

COURSE OUTLINE		
TERM: Fall 2026	COURSE NO: CMNS 370	
INSTRUCTOR:	COURSE TITLE: Digital Photography	
OFFICE: LOCAL: E-MAIL: @capilanou.ca	SECTION NO(S):	CREDITS: 3.0
OFFICE HOURS:		
COURSE WEBSITE:		

Capilano University is named after Chief Joe Capilano (1854–1910), an important leader of the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) Nation of the Coast Salish Peoples. We respectfully acknowledge that our campuses are located on the unceded territories of the səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh), shíshálh (Sechelt), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Nations.

COURSE FORMAT

Three hours of class time, plus an additional hour delivered through on-line or other activities for a 15-week semester, which includes two weeks for final exams. May be delivered in online or mixed mode format.

COURSE PREREQUISITES

30 credits of 100-level or higher coursework

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to the practice of digital photography as a form of communication and creative expression. Students should develop technical and compositional skills in producing digital images and critically reflect on how digital photographs function in contemporary media environments. During the term, the course will help students to explore the ethical, cultural, and communicative implications of capturing and sharing images in the digital age.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND/OR RESOURCES

Specific texts, resources and technology may vary depending on the term and instructor. The course may make use of an assigned textbook, instructor-prepared courseware or readings made available as Open Educational Resources (OER)

COURSE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of this course, students will be able to do the following:

- Produce digital photographs that demonstrate both technical proficiency and creative intent.
- Apply compositional, aesthetic, and technical principles in the planning and execution of visual/photographic objects.
- Analyze digital images using critical and theoretical frameworks introduced in class.

- Evaluate the communicative, ethical, and cultural implications of photographic practices in digital environments.
- Articulate ideas clearly and critically in both written and oral forms about photography as a mode of visual communication.
- Reflect on their own photographic work and the broader social and cultural contexts in which digital images are produced and circulated

COURSE CONTENT

Weeks	Topics
1	Introduction: Why Study Photography Today?
2	History of Photography and Visual Culture
3	Theories of the Image: Barthes, Sontag
4	Composition, Aesthetics, and Meaning
5	Photography as Evidence: Fact and Manipulation
6	The Ethics of the Photographer
7	Photography and Identity
8	Great Photography Presentations
9	Photography and Politics
10	Photography as Art and Activism
11	Photography and Public Memory
12	Synthetic Images and Photography
13	The Future of Photography Platforms and Circulation: Images in the Feed
14 & 15	Final Exam Period

EVALUATION PROFILE

Assignments		%
Digital Photography Project Series	Over the term, students will produce a series of 4–6 original digital photographs organized around a chosen theme or concept (e.g., identity, space, community, time, visual noise, etc.). Each photo or mini-series will be accompanied by a short artist statement (150–200 words) that reflects on the technical choices (lighting, composition, editing).	25%
Photographic Essay Project	Photographic Essay: Students will create a digital photo essay that tells a story or explores a theme using a sequence of 5–8 images supported by minimal text (captions, quotes, or short narrative segments). Students should consider the relationship between words and images, the sequencing of visual material, and how meaning is constructed for digital communication. A 500-word written reflection will accompany the project, discussing the process, intention, and impact on the audience.	20%
Visual Analysis on Digital Posting	Visual Analysis: In this assignment, students will select a single photograph (not their own) and produce a 3–5	15%

	minute vlog, or 1200-word blog post, critically analyzing the image through one or more theoretical frameworks explored in the course (e.g., representation, semiotics, surveillance, identity politics, digital manipulation). This replaces a traditional quiz with a chance to actively apply critical thinking in a creative, student-driven format. Students will be asked to comment constructively on two peers' submissions to foster dialogue.	
Great Photographers Presentation	Great Photographer: Each student will prepare and deliver a short "artist talk" (5–7 minutes) at the end of the term, showcasing selected photographs from their coursework. The talk should explain their creative process, technical choices, thematic development, and learning journey, linking their practical work to the course's conceptual and critical dimensions. This assignment supports oral communication skills and self-reflection, helping students articulate their voice as image-makers.	15%
Group Visual Campaign	Group Visual Campaign: Working in small groups, students will design a digital photography campaign addressing a social, environmental, or cultural issue (e.g., mental health, climate change, gender norms). The campaign should be designed for a specific platform or context (e.g., Instagram carousel, web gallery, zine format), integrating both visuals and minimal text. Groups must submit a creative brief and a collaborative reflection (500 words) outlining each member's role, challenges faced, and how the campaign engages a target audience.	15%
Professionalism & Participation	This includes engaging in thoughtful and collegial discussions in class, arriving on time, refraining from using electronic devices unless instructed to do so, and submitting assignments on time in APA format. Students with Exceptional circumstances or documentation from Accessibility Services will be accommodated accordingly.	10%
Total		100%

GRADING PROFILE

A+ = 90-100	B+ = 77-79	C+ = 67-69	D = 50-59
A = 85-89	B = 73-76	C = 63-66	F = 0-49
A- = 80-84	B- = 70-72	C- = 60-62	

Incomplete Grades

Grades of Incomplete "I" are assigned only in exceptional circumstances when a student requests extra time to complete their coursework. Such agreements are made only at the request of the

student, who is responsible to determine from the instructor the outstanding requirements of the course.

