



Basic Digital Photography

SYLLABUS

**Basic Digital Photography–Institute of Photographic Studies
Faculty of Record: Rowan Gillson, M.A.**

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Basic Digital Photography is made up of 16 lessons filled with practical tips and easy to understand examples to provide students with a practical introduction to photography. After watching a tutorial video students shoot a photo assignment to put what they've learned into practice. Finally, assignments are submitted to the IPS Community or to a professional IPS Instructor to receive feedback.

This course is designed to train photographers in the art of photography irrespective of the digital camera they are using. The techniques in this course do not depend on any specific camera functionality, but rather provide ways to use any camera more effectively

EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

Upon completion of this course the student should be able to:

- Take sharp photos
- Tell better stories through good composition
- Blur the background
- Photograph fast action
- Understand basic camera buttons
- Edit and organize photos
- Make food look good
- Shoot great landscapes
- Create beautiful portraits
- Find amazing light
- Photograph with creativity

RATIONALE:

The rationale of this course, in terms of the vision of IPS, is as follows:

- Basic Digital Photography fulfills the vision of IPS by laying a foundation of photographic excellence, equipping students to create images of impact and excellence for the sake of the Kingdom of God.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

To successfully complete this course, students must be able to:

- Read materials relating to each topic to be considered
- View recorded lectures
- Complete photographic assignments
- Engage in evaluation of photographic assignments with instructors and classmates
- Perform satisfactorily on exams and coursework

Students are required to have the following equipment:

- Digital camera with battery and memory card
- Personal computer with internet access
- Editing software (Picasa, iPhoto, or Lightroom)

BOOKS TO PURCHASE:

BIG PICTURE SCHEDULE:

Complete descriptions and grading criteria for each assignment may be found in the week-by-week descriptions and the alphabetical listing of assignments

Due Date	Assignment	Points
Week 1	Watch lecture : “Camera Basics”	10
	Watch lecture : “Organizing Your Photos”	10
	Turn in : Week 1 Assignment	25
	Participate in Critique Session	20
Week 2	Watch lecture : “Composition”	10
	Watch lecture : “Focusing and Sharpness”	10
	Turn in : Week 2 Assignment	25
	Participate in Critique Session	20
Week 3	Watch lecture : “Editing”	10
	Watch lecture : “Creativity”	10
	Turn in : 2x Week 3 Assignments	50
	Participate in Critique Session	20
Week 4	Watch lecture : “Exposure”	10
	Watch lecture : “Lighting”	10
	Turn in : Week 4 Assignment	25
	Participate in Critique Session	20
Week 5	Watch lecture : “Action”	10
	Watch lecture : “Blurring the Background”	10
	Turn in : 2x Week 5 Assignments	50
	Participate in Critique Session	20
Week 6	Watch lecture : “Portraiture”	10
	Watch lecture : “Posing”	10
	Turn in : Week 6 Assignment	25
	Participate in Critique Session	20
Week 7	Watch lecture : “Landscapes”	10
	Watch lecture : “Night”	10
	Turn in : 2x Week 7 Assignments	50
	Participate in Critique Session	20
Week 8	Watch lecture : “Food”	10
	Watch lecture : “Macro”	10
	Turn in : Week 8 Assignment	25
	Participate in Critique Session	20
	TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE	550

GRADING SCALE:

Grade	Scale	Points
A	93-100	550-512
A-	91-92	511-501
B+	88-90	500-484
B	85-87	483-468
B-	82-84	467-451
C+	78-81	450-429
C	75-77	428-413
C-	72-74	412-396
D+	68-71	395-374
D	65-67	373-358
F	Below 65	357-0

LATE ASSIGNMENTS:

For every late assignment, you lose 10% of the possible points for each class period the assignment is late. Example: the maximum score possible on a late 10-point project will be 9 points the second week, 8 points the third week and so on.

In order to facilitate potential college credit, assignment deadlines are not flexible. A one-time, 2-week extension at the end of the course can be arranged for \$100 to allow a student to complete their remaining assignments. Points will still be deducted for work turned in after the original deadline.

