Art 482 History of Photography (from its Origins to WWII) Spring 2018
The Photographic Image In Modern and Contemporary Context: The Ideas, the Images, and Some Image Makers, 1945—Present
Instructor: Dr. David A. Lewis, AR 101A, Phone 468-4328
Office Hours: M/W 3:30-5:00pm, T/R 3:30-5:00pm, F 9:00-11:50am, and by appointment
Class meets T/R, 2—3:15PM
Handouts will be provided, with selective readings to be assigned as appropriate.

Highly recommended for graduate students, and recommended for Undergraduates,

(some of the handouts are from this book, but the whole book provides useful and sometimes powerful insights on the art of photography and how we can understand and interpret it.)

For contemporary trends, see these current publications: Aperture and Blind Spot Magazine. There are numerous photography sites on the web, from “fan-based” sites and artist’s blogs, to notices by commercial galleries, professional foundations, photography programs, museum sites: all can be useful. ArtDaily.org often features notices on photography exhibitions, auction sales/records, etc.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Art 482B/582B provides an intensive examination of the major ideas, themes and some of the controversies germane to photography created after W.W.II and to the present. The course surveys the work of major individual artist photographers and their work, as well as provide further examples by less well known photographers. Working within the framework of an “Art in Context” approach, lectures and discussions will examine representative works not only in terms of formal conventions and innovations, but also with the idea of placing them within the broader historical milieu. The instructor encourages lively discussion among the students, who may wish to explore more fully certain issues raised in either the class lectures or assigned readings.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES:
Students who successfully complete ART 482/582 will demonstrate competency in understanding the core principles, events, theory and practice of photography as an art form from the Postwar years through the early 21st century. They will demonstrate: 1) an ability to identify and describe the significance of major photographers, 2) be able to identify representative examples of photography in fine arts, fashion, and popular culture for the period, 3) a mastery of the core theoretical principles of postwar, pop, and postmodern photography as a broad historical phenomena, and 4) articulate aspects of the interaction between photography and other visual arts of the period.

STUDENT EVALUATION:
Students will be assigned according to their performance on three examinations (100 pts each, consisting of essays and objective questions), a term project (50 pts., keeping a weekly journal, with notes from readings, guest speakers and films viewed for the course, copies of handouts, other documents you may collect, and your own thoughts about photographs and photographic issues you find of interest), and class participation (50 pts., which includes: both attending class regularly and being involved in class discussions, attending the Photofest Houston field trip on April 6th). Grades: A 380-400; B 360-379; C 340-359; D 300-339
ADVISORY: This course is not for the faint of heart: It necessarily presents and discusses some imagery of an explicit nature, i.e., photographs that explore controversial subject matter (human sexuality, violence, death and disease, religion, atheism, crime and punishment, war, the ecology, politics, prejudice, and just about anything else that could be upsetting to someone, anyone, or everyone at some point in their lives.) This is the nature of the photograph of the last and current generations.

NOTE: This schedule is subject to change at the instructor’s discretion.

PART 1 INTRODUCTORY TOPICS AND ISSUES

Week#: Topics and Reading assignments:

   Modernist Strategies and Typologies in the Photographic Arts.

PART II. STREET PHOTOGRAPHY

   Readings: Handout on Cartier-Bresson
   Word War II and its Aftermath: ‘The Family of Man’ in a House Divided; Robert Frank and the American Road
   Readings: Handout.

4. Feb. 5, 7. Urbane and Mundane—City Life and Ordinary Experience
   Readings: to be assigned.

PART III. STRAIGHT ART PHOTOGRAPHY AT MIDCENTURY

5. Feb. 12, 14. In Evidence: Traces of Traces
   Readings: Handout
   What is the Sugar Doing in the Salt? Or Objects Objectified
   Readings: Handout


PART IV. PORTRAIT AND FASHION PHOTOGRAPHY, ca. 1940—1980

7. Feb. 26, 28. “All Avedon All the Time, Everywhere, and Inescapably So!”
   Film “Darkness and Light,” class discussion
8. March 5, 7.  *Camera Pictura: The Imaging Studio*
   Readings: none.

   Readings: Handout

10. March 26, 28.  *We See What We See—Observations on the “Gaze”*
   Readings: Handout

PART V. PHOTOGRAPHY IN THE POSTMODERN AGE, Part I, ca. 1965—1995

11. April 2, 4.  *On the Meaning of Nature in the Information Age*
   Readings: Handout

   Readings: none.

PART VI. POSMODERN TO CONTEMPORARY POSTPHOTOGRAPHIC ARTS

   Readings: Handout

   Readings: Handout

15. April 30, May 2.  “Seeing and Being: Are We What We See?”
   Readings: Handout
   *Postscript on Post-photographic Art*
   Readings: none

*Final Exam (Consult official exam schedule)*