

**MCOM 3360 – Photojournalism**  
**M/W 4:05 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.**  
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**Course Description:** Photographs tell stories in ways that words cannot. The focus of this course is to utilize photography as a means of creating stories that reflect real life and culture, gain a better understanding of the art of storytelling, and gain a better understanding of theoretical application within photojournalism and photography. You will engage in the medium of photography, critically analyze examples of photojournalism, and learn about the theories and historical significance that your photography references. This class combines the application of photography techniques in photographic assignments, fieldwork, and an examination of the history and theory of photography and storytelling.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Produce accurate photojournalistic pieces for the purposes of storytelling and publication in print and digital media.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and issues, especially as it relates to photojournalism.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of, and be able to apply, the principles and laws governing freedom of speech and the press.
4. Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information using tools appropriate for public relations/integrated communication or multimedia journalism.
5. Write correctly and clearly using the formats and compelling storytelling styles for the audiences and purposes required for public relations/integrated and multimedia journalism.
6. Understand the field of photojournalism by evaluating and researching professional photojournalists and their work.
7. Engage in the language of photographic critique for an in-depth analysis of images, the theoretical application, and the significance of the story.

### **Course Requirements**

1. Readings as assigned (provided on Canvas)
2. Technology/Software:
  - a. DSLR or digital camera that takes quality images, a phone with quality camera capabilities, or the ability to check out DSLR cameras from the lab.
    - i. You do not need to buy a new DSLR for this course – we have them available for check-out if your phone does not take quality images. You just need to be able to come to the school outside of class time to reserve, check out, and return the equipment.

- ii. If you choose to use your phone, it must take quality images and have the ability to zoom without losing image quality. If you choose to use your phone over checking out camera equipment and it does not take quality images, you will lose points on your assignments for quality.
- b. Photo Editing Software or the ability to come to the school to use our photo editing software.
- c. Microsoft Office or other word processing software that allows exporting to .DOC/.DOCX (many word processors will export to this Microsoft Word format).
- d. SD card or card that is compatible with DSLR Camera.
- e. Flickr.com Account - this is a free account and will be utilized to submit photo assignments.

**Evaluation and Grade Calculation -**

Assignments (Reflections, critiques, etc.)	20%
Photography assignments	60%
Final project	20%

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Total	100%
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Percent	Letter Grade
90% - 100%	A
80% - 89%	B
70-79%	C
60-69%	D
59% and below	F

Assignments Overview

1. Photo Assignments (60%) – SLOs 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5
  - a. Throughout the semester there will be a variety of photo assignments that require you to take images following guidelines and themes for the material that we are covering. You will be required to submit 5 images total. This total includes ONE final image that you feel is the best that is accompanied by a well-written caption, and four additional images. You will be graded on the final image and caption. The additional images are required to show that you did not just take one image and call it a day – I want to see the effort you put into each assignment. You should utilize the techniques that we are covering, theoretical application for storytelling, knowledge of photo composition and lighting, and knowledge of image caption writing. Images must have been taken during this semester and students MAY NOT use images taken prior to the beginning of the semester or utilize images taken by someone else. Both actions will result in receiving a zero for the assignment.
2. Misc. assignments (15%) – SLOs 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, & 7
  - a. Throughout the semester we will have a variety of assignments to examine material covered during lectures. These assignments include practice assignments, photo critiques, etc. The purpose of these assignments are to strengthen your understanding of the field of photojournalism, learn to critically assess the quality of your work and the work of others, and gain additional practice in various photojournalism skills.
3. Final Project (25%) – SLOs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, & 7
  - a. For your final project, you will bring together journalistic storytelling and advanced photography

skills to create a visually strong and contextually interesting photo story of the topic of your choice. The theme of your photo story must be something that tells an interesting, newsworthy story and you **MUST** receive permission from any business or individual you feature in your story. This is an assignment that you are urged to work on throughout the semester. There will be two parts: the pitch and preliminary research and the final, publish-ready story.

