

PGY 2101 - Visual Literacy

Spring 2016 / 3 credits

SAAH University of Florida

Section A

Instructor: Sergio Vega
Hours: Monday periods 8-9
Classroom: FAC 120 / e-mail: veryvega@ufl.edu
Office Hours: Monday from 17:00 to 18:00 (by appointment only).
Office: FAD 229 / phone: 352-273-3035

Section B

Classroom: ARCH 120
Instructor: Molly Edwards <mollyeedwards@ufl.edu>
Instructor: David Foshee <dkfoshee@ufl.edu>
Instructor: Paden De Vita <padendevita@gmail.com>

Course Goals and Objectives

This an introductory course to photography that focuses on the critical processes by which visual imagery acquires meaning. The objective is to provide students with a comprehensive overview of the history of the medium that will facilitate their understand of the critical issues involved in the production, distribution and reception of photographic images. In addition to think about *why* we make photographs, the goal is for students to learn *how* to make photographs by learning basic camera techniques, composition, processing film, and printing images.

Course Outline / Methods of the Course

Section A is conducted by the main instructor and consists in lectures, class discussions of the assigned readings, screenings and presentations. It is mandatory to complete the assigned readings every week. Slide lectures and screenings will feature an introduction to the work of some of the main photographers in the history of the medium. Class discussions will address the evolution of theoretical ideas that influenced the production and reception of photographs at different key historical moments. There will be a final quiz on Tuesday December 8th. The content of the quiz will summarize the slide lectures, readings and content of class discussions. For this reason it is crucial to take notes during lectures and discussions on a notebook. If you miss more than two lectures you will not be able to pass the exam and probably get a failing grade.

Topical outline for section A

Since Louis Daguerre in 1838 invented the photographic process known as Daguerreotype, the multiple uses and meanings ascribed to photographic images became a field of endless contestations. Most people agreed that photographs provided objective reproductions of reality that could be used to identify people and things. Following that interpretation of the medium some sustained that its primary purpose should be to use them in the courts of law as evidence, by the police in archives of criminals (or potential criminals) and to provide proof or documentation for scientific research on a vast array of fields. Others believed it would best replace paintings at depicting large social and historical events, and portray people and their families in order to preserve their memories. Others thought it would be the ideal tool to replace painting at representing the imaginary, the world of mythology, fantasy, and past history.

The lecture series will explore various still contested interpretations of photographic images to arrive at the perspective on photography provided by semiotic studies. Semiotic interpretations of photography

distinguish two simultaneous operations of signification: 1) as presence or embodied meaning (a message without a code) that derives its *denotation* 2) as linguistic-literary message or the manner in which society to a certain extent communicates what it thinks of it, or its *connotation*.

1) Introduction to nineteenth century photography

2) Photography in the Soviet Avant-garde

3) Photography during the depression

4) Surrealism

5) Photography during and after World War II: Humanism and Neorealism Case studies

a) Camera Work, a photography journal by Stieglitz b) The photographic archive: Eugene Atget and August Sander c) The Farm Security Administration project d) "Paris de nuit" a book by Brassai e) Lee Miller: from Surrealist to war correspondent. f) Steichen's exhibition "The Family of Man"

Section B is conducted by the Teaching Assistants and is where students discuss, conceptualize and produce their assignments in close collaboration with their instructors. In this section, students will have the opportunity to flesh out their ideas, learn techniques, show their work, and receive feedback from classmates and instructors on regular basis. There will be one main assignment due on Friday April 17th. In addition, there will be several technical assignments throughout the semester.

Books

Sontag Susan, *On Photography* 1990 edition, Anchor Books. ISBN 0-385-26706-1 (required)

Horenstein Harry, *Black and White Photography* Little, Brown and Company (multiple editions) ISBN 978-0316373050

Barthes Roland, *Image-Music-Text*, Hill and Wang a division of Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York ISBN 0-374-52136-0

Barthes Roland, *Camera Lucida*, Reflections on Photography Hill and Wang, a division of Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York ISBN 0-374-52134-4

Critical Dates

Main assignment (portfolio) due on Friday April 15th

Quiz on Monday April 18th

Grading Criteria

Percentage Points/ Letter Grades (*):

100-93 A: Present at all class/ lab meetings-Significant engagement with course material and excellent results-both technical and conceptual. Significant contribution to group discussions and presentations.

92-90 A- : Present at all class/ lab meetings-Significant engagement with course material. Good technical development. Significant contribution to group discussions and presentations.

89-88 B+ : Present at all class/ lab meetings-Very good engagement with the course material and group discussions.

87-80 B: Present at all class lab meetings-Good engagement with the course materials and group discussions.

79-78 C+: Present at most or all of class/lab meetings-Good engagement with the course materials and group discussions.

77-70 C: Present at most or all of class/lab meetings-Satisfactory engagement with the course materials and group discussions.

69-60 D: Student has missed class/ lab meetings and has not engaged the course material in a satisfactory manner. Student's engagement with discussions is minimal. Additionally, this mark may reflect excessive absence from class and lab meetings.

59-0 E: Student has not satisfactorily engaged nor met the class criteria. Additionally, this mark may reflect excessive absence from class and lab meetings.

(*)This course follows University of Florida grading regulations and guidelines: UF grading policy website: <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html>

Counseling

University Counseling Services/ Counseling Center 301 Peabody Hall P.O. Box 114100, University of Florida Gainesville, FL 32611-4100

Phone: 352-392-1575 Web: www.counsel.ufl.edu If you are experiencing problems or difficulties with the academic requirements of this course you may also contact the Departmental Advisor in Fine Arts: +1 (352) 392-0207. Further, the Dean of Students Office can assist you with a range of support services. <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/supportservices/>

Students with Disabilities:

If you require accommodations because of a disability, please make an appointment during my office hours so that we may discuss your needs in accordance with the UF official policy: "Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students office. The Dean of Students office will provide documentation to the student who must then present this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation."

Academic Honesty

The university's policies regarding academic honesty, the honor code, and student conduct related to the honor code will be strictly enforced. Full information regarding these policies is available at the following links: - Academic Honesty: <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/students.html#honesty>

- Honor Code: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php> - Student Conduct: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/conductcode.php>

Health and Safety

1) The link below includes information and policies regarding health and safety in the School of Art and Art History at UF. <http://www.arts.ufl.edu/art/healthandsafety>