



Course Syllabus: Photojournalism
College of Fine Arts
MCOM 3103 Section 101
MWF, noon-12:50 p.m., D202 Fain Fine Arts Center
Fall 2025, 8/25/2025-12/13/2025

Contact Information

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Course Description

Photojournalism. Introduction to creating storytelling images - print, online, and video. Includes camera operations, lighting, and composition. Course will include image-editing software and discussion of the ethical and legal implications of photojournalism.

3.000 Credit hours

3.000 Lecture hours

Course Learning Objectives

- 1/ Students will be able to set up and operate digital cameras and photo equipment effectively.
- 2/ Students will be able to use digital photo editing software effectively.
- 3/ Students will be able to apply technical skills (exposure, focus, lighting) to photojournalism work.
- 4/ Students will be able to apply creative skills (composition, rule of thirds, leading lines, perspective, depth of field, cropping) to photojournalism work.
- 5/ Students will be able to write effective photo cutlines adhering to Associated Press style.
- 6/ Students will be able to produce professional quality photojournalism work.
- 7/ Students will be able to seek out original newsworthy or feature-worthy subjects.
- 8/ Students will be able to produce and edit a coherent photo story of 10 images.
- 9/ Students will be able to explain ethical issues in photojournalism
- 10/ Students will be able to explain legal issues in photojournalism.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Required

Photojournalism: The Professional's Approach, Ken Kobre, 7th Edition (2017), Routledge. Note: This text is only available in paperback format.

Required Equipment

Students are required to obtain at least one SD photo card (128 GB or larger, 250 MPS, v60), an SD card reader with USB-C cable for Apple (to transfer images to the Mac) and an external hard drive with USB-C cable for Apple (to save your work).

Equipment Checkout

The MSU Mass Communication Department provides nine camera kits for students in this photojournalism class (Canon EOS R7 digital mirrorless camera body, Canon 18-150 RF zoom lens, two batteries, battery charger, microphone, cleaning kit, filters and camera backpack). There are also three professional Canon 70-200 F 2.8 zoom lenses. All equipment is available for students to check out in this photojournalism class. Procedures for checkout will be provided in class; these procedures must be strictly followed. Checkout is available for 24-hour periods; equipment must be returned on time to provide availability for all students in the class.

Student Handbook

See [Student Handbook](#)

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). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct.

[Office of Student Conduct](#)

Grading

Table 1: Assignments/Grade weights.

Assignments	Weight
In-class Learning Assignments	20%
Photojournalism Assignments	40%
Mid-term Exam	20%
Term Project	20%
Total %	100%

Table 2: Total percentage for final grade.

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

In-Class Learning Assignments

Graded in-class learning assignments will be conducted during many class meetings. These are designed to enhance student understanding of professional principles and practices. Students will discuss in small groups and then contribute to full class discussion on professional topics. Students who actively, meaningfully participate will receive full credit; those who don't will receive no credit. No makeups will be available for in-class learning assignments.

Photojournalism Assignments

Students will complete 9 individual photojournalism assignments during the semester (40% of your course grade) including technical 1, technical 2, portrait, food, fashion, sports, architecture, landscape and tourism. These will be graded based on technical quality, aesthetic quality, news or feature value and cutline writing quality.

Exams

There will be one exam, a mid-term exam (20% of your final course grade) The mid-term exam will be administered on 10/13. The exam will be timed.

Projects Required

Students will work on an individual term project (20% of your final course grade). The final product will be a photo story with 10 images. The term project will be due 12/5 and will be presented 12/10, 3:30-5:30 p.m.

Mid-Term Exam

The written mid-term exam (20% of your final course grade) will be administered on 10/13 during the regular class period. This exam will be timed.

Final Exam

The individual term project will constitute your final exam (20% of your final course grade). The term project will be due 12/5 and will be presented 12/10, 3:30-5:30 p.m.

Extra Credit

There will be no extra credit assignments.