WEEKLY DETAILED SCHEDULE:

Week One

Lectures:

- **Camera Basics.** If you have ever wondered what this or that button does, this is the session for you! You'll learn about key functions basic to every digital camera, whether a smart phone or a Digital SLR, and how to put them into use.
- **Organizing your Photos.** This session is presented in three different versions, you only need to watch the one that pertains to the software you will be using for this class: Picasa, iPhoto or Lightroom. In this session you'll learn how to download your images, keep them organized, rename, caption and keyword images, and back them up so nothing ever gets lost.

Assignments:

- **Photographic Assignment – My Favorite Things.** Turn in 5 images of some of your favorite things. Do the things you already know to make great photos, but don't worry – we haven't talked about exposure or composition yet. Download your images and take care to rename, caption and keyword each photo. These organization techniques are the most important thing for your image score this week. These images will be evaluated by the class instructor during the weekly critique session.
- **Critique Session.** Meet with your instructor and classmates for an online conferencing event to evaluate the images turned in for the week's assignment. Each critique session will take into special consideration the techniques learned during the week as well as incorporating all previous learning.

WEEKLY DETAILED SCHEDULE:

Week Two:

Lectures:

- **Composition.** This session contains some simple ideas that will be a huge boost to help you create compelling photos. If you could only watch one video about photography, this is the one to see!
- **Focusing and Sharpness.** There's nothing worse than a blurry photo of an awesome memory. This video will teach you how to get maximum sharpness out of your camera for every shot.

Assignments:

- **Photographic Assignment – Composition.** Turn in 5 compelling images with amazing composition. Use any of the ideas in this week's videos to give your story more impact. If you get stuck, fall back on filling the frame and the rule of thirds. Each image needs to be renamed, captioned and have at least 2 keywords. The class instructor will evaluate these images during the weekly critique session.
- **Critique Session.** Meet with your instructor and classmates for an online conferencing event to evaluate the images turned in for the week's assignment. Each critique session will take into special consideration the techniques learned during the week as well as incorporating all previous learning.

WEEKLY DETAILED SCHEDULE:

Week Three:

Lectures:

- **Editing.** This session is presented in three different versions, you only need to watch the one that pertains to the software you will be using for this class: Picasa, iPhoto or Lightroom. In this video you'll learn about the basic tools and key ideas for editing your photos in color and black and white.
- **Creativity.** Creativity is every photographer's greatest challenge. This video presents 5 ways to break free from the ordinary to create better images than you've ever photographed before.

Assignments:

- **Photographic Assignment – Editing.** Choose 5 of the 10 images you've already turned in for this class and re-edit them using the techniques you learned this week. Each image needs to be renamed, captioned and have at least 2 keywords. Each image needs to be renamed, captioned and have at least 2 keywords. The class instructor will evaluate these images during the weekly critique session.
- **Photographic Assignment – Creativity.** Turn in 5 sets of 2 images (10 images total). The first image in each set should be "ordinary," while the second image should be a photo of the same subject but showing it in a very creative and unique way. Each image set is worth 5 points for a total of 25 points in this assignment. Each image needs to be renamed, captioned and have at least 2 keywords. Each image needs to be renamed, captioned and have at least 2 keywords. The class instructor will evaluate these images during the weekly critique session.
- **Critique Session.** Meet with your instructor and classmates for an online conferencing event to evaluate the images turned in for the week's assignment. Each critique session will take into special consideration the techniques learned during the week as well as incorporating all previous learning.

WEEKLY DETAILED SCHEDULE:

Week Four:

Lectures:

- **Exposure.** Cameras are super smart and generally able to get a good exposure when you point them in the right direction. This session will teach you how to trick your camera into getting the exposure that matches your creative vision for the photo.
- **Lighting.** Lighting is the most critical component in photography. This session will teach you to use the directions and colors of natural light to make your images more interesting.

