Instructor: Dr. Kurt Rahmlow
Office: Art Building, Room 229
Office phone: 940-565-4777
E-mail: Please use Blackboard
Office hours: T, Th 2:00-3:30

**AEAH 4843-001:**
*History of Photography*

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Survey of the history of photography, including developments in photographic technologies, practices, theory and analysis. Prerequisites: ART 1200, 2350, and 2360.

This class is designed for students who have had experience with art historical coursework—that is, it presupposes a working familiarity with art historical terminologies, methodologies, and practices. Class meetings will involve PowerPoint lectures and large- and small-group discussions of critical texts and artworks. Students will be required to conduct a focused, independent course of research that will culminate in a series of assignments.

Please bear this in mind: Some of you may find this material disturbing. Graphic violence, alternative life styles, and explicit sexuality are themes pursued by a number of contemporary artists, in particular. By remaining in this course, you are committing yourself to discussing and viewing these works.

Please also bear this in mind: You may find this course quite challenging. The discourse circulating around photography tends to be, intellectually speaking, somewhat sophisticated. We will be reading a series of critical and theoretical texts that will be very difficult to understand. It is by no means impossible to excel in this course, but if you are looking for that “easy A,” you may want to look elsewhere. This is not an “art appreciation” course.

COURSE OBJECTIVES/LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. To learn about the history of photography—its origins, its various forms, and its theories.
2. To develop and hone research skills.
3. To develop and hone skills of analysis and critical thinking.
4. To develop writing skills.
4. To develop the skills necessary to organizing and carrying through an extended project.

**Course Textbooks**

Using “Blackboard”

I will post a number of important documents to the course Website on “Blackboard,” including this syllabus, informational sheets and handouts. I will also post a number of reading assignments to that Website that are not contained in the course textbook. You will be able to track your grades on this site, too, and I will ask you to turn in your writing assignments electronically using its Turnitin function. You can access “Blackboard” by following these steps:

1. Go to the UNT homepage.
2. Click on the Blackboard link.
3. Log into the system.

Course Requirements

Attendance—5% of final grade
Participation—5% of final grade
Textual Analysis Papers—10% of final grade
Formal Analysis Paper—15% of final grade
Annotated Bibliography—15% of final grade
Mid-Term Examination—25% of final grade
Final Examination—25% of final grade

Attendance and Participation

Attendance and timely arrival are mandatory. If you cannot commit to attending lectures, or if you believe you will regularly be late to class, please drop this course. I will take attendance five times during the course of the term, on random dates. If you should miss more than half a class meeting, you will be counted absent. If you arrive late or leave early and are not present when I call attendance, it is your responsibility to speak with me before we adjourn for the day; otherwise, you will not receive credit for attendance. If you are absent for a legitimate reason on one of these days and wish to receive credit for the class, (1) you will have to provide me with proper documentation of your excuse, and (2) you will have to make up the work for that day by writing a short response paper reviewing the material we covered in class. Please see me for details. If you cannot document a legitimate reason for missing class (illness, a death in the family, military duty, a religious holiday, for instance), you may not make up an absence. If you are going to be absent in order to observe a religious holiday, I ask that you notify me in advance, by e-mail, during the first two weeks of the term.

It is also mandatory that you arrive having carefully prepared the day’s assignments. I cannot emphasize this last point enough. This means that you must read the day’s assignments closely, making written notes about items of interest, points of critique, possible connections to other materials that we have covered, etc. While in class, I expect students to draw from their preparation and participate in the classroom community—that is, I expect all students to get involved in the conversation. If the conversation flags noticeably, I reserve the right to give unannounced quizzes or assign discussion questions or in-class writing assignments. These will count toward your participation grade, and they may only be made up in cases of documented excused absence. On occasion, I will collect informal assignments—discussion
questions, for example, or work produced during small group discussion. These will also count toward your participation grade.

I do not allow the use of **cellular phones, pagers, laptops, iPads, or recording devices** in this classroom, except by special permission. If you have a disability that forces you to use a laptop or a recording device, please provide me with the proper documentation (see below), and I will gladly make an exception in your case. If you are in the midst of a personal emergency that requires you to keep your telephone active, please notify me at the beginning of class. Otherwise, all cell phones and laptops MUST be shut off and put away before the start of class. If you do not adhere to this requirement, I will ask you to leave the classroom.

Finally, please be aware that I hold this class to appropriate standards of **collegiality** and decorum. The free exchange of ideas requires that we respect each other and listen carefully to one another. Please feel free to disagree with an interpretation and debate ideas with other students and with me. I do ask, however, that you refrain from insulting or abusing other students, and I ask that you do not conduct conversations, sleep, read the newspaper, send text messages, or wander in and out of class while I or one of your classmates is speaking. If you cannot observe this requirement, I will ask you to leave the classroom.

