

Fall 2023

## COM-337 (001): Photojournalism

Carol Johnson

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## COM 337 –Photojournalism – Fall 2023

Tu / Th 1:00-2:20 – FMH 307

**COM 336 – Photojournalism** (*Prerequisites: ENGL 102 and one History and Humanities GER 200 level course with a grade of C or higher*): Through hands-on photography and writing supervised by the instructor, students develop competencies in discovering and creating interdisciplinary stories using a variety of photographic techniques and writing methods. Special focus on creating photographic narratives, supported by prose. This course satisfies the three credit 300 GER in History and Humanities.

**Dr. Carol Siri Johnson**  
cjohnson@njit.edu

**Office** –316 Cullimore  
**Hours:** by email appointment

### COM 337 Photojournalism Syllabus

—no final in this class—

#### Course Goals:

In this course you will learn to:

- ◆ Practice photographic design
- ◆ Learn to view images analytically
- ◆ Identify and develop a personal style
- ◆ Use your photos to tell a story
- ◆ Use effective captioning techniques
- ◆ Combine visuals and narrative in informative essays

#### Assignments & Grading:

- ◆ **Attendance is required** and is **graded**: 0-1 absences = 20 (highest score); 2 absences = 18; 3 absences = 16; 4 absences = 14; 5 absences = 12; 6 absences = 10; 7 absences = 8; 8 or more = 0. If you are absent due to illness or other problems, email me *before* class.
- ◆ All grading will be done numerically (if an assignment is worth 10%, it will receive a grade from 1 to 10) which will be added at the end of the semester. Grades are not fully recorded in Canvas. Small assignments receive full credit after completion.

#### Course Textbook (choose **one** and order from Amazon):

- ◆ *The iPhone Photography Book*, by Scott Kelby, 2021 (\$23).
- ◆ *smart phone smart photography*, by Jo Bradford, 2018 (\$14).

#### Final Grades:

A = 91 – 100    B+ = 86 – 90    B = 80 – 85    C+ = 75 – 79    C = 70 – 74    D = 65 – 69    F = 0 – 64

Academic Integrity is the cornerstone of higher education and is central to the ideals of this course and the university. Cheating is strictly prohibited. As a member of the NJIT community, it is your responsibility to follow the [academic code of integrity policy](#). Any student in violation of the code by cheating, plagiarizing, or using any online software inappropriately will result in disciplinary action. This may include a failing grade, suspension, or dismissal. **In this class, use your own writing only.**

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Assignment and Grade List

Assignment Name and Description	%
<p><b>Class Participation</b> – 0-1 absences = 20 (highest score); 2 absences = 18; 3 absences = 16; 4 absences = 14; 5 absences = 12; 6 absences = 10; 7 absences = 8; 8 or more = 0. If you must be absent, email me <i>before</i> class.</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> collaborative practice and analysis of photography takes place during class, so it is necessary to be there.</p>	20
<p><b>Daily Photos</b> –you must have one photo uploaded to the class folder, ready for critique, when called on.</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Practicing photographic design, analyzing image components, identifying and developing a personal style.</p>	10
<p><b>Where am I?</b> – take three pictures of a place with no explicitly identifiable features. Using details from the photos, the class will guess where you are.</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Learning to view images analytically, focusing on details in photos.</p>	2
<p><b>What is It?</b> – take three close-up pictures of three objects with no explicitly identifiable features. Using details from the photos, we will guess what each is.</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Learning to view images analytically, practicing macro photography; focusing on details in photos.</p>	3
<p><b>A Day in the Life</b> –Step 1: list the basic actions you take every day. We will review this list in class in groups. Step 2: take photos to illustrate some of those tasks. Step 3: create a slide show, 10-15 images, with a caption describing each. Upload to the class folder and to Canvas for grading. The final essay will be presented in class (3-5 minutes).</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Practicing photographic design, using effective captioning, developing a personal style.</p>	10*
<p><b>Portrait of a Student (first draft)</b> – You will be randomly assigned someone to work with. Create a photo essay about their life and activities at NJIT, including work and hobbies. Begin by interviewing them and writing down their answers. Collaborate with your partner to get and take photos. The final article should be a Word document with a unique title, text describing the student and at least 5 captioned photos. The first draft should be uploaded to Canvas for comments and grading.</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Interviewing, collaboration (to take or get photos), and writing.</p>	5*
<p><b>Portrait of a Student (final draft)</b> – Revise your essay to make changes suggested by my comments. Make sure the layout and spelling are ready to be viewed by others (all essays will be posted in Canvas). The final draft should be uploaded to Canvas.</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> writing revision, layout, proofreading.</p>	5*

