



Course Syllabus: Photography IV

Fain College of Fine Arts

ART 4013-101

Fall 2026

T/Th 9:00am–12:20pm

Fain Fine Arts **C115**

Contact Information

Instructor: Jordan Funk

Office: C115A

Office hours: M 1:00pm–4:00pm, T/Th 12:30pm–1:30pm

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Course Description

Emphasis on professional practices and development of a commercial photography portfolio. Students will develop techniques such as advanced lighting, posing and staging that are used in classic studio photography as well as on location. Fashion, product, food, and architectural photography will be explored.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

There is no assigned textbook for this course. Readings will be distributed through D2L as accessible PDFs or web links.

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

Classroom Conduct and Policies

- As a student at MSU Texas, you are expected to conduct yourself in a respectful and mature manner. Give your classmates the same grace you want them to give you in return.
- It is imperative that you work in a way that keeps the lab clean and organized and is respectful of other students. You must realize that your actions will affect others. Please be conscientious of your fellow students and be kind.

- NO FOOD OR DRINK IN THE COMPUTER LABS!!! There is a lot of expensive equipment, and we must respect our shared workspaces.
- General studio cleanup will be the last 10 minutes of each class session. Students will maintain discipline in studio safety precautions, maintenance and upkeep throughout the semester. The instructor will drop students not willing to take an active part in those goals.
- Classroom behavior that interferes with either the instructor's ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to benefit from the instruction will result in the instructor's removing the disruptive student(s) from the class. The student will be marked as absent and will miss all material covered that day.
- You are expected to come to class prepared, having completed all reading assignments and arriving with any required materials. If you did not complete the reading, you still have to come to class and participate in all class discussions and activities.
- Preparation for Critique: I highly recommend that you print 1-2 days before critique. Printing is part of the process, not just the end point. Technology is fickle—printers jam, ink runs out, IT issues, etc. Please give yourself plenty of time to print. You must have your photos printed BEFORE the start of class. You will NOT be allowed to print during class on critique day.
- Late work is not eligible for a class-wide critique. There are too many moving pieces in this class for us to constantly be going backwards to critique work that is turned in after the project critique is done. Work ineligible for class-wide critique will still get written feedback from the instructor.
- You are expected to contribute to critiques of the assignments and final projects, offering constructive criticism to your peers, and providing useful commentary about the work under discussion. ***If you come to critique and do not participate or sit there on your phone the whole time, I will mark you absent.** Simply physically being in the room is not enough to count as participation.
- Help each other, as you will learn as much from each other as you will learn from your instructor. I will do my best to create a safe and fun environment where you feel excited to make work.
- Disruptive and disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated. Tardiness is disruptive, so be on time.
- Be mindful of the lab schedule; you are not permitted to work in the lab during other classes (unless you have permission from that instructor in advance).

- Active participation and involvement during class includes:
 - Giving your full attention to the instructor and your classmates
 - Completing assigned readings, homework, projects, etc.
 - Having an open-minded outlook and hearing others when they speak
 - Participating in exercises and assignments
 - Giving feedback during discussions and critiques, verbal or written
- All work must be made specifically for this class during this semester. No previously taken photos may be used. Failure to do so will result in an "F."
- A grade of "Incomplete" is granted only with a written doctor's excuse or under emergency circumstances such as illness or a death in the family

Required Materials

- Access to Adobe Lightroom Classic and Adobe Photoshop
- DSLR OR mirrorless camera with full manual capabilities (NO point & shoots)
- Tripod
- SD Card
- Notebook & Pen
- External **Solid State** Hard Drive (SSD) (We will discuss solid state drives on day 1)
 - 1 TB or greater (consider what kind of computer it is formatted for, and know that the computers you will be working on during class time are Mac)
 - A small thumb drive will NOT suffice
 - If you already have a non-solid state drive, that is okay for now, but it is imperative that you do not use it for long term archival storage!
- Red River inkjet paper
 - Choose from either [UltraPro Satin or UltraPro Luster](#)
 - 17" roll
 - Box of 50 or 100 sheets
- One inkjet cartridge for Canon or Epson printers (to be assigned by instructor)
- Portfolio for storage of prints and course materials
 - I recommend finding a flat storage solution that can accommodate the paper size you will be printing on this semester
 - A portfolio or archival box will be ideal

Student Resources

More than anything else, your #1 priority is always your well-being and safety. Learning and progress can't be made if your foundational needs are not being met. If you need support, please use the resources below; your tuition covers them regardless of how much you use them. Remember, if you feel unsafe for whatever reason, you can always call campus police or dial 911 for an emergency.