## **Class Policies and Expectations**

### **1. Classroom Policies and Expectations**

- A. Work hard - learning requires constant reading, researching, thinking, discussing, and working with your classmates and me. Everyone has something important to contribute. My job is to present new information and prepare a climate in which you can contribute your own special knowledge. Your job is to be prepared to contribute.
- B. Participate – you must be an active part of the course to succeed. You will also have to give effort outside of class.
- C. Treat each other with respect and display common classroom courtesies.
  - 1. You are responsible for your attitude and how you treat others. I will not tolerate name calling, fighting, students belittling each other for differing opinions, etc. I expect you to act like adults, show each other respect, and to challenge yourself and each other to learn/understand opinions you may not agree with. If you are not treating individuals with respect or are causing a distraction, you will be asked to leave the classroom.
- D. The use of cellphones, tablets, or other device use during class times is not allowed unless the need is specified by me (i.e. during an activity). You are not permitted to use cellphones for note taking, checking social media, view/work on material for another course, or simply browse the internet during class times.
  - 1. If you must take a phone call, please leave the classroom before you answer the phone. If you must respond to a message, do it quickly and discreetly. Abuse of this will result in you losing this privilege.
  - 2. If the only device you have to take notes on is your phone, I will provide you with a notebook to take notes during class.
- E. I use Canvas and email to communicate, post assignments and readings, present feedback and provide a space for you to communicate with your classmates. I expect you to check both daily and stay aware of what is coming up.
- F. Communicate - If you have a problem with anything throughout the semester... getting an assignment in on time, needing to be absent from a class, getting your book, checking out equipment, or anything I'm doing as a professor... talk to me about it. I cannot help you or fix the problem if I am unaware of it.

### **2. Attendance Policy**

- A. Attendance in this course is crucial to student success and students are expected to attend class each time it meets.
- B. Final presentations are graded, and students must attend both presentation grades to receive full points unless their absence is considered excused.

1. **Excused absences include:**
  - a) Illness supported by a doctor's note.
  - b) Death in family
  - c) Documentable emergencies (i.e., car trouble / invoice from mechanic)
  - d) Religious event that the student has given notice for.
  - e) School sponsored event that the student has given notice for.
  - f) Other situations will be handled on a case-by-case basis.
2. **What is not considered an excused absence:**
  - a) Work
  - b) Trip out of the area
  - c) Oversleeping
  - d) Appointments that are made after the start of the semester and are not for life/health-threatening reasons.
  - e) Running errands for yourself or someone else
  - f) Completing work for or participating in another on-campus organization
  - g) Forgetting that you had class
  - h) Anything else that isn't a documentable emergency.

### 3. **Assignment Policies**

- A. Assignments have deadlines and these deadlines need to be met. It is your responsibility to utilize time outside of class in an effective manner so you can ensure that you submit each assignment before the due date and time.
  - a. For many assignments, not all, the submission folder will stay open for one week after the due date. Any assignments turned in after the due date will receive a point per day deduction. Specific point values that will be deducted each day can be found on the assignment overviews on Canvas. It is your responsibility to know when the assignment is due for full credit, when the assignment closes, and the number of points that will be deducted each day for late submissions. Assignments will not be accepted after this final date.
- B. Assignments and due dates may be changed at the instructor's discretion with fair notice to students.
- C. I will not accept assignments via email unless there are issues with Canvas and the email includes your assignment and a screenshot of the Canvas malfunction.
- D. Merely completing all assignments does not guarantee that you will pass the course. You must put forth effort and show an understanding of the material to earn a satisfactory grade.
- E. I will not accept screenshots of assignments. Unless otherwise indicated, all assignments must be typed, formatted to be a .DOC or .DOCX (Pages, Google Drive, and other online word processors must be exported to this specific format), and submitted via Canvas.
- F. Assignments will be discussed in class, students will be given a course schedule, Canvas includes a syllabus function that outlines upcoming due dates, due dates can be seen listed on each assignment under the assignment tab in Canvas, assignment due dates can be added to your Canvas calendar, and each due date will be listed in the course modules. There are SEVERAL ways to determine what

is coming up due in class. It is your responsibility to be aware of what is coming up due and to stay on top of your assignments.

