

COM3209: DIGITAL PHOTOJOURNALISM

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Digital Photojournalism

Subject Code

COM - Media and Communication

Course Number

3209

Academic Unit

Media and Communication (COM)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

Medium of Instruction

Other Languages

Other Languages for Medium of Instruction

English [For practicum component: English and Chinese]

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course aims to teach students the importance of still visual images in communicating ideas and hands-on skills in producing news-oriented photography, as well as the criteria necessary to recognize, evaluate and capture photos with social or news value in a variety of common journalistic situations. In addition, it trains students to use digital production tools that are becoming a major part of required knowledge for photojournalists. It also teaches students the ethics of photojournalism.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Explain the history and development of the profession of photojournalism	10	x	x	x
2	Describe the ethos of the profession and its great works	10	x	x	x
3	Visualize content that is visually newsworthy	10	x	x	x
4	Describe the role of the camera as an extension of the eye for newsworthy visuals	10		x	x
5	Demonstrate proficiency in handling a still camera (35mm/digital) and its manual functions (shutter speed, focusing, aspect ratio, depth of field, f-stops)	10		x	x
6	Explain and apply lens characteristics (wide, medium, telephoto) and the types of images they produce	10		x	x
7	Demonstrate knowledge of various digital settings and the results they produce	5	x	x	x
8	Demonstrate skills in shooting and presenting journalistic images in 1) well-composed standalone photographs and 2) documentary and storytelling photo-sequences	20		x	x
9	Evaluate photos based on news values and aesthetics	10	x	x	x
10	Follow ethical guidelines and engage in ethical photojournalistic practices	5	x	x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs		Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lectures	Student will study the history of photojournalism and the great works of photojournalists	1, 2	2 weeks
2	Lectures	Student will learn codes of ethics for photojournalists and cases of privacy, private property, and right of portrait	10	1 week
3	Tasks	Student will investigate what constitutes newsworthy photos and visuals: - news values - local and international news publications - on-line news photos and visuals	3, 4	2 weeks
4	Hands-on exercises and assignments	Students will participate hands-on exercises covering topics such as: - light and its effects - shutter speed - depth of field - portraits - digital darkroom (basic editing) - 3-photos story - standalone photograph - photo essay - digital portfolio	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	8 weeks

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

ATs		CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("-" for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	In-class exercises: - portrait (5%) - shutter speeds (5%) - depth of field (5%) - shadows (5%) - digital portfolio (10%)	1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 10	30	-	Yes

2	Hands-on assignments: - 3-photos story (20%) - 1-photo composition assignment (20%) - Photo essay (final assignment) (30%)	3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	70	-	Yes
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Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

In-class exercises

Criterion

Command of subject matter

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Excellent command of the course content.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Good command of the course content.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Adequate command of the course content

Marginal (D)

Fair command of the course content

Failure (F)

Inadequate command of the course content

Assessment Task

Hands-on assignment

Criterion

Ability to create journalistic visuals based what they have learned in class

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Excellent application of concepts and techniques taught in class.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Good application of concepts and techniques taught in class.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Adequate application of concepts and techniques taught in class.

Marginal (D)

Marginal application of concepts and techniques taught in class.

Failure (F)

Failure to meet most or all the criteria.

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Photojournalism; Visual images in communication; Ethics of photojournalism; Production of photo/images for journalism; Masterpieces of photojournalism.

Reading List**Compulsory Readings**

Title	
1	Kenneth Kobre (2008). Photojournalism: The Professionals' Approach (6th ed.). Elsevier Science & Technology Books, U.S.A.
2	Jon Canfield & Tim Grey (2004). Photo Finish: Digital Photographer's Guide to Printing, Showing, and Selling Images. San Francisco, Calif.: Sybex, U.S.A.
3	The South China Morning Post
4	National Geographic

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Nil