**Textual Analysis Papers**
As the semester progresses, you will write two 2-page essays treating the passages posted to Blackboard. The purpose of these exercises is to encourage you to consider those readings more closely and thoughtfully, since we will not always have time to discuss them in lecture. Assignment sheets for these papers will be posted to Blackboard. These assignments will receive numerical grades ranging from 0 to 100. Corresponding letter grades will conform to the grading scale below. These assignments must be submitted electronically using the Turnitin function on Blackboard.

A note on paper format: A page requirement ALWAYS refers to FULL pages. Additionally, please do NOT pad your papers by adding unnecessary spacing, particularly between paragraphs. All papers should have 1” margins all around, 12-point font, double spacing (NOT triple spacing), and single returns (there should not be any double returns anywhere on a paper). Include a title page, as well as footnotes and a bibliography. Use *Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th edition, footnote format for the humanities to document your use of source texts. Include “figures” (images of the works you discuss), as necessary, at the end of the paper (not spliced into the text), and identify them by artist, title, and date in a caption. Finally, always staple and number your multi-page papers. I will not accept a multi-page paper that is folded or paper-clipped.

**Formal Analysis Paper**
As mid-term approaches, you will write a 3-4 page formal analysis paper on a specific photograph. During the first few weeks of class, I will be asking you to choose, and sign up for, a work from a list that I will circulate during lecture. If you have a strong preference, please sign up as soon as possible, since the choices become limited the longer you wait. This work will be the subject of this graded paper as well as your annotated bibliography (see below). The Formal Analysis Paper will not be research-based, but will be your response to a specific task, as
outlined in an assignment sheet that I will post to Blackboard two weeks before the essay is due. This assignment will receive a numerical grade ranging from 0 to 100. A corresponding letter grade will conform to the grading scale below. The note on paper format offered above also applies in this case. This assignment must be submitted electronically using the Turnitin function on Blackboard.

**Annotated Bibliography**
In lieu of a final paper, I will be requiring you to assemble an annotated bibliography of 5 to 7 critical or theoretical texts that relate to your chosen work of art. I will describe this assignment in more detail as the term progresses. This assignment will receive a numerical grade ranging from 0 to 100. A corresponding letter grade will conform to the grading scale listed below. This assignment must be submitted electronically using the Turnitin function on Blackboard.

**Mid-Term and Final Examinations**
You will demonstrate your grasp of the material we have covered in class by sitting two in-class examinations (see the course schedule for respective dates and times). The format will include multiple choice questions and essays. Exams will receive a number grade ranging from 0 to 100. Corresponding letter grades will conform to the grading scale listed below. I only grant make-up exams in extreme cases, and I require formal documentation of hardship before I schedule them. The exception to this rule is the observance of religious holidays; however, if you are going to miss an exam for this reason, I require advance notification. Additionally, no matter what the cause of your absence, you MUST contact me no more than 24 hours after the exam concludes, either by phone or by e-mail to schedule a make-up; if you fail to contact me within this period, you will forfeit your right to taking a make-up exam.

**Late and Missed Assignments**
All written assignments that must be submitted through the Turnitin function on Blackboard are due at the date and time noted on the assignment sheet. Any assignment submitted later than the time specified, even by one minute, will be counted late. Any assignments due in hard copy in class are due at the beginning of class. Assignments will be penalized 1/3 of a letter grade for every calendar day they are late. If you miss a deadline of any sort due to absence, and you have a legitimate excuse (for example, you were seriously ill, or your car exploded in the parking lot of McDonald’s while you were inside getting breakfast on the way to class), then you MUST notify me within 24 hours. You MUST also have proper documentation of your excuse. If you cannot document a legitimate excuse, then your work will be subject to late penalties. If you are experiencing difficulties that you believe will interfere with your ability to complete an assignment on time, please notify me in advance of the due date so that we can discuss the situation.

**Grading Scale**
- A+ 97-100
- A  94-96
- A- 90-93
- B+ 87-89
- B  84-86
- B- 80-83
- C+ 77-79
University and Departmental Policies

Plagiarism and Cheating
I shouldn’t have to talk about such things at this level, but please note: I feel very strongly about this. Please do not do this in my course. It would embarrass us both, and it would make me feel stressed out, disappointed, and depressed. If I catch you cheating or plagiarizing, I will certainly fail you for the assignment, possibly for the course, and report you for disciplinary action. Please take pride in your abilities and your work and give this class your best honest effort. If you are not sure what constitutes plagiarism or cheating, please see me. In general, if you use someone else’s words or ideas, you must acknowledge that you are borrowing them—you may not pass them off as your own. In addition, if you accept so much assistance on a project that the work is no longer substantially your own, you have cheated. Regarding quizzes and exams, all of these will be “closed book.” Accepting or seeking any assistance from, or seeking reference to, another person, piece of writing, or electronic source, constitutes cheating. Put simply, just bear in mind that your responsibility in this course is to earn your score by virtue of your own best effort.