- G. It is your responsibility to ensure that your assignments are being submitted correctly to Canvas by the due date and time. If an assignment appears to be not submitted beyond the assignment closing, it will receive a zero. If you do not regularly check your grades or check Canvas for technical errors, there is little that can be done at the end of the semester. If you do experience technical difficulties submitting assignments, you must email me before the assignment closes.
- H. All assignments will be checked by plagiarism and AI detection software.
- I. Students will adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. A student who is caught doing either will earn a “0” for that assignment and will be subject to academic and disciplinary action. If a student is caught a second time, they will automatically fail the course.
  - a. In addition to UT Tyler’s Student Conduct and Discipline policy, plagiarism/cheating includes:
    - i. Self-plagiarism - the use of papers or other materials previously submitted elsewhere. I expect you to submit work created specifically for this class during this semester.
    - ii. AI generated content – the purpose of my assignments is for you to explore your understanding of the material on a deeper level, not have a computer explore it for you.

### **1. UT Tyler AI Statement**

- A. UT Tyler is committed to exploring and using artificial intelligence (AI) tools as appropriate for the discipline and task undertaken. We encourage discussing AI tools’ ethical, societal, philosophical, and disciplinary implications. All uses of AI should be acknowledged as this aligns with our commitment to honor and integrity, as noted in UT Tyler’s Honor Code. Faculty and students must not use protected information, data, or copyrighted materials when using any AI tool. Additionally, users should be aware that AI tools rely on predictive models to generate content that may appear correct but is sometimes shown to be incomplete, inaccurate, taken without attribution from other sources, and/or biased. Consequently, an AI tool should not be considered a substitute for traditional approaches to research. You are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the information you submit. Misusing AI tools that violate the guidelines specified for this course (see below) is considered a breach of academic integrity. The student will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in UT Tyler’s Academic Integrity Policy.
  - 1. Students can use AI platforms to help prepare for assignments and projects (i.e., brainstorming) and to revise and edit their work (i.e., identify flaws in reasoning, spot confusing or underdeveloped paragraphs, or correct citations).
  - 2. Students may not use AI to generate/create work for submission. All work submitted must come from the student. Any work (reflections or photos) generated by AI will receive a zero.

- While AI can be a good starting point for research, the AI platform utilized does not count as an academic source because it can be incorreccted or incomplete. It will not be accepted as a source for citing information.

Course Schedule

Date	Agenda	Due today
<b>Week One</b>		
M 1/13	<p><u>Course introduction:</u> Syllabus, schedule, equipment use agreements, studio policies, etc.</p> <p><b>Assign:</b>  <u>Misc:</u> Flickr.com account creation due Wednesday, 1/22  <u>Read:</u> Experience is the Best Teacher (on Canvas)</p>	
W 1/15	<p><u>Topic:</u> Intro to photojournalism</p> <p><b>Assign:</b>  <u>Read:</u> A Brief History of Photojournalism (on Canvas)  <u>Read:</u> Pictures that Change History – Why the World Needs Photojournalists (on Canvas)</p>	
<b>Week Two</b>		
M 1/20	<b>MLK Jr. Day – No class meeting</b>	
W 1/22	<p><u>Topic:</u> Intro to photojournalism</p> <p><b>Assign:</b>  <u>Read:</u> The Photography Critique (on Canvas)  <u>Photos:</u> “A Day in the Life” due Monday, 2/3 by the start of class  <u>Professional critique:</u> Your choice due Monday, 2/3</p>	<u>Misc:</u> Flickr.com account creation
<b>Week Three</b>		
M 1/27	<p><u>Topic:</u> Captions, AP Format, and News Values</p> <p><b>Assign:</b>  <u>Read:</u> What are the Seven News Values? (on Canvas)  <u>Read:</u> AP Style Highlights (on Canvas)  <u>Read:</u> Writing Photo Captions (on Canvas)  <u>Misc:</u> Caption writing workshop in class on Wednesday, 1/29</p>	

