

Photography Practices

Spring 2026

Course	Information
---------------	--------------------

Course Duration: 15 weeks

Credit Hours: 45 (4 credits)

Instructor	Information
-------------------	--------------------

Professor Vibhav Kapoor

Email: vibhav.kapoor@jgu.edu.in

Course Description

An experiential project-based studio course where students will use digital processes to create black-and-white and colour photographs for completing assignments designed to challenge students in the problems particular to the photographic medium. This is a broad course on photography that would follow the medium's historical, philosophical, conceptual, and technical history. Students will be introduced to different genres of photography including landscape, portraiture, architecture, and still life. Through hands-on projects, students will learn essential skills in composition, lighting, and post-processing while developing their unique creative voice. Weekly discussions and critiques will be held to assess each students progress in the course. Students would also understand the complexity, uniqueness, and larger cultural role of the photographic medium through the attentive making of photographs and study of the medium as a social tool.

Course Intended Learning Objectives (Aim)

- **Technical Mastery:** Achieve proficiency in fundamental photographic techniques including exposure control (ISO, aperture, shutter speed), composition principles, and digital workflow management from capture to final output.
- **Genre Expertise:** Demonstrate competency across multiple photographic genres including landscape, portraiture, architectural, and documentary photography, understanding the unique challenges and approaches of each discipline.
- **Critical Analysis Skills:** Develop sophisticated visual literacy and critical thinking abilities through regular participation in critique sessions, peer feedback, and analytical discussions of photographic work.
- **Historical and Cultural Understanding:** Students will gain comprehensive knowledge of photography's evolution from its invention to contemporary practice, understanding its role as both documentary tool and artistic medium within broader cultural contexts.

- **Professional Portfolio Creation:** Students will build a cohesive body of work that demonstrates technical excellence, conceptual depth, and personal artistic development suitable for academic or professional presentation.
- **Industry-Standard Practices:** Students will master contemporary photography workflows including digital editing, image management, and presentation techniques essential for careers in visual arts, architecture, design, journalism, and related fields.

Course Evaluation

This practice-based course would be continuously evaluated.

Weekly Assignments (70%)

These assignments will be evaluated during in-person group critiques held throughout the semester.

Final Project (20%)

Students must work on a chosen theme from the various genres of photography discussed during the course. A photo essay consisting of 12-15 images along with an artist statement of 250-300 words will be required as the final submission.

Participation (10%)

This includes attendance, in-class discussions, and critiques. Every class missed without informing the instructor will affect the student's grade.

Grading

JSLH approves the use of this rubric for FINAL ASSESSMENT grading as indicated below:

O (80% and Above) [8.0]	Outstanding	Exceptional knowledge of the subject matter, thorough understanding of issues; ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles and extraordinary critical and analytical ability
A+ (75%-79%) [7.5]	Excellent	Sound knowledge of the subject matter, thorough understanding of issues; ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles and critical and analytical ability
A (70%-74%) [7.0]	Very Good	Sound knowledge of the subject matter, excellent organizational capacity, ability to

		synthesize ideas, rules and principles, critically analyse existing materials and originality in thinking and presentation
A- (65%-69%) [6.0]	Good	Good understanding of the subject matter, ability to identify issues and provide balanced solutions to problems and good critical and analytical skills
B+ (60%-64%) [5.0]	Fair	Average understanding of the subject matter, limited ability to identify issues and provide solutions to problems and reasonable critical and analytical skills. Average understanding of the subject matter, limited ability to identify issues and provide solutions to problems and reasonable critical and analytical skills
B (55%-59%) [4.0]	Satisfactory	Adequate knowledge of the subject matter to go to the next level of study and reasonable critical and analytical skills
B- (50%-54%) [3.0]	Acceptable	Limited knowledge of the subject matter and irrelevant use of materials and, poor critical and analytical skills
P1 (45-49.9) [2]	Marginal	Poor comprehension of the subject matter; poor critical and analytical skills and marginal use of the relevant materials.
P2 (40- 44.9) [1]	Very marginal	Bare minimum comprehension of the subject matter; incoherent articulation.
F	Fail	Course needs to be repeated. Level of understanding is well below required standard of critical and creative thinking.

