

School of Journalism—USC Annenberg School for Communication
JOUR 421 Photo Editing for News Media

Instructor: Rick Meyer, photojournalist
ASC G38

Day/Time: Tuesday and Thursday, 9 a.m.—10:50 p.m.

Prerequisite: None

Photo Editing is a rigorous program of practical exercises and academic study.

Photo Editing is a class for print and PR majors or anyone who will be working with photographers or photographs at newspapers, magazines, corporate publications, or web sites. The emphasis of the class is to better understand photographs and how they work in concert with words and graphics to inform the public.

The class will focus on organizing photographic coverage, the implementation of that coverage, editing the results and ultimately the layout of the finished product.

The class will develop the student's understanding of the intuitive and intellectual elements of photographs.

Weekly hands-on workshops will give students an advanced and comprehensive understanding of photo editing. Students will be encouraged to refine a strong sense of style, content, and design.

Presentations, discussions, and exercises will also cover ethics, truth, and honesty in photographs. The course will give valuable insights into dealing with photographers, reporters, designers and editors.

Editing assignments will be given, with deadlines. Several packages/photo essays for the purpose of publication will be expected during the term. Digital photo story packages will be provided for use in the classroom. There is no prerequisite for this class. Experience as a photojournalist is not required.

Pending

Open Lab:

The Newspaper Designer's Handbook, 4th Edition by Tim Harrower
McGraw-Hill, ISBN 0-697-32720-5

Picture Editing. By 2nd Edition by Tom Ang.
Focal Press, ISBN 0-240-51618-4

Class handouts. Approximately 80 handouts will be provided to students during the semester.

Visual Communication. Images with Messages. By Paul Lester
Wadsworth Publishing Co. ISBN 0-534-19530-X

You should be aware of local and national news and read a newspaper of record every day, such as the New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, or the Orange County Register. National Public Radio and various news web sites provide important news, as well.

News Photographer magazine, the Los Angeles Times, Orange County Register, and New York Times are all available daily in the Annenberg Resource Center (ARC).

Newsmagazines, photo web sites, photography books and catalogs.
Biographies of photographers and photojournalists.
Associated Press Stylebook.

The goal of the class is to provide students with an advanced understanding of Photo Editing.

This class is designed to take students step-by-step through the photo editing process. This includes originating photo ideas, coordinating project coverage, daily news operations, pre-planning photographic coverage, and basic layout to showcase the photography.

Weekly assignments include exercises and assignments will take students through editing pictures under deadline, photo cropping, photo spreads and photo illustrations and the basic elements of page design. Writing copy blocks, captions, and headlines, as well as designing photo boxes and picture pages will be required.

Emphasis will be placed on improving your technical expertise in basic digital media.

Attendance

Good attendance is mandatory if you expect to pass the class. Tests and assignments cannot be made up except in the most serious medical situations.

All quizzes and assignments must be turned in on time. If there are religious holidays observed or unusual situations that require students to miss class, please let me know about them as far in advance as possible, preferably at the beginning of the semester.

Field Trips

Computer Competency

Internships

The value of professional internships as part of the overall educational experience of our students has long been recognized by the School of Journalism. Accordingly, while internships are not required for successful completion of this course, any student enrolled in this course who undertakes and completes an approved, non-paid internship during this semester shall earn academic extra credit herein of an amount equal to one percent of the total available semester points for this course.

Grading

I look at several factors when grading. I estimate your experience and then measure your improvement. Not all grading can be from tests. As photo editors, I look for your technical ability, your ability to understand photographs. Your understanding of what makes good news pictures and what stories have the potential to produce is of paramount importance. The amount of effort that students expend on the class work will have a direct positive relationship to their grade.

50% Weekly assignments.

15% Editing project.

10% Midterm exam.

15% Final exam.

10% Class participation.

Weekly assignments. Exercises and assignments will take students through editing pictures under deadline, photo cropping, photo spreads and photo illustrations and the basic elements of page design. Writing copy blocks, captions, and headlines, as well as designing photo boxes and picture pages will be required.