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<b>Assignment Name and Description</b>	<b>%</b>
<p><b>Group Photo Stories</b> – with your group, plan a story you can tell with twenty to thirty photos and no words. Collaborate to take the photos and combine them into a slide show. This assignment will be presented in class.</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Planning, using photos to tell a story, group work.</p>	<b>5</b>
<p><b>Tips and Tricks from Books</b> – Using the textbook you chose, identify and experiment with one photographic technique described by the authors. Create a slide show to display your own experiments and teach the new technique to the class (5-7 min.).</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Using texts to learn new photographic techniques and methods; teaching photographic techniques.</p>	<b>5</b>
<p><b>Self Portraits</b> – Take three photos of yourself. One should be designed for LinkedIn, one for social media, and one should be your “real” self. Photos will be presented in class.</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Creating effective self portraits, practicing photographic design, audience analysis.</p>	<b>5</b>
<p><b>Home</b> – Prepare a photo essay on your “home,” whether that is a room or a neighborhood. Use your own photos and photos from Google maps if necessary. This will be presented in class (3-5 min.).</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Outdoor urban / suburban photography; indoor photography; using photos for self expression.</p>	<b>5</b>
<p><b>Feature Article</b> – This is your main project for the semester. Choose a topic that interests you such as arts, culture, a specific place or an environmental problem. Take photos of the topic and write about it. Combine the words and images into an article, three to five pages. Submit the first draft (10 points) and the final draft (5 points) to Canvas.</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Practicing photographic design, writing, effective captioning techniques, combining visuals and narrative in an essay.</p>	<b>10* / 5*</b>
<p><b>Favorite Photographer</b> – Create a ten to twenty slide presentation on your favorite photographer. Be prepared to talk about their work history, sources of inspiration, style, and whether they make any money from their work. This will be shown in class (4-6 min.).</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Researching professional photographers, viewing images analytically, career analysis.</p>	<b>5</b>
<p><b>Best Photos Review</b> – Create slide presentation with the five best photos you took during the semester. Be prepared to talk about your personal style (3-5 min.).</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Identifying and developing a personal style, viewing images analytically, semester review.</p>	<b>5</b>

**Note:** much of the work in this class is short assignments worth five points. Generally, you receive full credit upon completion but won't see the grade. Assignments with an asterisk (\*) will receive detailed grades and comments from me in Canvas.

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Course Schedule (subject to minor changes)

