**Decorative banner that says Birmingham-Southern College with the BSC logo.
**

***AR325 Photography: The Language of Light (1)***

*Spring 2023 T/TH 8:00-10:50*

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Instructor: Professor Pamela Venz

**Office Hours: MWF 11:00-12:00, TTH by appointment Microsoft Teams meetings available   
Office Location: Kennedy Art Center**

**Class Times: W/F 8:00-10:50 T/TH 8:00-10:50 M 10:15-11:00**

email: [pvenz@bsc.edu](mailto:pvenz@bsc.edu)

**Course Objectives:**

This course is a studio experience in the observation, capture and use of light in still photography. Light is the primary medium of photography and you will explore this medium beginning with natural light, continuing with available light and finally in studio light situations. Through readings, projects and critiques the course will explore this creative visual language and its impact on photographic images. The curriculum will focus on developing your understanding of photographic techniques: first, through lectures with historical and contemporary perspectives and secondly, through studio applications. It requires the completion of AR111, AR222, or MFS220, and knowledge of SLR camera mechanics.

The studio component will build on your understanding of camera mechanics, composition, visual context and photographic printing processes. Through the assigned projects there will be an emphasis in developing individual competency both conceptually and technically. Discourse and terminology explains the practice of art, however certain instinctual elements will guide its making.

**Course Outcomes:**

Students successfully completing this course will:

* + Understand the manual SLR camera controls and the visual results of manipulating said controls particularly with regards to light control.
  + Understand the application of specific lighting materials and equipment used in still photography
  + Create photographs using camera controls, light, compositional elements, physical contexts, and subject matter choices that communicate ideas/concepts.
  + Verbally articulate in critique situations the concepts and visual approaches used in each assignment.
  + Make critical judgments concerning the effectiveness of said approaches and concepts in the student’s individual work and those of his/her peers during class critiques.

**Course Expectations:**

The course is designed to expose students to a wide range of equipment. Special attention will be given to equipment options that are affordable or that can be easily built. You will be required to photograph your lighting set ups, and a small print of the set-up will be turned in with your projects. A digital SLR camera with manual controls, is required. A limited number of cameras is available from the Department of Art and Art History for students to check out for the term.

Critical examination/discussion of your work will be a crucial aspect of the course and cannot be “made-up” if missed. Therefore regular attendance and verbal participation are mandatory**.** Absences from the class should be limited to personal or medical emergencies, which must be reported to the instructor if they occur, e-mail messages are fine. However, **more than 3 absences** will adversely affect your grade, causing your grade to drop one letter for each absence over 3, **5 absences will result in an “F” for the class, regardless of the quality of your work**. Regularly arriving late to class or leaving early will be treated as an absence. The only exceptions to this will be the few occasions when shooting assignments are occurring during the class meeting time. **YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MATERIAL COVERED IN MISSED CLASSES. No extensions on due dates will be granted for missed classes.** Keep in contact with your fellow students for material you may have missed. Due to the amount of material covered and the involvement of the College’s equipment, technical demonstrations must not be missed.

**All assignments will be completed on time**; late assignments will factor in as an “F” in your final grade. We will discuss the details of these in sequence. **You will also be required to keep a written log**. This log will include, but not be limited to, such things as: comments and questions generated by the lectures, slides and videos, technical information concerning shoots (f-stops, shutter settings, lighting set-ups, etc.), printing problems and/or results, etc. This log should be in your possession during class times and especially during critiques!

First day of class each week, beginning the fourth full week of class, you will bring in one published photo that is clearly high production value, recommend Wired, Esquire, GQ, Vanity Fair, ESPN The Magazine, both current and back issues. You will discuss in class why it goes with the publication, analyze and discuss the use of light in the photo; what works? Are there flaws? What would you do differently? Each will be turned in with your log, noting the date of class presentation for each. Each student will also create and present to the class a PowerPoint about a photographer chosen from the list below.

In addition, you will be required to attend/discuss: all campus art exhibitions and all departmental lectures.

Your photos will be graded based on how well you execute the following five (5) elements:

**Concept (Idea):** How thoroughly have you considered the assignment and how inventive are your resolutions.

**Composition (structure):** How well have you considered compositional elements such as line, texture, space, lighting, etc. We will discuss these in critiques so pay attention!

**Shooting and Lighting Technique:** How well do you manipulate the camera’s controls; focus, shutter, aperture settings, etc.? How well are you using the various lighting techniques covered in class

**Print Quality:** How well do you print, are your prints in focus, show good contrast, are clean with straight borders, etc.?

**Presentation:** Includes the quality of the physical presentation of your prints, and the verbal presentation of your ideas

Your grade will be derived as follows:

**Portfolio 85%,**

**Log, PowerPoint presentation 15%**.

**Participation is expected and will be the “Icing on the grade cake”, a lack of active participation will take the icing away.** A PowerPoint portfolio of your semester’s work and an artist statement will be due on the last day of class.