Academic Integrity

A Note on Classroom Punctuality/Conduct:

JSLH conducts all classes on a foundation of professionalism. It is expected that students should be present in class and seated within five minutes of the class start time. Students arriving after a ten-minute window from the designated start time will be refused entry/attendance. Please show courtesy to your instructors and co-learners by observing punctuality. Please also note that the seminar room is a place for free expression and critical thinking, and this comes with a responsibility on the part of students to respect opinions expressed and actively participate in the work of the classroom discussion.

A Note on Plagiarism:

In line with JGU policy, JSLH operates a zero-tolerance approach to Plagiarism. The unacknowledged use of material by others within your work is a violation of academic integrity and all reported cases will be investigated before potential disciplinary action. Instructors will address methods of citation and presentation within written work.

Disability Support and Accommodation Requirements:

JGU endeavors to make all its courses accessible to students. All students with a known disability needing academic accommodations are required to register with the Disability Support Committee dsc@jgu.edu.in. The Committee has so far identified the following conditions that could possibly hinder student's overall well-being. These include: physical and mobility related difficulties; visual impairment; hearing impairment; medical conditions; specific learning difficulties e.g. dyslexia; mental health. The Disability Support Committee maintains strict confidentiality in its discussions.

Keyword Syllabus

Photography; experiential learning; critique

Course Schedule*

Foundations of Photography (Weeks 1-3)

Week 1: Brief History of Photography & Principles of Photography

This introductory module covers the historical background of the photographic medium, establishing foundational knowledge of photography's evolution. Students will learn technical fundamentals including ISO, aperture, shutter speed, lens characteristics, and proper camera operation. This week establishes both the theoretical framework and practical skills necessary for the course.

Week 2: Seeing Photographs

Building on technical foundations, this session focuses on developing visual intelligence, understanding perception and perspective in photography. Students will explore how photographs communicate meaning and learn digital workflow processes essential for contemporary photography practice.

Week 3: First Critique Session

Black and White Photography & Landscape (Weeks 4-5)

Week 4: Black and White Landscape Photography

Students delve into black and white photographic studies, exploring the representation of both natural and social landscapes. This module emphasizes the unique qualities of monochromatic photography and how it shapes our understanding of environmental and cultural spaces.

Week 5: Landscape Critique Session

Light & Color (Weeks 6-7)

Week 6: Light & Colour

This module combines the photographic study of space and form with an introduction to color photography principles. Students learn to capture the built environment while understanding how color theory applies to photographic practice and how light interacts with architectural subjects.

Week 7: Light & Colour Critique

Portraiture and Human Representation (Weeks 8-9)

Week 8: Portraiture

Students explore the representation of people through photography, examining both technical

aspects of portrait creation and ethical considerations in photographing human subjects. This module addresses the social responsibilities and cultural implications of portrait photography.

Week 9: Portrait Critique Session

Documentary and Artistic Expression (Weeks 10-11)

Week 10: Realism and Surrealism

This module examines the spectrum between documentary photography and fictional representation, exploring how photography can serve both as a record of reality and as a medium for creative interpretation and surreal expression.

Week 11: Realism/Surrealism Critique

Narrative Photography (Weeks 12-13)

Week 12: Sequences, Introduction to Final Project

Students learn the art of narrative building through sequential images, understanding how multiple photographs can work together to tell stories, convey concepts, or create meaning through visual progression.

Week 13: Sequence Critique

Final Project Development (Weeks 14-15)

Week 14: Final Project Discussion

A dedicated workday featuring Q&A sessions, individual feedback, and collaborative discussion of final projects as students prepare their photo essays and artist statements.

Week 15: Final Critique

***This schedule is tentative and subject to change as and when required**

Required Materials

- Digital camera (DSLR, rangefinder) or smartphone
- Access to photo editing software, Adobe CC

Supplemental Readings

- Stephen Shore - The Nature of Photographs (Phaidon, 1998)
- Marvin Heiferman - Photography Changes Everything (Thames & Hudson, 2012)
- David Company - On Photographs (Thames & Hudson, 2020)

- Vilém Flusser - Towards a Philosophy of Photography (Reaktion Books, 1983)
- Leo Rubinfien - The Poetry of Plain Seeing (Art in America, 2000)
- Geoff Dyer - The Mystery at the Heart of Great Photographs (New York Times, 2016)
- Will Steacy - Photographs Not Taken (Daylight, 2012)
- Nathaniel Gaskell and Diva Gujral - Photography in India: A Visual History from the 1850s to the Present (Prestel, 2019)
- Additional contemporary articles and essays