

Digital Photography Syllabus

Semester I - Fall 2026

Instructor: Ms. Joni Conner

Email: artsiejones@gmail.com

Course Description, Expectations, and Goals

This course is an exploration of the theories and methods of photography as both a historic as well as a contemporary art medium for the digital age. Students will become acquainted with the fundamental concepts and formal language of photography to achieve a working knowledge of the basic techniques of photography through project work. Students will also develop an ability to interpret and discuss photography in terms of aesthetic and conceptual issues. This course emphasizes the artistic process, including composition, lighting, perspective, and storytelling through imagery.

By the end of the course, students will have developed (photography pun intended) an understanding of...

- The history of cameras and photography
- How a camera works and be able to identify the parts of the camera and explain their function
- The ability to properly operate the controls and functions of the camera
- An understanding of light theory and the basic principles of lighting
- The ability to analyze and properly use depth-of-field, shutter speed, aperture settings, use of lens focal lengths, and exposure controls
- The ability to demonstrate an understanding of visual literacy, aesthetics, design, and contemporary criticism in the development of the student's work
- The ability to critically and intelligently discuss their work and the work of fellow students during critiques
- The ability to synthesize and incorporate creative approaches to both subject matter and format in their own photographic works.

Discussions and Projects

The course will consist of a series of technical and historical discussions along with a series of projects which will incorporate personal concepts and perceptions relating to structured topics. Each project will be introduced and explained in class every other week and then there will be in class critiques requiring class participation on the due date.

Required Materials

It is important that students bring basic photography materials and supplies to every class:

- Digital SLR camera, battery, and memory card (provided)
- Photographic Editing Software of choice
- Note taking supplies (optional)
- An open mind and a love of Art

Policies

Attendance is essential. Students are expected to attend all classes, to arrive on time, to remain until the end of each class, and to come to class prepared. Each assignment must be completed on time. Late work will not be accepted. Please let me know if there is an emergency situation or serious problem. **Please turn off cell phones before bringing them into the classroom.**

Academic Integrity

Academic fraud is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Cheating and plagiarism (and all other forms of academic fraud — **such as the use of AI**) will result in serious consequences. Per the Torah High Student handbook: *Cheating is a serious offense. If a student copies work or allows work to be copied they will receive a zero on the assignment or test. Any student caught cheating, risks severe disciplinary action.*

Computer-Rendered Artificial Pictures (CRAP) - A“I” Policy

Additionally and slightly alluded to above, AI “art” is **NOT** art. Any use of AI in my class will automatically earn you a ticket out of my class and/or a big whopping F. This includes not only images but also the use of AI for writing or any other aspect of any assignments.

I proudly scorn, have never, and will never use AI. Neither will you at least in my classes. No exceptions. Do not pass GO, do not collect \$200. Boom. Done. ChatGPSEYOUNEVER!

Please see these resources regarding AI/CRAP when it comes to art for further information:

<https://www.theintrinsicperspective.com/p/ai-art-isnt-art>

<https://www.newyorker.com/culture/the-weekend-essay/why-ai-isnt-going-to-make-art>

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2025/may/20/ai-art-concerns-originality-connection>

<https://goodlawproject.org/ai-giants-are-stealing-our-creative-work/>

Further questions? See me privately.

Important Dates to Remember

Date	Topic
Aug 25	First day, introductions, formalities . . .
Sep 1	<i>Project 1 Assigned</i>
Sep 11 NO CLASS - EREV ROSH HASHANNAH	
Sep 25 - Oct 2 NO CLASS - SUKKOT BREAK	
Oct 20	Roundup Day!
Oct 22-23	Project 1: Portraits Critique
Oct 27	<i>Project 2 Assigned</i>
Nov 17	Roundup Day!
Nov 19 -20	Project 2: Imitation Critique
Nov 24	<i>Project 3 Assigned</i>
Nov 26-27 NO CLASS - THANKSGIVING BREAK	
Dec 15	Roundup Day!
Dec 17-18	Project 3: Forced Perspective Critique
Dec 22	<i>FINAL PROJECT Assigned</i>
Dec 23-Jan 1 NO CLASS - WINTER BREAK	
Jan 19	FINAL Roundup Day!
Jan 21-22	FINAL PROJECT Critique & Closing (and a party!)