W 1/29	<p><u>Workshop:</u> Caption writing</p> <p><b>Assign:</b>  <u>Assignment:</u> 6-word stories and photo captions due Wednesday, 2/5</p>	
<b>Week Four</b>		
M 2/3		<p><u>Photos:</u> “A Day in the Life” (start of class)  <u>Professional critique:</u> Your choice</p>
W 2/5	<p><u>Topic:</u> Storytelling with emotion and interaction</p> <p><b>Assign:</b>  <u>Photos:</u> Emotion and Interaction in Everyday Life due Monday, 2/17 by the start of class  <u>Professional critique:</u> Emotion and interaction due Monday, 2/17</p>	<p><u>Assignment:</u> 6-word stories and photo captions</p>
<b>Week Five</b>		
M 2/10	<p><u>Topic:</u> Photojournalism Law and Ethics</p> <p><b>Assign:</b>  <u>Read:</u> The Professional Approach - Law (on Canvas)  <u>Read:</u> The Professional Approach - Ethics (on Canvas)</p>	
W 2/12	<p><u>Topic:</u> Photojournalism Law and Ethics</p>	
<b>Week Six</b>		
M 2/17	<p><u>Critique:</u> Emotion and Interaction in Everyday Life</p>	<p><u>Photos:</u> Emotion and Interaction in Everyday Life (start of class)  <u>Professional critique:</u> Emotion and interaction</p>
W 2/19	<p><u>Topic:</u> Documentary and street photography</p> <p><b>Assign:</b>  <u>Photos:</u> Documentary or Street Photography due Monday, 3/3 by the start of class  <u>Professional critique:</u> Documentary or street photography due Monday, 3/3</p>	
<b>Week Seven</b>		

M 2/24	<u>Topic:</u> Photo stories  <b>Assign:</b>  <u>Read:</u> What is a Photo Story in Photojournalism? (on Canvas) <u>Major:</u> Photo story pitch due Monday, 3/3 <u>Major:</u> Final photo story due Monday, 4/21 by the start of class <u>Major:</u> Photo story presentations on Monday, 4/21 and Wednesday, 4/23	
W 2/26	<u>Topic:</u> Photo stories	
<b>Week Eight</b>		
M 3/3	<u>Critique:</u> Documentary and Street Photography	<u>Photos:</u> Documentary or Street Photography (start of class) <u>Professional critique:</u> Documentary or street photography <u>Major:</u> Photo story pitch
W 3/5	<u>Topic:</u> General news  <b>Assign:</b> <u>Photos:</u> General News due Wednesday, 3/12 by the start of class <u>Professional critique:</u> General news due Wednesday, 3/12	
<b>Week Nine</b>		
M 3/10	Workday – No class meeting	
W 3/12	<u>Critique:</u> General news	<u>Photos:</u> General News due Wednesday, 3/12 (start of class) <u>Professional critique:</u> General news
<b>Week Ten</b>		
Spring Break – Monday, 3/17 – Friday, 3/21		
<b>Week Eleven</b>		



M 3/24	<p><u>Topic:</u> Features and environmental portraits</p> <p><b>Assign:</b>  <u>Photos:</u> Feature or environmental portraits due Wednesday, 4/2 by the start of class  <u>Professional critique:</u> Feature or environmental portraits due Wednesday, 4/2</p>	
W 3/26	<p><u>Topic:</u> People without people</p> <p><b>Assign:</b>  <u>Read:</u> Street Photography without People (on Canvas)  <u>Photos:</u> People without people due Wednesday, 4/9 by the start of class  <u>Professional critique:</u> People without people due Wednesday, 4/9</p>	
<b>Week Twelve</b>		
M 3/31	Workday – No class meeting	
W 4/2	<p><u>Critique:</u> Features and environmental portraits</p>	<p><u>Photos:</u> Feature or environmental portraits (start of class)  <u>Professional critique:</u> Feature or environmental portraits</p>
<b>Week Thirteen</b>		
M 4/7	<p><u>Topic:</u> Sports and events</p> <p><b>Assign:</b>  <u>Photos:</u> Sports and events due Wednesday, 4/16  <u>Professional critique:</u> Sports and events due Wednesday, 4/16</p>	
W 4/9	<p><u>Critique:</u> People without people</p>	<p><u>Photos:</u> People without people (start of class)  <u>Professional critique:</u> People without people</p>
<b>Week Fourteen</b>		
M 4/14	Workday – No class meeting	

W 4/16	<u>Critique</u> : Sports and events	<u>Photos</u> : Sports and events <u>Professional critique</u> : Sports and events
<b>Week Fifteen</b>		
M 4/21	Final project presentations	<u>Final project</u> : Final project (start of class)
W 4/23	Final project presentations	
<b>Week Sixteen</b>		
Finals Week – No class meetings Monday, 4/28 – Wednesday, 4/30		