**Grades are based on the following scale:**

**A =** A degree of excellence well beyond class level

**B =** Performance of very good competency

**C =** Average performance (not bad, not challenging)

**D =** Very poor performance, lowest passing grade little commitment to class requirements

**F =** Failure to fulfill class requirements

**Point Scale:**

A: 100-94 A-: 93-90

B+: 89-87 B: 86-83 B-: 82-80

C+: 79-77 C: 76-73 C-: 72-70

D+: 69-67 D: 66-63 D-: 62-60

F: 59-0

It is important to understand that the class critiques of your work will be treated as **“exams”** in more traditional lecture courses. Your participation as presenter and critic, as well as the technical and conceptual quality of your work **will be evaluated as a test and computed into your final grade**. The critique is my way of evaluating your comprehension of the vocabulary, course content and project parameters. It is strongly advised to keep a record of critique comments in your log for later reference. Try not to be motivated by grades when creating work, by doing so you will be “playing it safe” and hindering your ability for experimentation and critical thinking. Assignments turned in after the due date, without prior instructor permission will be factored in as an “F”.

I am available to speak with you at any time about your work and your progress within the course this is why I have office hours. If you are confused, frustrated or just need some feedback, **talk to me**. This is why I am here and I cannot read your mind. *I will not, however, tell you which images to print and turn in for the final critiques. Your decision making process, along with your technical execution of that process, forms the basis of my evaluation (represented by the letter grade) of your performance in the class.*

**Academic Integrity**

Adhere to the honor code at all times: As a member of the student body of Birmingham-Southern College, I recognize my responsibility to the traditions of the institution, to my fellow students and to myself. I recognize the significance of the honor system. I pledge that I have read and understand the Constitution of the Honor Council, including the Honor Code, and agree to be bound by its provisions**.**

This means that the work you do in this class will be your original work. Plagiarism in a visual art class includes use of visual imagery that as not created by you, or if copied from an outside source (such as the internet) must be altered and used in such a way as to create an original concept. Should you have any questions regarding this, particularly with respect to what constitutes plagiarism, please come to talk to me as plagiarism may result in expulsion.

If you are renting a camera from the department of Art and Art History you are responsible for its care. Should you lose it you will be responsible for its replacement. Should you damage it you must report it to me immediately to assess the extent of the damage and the level of your responsibility with regards to its repair.*In a related issue to honesty, there is a ZERO tolerance in the class with regards to cell phone usage. You will not text, check e-mail, look at your pictures, check voice mail or perform any other phone activity**during lectures, demos, critiques or class discussions.*No one, including myself, is so important that you cannot be disconnected from the rest of the world during this class period. Your final grade will drop by one letter if I see you violating this policy.

Additional information on the honor code and violations can be found in the Birmingham-[Southern Student Handbook](https://www.bsc.edu/campus/studev/student-handbook/7/) and on [the BSC website](https://www.bsc.edu/campus/studev/honor-council/index.html).

**Netiquette**

1. Check your email often--this is the method the instructor will use most often to communicate with you.
2. Adhere to the same standards in your digital communications as you would for traditional written language.
3. Use clear and concise language.
4. Remember that all college level communication should have correct spelling and grammar.
5. Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm as tone can be lost in an email or discussion post.
6. Using all capitals is the equivalent of SHOUTING and considered RUDE.

**Student Grievance Policy**

Students should follow the complaint process as outlined in the current[**Birmingham-Southern College Student Handbook.**](https://www.bsc.edu/campus/studev/student-handbook/46/)

**Accessibility/ Americans with Disabilities Act**

Birmingham-Southern College complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students with disabilities who seek accommodations must make their request by contacting the Office of Accessibility in-person, via email ([accessibility@bsc.edu](mailto:accessibility@bsc.edu)), or by calling 205-226-7909. The Office of Accessibility is located in the Counseling and Health Services Suite of Norton Center Room 241. Students who are registered with the Office of Accessibility are responsible for providing faculty with a copy of their accommodation letter and scheduling a meeting to discuss how their approved accommodations will apply to this course. Visit the [Office of Accessibility website](https://www.bsc.edu/campus/accomodations/index.html) for additional information.

**Title IX**

Birmingham-Southern College is committed to the creation and maintenance of a safe learning environment for students and the campus community. The College forbids any type of sexual or gender-based misconduct among its students, faculty, and staff. The College encourages all members of the academic community to report suspected sexual and gender-based misconduct to the appropriate authorities so that it can be investigated, remedied, and eliminated. Such misconduct is prohibited whether the actor is a student, faculty member, staff member, contractor, visitor, or another member of the College community. BSC forbids retaliation against any person who has opposed, reported or participated in an investigation concerning sexual or gender-based misconduct.

In accordance with federal policy, all College employees are required to report information related to discrimination and harassment which includes, but is not limited to, sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, and sexual harassment. For this reason, if you tell a faculty member about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence or other related misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the Title IX coordinator. As a student, you can report allegations of sexual misconduct to officials in Student Development (Assistant Dean of Students, Dana Bekurs; Associate Dean of Students, W. David Miller; Vice President for Student Development, David Eberhardt), Campus Police, or confidential resources in Counseling Services, Health Services, and Religious Life. Please refer to the [Title IX section](https://www.bsc.edu/titleix/index.html) of the BSC website for more information on filing a report and available resources.

One textbook is required: Light Science and Magic by: Fil Hunter, Steven Biver, Paul Fuqua

Artist List for student PowerPoint Presentations:

Rembrandt

Carravagio

Annie Liebovitz

Maggie Taylor

Richard Avedon

Lois Greenfield

Paul Strand

Gregory Crewsden

William Wegman

Edward Steichen