

**College of San Mateo**  
**Official Course Outline**

1. **COURSE ID:** ART 396    **TITLE:** Documentary Photography 1  
**Units:** 3.0 units    **Hours/Semester:** 24.0-27.0 Lecture hours; 72.0-81.0 Lab hours; and 48.0-54.0 Homework hours  
**Method of Grading:** Letter Grade Only  
**Prerequisite:** ART 381

2. **COURSE DESIGNATION:**  
**Degree Credit**  
**Transfer credit:** CSU; UC

3. **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS:**  
**Catalog Description:**

Designed for students with digital photography skills. Students create two portfolios of documentary photographs. Lectures address the history of documentary photography, social impact and how to convey information with clarity and honesty. A major emphasis is choosing a project and developing a point of view. Class critiques guide each project. A materials fee as shown in the Schedule of Classes is payable upon registration.

4. **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME(S) (SLO'S):**

Upon successful completion of this course, a student will meet the following outcomes:

1. Demonstrate their knowledge of documentary photographers
2. Create a portfolio of documentary photographs that directly interact with the subject
3. Demonstrate through their photographs an adherence to truthful digital editing
4. Critically analyze their own work, the work of their peers and the work of professional photographers

5. **SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES:**

Upon successful completion of this course, a student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate through their photographs a knowledge of historical and contemporary documentary photographers
2. Understand the significance and adherence to truth in this digital age of digital manipulation
3. Create a portfolio of documentary photographs.
4. Critically analyze their own work, the work of their peers and the work of professional photographers

6. **COURSE CONTENT:**

**Lecture Content:**

**Lecture: History**

Significant documentary photographs  
Significant photojournalistic photographs  
Social impact

**Lecture: Ethics**

Conveying information with honesty and clarity  
Avoidance of manipulation

**Lecture: Point of view**

Develop a point of view  
Establish a unique vision

**Lecture: Editing**

Choosing a project and fully investing in its development and completion  
Editing a suite of images

**Lecture: Critique**

Working with an editor  
Presenting the photographic essay or story

## **Lecture/Demo: Mat Cutting and Presentation**

- Function of the overmat
- Acid free tape
- Linen tape
- Burnishing

### **Lab Content:**

**Objective: Students will demonstrate through their photographs a knowledge of historical and contemporary documentary photographers.**

Using the book: "A World History of Photography" By Naomi Rosenblum, which provides solid historical perspective, students will breakout into in small discussion groups.

**Objective: Create a portfolio of documentary photographs.**

1. Students will work in the computer and printing lab where they will import their photos from the camera's memory card onto their personal hard drives.
2. They will separate those photographs into collections using digital software to sort those photographs into several projects.
3. Those photographs will be prioritized into groupings using a hierarchy of most too least successful.
4. Students will meet with the instructor who will further prioritize those photographs.
5. Upon further editing students will place their strongest photos on the server for a class critique for group feedback.

**Objective: Students will understand the significance and adherence to truth in this age of digital manipulation.**

1. Each student will weigh the comments of the class and instructor to make decisions about their projects.
2. After committing to the project, students will continue it's development to it's completion.

**Objective: Students will critically analyze the work of their peers, and the work of professional photographers.**

1. Students will interact in the lab session, discussing their project and those of professional photographers that they discover on the web.
2. Photos will be exported to the server for printing proofs. They will be placed on the viewing board and the instructor will guide them in the digital editing process, suggesting:
  - Cropping and aspect ratio management.
  - Fine tuning of global adjustments, color balance, contrast and density for black and white images.
  - Students will make necessary changes and print the second, third and possibly fourth proofs.
  - Final prints will be made, trimmed and museum mounted using professional mat board and signed.

## **7. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:**

Typical methods of instruction may include:

- A. Lecture
- B. Lab
- C. Activity
- D. Critique
- E. Directed Study
- F. Discussion
- G. Field Experience
- H. Individualized Instruction
- I. Observation and Demonstration

## **8. REPRESENTATIVE ASSIGNMENTS**

Representative assignments in this course may include, but are not limited to the following:

### **Writing Assignments:**

- A. Write a paper on a documentary photographer.

### **Reading Assignments:**

- A. Read a biography or critical analysis that focuses on a documentary photographer.

### **Other Outside Assignments:**

- A. Expose and catalog approximately 1000 photographs, before final editing that incorporate a documentary approach to photography.
- B. Create a portfolio of approximately twelve photographs that demonstrate a documentary approach to photography.

## 9. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF EVALUATION

Representative methods of evaluation may include:

- A. Class Participation
- B. Class Performance
- C. Homework
- D. Lab Activities
- E. Papers
- F. Portfolios
- G. Projects
- H. Research Projects
- I. Critiques: Students will turn in a portfolio of prints for critique and grading. They are required to participate in the critiques and respond to the photographs of other students in the class.

## 10. REPRESENTATIVE TEXT(S):

Possible textbooks include:

- A. Naomi Rosenblum. *A World History of Photography*, ed. Perseus Distribution Service, 2011

**Origination Date:** November 2020

**Curriculum Committee Approval Date:** December 2020

**Effective Term:** Fall 2021

**Course Originator:** Richard Lohmann