Late Assignments

Assignments are due at the beginning of the class on the due date listed. If you anticipate handing in an assignment late, please consult with your instructor beforehand.

Missed Exams/Quizzes/Labs etc.

Make-up exams, quizzes and/or tests are given at the discretion of the instructor. They are generally given only in medical emergencies or severe personal crises. Some missed labs or other activities may not be able to be accommodated. Please consult with your instructor.

Accommodations can be made to honour community needs and traditional practices.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all classes and associated activities.

English Usage

Students are expected to proofread all written work for any grammatical, spelling and stylistic errors. Instructors may deduct marks for incorrect grammar and spelling in written assignments.

Electronic Devices

Students may use electronic devices during class for note taking only.

On-line Communication

Outside of the classroom, instructors will (if necessary) communicate with students using either their official Capilano University email or eLearn; please check both regularly. Official communication between Capilano University and students is delivered to students' Capilano University email addresses only.

UNIVERSITY OPERATIONAL DETAILS**Tools for Success**

Many services are available to support student success for Capilano University students. A central navigation point for all services can be found at: <https://www.capilanou.ca/student-services/>

Capilano University Security: download the [CapU Mobile Safety App](#)

Policy Statement (S2009-06)

Capilano University has policies on Academic Appeals (including appeal of final grade), Student Conduct, Academic Integrity, Academic Probation and other educational issues. These and other policies are available on the University website.

Academic Integrity (S2017-05)

Any instance of academic dishonesty or breach of the standards of academic integrity is serious and students will be held accountable for their actions, whether acting alone or in a group. See policy

and procedures S2017-05 Academic Integrity for more information:

<https://www.capilanou.ca/about-capu/governance/policies/>

Violations of academic integrity, including dishonesty in assignments, examinations, or other academic performances, are prohibited and will be handled in accordance with the Student Academic Integrity Procedures.

Academic dishonesty is any act that breaches one or more of the principles of academic integrity. Acts of academic dishonesty may include but are not limited to the following types:

Cheating: Using or providing unauthorized aids, assistance or materials while preparing or completing assessments, or when completing practical work (in clinical, practicum, or lab settings), including but not limited to the following:

- Copying or attempting to copy the work of another during an assessment;
- Communicating work to another student during an examination;
- Using unauthorized aids, notes, or electronic devices or means during an examination;
- Unauthorized possession of an assessment or answer key; and/or,
- Submitting of a substantially similar assessment by two or more students, except in the case where such submission is specifically authorized by the instructor.

Fraud: Creation or use of falsified documents.

Misuse or misrepresentation of sources: Presenting source material in such a way as to distort its original purpose or implication(s); misattributing words, ideas, etc. to someone other than the original source; misrepresenting or manipulating research findings or data; and/or suppressing aspects of findings or data in order to present conclusions in a light other than the research, taken as a whole, would support.

Plagiarism: Presenting or submitting, as one's own work, the research, words, ideas, artistic imagery, arguments, calculations, illustrations, or diagrams of another person or persons without explicit or accurate citation or credit.

Self-Plagiarism: Submitting one's own work for credit in more than one course without the permission of the instructors, or re-submitting work, in whole or in part, for which credit has already been granted without permission of the instructors.

Prohibited Conduct: The following are examples of other conduct specifically prohibited:

- Taking unauthorized possession of the work of another student (for example, intercepting and removing such work from a photocopier or printer, or collecting the graded work of another student from a stack of papers);
- Falsifying one's own and/or other students' attendance in a course;
- Impersonating or allowing the impersonation of an individual;
- Modifying a graded assessment then submitting it for re-grading; or,
- Assisting or attempting to assist another person to commit any breach of academic integrity.

Sexual Violence and Misconduct

All Members of the University Community have the right to work, teach and study in an environment that is free from all forms of sexual violence and misconduct. Policy B401 defines sexual assault as follows:

Sexual assault is any form of sexual contact that occurs without ongoing and freely given consent, including the threat of sexual contact without consent. Sexual assault can be committed by a stranger, someone known to the survivor or an intimate partner.

Safety and security at the University are a priority and any form of sexual violence and misconduct will not be tolerated or condoned. The University expects all Students and Members of the University Community to abide by all laws and University policies, including B.401 Sexual Violence Policy and B.401.1 Sexual Violence Procedure (found on Policy page <https://www.capilanou.ca/about-capu/governance/policies/>)

Emergencies: Students are expected to familiarise themselves with the emergency policies where appropriate and the emergency procedures posted on the wall of the classroom.