[Housing](#)
[Dining](#)
[Career Closet](#)
[Mustangs Pantry](#)
[Student Life](#)
[Tutoring Programs](#)

[Student Health](#)
[Services](#)
[Financial Aid](#)
[Disability Support](#)
[Services](#)
[Counseling Center](#)

[Clark Student Center](#)
[Bridwell Activities](#)
[Center](#)
[Wellness Center](#)
[Work-Study](#)

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given). Please see class AI Policy for information about AI usage. Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct.

[Office of Student Conduct](#)

Communication Guidelines

I am always available to be reached by email, and during the day I may be by my office phone, but I expect that you are respectful and professional in your communication with me. Before you contact me, please ask yourself: *Have I first looked on D2L, in the syllabus, or reached out to a fellow student for assistance?*

If you have a private question, please contact me via email, and I will respond within 24 hours on weekdays. Please do not expect a response over the weekend.

Moffett Library

Moffett Library provides resources and services to support students' studies and assignments, including books, peer-reviewed journals, databases, and multimedia materials accessible both on campus and remotely. The library offers media equipment checkout, reservable study rooms, and research assistance from librarians to help students effectively find, evaluate, and use information. Get started on this Moffett Library webpage to explore these resources and learn how to best utilize the library.

Grading

Table 1: Percentage of final grade allocated to each assignment

Assignments	% of Grade
Participation	25%
In-class exercises (2)	10%
Neighborhood	20%
Good Enough to Eat	20%
Portraits in Disguise	25%

Table 2: Total percentage for final grade.

Grade	Percentage
A	90%-100%
B	80% to 89.9%
C	70% to 79.9%
D	60% to 69.9%
F	Less than 60%

Course Expectations

This class is broken up into major projects, and each student is responsible for managing their time in and out of class to complete their assignments. Time management is an essential part of success in this course, and each student is expected to spend the same amount of time on their projects as the amount of time they are in this course during the week. This means if you spend 6 hours in class twice a week, you should spend 6 hours of your own time that week working on this class's workload. Regular attendance and participation is key to succeeding, and students with repeated absences will find it difficult to pass this course. Remember that if you're absent, you lose points for daily attendance AND participation points.

***Only newly created work is allowed to be submitted in this class. Work created before the start of the assignment introduction or for another course will not be accepted, and this is considered academic dishonesty.**

AI Policy

If you choose to use AI in any way in this class for your assignments, submitting graded material, or while providing critical feedback, documentation must accompany each submission showing the amount of work done by YOU (the student) and the contributions/edits/transformations made by AI. This applies to image editing, writing submissions, image transformation, etc. If there is a prompt inputted/conversation/or a back-and-forth about assignments between an AI and student, this must also be submitted as documentation with the submission. This helps me to understand how much of the core of the work has been altered by AI.

***Image generation is not allowed in this class, and you will fail the assignment if you submit AI-generated images. This is a photography class; you MUST take photos to pass this class.**

For example, if you use AI tools in Lightroom/Photoshop for editing, you must also submit the unedited image so that I can see how much has been changed and how much of the final work remains authentic to you. If you use AI to polish your artist statement, then you also need to submit what was written before, and all prompts fed to the AI, as well as all feedback given by AI on that writing.

Quizzes & Exams

No quizzes, tests, or exams will be given in this course. Instead, each student's progress is monitored through progression of skill, creativity, and concept in each of their assignments over the course of the semester. Students should show visible progress in aesthetics, ideas, or control over their medium by the end of the course.

Projects Required

In-class exercises – 2 in-class exercises that will focus on experimentation, ways of seeing, and embracing the unknown in image making. Students will follow instructions and turn the project in by the specified due date & time.

