PHOT 40: DARKROOM PHOTOGRAPHY

In Workflow

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Approval Path

1. 2026-10-15T15:45:29Z
   Marcy Wacker (wacker): Approved for DOD Committee Chair
2. 2026-10-15T16:05:39Z
   Richard Pratt (rpratt): Approved for DOD Chair
3. 2026-10-21T19:04:16Z
   Rebekkah Mulholland (rebekkah.mulholland): Approved for ALS College Committee Chair
4. 2026-10-22T00:35:47Z
   Matt Schmidtlein (schmidmc): Approved for ALS Dean

History

1. Jun 13, 2025 by Douglas Dertinger (dderting)

Date Submitted: 2026-10-12T23:17:34Z

Viewing: PHOT 40 : Darkroom Photography
Last approved: Fri, 13 Jun 2025 18:06:19 GMT
Last edit: 2026-10-12T23:17:32Z

Changes proposed by: Nick Shepard (218680229)

Contact(s):

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Catalog Title:
Darkroom Photography

Class Schedule Title:
Darkroom Photography

Academic Group: (College)
ALS - Arts & Letters

Academic Organization: (Department)
Design

Will this course be offered through the College of Continuing Education (CCE)?
No

Catalog Year Effective:
Fall 2027 (2027/2028 Catalog)

Subject Area: (prefix)
PHOT - Photography

Catalog Number: (course number)
40

Course ID: (For administrative use only.)
157901

Units:
3

Is the ONLY purpose of this change to update the term typically offered or the enforcement of existing requisites at registration?
No

In what term(s) will this course typically be offered?
Fall, Spring

Does this course require a room for its final exam?
No, final exam does not require a room

This course complies with the credit hour policy:
Yes

Justification for course proposal:
This proposal updates PHOT 40 and seeks designation as a General Education Area 3A (Arts) course. The course's learning outcomes and assessments have been revised to align with Area 3A requirements, emphasizing photographic production, aesthetic and critical judgment, and the relationship between artistic practice and cultural context.

Course Description: (Not to exceed 90 words and language should conform to catalog copy.)
Course covers basic concepts and skills in chemical-process photography. Emphasis is placed on basic camera theory, film exposure and development, darkroom printing, and post processing techniques. Lectures, discussions, and assignments provide artistic and historical context for the creation and interpretation of photographic images.

Are one or more field trips required with this course?
No

Fee Course?
No

Is this course designated as Service Learning?
No

Is this course designated as Curricular Community Engaged Learning?
No

Does this course require safety training?
Yes

Does this course require personal protective equipment (PPE)?
Yes

Course Note: (Note must be a single sentence; do not include field trip or fee course notations.)
This course requires safety training

Does this course have prerequisites?
No

Does this course have corequisites?
No

Graded:
Letter

Approval required for enrollment?
No Approval Required

Course Component(s) and Classification(s):
Laboratory

Laboratory Classification
CS#13 - Technical Activity/Laboratory, involving business machines (K-factor=1.3 WTU per unit)

Laboratory Units
3

Is this a paired course?
No

Is this course crosslisted?
No

Can this course be repeated for credit?
No

Can the course be taken for credit more than once during the same term?
No

Description of the Expected Learning Outcomes and Assessment Strategies:

List the Expected Learning Outcomes and their accompanying Assessment Strategies (e.g., portfolios, examinations, performances, pre-and post-tests, conferences with students, student papers). Click the plus sign to add a new row.

	Expected Learning Outcome	Assessment Strategies
1	Control camera settings to achieve appropriate photographic exposures.	Technical exams Photographic projects
2	Apply black-and-white film processing techniques to produce photographic negatives.	Technical exams Photographic projects
3	Produce silver-gelatin photographic prints demonstrating attention to tonal quality, finishing, and presentation.	Technical exams Photographic projects Critiques
4	Create photographic images that use visual form to communicate meaning.	Photographic projects Critiques Class discussions Informal written responses
5	Analyze photographic images using relevant aesthetic principles, artistic and cultural contexts, and disciplinary vocabulary.	Class discussions Critiques Informal written responses

Attach a list of the required/recommended course readings and activities:
PHOT40_PossibleProjects.pdf

Is this course required in a degree program (major, minor, graduate degree, certificate?)
Yes

Has a corresponding Program Change been submitted to Workflow?
No

Identify the program(s) in which this course is required:

Programs:
BFA in Photography

Does the proposed change or addition cause a significant increase in the use of College or University resources (lab room, computer)?
No

Will there be any departments affected by this proposed course?
No

I/we as the author(s) of this course proposal agree to provide a new or updated accessibility checklist to the Dean's office prior to the semester when this course is taught utilizing the changes proposed here.