Tuesdays

Thursdays

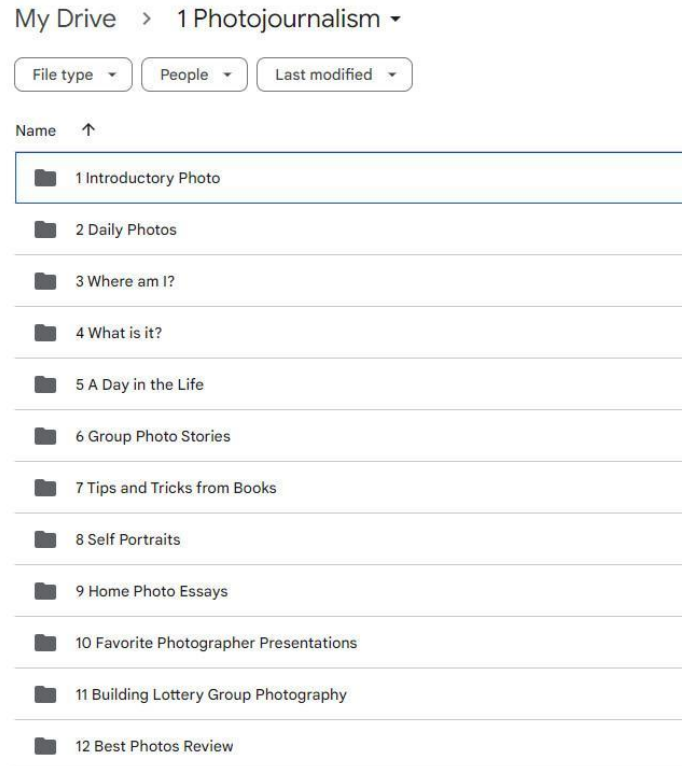
Date	Class Activity	Date	Class Activity
9/5	Go over syllabus; introductory photos; assign <i>Where am I?</i>	9/7	Daily photos; <i>Where am I?</i> ; assign <i>What is It?</i>
9/12	Daily photos; <i>What is it?</i> ; demonstrate and assign <i>A Day in the Life</i> outline	9/14	Daily photos; presentation order for <i>A Day in the Life</i> ; review outlines in groups
9/19	<i>A Day in the Life</i> presentations (13 per class)	9/21	<i>A Day in the Life</i> presentations (13 per class)
9/26	Daily photos; make teams for <i>Portrait of a Student</i> ; start interviews	9/28	Daily photos; make groups for <i>Group Photo Stories</i> ; work in groups on <i>Photo Stories</i>
10/3	Daily photos; <b>first draft <i>Portrait of a Student</i> due</b> ; work in groups on <i>Photo Stories</i>	10/5	Daily photos; present <i>Group Photo Stories</i> ; team work for <i>Portrait of a Student</i> (to get additional material if necessary)
10/10	Daily photos; demonstrate and assign <i>Tips and Tricks</i> presentation; announce / choose topics	10/12	Daily photos; <b>final draft <i>Portrait of a Student</i> due</b> ; presentation order for <i>Tips and Tricks</i> ; object photography competition
10/17	Daily photos; <i>Tips and Tricks</i> presentation (8-10 per class)	10/19	Daily photos; <i>Tips and Tricks</i> presentation (8-10 per class)
10/24	Daily photos; <i>Tips and Tricks</i> presentation (8-10 per class)	10/26	Daily photos; <i>Self Portraits</i> due; view <i>Self Portraits</i> in class
10/31	DSLR Day I (everyone brings cameras, cords; share)	11/2	DSLR Day II (show results and talk about camera differences)
11/7	<i>Home</i> presentations (13 per class)	11/9	<i>Home</i> presentations (13 per class)
11/14	Assign <i>Feature Article</i> : look at articles from last semester; individual brainstorming	11/16	Daily photos; assign <i>Favorite Photographer</i> presentation; individual grade conferences
11/21	Daily photos; <i>Favorite Photographer</i> presentations (10 per class)	11/23	Thanksgiving – no class
11/28	Daily photos; <b>first draft <i>Feature Article</i> due</b> ; <i>Favorite Photographer</i> presentations (10 per class)	11/30	Daily photos; <i>Favorite Photographer</i> presentations (10 per class)
12/5	Building lottery group photography – in-class exercise	12/7	Daily photos; <i>Best Photos Review</i> presentations (13 per class)
12/12	<b>Final draft <i>Feature Article</i> due</b> ; <i>Best Photos Review</i> presentations (13 per class)		

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### Shared Google Drive Folders

You all have access to the main folder for this class, “1 Photojournalism.” Inside that folder there are folders for each assignment (see below). Upload your work here so we can easily view it in class.



### Naming Conventions

Name your photos and files so they are easy to find. The best convention is lastname.firstname. If you are submitting multiple images that will be sequentially viewed, try:

jones.joe 1  
jones.joe 2  
jones.joe 3