Editing Project.

Midterm Exam.

Final Exam.

A = Excellent. Professional quality work. Flawless technique. Relevant and insightful photo editing on all levels under all deadline conditions.

B = Good. Journeyman photo editing. Competent editing of multiple images into relevant story-telling images.

C = Acceptable. Average photo editing. Picture editing produces publishable but undistinguished work.

D = Poor. Unsatisfactory and flaw-filled. This work is not publishable.

F = Unacceptable. Thoroughly unprofessional. A total failure to execute the assignment.

Please note that successful Photo Editing is not about perfection, it is about problem solving, being creative and proactive, and investing your time wisely. Your out-of-class time usually includes eight hours of homework and assignments per week. I will hold you to professional standards because I know you are capable of them.

ZIP 750 mb disk, USB thumb drive or blank CD-ROMS for turning in assignments and storing photos.

Please keep cell phones and pagers set to “vibrate” or “off” during class. Please leave the classroom to handle emergency business without disturbing others.

Make sure the computer lab and classroom are clean before you leave. Respect your colleagues and friends by keeping your community workspace neat. Sorry, but no food or drinks are allowed in the computer lab/classroom.

WILL affect your final grade.

Even if you can't come, someone else can deliver your assignment by deadline.

PLAN AHEAD. If you are editing at the last minute and something goes wrong, you won't have time to solve the problem. Start your assignments early in the week so you can redo them if you are having technical problems.

If you observe a religious holiday when class meets or if you become ill on the day of class, make arrangements to turn your materials in on time. See "Grading" above.

All assignments will be critiqued in class. Students will be expected to evaluate and comment on each other's work. Your comments should constructively point out the good and the bad, without being overly critical.

PLAGIARISM/USC SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

one's own; in journalism, this includes appropriating the reporting of another without clear attribution. The following is the Annenberg School of Journalism's policy on academic integrity as published in the University catalog: "Since its founding, the USC School of Journalism has maintained a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found guilty of plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on examinations, or purchasing papers or other assignments will receive a failing grade in the course and will be dismissed as a major from the School of Journalism. There are no exceptions to the school's policy."

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is 213-740-0776.

Class 1 Tuesday August 28

Orientation, student & instructor expectations.

The schedule.

Student profiles.

Characteristics of photojournalism. (assigned reading handout)

Careers in photo editing. (assigned reading handout)

So you want to be a photo editor. (assigned reading handout)

How photographs are used in today's media. (assigned reading handout)

Image Browser or Photo Mechanic instruction.

Photo editing exercise and discussion on news photos.

Class 2 Thursday August 30

What are pictures supposed to do? (assigned reading handout)

Staff you will be working with. (assigned reading handout)

Scheduling assignments. (assigned reading handout)

Image Browser or Photo Mechanic instruction.

PowerPoint. (assigned reading handout)

Photo editing exercise and discussion on feature photos.

Visual checklist.

Class 3 Tuesday Sept 4

How a photo assignment desk works. (assigned reading handout)

Digital darkroom. (assigned reading handout)

Prepress. (assigned reading handout)

Proofing and output. (assigned reading handout)

Sept 6

Class 5 Tuesday Sept 11

Class 6 Thursday Sept 13

Give credit properly. (assigned reading handout)

Photo boxes and pictures in combination. (assigned reading handout)

Student Picture Stories.

Assignment: Picture Box.

Class 7 Tuesday Sept 18

Class 8 Thursday Sept 20

Class 9 Tuesday Sept 25

Assignment: Editing digital images.

Critique: Editing digital images.

Internships. (assigned reading handout)

Ethics and honesty in photo editing. (assigned reading handout)

Editing for intimacy. (assigned reading handout)

Weather art. (assigned reading handout)

PPAGLA code of ethics. (assigned reading handout)

Photo editing exercise on photo essay.

Assignment: The simple photo essay.

Critique: The simple photo essay.

The mug shot. (assigned reading handout)

Police Guidelines

Editing for impact.

Photo editing exercise and discussion on headshots and mug shots.