I/we agree

University Learning Goals

Undergraduate Learning Goals:

Competence in the disciplines
Knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world
Intellectual and practical skills
Personal and social responsibility
Integrative learning

Is this course required as part of a teaching credential program, a single subject, or multiple subject waiver program (e.g., Liberal Studies, Biology) or other school personnel preparation program (e.g., School of Nursing)?

No

Is this a General Education (GE) or Graduation Requirement (GR) course or is it being considered for GE/GR?

Is this a General Education (GE) course or is it being considered for GE?

Yes

In which GE area(s) does this apply?

3A. Arts

Which GE objective(s) does this course satisfy?

Develop an acquaintance and understanding of cultures and major dynamic social institutions which affect one's life.

Attach Course Syllabus with Detailed Outline of Weekly Topics:

PHOT40_Syllabus_FormA-GE3A.docx

Syllabi must include: GE area outcomes listed verbatim; catalog description of the course; prerequisites, if any; student learning objectives; assignments; texts; reading lists; materials; grading system; exams and other methods of evaluation.

Will more than one section of this course be offered?

Yes

Provide a description of what would be considered common to all sections and what might typically vary between sections:

All sections will introduce the fundamental theories and techniques involved in using a camera to expose silver gelatin film, chemically developing that film, and producing silver gelatin prints in a chemical darkroom. Each section will also address the basic analysis and critique of photographic forms, modes of communication through photographic images, and qualitative evaluation of technical and aesthetic quality. Students in all sections will be assessed on a common set of foundational technical skills. Although the specific projects may vary by instructor, all sections will require students to produce photographic work informed by readings and concepts from the field. Supporting readings may also vary according to the instructor's selected projects and areas of emphasis.

Please write a statement indicating the means and methods for evaluating the extent to which the objectives of the GE Area(s) and any writing requirements are met for all course sections:

Each semester, prior to the start of classes, the Photography Program Coordinator will review course syllabi to ensure that all GE Area 3A learning objectives are represented and that the course includes appropriate reading assignments and discussion of those readings. For assessment purposes, examinations and assessment results, project descriptions, and representative project samples will be collected and reviewed annually by the full-time Photography faculty. The faculty's annual evaluation will include recommendations for the following academic year.

What steps does the department plan to take to ensure that instructors comply with the respective category criteria and who is responsible?

Each semester, prior to the start of classes, the Photography Program Coordinator will review course syllabi to ensure that instructors address the GE Area 3A learning objectives, incorporate appropriate readings, and include discussion of those readings. Annually, the full-time Photography faculty will collect and review examinations and assessment results, project descriptions, and representative project samples to evaluate student achievement of the category criteria. A departmental assessment committee will also review GE Area 3A assessments annually and provide recommendations for the following academic year. The Photography Program Coordinator, full-time Photography faculty, and departmental assessment committee share responsibility for monitoring compliance and recommending any necessary curricular or instructional adjustments.

General Education - Area 3A: Arts

Section 1.

Indicate in written statements how the course meets the following criteria for Area 3A. Relate the statements to the course syllabus and outline. Be as succinct as possible.

General criteria:

Indicate how the course is introductory and has no prerequisites.

The course is introductory because it begins with fundamental concepts and skills in chemical-process photography, including camera operation, film exposure and development, darkroom procedures, and basic printing techniques. Instruction progresses from basic camera and exposure exercises to film processing, contact printing, enlargements, print finishing, and the creation of increasingly complex photographic projects. No prior coursework or technical experience is required; the syllabus lists no prerequisites and provides foundational instruction, demonstrations, and guided laboratory practice for all students.

Indicate how the course is broad in scope or survey in nature.

PHOT 40 is broad in scope because it introduces students to the essential practices and concepts of chemical-process photography, including camera operation, exposure, black-and-white film processing, contact printing, enlargements, print finishing, and photographic presentation. The course also surveys the ways photographic images communicate meaning through visual form, supported by readings, image discussions, critiques, and consideration of artistic and historical contexts. A sequence of varied projects gives students experience with multiple approaches to photographic production and interpretation.

Specific criteria:

Indicate in written statements how the course meets each of the following Learning Criteria for Area 3A. Relate the statements to the course syllabus and outline. Be as succinct as possible.