Neighborhood – Students will use this assignment to explore what gives a neighborhood distinct character. Investigations should consider architecture, color, space, narrative, and sequencing. An emphasis should also be placed on their chosen neighborhood's particular details that make the place unique. A minimum of 8 and a maximum of 12 images may be submitted. Not all images must tell a major story, but they should work together to give the audience an understanding of this neighborhood's unique traits and characteristics. Images should be submitted as high resolution JPEGs on D2L along with printed images.

Good Enough to Eat – This project examines the world of food photography, and students may choose one of two ways to approach this project. They may either photograph *real* food or objects that come together to *resemble* food. This can be approached from a documentary angle or a sculpturally creative angle, and the images do not need to be classical still life's. Students will be encouraged to step out of their comfort zone and consider all the ways they can make objects look appetizing in photographs through light, color, composition, framing, and concept. 5 high resolution JPEGs should be submitted to D2L along with printed images.

Portraits in Disguise – Students will use their advanced knowledge of photography to create a series of 10 images that do not show their subjects face, while still giving the viewer a sense of who their subject is. Use of fashion, props, patterns, lighting, color, shapes, body language and environmental details should be considered when photographing. These may be self-portraits or portraits, and one model may be used for the entire project, or multiple models can be used. 10 images should be uploaded as high resolution JPEGs to D2L, along with printed images. No late work will be accepted for the final project.

Final Exam

There is no final exam in this course. Instead, your final project, "Inspired," will count as your final exam in this class. No late work will be accepted for the final project.

Extra Credit

Extra credit will be offered at the discretion of the instructor.

Late Work

***Late work is not eligible for class-wide critique, but written feedback by the instructor will be given.**

Late work will have 5% of the overall project grade deducted per day that the project is late. If you miss the deadline by a couple of hours, then your grade will see minimal points deducted. However, if you waited until the last minute to start a project, and you turn it in 1 week late, then you will see 7 days' worth of late points deducted from your final grade (a 35% reduction of your grade). These late points are *automatically* deducted from late assignments in the gradebook on D2L.

Make Up Work

Make up work is accepted on a case-by-case, instructor-approved basis. An excused, documented absence (from illness, an emergency, family death, etc.) is needed with the submission of the make-up work, or the entire assignment will not be accepted.

Important Dates

- Last day for term schedule changes: 8/27/26
- Deadline to file for December graduation: 9/21/26
- Last Day to drop with a grade of "W": 11/23/26
- Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#)

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log in to [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

Attendance

Students enrolled in the Juanita and Ralph Harvey School of Visual Arts must comply with the following department-wide Attendance and Lateness Policy:

- If you are sick... Please *don't* come to class!! We can Zoom/Facetime you in if appropriate
- Students arriving after class begins will be considered late. Students arriving 10 minutes after class begins will be counted absent.
- THREE late arrivals count as an absence.

- ***Students may be absent from class THREE times without penalty and without providing any documentation regarding the absence.**
- If students incur a FOURTH absence, their final course evaluation will be reduced by a full letter grade.
- If students are absent or late FIVE times, whatever the reason, they will receive a FAILING GRADE, be dropped from the class roll, and be asked to stop attending class.
- Example: after your 4th absence, a 90% (A) will become an 80% (B)
- Example: after your 4th absence and 3rd tardy, an 80% will become an F and you will be dropped from the course.
- Faculty members have the discretion to make exceptions to this policy based on individual circumstances.

Inclement Weather

If the university closes due to inclement weather, or I deem the road conditions to be unsafe for commuting students, our class will not shift to an online format. Any assessments, assignments, or deadlines that coincide with the closure dates will be adjusted as needed once campus reopens. I will communicate any changes or updates via D2L and email. Please monitor official university announcements during severe weather events.

Online Computer Requirements

Taking this class requires you to have access to a computer (with Internet access) to complete and upload your assignments. It is your responsibility to have (or have access to) a working computer in this class. The computers in the lab C115 are available to use unless there is another class in progress.

****Assignments and tests are due by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered a reason for the instructor to allow students extra time to submit assignments, tests, or discussion postings.*** Computers are available on campus in various areas of the buildings as well as the Academic Success Center.

***Your computer being down is not an excuse for missing a deadline!!**

There are many places to access your class! Our online classes can be accessed from any computer in the world which is connected to the internet. Contact your instructor immediately upon having computer trouble. If you have technical difficulties in the course, there is also a student helpdesk available to you. The college cannot work directly on student computers due to both liability and resource limitations, however, they are able to help you get connected to our online services. For help, log into [D2L](#).

