required to spend between \$200 and \$250 on film and developing if your camera is not digital.

Where to purchase photographic materials:

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| <p>1) Foto Ottica Bongi
Via Por Santa Maria n. 82-84/r
Tel: 055 2398811</p> <p>2) Ottica Fontani
Viale Francesco Strozzi n. 18-20/a
Tel: 055 470981</p> | <p>3) New SAR S.r.l.
Via Potente n. 7
50019 Sesto Fiorentino
Tel: 055 414449
Fax: 055 442031</p> |
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For camera repairs:

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| <p>1) Punto Reflex
Via Ponte di Mezzo n. 16/r</p> | <p>Tel.: 055 353733
Bus n. 23 (short trip, good and fast work)</p> |
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Labs:

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| <p>1) Centerchrome
Via Rossini n. 31
Tel: 055 8879697 – fax: 055 8826076
www.centerchrome.it</p> <p>2) QSS Via della Scala Centro Servizi
Via della Scala n. 22/R
Tel/Fax: 055 214730</p> | <p>3) Foto Laboratorio Fiorentino S.n.c.
Via Andrea del Castagno n. 4/A
Tel: 055 578994 – Fax: 055 578995</p> <p>4) Sky Photographic S.a.s.
Via Lavagnini n. 4/r, Tel: 055 2342545
www.skyphotographic.it</p> |
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**Photography in Florence
Course Content:**

Session	Topic	Activity	Student Assignment
1	Introduction to the course How we will use Florence a setting for our photography	Checking your cameras (you should bring your equipment – SLR or DSLR cameras with manual mode). Visit to Fontani or Bongi Photostore to buy material, if needed	Bring all necessary photographic equipment Reading: from Henri Cartier Bresson’s “The mind’s eye”
2	Introduction to the history of photography. Theory: the functioning of a SLR camera. Basic skills (exposure, depth of field, camera, lens)	Analysis of some famous photographic projects: Atget’s Paris; William Klein’s New York 1954 – 55; Koudelka’s Prague ’68 and Chaos. Comparison between Robert Frank’s <i>The Americans</i> and Paul Strand’s <i>Un paese</i> (the glance of an European at the States and the glance of an American at Europe). If possible, slide show: Urban landscape	Assignment #1: Urban landscape. Your quarter, your street, the first impact of Firenze on you. At least 15 images (slides if you have a SLR, a CD if you use a DSLR). The critique will be held on session 6. Reading: from Michael Langford’s Manual of photography, chapter n. 2 pp. 24-37 From Italo Calvino’s “Invisible cities”, (pp.46-49)
3	Street photography/ shooting in the crowd	Field trip to San Frediano quarter or to SMN Station	Reading: Langford, chapter n. 3, pp. 39-54 Italo Calvino, pp. 53-55 Editing: your reportage & burn to a CD or a flashdrive (if applicable).
4	Review on theory. A short introduction to the theory of colour	Visit to MNAF (Museo Nazionale Alinari della Fotografia)	Reading: Langford, chapter n. 6 pp. 103-117 Italo Calvino, pp. 66-67 and 76-77 Writing: a statement about your impression of the exhibition.
5	The timelessness of a garden	Field trip to Boboli	Reading: Langford, chapter n.10, pp. 205-230 Editing: your reportage & burn to a CD or a flashdrive.
6	Urban landscape project review. If possible brief overall review on technique	Critique of assignment #1	Reading: From Italo Calvino’s “Difficult loves”, the chapter titled “The adventure of a photographer” Assignment #2: Human landscape: portraying unknown people (at least 15 images, slides or on a CD and a written statement). Deadline and critique day: session 9).
7	Midterm exam	View of a documentary about photography and/or Presentation of the teacher’s work. Technical test: 10 to 15 questions about the camera, exposure and the basics of photography.	Reading: From Susan Sontag’s “On photography“, the chapter titled “Plato’s cave”, pp. 3-24 Preparation: Start thinking about the final project, based on a chapter from Italo Calvino’s <i>Invisible cities</i> .
8	I will return your corrected tests. Individual meetings available if needed	Film Screening: <i>Born into brothels</i> Film	Reading: from Georges Perec's « Species of spaces and other pieces » Editing: your photos from the outskirts' field trip

9	Make up class (it replaces April 9 class, Easter Monday)	The heritage of a traveller, a photographer and a writer: visit to Fosco Maraini's photographic archive at Palazzo Strozzi (if available). In class: if possible view of a documentary by Vittorio De Seta	Writing: a statement about your impressions
10	The Outskirts	Field trip to Scandicci or Cascine Park	Editing: burn your reportage to a cd or a flashdrive Reading: Italo Calvino, pp. 90-91 and 126-127
11	2 nd assignment analysis	Critique of Assignment #2 Film screening: from "Contacts" the chapter about Raymond Depardon	Assignment #3: A Story: at least 18 images and a written presentation of the project. The review will be held during the final lesson. Reading: From Robert Adams' "Beauty in photography" chapter titled "Beauty in photography", pp. 23-36
12	The hidden Florence	Field trip to San Salvi: former mental institution of Florence	Editing: your San Salvi reportage & burn to a CD or a flashdrive (if applicable). Reading Review: From Roland Barthes' "Camera lucida", pp. 23-60, chapters 9-24)
13	Individual meeting Individual meeting (if needed)	Selection of your best images for the end of term exhibition.	Reading: From Henri Cartier Bresson's The mind's eye, chapters titled L'imaginaire d'apres nature and The Europeans. Reminder: final critique on the next lesson
14	Critique of your third and final project	Critique of Assignment #3 Final exam	Final statement due

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