Art 482 History of Photography (from its Origins to WWII)  Spring 2019
Course Syllabus

M/W 2:30 – 3:45 P.M.  Class Room: AR 106
Instructor: Dr. David A. Lewis, AR 123A, e-mail: dlewis@sfasu.edu; phone ext. 4328
Office Hours: M/W 1:30—2:30pm, T/R 3:30—5:00; Fri. 9—10:50, 1:00—4:00, by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course surveys the history of photography from its origins to World War II, through slide presentations, readings, discussions and a project. We will explore photography primarily as an art form and consider its relationship to other artistic media in cultural contexts. To that end we will examine important movements, photographers, theoretical and technical innovations as we investigate photography’s broader role in the visual arts.

Learning Outcomes:
This Course meets the following School of Art Program Learning Outcomes:

   Undergraduate students will comprehend basic principles, ideas and issues germane to the History of Art, through their foundation level art history instruction. (Competency Reinforced and in upper level course).

   Undergraduate students will exhibit proficiency in the application of technical and problem solving skills appropriate to their designated concentration, as well as developing individual creativity: Art Education, Art History and Art Studio (Advertising Design, Art Metal/Jewelry, Ceramics, Cinematography, Digital Media, Drawing, Painting, Photography, Printmaking, Sculpture).

   Undergraduate students will compare their progress against models of excellence in the visual arts, which are provided through high quality extracurricular and extramural art activities.

   Undergraduate students will design and implement art activities that increase the prominence, visibility and attendance to these events by the larger art community appropriate to their designated field.

This Course meets the following School of Art Student Learning Outcomes:

   Students who successfully complete ART 482 will demonstrate competency in understanding the core principles, events, theory and practice of Photographic history with a cultural context from its origins up to World War II. Students will demonstrate: 1) ability to identify and know the significance of major photographers, and 2) critical debate in its place in art history; 3) be able to identify representative works of photography in a broad range of media and processes from photograms and Daguerreotypes through Silver Gelatin, Autochrome and Kodochrome Prints; 4) mastery of the core principles of 19th-century and Early 20th-century photography as a broad cultural phenomena and 5) within the context of specific periods/movements, of the 19th-century, including naturalism and pictorialism, and 6) of specific Modernist movements of the early 20th century (Cubism, Vorticism, Futurism, Dada and Surrealism, Expressionism, and Strait Photography; and 7) a core understanding of Photography’s role in Journalism, Fashion and popular culture during these periods. The students will be able to address the seven questions noted below as key aspects to understanding 19th-century and Early 20th-Century American Art.

We will consider the following broad questions to gain a fuller understanding of the period:

   What was the artist photographer’s function in society?
   What role did photographic arts organizations and institutions have in shaping the art scene?
   How did the development of art criticism and the rise of the popular press have in shaping the
perception of photographic media in the art of the 19th-20th centuries and into our own times?

How did photographic artists’ understanding of: a) developments in science and technology; b) psychology and medicine; c) their level of engagement with philosophical, religious and political theory; and d) how their awareness of the major events of their times and may have effected their work (and vice versa)?

How did photographic art reflect changing attitudes toward nature?

How did photographic art reflect changing notions of identity in terms of religion, and the politics of class, race, gender, and self-determination?

How did photographic artists use imagery, whether prosaic, dramatic, or comedic, to achieve their objectives?

Many of the photographs shown in class will not be illustrated in the textbook. Slide lists detailing the objects to be shown during exams will be distributed one week prior to the examination date. Any testable images not found in the book will be accessible on the web or otherwise provided by the instructor, such as D2L.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

Students will be assigned grades according to their performance on three exams (including the final), a term project, and class participation. Exams consist of slide IDs, short answer and slide comparison essays. Short answer questions may address specific individuals, processes, or terminology. Generally, the slide comparison essays require students to consider the photographers and their work in terms of their style, that is, to discuss their underlying goals and motivations, media and technique, and approach to design—for high marks, students also need to explain the significance of the images within historical context and social milieu. In order for you to do this most effectively, you will need to attend lectures (we will examine several photographers and works not discussed in the textbook) and read the assignments. Guidelines and potential topics for term projects will be provided in a separate handout. Students are expected to attend class regularly and to keep up with the reading assignments. Three excused absences only are permitted without consequence, beyond that, course grade for the term are subject to reduction by one half-letter grade for each additional absence for a maximum of six absences (including excused absences). The accumulation of seven absences constitutes failure to complete the course and will result in an F or QF grade for the term. Students who find, for whatever reason, that they are unable to meet attendance requirements are strongly encouraged to withdraw from the course by the twelfth class day.

Final grades are based on the following:
Exam #1: 25%
Exam #2: 25%
Exam #3: 25%
Term project: 25%

TEXTBOOK:
[Additional readings to be provided in handouts.]

COURSE SCHEDULE

Class introduction: discussion of ways of seeing and thinking about photography.

Week 3. Feb. 4, 6.
   Face to Face: Daguerre and Early Photographic Portraiture.

   The Legacy of William Henry Fox Talbot, the Rise of the Calotype and the Ubiquitous
   Photograph.

   The Speculum Mundi or “Mirror of the World”—Photography and Early Representations of
   Landscape, Architecture, Still life.
   Readings: Hand out.

Week 5. Feb. 18, 20.
   Victorian Material Vision and Photographic Invention: Pictures on Glass & Tin, the
   Carte de Viste and the Photo Album

Week 6. Feb. 25, 27. **First Exam, Feb. 25th**
   The Studio Tradition and Stereoscopic Vision
   Readings: Hirsch, pp. 68—76.

Week 7. March 4, 6.
   Picturing the Realities of Modern Life, pt. 1: Conflict and War.
   Readings: Hirsch, pp. 77—90.

   A New Medium of Communication: A Convergence of Science and Art
   Readings: 91—106.

   Transparent Truths? Or Fictional Narratives “Seen Through a Glass Darkly?”
   Readings: 107—130.

   **Spring Break: March 16—24th**

Week 9. March 25, 27.

   Motion and the Blur Aesthetic: Photography, Impressionism, and the Ever-present Now.
   Readings: handout to be provided.

Week 10. April 1, 3.
   The Hand Held Camera, The Snapshot and the Motion Picture

   Art and Photography, Part I: Naturalism, Pictorialism and the Photo-Secession.
   Readings: Hirsch, pp. 147—169.

Week 11. April 8, 10. **Second Exam, April 8th**
   Art Photography, Part II: Photography and Modern Art
Week 12. April 15, 17.
   Photography and Modern Art, continued.

   Photography as an Independent Art: The New Culture of Light and “Straight” Photography
   Readings: Hirsch, pp. 191-200

   FILM UND FOTO and New Objectivity; Materializing the Surrealist Dream

   Defining an Era: Photography as a Social Document

Week 15. May 6, 8.
   Photography of the Second World War.
   Readings: 249—274.

Week 16. May 13—17
   Final Exam check online exam schedule or Art Office door for time.