Students with Disabilities
The College of Visual Arts and Design is committed to full academic access for all qualified students, including those with disabilities. In keeping with this commitment and in order to facilitate equality of educational access, faculty members in the College will make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with a disability, such as appropriate adjustments to the classroom environment and the teaching, testing, or learning methodologies when doing so does not fundamentally alter the course. If you have a disability, it is your responsibility to obtain verifying information from the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) and to inform me of your need for an accommodation. Requests for accommodation must be given to me no later than the first week of classes for students registered with the ODA as of the beginning of the current semester. If you register with the ODA after the first week of classes, your accommodation requests will be considered after this deadline. Grades assigned before an accommodation is provided will not be changed. Information about how to obtain academic accommodations can be found in UNT Policy 18.1.14, at www.unt.edu/oda, and by visiting the ODA in Room 321 of the University Union. You also may call the ODA at 940-565-4323.

Course Risk Factor
According to University Policy, this course is classified as a category one course. Students enrolled in this course will not be exposed to any significant hazards and are not likely to suffer any bodily injury. Students will be informed of any potential health hazards or potential bodily injury connected with the use of any materials and/or processes and will be instructed how to proceed without danger to themselves or others.
Building Emergency Procedures
In case of emergency (alarm will sound), please follow the building evacuation plans posted on each floor of your building and proceed to the nearest parking lot. In case of tornado (campus sirens will sound) or other weather related threat, please go to the nearest hallway or room on your floor without exterior windows and remain there until an all clear signal is sounded. Follow the instructions of your teachers and act accordingly.

Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities
Each University of North Texas student is entitled to certain rights associated with higher education institutions. See www.unt.edu/csrr for further information.

Course Schedule

Week 1

08/25: Introductions; course overview.

Week 2

08/30: The art academy and academic art theory; early technologies of seeing; reading—Hirsch, Seizing the Light (hereafter abbreviated as STL), pp. 1-18.


Week 3

09/06: Formal analysis and a primer on expository writing; Formal Analysis Paper assigned.

09/08: The Callotype; reading—STL, pp. 40-56.

Week 4

09/13: Pictures on glass and a primer on thesis statements; reading—STL, pp. 57-76.

09/15: Early documentary photography and a primer on paragraphing and organization; reading—STL, pp. 77-90.

Week 5

09/22: Defining the medium; reading—*STL*, pp. 91-106; **Formal Analysis Paper due.**

**Week 6**


**Week 7**

10/04: New breakthroughs in technology, followed by a primer on the use and abuse of source texts; reading—*STL*, pp. 131-146.

10/06: Pictorialism; reading—*STL*, pp. 147-169; **Textual Analysis Paper #1 due.**

**Week 8**


10/13: **Mid-Term Exam.**

**Week 9**


Week 10


Week 11


Week 12


Week 13


Week 14

11/24: No class today; Thanksgiving break!

**Week 15**


**Week 16**

12/06: Photography as a digital medium; reading—STL, pp. 413-426; Corey Dzenko, “Analogue to Digital: The Indexical Function of Photographic Images,” *Afterimage* 37, no. 2 (September/October 2009): 19-23, on **Blackboard**; post a photographer’s Website to the **Blackboard Discussion Board** labeled “Contemporary Photographers’ Websites” by 5 p.m., along with a brief explanation of why you think her or his work is interesting/worthy of study. Please make the photographer’s name the title of your post.

12/08: Contemporary Practitioners; reading—Artists’ Websites, posted to Blackboard; **Annotated Bibliography due.**

**Week 17**

12/15: **Final Exam**, 1:30 pm-3:30 pm (Thursday)

*The instructor reserves the right to alter this syllabus at his discretion.*
I have read this syllabus. I agree to comply with all of the provisions it describes. I understand the course structure, grading and attendance policies, as well as the risk factor rating. I understand that this class includes a substantial amount of reading and discussion. I understand the attendance and late policies, and I am aware that absences and late work will result in a lowered final grade. By taking this course, I agree not to commit acts of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, cheating, and failing to cite sources. I understand that, at a minimum, any act of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of “F” for the assignment. I further understand that Dr. Rahmlow will pursue disciplinary actions against me with the University of North Texas should I commit any act of academic dishonesty. These disciplinary actions may range all the way from an “F” for the assignment to an “F” for the course, even to suspension or expulsion from the University. I acknowledge that Dr. Rahmlow reserves the right to alter his syllabus at his discretion during the course of the semester.

Signature

______________________________________________________________________________

Printed name

Date

______________________________________________________________________________

Student ID Number

The return of this syllabus agreement is required for continued enrollment in the course.