Recording Classes

****Recording classes is generally prohibited without the professor's explicit permission.***

Recordings of my lectures or demonstrations are recordings of my intellectual, copyrighted material. Such recordings, when permitted, are for personal use only and may not be uploaded to the internet or otherwise shared, transmitted, or published without the professor's prior written consent. When it is feasible and appropriate, students may record classes to accommodate disabilities under the Americans With Disabilities Act, with prior approval of [Disability Support Services](#) (DSS). Such recordings **may not** be uploaded to the internet or otherwise shared, transmitted, or published. Please speak to DSS to establish accommodations for this class if you need them!

Change of Schedule

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exists in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

Services for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Student Wellness Center, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

Emergency Aid Resources for Basic Needs

Unexpected life circumstances can affect anyone. If you are experiencing challenges meeting basic needs—such as housing, utilities, food, transportation, healthcare, technology, textbooks or other life necessities, resources may be

available to help. Visit the [Student Emergency Support and Resources webpage](#) to learn more, and explore emergency support opportunities through MSU and how to access them. For additional information, please contact the Office of Student Affairs: Clark Student Center #108, (940) 397-7500, student.affairs@mstuexas.edu.

College Policies

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by WATC. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated smoking areas at each location.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

Campus Carry

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License to Carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

Active Shooter

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [MSUReady – Active Shooter](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled “Run. Hide. Fight.” which may be electronically accessed via the University police department’s webpage: [“Run. Hide. Fight.”](#)

Grade Appeal Process

Update as needed. Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [MSU Catalog](#)

***Notice:** Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Course Schedule:

Week	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Assignment Due & Date
Week 1 8/25 to 8/27	Syllabus & Introductions Class Expectations & Policies Introduce Neighborhood Assignment	N/A
Week 2 9/1 to 9/3	Reading Discussion: In Defense of the Poor Image - Hito Steyerl (2009) Demo: Printing Art Camp 9/3 at 9am (art majors only)	N/A
Week 3 9/8 to 9/10	Reading Discussion: Rich Meme, Poor Meme - Aria Dean (2016) Demo: File storage Video: How Not to be Seen (Steyerl) Reading Discussion: The Decisive Moment excerpt - Cartier-Bresson (1952)	N/A
Week 4 9/15 to 9/17	In-class Exercise: On-camera Flash Shooting day - Check in REQUIRED for attendance	N/A
Week 5 9/22 to 9/24	In-class exercise: Alphabetography Shooting day - Check in REQUIRED for attendance	N/A
Week 6 9/29 to 10/1	Printing Day (Mandatory) Critique: Neighborhood	"Neighborhood" due on 10/1 at 9 am
Week 7 10/6 to 10/8	Introduce Good Enough to Eat Assignment Lecture: Food Photography	N/A

Week	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Assignment Due & Date
Week 8 10/13 to 10/15	MOVIE DAY: Rear Window (1954) In-class Discussion: Rear Window Introduce Creative Lighting Assignment	N/A
Week 9 10/20	Critique day for Photo 1, 2 & 3– MANDATORY Jordan out of office 10/22 for SPE	N/A
Week 10 10/27 to 10/29	In-class Exercise: Limited Props Reading Discussion: Who is Speaking thus? - Abigail Solomon-Godeau (1986) In Class Workshop: Lumen Prints	N/A
Week 11 11/3 to 11/5	Critique: Good Enough to Eat Introduce Portraits in Disguise Lecture: Portraits in Disguise Critique day for Photo 1, 2 & 3 - MANDATORY	"Good Enough to Eat" due on 11/5 at 9 am
Week 12 11/10 to 11/12	Shooting day – Check in REQUIRED for attendance History of Photography Lecture (Part 1)	N/A
Week 13 11/17 to 11/19	History of Photography Lecture (Part 2) Printing Day	N/A
Week 14 11/24	Thanksgiving break – No class meeting this week	N/A
Week 15 12/1 to 12/3	12/1: Critique for Photo 1 - MANDATORY 12/3 Critique: Portraits in Disguise	"Portraits in Disguise" due on 12/3 at 9 am