Think conceptually and critically about medium, performance or presentation, and production for at least one art form.

PHOT 40 helps students think conceptually and critically about photography as an artistic medium through the integration of technical instruction, creative production, and critical discussion. Students learn how camera settings, film exposure, chemical processing, enlargement, print finishing, and presentation affect the appearance and meaning of photographic work. Through readings, image discussions, examinations, project critiques, and individual feedback, students evaluate how photographic choices communicate ideas and refine their own work in response to technical and conceptual considerations.

Demonstrate knowledge of artistic production, aesthetic properties, and the way creative work is shaped by artistic and cultural forces.

PHOT 40 develops students' knowledge of artistic production through hands-on experience with camera operation, film exposure and processing, darkroom printing, print finishing, and presentation. Students examine aesthetic properties such as tonal quality, composition, visual form, and technical execution while producing and evaluating their own photographic work. Readings, lectures, image discussions, and critiques place photographic production within artistic and historical contexts, helping students understand how creative choices, materials, technologies, and cultural contexts shape the meaning and interpretation of photographic images.

Have an acquaintance with a broad understanding of artistic forms, genres, and cultural sources.

with an acquaintance with varied artistic forms and genres within photography through projects that include introductory, portrait, narrative, and independently developed photographic work. Readings, lectures, image discussions, and critiques expose students to photographic practices and cultural sources that inform the creation and interpretation of images. By studying how photographic images communicate through visual form and context, students develop a broad introductory understanding of photography as an artistic discipline.

Be able to develop and defend informed judgments about creative work

PHOT 40 helps students develop and defend informed judgments about creative work through regular image discussions, project critiques, readings, and examinations. Students evaluate photographic images and their own work using aesthetic principles, technical criteria, artistic and cultural contexts, and disciplinary vocabulary. Through the iterative process of darkroom printing, students evaluate successive prints and make adjustments to exposure, contrast, and local tonal values to refine their work. Critiques require students to articulate and support their interpretations, respond to feedback, and make reasoned judgments about the effectiveness of photographic choices, including composition, tonal quality, craft, presentation, and meaning.

Includes a writing component described on course syllabus

l) If course is lower division, formal and/or informal writing assignments encouraging students to think through course concepts using at least one of the following: periodic lab reports, exams which include essay questions, periodic formal writing assignments, periodic journals, reading logs, other. Writing in lower division courses need not be graded, but must, at a minimum, be evaluated for clarity and proper handling of terms, phrases, and concepts related to the course.

2) If course is upper division, a minimum of 1500 words of formal, graded writing. [Preferably there should be more than one formal writing assignment and each writing assignment (e.g. periodic lab reports, exams which include essay questions, a research/term paper etc.) should be due in stages throughout the semester to allow the writer to revise after receiving feedback from the instructor. Include an indication of how writing is to be evaluated and entered into course grade determination.]

The syllabus evidences this requirement through assigned readings, written preparation for examinations, two technical examinations, and a written-work policy requiring any formal writing to be typed, proofread, and evaluated for both content and syntax. These activities encourage students to use course terminology and concepts related to camera operation, film processing, photographic technique, visual form, and artistic context. The syllabus also states that written work is assessed for clarity, grammar, and content, satisfying the requirement that student writing be evaluated for clear and accurate handling of relevant terms, phrases, and concepts.

Section 2.

If you would like, you may provide further information that might help the G.E. Course Review Committee understand how this course meets these criteria and/or the G.E. Program Objectives found in the CSUS Policy Manual, General Education Program, Section I.B.

PHOT 40 introduces students to photography as both an artistic medium and a means of interpreting and representing the world. Through hands-on experience with black-and-white film photography, students develop technical skills alongside visual literacy, critical thinking, and creative problem-solving. The deliberate pace of film photography and the iterative process of darkroom printing encourage close observation, thoughtful decision-making, and reflection on the relationship between photographic choices and visual meaning. Lectures, image discussions, and critiques introduce students to historical and contemporary photographic practices and encourage them to consider how images communicate ideas within artistic and cultural contexts. The course offers students from across disciplines an opportunity to engage directly with artistic production while developing skills in observation, interpretation, and critical judgment.

The attached Possible Projects document provides examples of the photographic assignments through which students develop technical proficiency, explore visual expression, and exercise critical judgment through the iterative processes of photographic production and printing.

Please attach any additional files not requested above:

PHOT40_PossibleProjects.pdf

Key: 3894