Assignment: Mug shot.

Critique: Mug shot.

Photojournalism leadership. (assigned reading handout)

Photo pages. (assigned reading handout)

Sixteen image portfolio and the photographer's portfolio. (assigned reading handout)

Digital survival guide.

Slide show: Photo pages.

Art directors, editors, page designers and other people that can change your world.

The personality of a photojournalist. (assigned reading handout)

Getting started with your career. (assigned reading handout)

Checklist for photojournalists. (assigned reading handout)

Typography as a graphic. (assigned reading handout)

Photo editing exercise and discussion on typography.

Slide show: Typography and the printed page.

Midterm Exam.

The picture story. (assigned reading handout)

Coaching photographers. (assigned reading handout)

Managers vs. leaders. (assigned reading handout)

Slide show: Newspaper picture pages.

Assignment: Case study. Planning coverage of a big event.

Critique: Case study. Planning coverage of a big event.

Modes of photographic storytelling. (assigned reading handout)

Photo reproduction. (assigned reading handout)

Emailing photos.

What If: Learn from other's mistakes. (assigned reading handout)

The photo essay. (assigned reading handout)

Life Magazine. (assigned reading handout)

Structure of the photo essay. (assigned reading handout)

Slide show: Photo essay.

Assignment: Four-minute reports. Research and report on a master of the photo essay.

Critique: Four-minute reports. Research and report on a master of the photo essay.

Sports photography. (assigned reading handout)

Photo editing exercise and discussion on sports photography.

Assignment: Sports event editing.

Critique: Sports event editing.

Things that waste the photo editors time. (assigned reading handout)

Active listening techniques. (assigned reading handout)

PowerPoint exercise. Photo presentations.

Advanced Photoshop.

Tricks of modern design. (assigned reading handout)

Survey of magazine picture use.

Changes in magazine layout. (assigned reading handout)

Magazine layout. (assigned reading handout)

Photo editing exercise and discussion on magazine picture use.

Slide show: Magazine picture pages.

Assignment: Design a page for Time Magazine.

Class 20 Thursday Nov 1

Critique: Time Magazine page design.

Editorial leadership roles and responsibilities. (assigned reading handout)

Newspaper magazines. (assigned reading handout)

Survey of magazine picture use in Los Angeles Times Magazine and New York Times Magazine.

Photo editing exercise. Presenting to the editors.

Class 21 Tuesday Nov 6

What photo leaders do. (assigned reading handout)

Survey of printing methods. (assigned reading handout)

Deadlines and time management. (assigned reading handout)

Intuitive elements of a photo. (assigned reading handout)

Intellectual elements of a photo. (assigned reading handout)

Class 22 Thursday Nov 8

Photographer's portfolio exercise. Editing for impact.

Photo essay project.

Electronics, cameras and scanners. (assigned reading handout)

Emailing photographs. (assigned reading handout)

Video: The Photographers.

Class 23 Tuesday Nov 13

Guest Speaker: The Editing for the Portfolio.

Wild art.

Photo essay project.

Guidelines for picture page layout. (assigned reading handout)

Informational graphics. (assigned reading handout)

Class 24 Thursday Nov 15

Photographer's portfolio exercise.

Ethics and invasion of privacy. (assigned reading handout)

Creative assignment process. (assigned reading handout)

The "blood on the eggs" test. How to handle gruesome photos. (assigned reading handout)

Dead bodies. (assigned reading handout)

Photo editing exercise and discussion on dead bodies.

Class 25 Tuesday Nov 20

Assign Final Portfolio/Photo Essay projects.

The great hiring hunt. (assigned reading handout)

The photography business. (assigned reading handout)

Libel and slander. (assigned reading handout)

Photo editing exercise and discussion on fairness and accuracy.

Photo editors bag of tricks.

Class 26 Thursday Nov 22 Thanksgiving Break

Class 27 Tuesday Nov 27

Class 28. Thursday Nov 29

Class 29 Tuesday Dec 4

Class 30 Thursday Dec 6

Final Examination Week

Syllabus is subject to change.