

# Castro Valley High School

# PHOTOGRAPHY

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**P**hotography will introduce you to the fundamentals of visual literacy through the medium of traditional film and digital photography. The objectives of this course are to help you become technically and aesthetically proficient with both traditional and digital photography processes, so they become an extension of your expression and communication. With that goal, you will learn to operate a manual SLR film camera, process black and white film and prints, use a scanner, a digital camera, manipulate images in Adobe Photoshop, use a photography studio and create a digital portfolio. This course will also explore the aesthetic, technical, cultural and historical aspects of photography and its role as a form of visual communication.

## REQUIRED EQUIPMENT:

It is *highly recommended*, but not mandatory, that you obtain a manual 35mm Single Lens Reflex (SLR) film camera (the kind that allows you to change the lens). There will be a limited number of cameras available for check-out, but it is preferable to have your own. *I strongly advise the you don't buy a "new" film camera.* Due to the conversion to digital photography, *there are scores of used SLR cameras that can be purchased* on eBay, Craigslist, and local camera shops (please go to the "links" section of the class CVHS website for more info, [www.cvhsphoto.com](http://www.cvhsphoto.com) or contact me if you are not sure what kind of camera to get). Before buying a used SLR camera, I also recommend asking friends and family members if they have a SLR camera that you can use for the semester. Please note: if you are not be able to obtain a film camera, do not worry, you will still be able to enroll in the class.

**LAB FACILITIES:** The CVHS photography department has a Mac-based computer lab, equipped with 33 Mac desktops with the software needed for this coursework. In addition, there is a photography studio outfitted with lighting equipment and a "traditional" B&W film processing and printing lab. A general rule of thumb and common sense is to use care and consideration with the whenever you are using any of the photography department equipment and facilities. We are all in this together, and the computer lab, studio and darkroom only work if we all look out for the best interests of each other –the equipment is not insured & there is no \$ for replacement, so if something is damaged or lost, then and we all lose.

## CLASS PROCEDURES

- ☞ Be on time to class each day with all materials and supplies ready. Tardy referrals will be issued for every 3 tardies.
- ☞ Please be respectful of your instructor, your classmates, yourself and our time together. We will do the same for you.
- ☞ In consideration of our shared experience, **cell phones, texting or computer games are NOT permitted in class.**
- ☞ Finish food or drinks outside the darkroom or computer lab.
- ☞ Please listen while the teacher or another student is addressing the class.
- ☞ **USE THE BATHROOM** before you come to class.
- ☞ **You must NEVER leave the classroom without permission.**
- ☞ Plagiarism or cheating of any kind will result in a failing grade for that assignment –no discussion. Plagiarism includes "copying" or "borrowing" images that you have not shot and claiming them as your own work, as well as copying words and ideas from others and claiming them as your own.

(Check this box after you have read and agree to the policy below.)

**I understand that the use of ELECTRONIC DEVICES is not permitted in this class. This policy extends to laptops, cell phones, Blackberries, iPhones, smart phones, iPods/MP3 players, recording devices and whatever else the industry invents between now and the end of the semester. I HAVE READ THIS POLICY AND UNDERSTAND THAT THE USE OF THESE DEVICES IS NOT ALLOWED IN THE CLASSROOM**

**COURSE GRADING:**

Your course grade will be based on the total points you've earned (from assignments, quizzes/tests and class participation) divided by the total points possible the class. The best way for you to get a good grade in this course is to take notes during lectures and readings and to invest effort and care on the assignments. The surest way to get a poor grade is to try to knock off the assignments at the last-minute. Because there are many of you and only one of me, you must take the initiative to seek help from me about concepts you do not understand, or skills you are having trouble mastering. Please don't be reluctant, I welcome the chance to help you individually.

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

Each quarter you will have photography assignments, reading and in class exercises. You will be graded on your effort, creativity, and ability to complete each assignment in the time allotted. Late work will be marked down.

### **PORTFOLIO**

At the end of each semester you will turn in a portfolio. It will consist of your best work from all of your assignments. Presentation of your portfolio will be discussed in class.

### **PHOTO ASSIGNMENTS GRADING:**

The photos you turn in for each assignment will receive two grades based on the results of your technical and creative efforts:

**TECHNICAL EVALUATION:** The first grade is an evaluation of the technical content of the work, based on the criteria of the assignment. Technical considerations include: do the images meet the criteria of the assignment... did you shoot the required assignment and required number of images, are the images that are submitted for a grade focused, properly exposed and properly toned in Photoshop with the correct contrast, color balance, cropping, burning & dodging techniques, are the images free from dust and spots....

**CREATIVE EVALUATION:** The second grade is an evaluation of the creative content of the photo. It is not enough to be technically sound, you should strive to be creative in your image making as well. Creative considerations include: did the photographer "work" the assignment... have you employed creative techniques discussed in class... have you combined elements to tell a story, or used light, interesting composition, unusual angle, depth of field or moments to make your image more compelling...?

### **DAILY PARTICIPATION**

Any day you are absent, *excused or unexcused*, or not working on appropriate tasks in class, or tardy you will lose participation points. You may earn back points by working on assignments during lunch or after school.

**TESTS & QUIZZES:** In addition to photography, there are a variety of quizzes and writing assignments, which are an important percentage of your grade. These quizzes and writings are based on lectures and readings, so I strongly urge you to take notes in class during lectures and while reading. The writing in the textbook is straightforward, and there are lots of pictures and graphics to help you understand each concept.

### **DONATIONS**

Photography can be expensive, and the photo department welcomes any contributions to help provide students with needed materials and equipment. Please be advised that *all donations are voluntary and have no bearing whatsoever on a student's eligibility for class enrollment or their grade*. But for those who can help, donations in any amount are much appreciated. Checks can be made out to CVHS, or you can donate through the CVHS WebStore link at: [castrovalleyhigh.org](http://castrovalleyhigh.org). Thanks you for your support of the CVHS photography department.

