

Fall 2024

## COM 337-001: Photojournalism

Carol Johnson

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**COM 337 –Photojournalism – Fall 2024**  
**Tu / Th 2:30-3:50 – FMH 319**

**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 (A) 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.

**Optional Course Textbooks:**

- ◆ *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>	<b>20</b>
<p><b>Ongoing Photo Review (OPR)</b> –We begin class by looking at examples of photos you have taken. You must have one new photo uploaded to the class folder, ready for critique, at all times. Eight photos will be discussed during the semester.</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Practicing photographic design, analyzing image components, identifying and developing a personal style.</p>	<b>10</b>
<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>	<b>2</b>
<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>	<b>3</b>
<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>	<b>5*</b>
<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, at least 5 photos, minimum 400 words. 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>	<b>10*</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>

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<b>Assignment Name and Description</b>	<b>%</b>
<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. The final draft will be uploaded to Canvas.</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> writing revision, layout, proofreading.</p>	<b>5*</b>
<p><b>Tips and Tricks</b> – Using a textbook or online resources, identify and experiment with one photographic technique. Create a slide show to teach the new technique to the class and display your own experiments (5-7 min.).</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Using resources to learn new photographic techniques; teaching photographic techniques to the class.</p>	<b>5</b>
<p><b>Self Portraits</b> – Take three photos of yourself. One should be designed for LinkedIn, one for a social media profile, and one should be your “real” self. The LinkedIn and social media photos should be square. Photos will be presented in class.</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Practice creating self-portraits and closeups, audience analysis.</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, 500 words minimum. Five of the photos you use must be your own. Submit the first draft (10 points) and the revised draft (5 points) in 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, career analysis, public speaking.</p>	<b>5</b>
<p><b>Home Slideshow</b> – Create a five to fifteen slide presentation on your “home,” whether it is your room, house, neighborhood or online place where you spend time. This will be shown in class (4-6 min.).</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Photographing ordinary and accessible objects and places.</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, semester review.</p>	<b>5</b>

**Note:** much of the work in this class is short assignments worth five points. 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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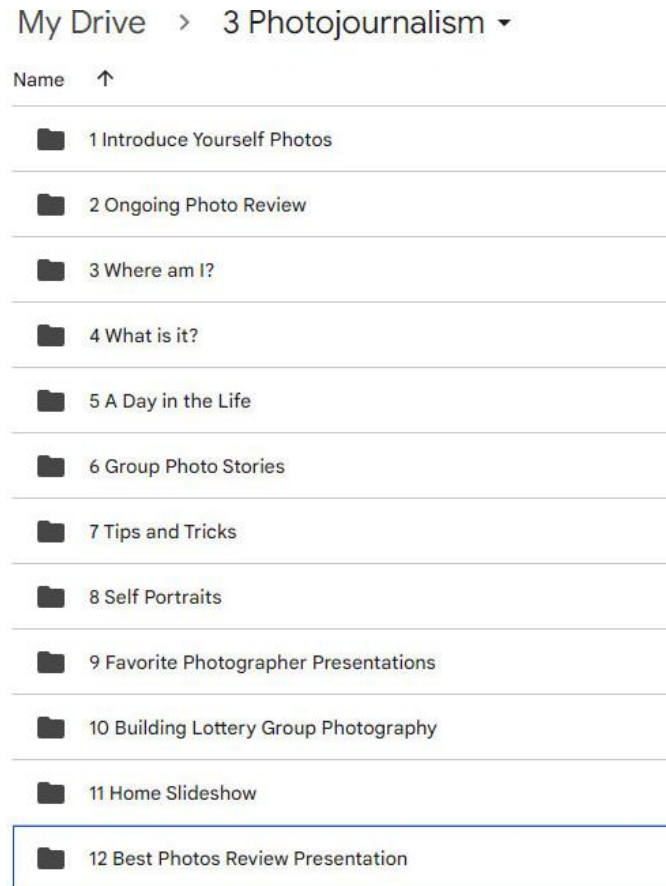
**Course Schedule (subject to minor changes)**

<b>Tuesdays</b>		<b>Thursdays</b>	
<b>Date</b>	<b>Class Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Class Activity</b>
9/3	Go over syllabus; introductory photos; assign <i>Where am I?</i>	9/5	Ongoing Photo Review (OPR); <i>Where am I?</i> ; assign <i>What is It?</i>
9/10	OPR; <i>What is it?</i> ; demonstrate and assign <i>A Day in the Life</i> outline	9/12	OPR; presentation order for <i>A Day in the Life</i> ; review outlines in groups
9/17	<i>A Day in the Life</i> presentations (9 per class)	9/19	<i>A Day in the Life</i> presentations
9/24	OPR; <i>A Day in the Life</i> presentations	9/26	OPR; make teams for <i>Portrait of a Student</i> ; start interviews
10/1	OPR; (brief) work in teams on <i>Portrait of a Student</i> ; make groups for <i>Group Photo Stories</i> , start work	10/3	OPR; <b>first draft <i>Portrait of a Student</i> due</b> ; work in groups on <i>Group Photo Stories</i>
10/8	OPR; present <i>Group Photo Stories</i> ; team work for <i>Portrait of a Student</i> (to get additional material if necessary)	10/10	OPR; demonstrate and assign <i>Tips and Tricks</i> presentation; presentation order
10/15	OPR; <b>final draft <i>Portrait of a Student</i> due</b> ; in-class photo exercise	10/17	OPR; <i>Tips and Tricks</i> presentation (9 per class)
10/22	OPR; <i>Tips and Tricks</i> presentation	10/24	OPR; <i>Tips and Tricks</i> presentation
10/29	Assign <i>Feature Article</i> , look at articles from last semester; individual brainstorming	10/31	OPR; assign <i>Self Portraits</i> , demonstrate <i>Favorite Photographer</i> presentation, presentation order
11/5	Review <i>Feature Article</i> assignment; view <i>Self Portraits</i> in class	11/7	<b>First draft <i>Feature Article</i> due</b> ; <i>Favorite Photographer</i> presentations (9 per class)
11/12	OPR; <i>Favorite Photographer</i> presentations	11/14	<i>Favorite Photographer</i> presentations
11/19	OPR; in-class exercise	11/21	Building lottery group photography – in-class exercise
11/26	<b>Final draft <i>Feature Article</i> due</b> ; OPR; in-class exercise	11/28	<b>Thanksgiving</b>
12/3	<i>Home</i> Slideshow (13 per class)	12/5	<i>Home</i> Slideshow
12/10	<i>Best Photos Review</i> presentations		

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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