Late Work

Late work turned in by 11:59 p.m. on the due date, will receive a 20-point penalty. After that, no late work will be accepted and will receive a zero grade.

Make Up Work/Tests

Students who have legitimate university accepted reasons for missing photojournalism assignments and the mid-term exam will be allowed to make up the mid-term exam; the professor will schedule makeups as soon as the student returns to campus. There will be no makeups for the term project nor in-class learning assignments.

Important Dates

Last day for term schedule changes: 8/28/2025

Deadline to file for graduation: 9/22/2025

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" 11/24/2025

See [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#) for more information.

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 into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all meetings of the classes in which they are enrolled on-time. Students should miss no more than three class meetings during the semester.

Instructor Class Policies

Students are expected to fully engage in the course by reading and studying BEFORE each class, arriving on time and attending each class. Professional, respectful behavior is expected. Do not play with phones, laptops, tablets or any other devices during class.

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 Clark Student Center, Room 168, (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](#).

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 has 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

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

Be sure to read, study and think about the topics for each class BEFORE coming to class each class meeting.

Week	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
Week 1 8/25 8/27 8/29	Welcome, Intro, How to Excel, Photo Assignments Camera set up/Camera Operation Checkout Procedure	8/25 8/27 8/29
Week 2 9/1 9/3 9/5	Labor Day holiday Ch 1/ Assignment/Where to Find News Exposure, Depth of Field, Rule of Thirds, Leading Lines, Perspective, Shutter Speed, Visual Variety	9/1 9/3 9/5
Week 3 9/8 9/10 9/12	Ch 7/ Cropping/Editing for Photojournalism Digital Editing Photoj Assign 1/ Technical 1 due	9/8 9/10 9/12
Week 4 9/15 9/17 9/19	Ch 2/ News Ch 3/ General News Ch 4/ Features	9/15 9/17 9/19

Week	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
Week 5 9/22 9/24 9/26	Ch 5/ Portraits Cropping/Editing portraits Photoj Assign 2/ Technical 2 due	9/22 9/24 9/26
Week 6 9/29 10/1 10/3	Food Photojournalism Food Photojournalism Photoj Assign 3/ Portrait due	9/29 10/1 10/3
Week 7 10/6 10/8 10/10	Fashion Photojournalism Fashion Photojournalism Photoj Assign 4/ Food due	10/6 10/8 10/10
Week 8 10/13 10/15 10/17	Mid-term Exam Ch 6/ Sports Photoj Assign 5/ Fashion due	10/13 10/15 10/17
Week 9 10/20 10/22 10/24	Ch 6/ Sports Ch 8/ Camera Bag/Equipment Ch 15/ Ethics	10/20 10/22 10/24
Week 10 10/27 10/29 10/31	Photoj Assign 6/ Sports due Photoj Assign 7/ Architecture due Ch 16/ Law	10/27 10/29 10/31
Week 11 11/3 11/5 11/7	Ch 17/ History Ch 17/ History Edit Photoj Assignment 8/Landscape in class	11/3 11/5 11/7
Week 12 11/10 11/12 11/14	Photoj Assign 8/ Landscape due Ch 10/ Covering the Issues Ch 11/ Photo Story	11/10 11/12 11/14
Week 13 11/17 11/19 11/21	Edit Photoj Assign 9/ Tourism in class Edit Photoj Assign 9/ Tourism in class Photoj Assign 9 due/ Tourism due	11/17 11/19 11/21
Week 14 11/24 11/26 11/28	First Draft/ Term Project Photo Story Due Thanksgiving holiday Thanksgiving holiday	11/24 11/26 11/28

Week	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
Week 15 12/1 12/3 12/5	Edit Term Project Photo Story in Class Edit Term Project Photo Story in Class Final Draft Term Project Photo Story Due	12/1 12/3 12/5
Week 16 Final Exam Period 12/10 3:30-5:30 p.m.	Final Project Photo Story Presentations Due	12/10 3:30-5:30 p.m.