Assignments:

- **Photographic Assignment - Lighting.** Turn in 5 images containing dramatic, dynamic light. Don't settle for "good" or "OK." Push yourself to find and photograph interesting light that makes your subject look good and your stories more compelling. Each image needs to be renamed, captioned and have at least 2 keywords. The class instructor will evaluate these images during the weekly critique session.
- **Critique Session.** Meet with your instructor and classmates for an online conferencing event to evaluate the images turned in for the week's assignment. Each critique session will take into special consideration the techniques learned during the week as well as incorporating all previous learning.

WEEKLY DETAILED SCHEDULE:

Week Five:

Lectures:

- **Action.** Fast action is a huge challenge to photograph without special equipment, but this session is going to teach you how to do it!
- **Blurring the Background.** Blurring the background is one of the best techniques for making your images more interesting and your stories more compelling. There are a number of tricks to making that background silky smooth, and this session will teach them to you.

Assignments:

- **Photographic Assignment – Action.** Get out there and practice your action photos! Turn in 5 images of subjects that were moving fast but you turned into great art. Each image needs to be renamed, captioned and have at least 2 keywords. The class instructor will evaluate these images during the weekly critique session.
- **Photographic Assignment – Blurring the Background.** Use what you've learned this week to turn in 5 images that have a subject in sharp focus and a very blurry background. Each image needs to be renamed, captioned and have at least 2 keywords. The class instructor will evaluate these images during the weekly critique session.
- **Critique Session.** Meet with your instructor and classmates for an online conferencing event to evaluate the images turned in for the week's assignment. Each critique session will take into special consideration the techniques learned during the week as well as incorporating all previous learning.

WEEKLY DETAILED SCHEDULE:

Week Six:

Lectures:

- **Portraiture.** In this video you'll learn how to take what you already know about photography and apply it to making people look really good. You'll learn about lighting, camera settings, backgrounds, and generally how to work with people.
- **Posing.** This video focuses in on posing – how to arrange a person to make them look their best. We'll go over some tips for guys, girls, and couples.

Assignments:

- **Photographic Assignment – Portraits.** Turn in 5 portraits of 2 or more different individuals. Each image must have sharp eyes and catch lights! Each image needs to be renamed, captioned and have at least 2 keywords. The class instructor will evaluate these images during the weekly critique session.
- **Critique Session.** Meet with your instructor and classmates for an online conferencing event to evaluate the images turned in for the week's assignment. Each critique session will take into special consideration the techniques learned during the week as well as incorporating all previous learning.

WEEKLY DETAILED SCHEDULE:

Week Seven:

Lectures:

- **Landscapes.** Dynamic landscape photography is powerful, capturing the imagination of the would-be traveler, and reminding us of the adventures we have been on. Most poor landscape photos have the same problem. In this lesson you'll learn how to overcome this One Problem to make your Landscape Photography stand out from the noise.
- **Night.** Opportunities for great photography abound when the sun goes down but things also become more challenging. This session will show you how to set up your camera and some ways to adjust your shooting style after dark.

Assignments:

- **Photographic Assignment – Landscapes.** Turn in 5 images of landscapes (urban landscapes are great too!). Remember to use good composition and dramatic lighting to keep your shots interesting. Each image needs to be renamed, captioned and have at least 2 keywords. The class instructor will evaluate these images during the weekly critique session.
- **Photographic Assignment – Night.** Turn in 5 images taken outside after dark. Remember to move to the light instead of trying to make darkness look good. Each image needs to be renamed, captioned and have at least 2 keywords. The class instructor will evaluate these images during the weekly critique session.
- **Critique Session.** Meet with your instructor and classmates for an online conferencing event to evaluate the images turned in for the week's assignment. Each critique session will take into special consideration the techniques learned during the week as well as incorporating all previous learning.

WEEKLY DETAILED SCHEDULE:

Week Eight:

Lectures:

- **Food.** Food photography is extremely popular right now and you don't want to be left behind! This video will show you how to make the plate of yumminess look like something people want to eat instead of just another pile of goo.
- **Macro.** Macro is all about getting close and revealing the amazing detail we usually overlook. This video will help you find and photograph those little intricacies that make life interesting.

Assignments:

- **Photographic Assignment – Food.** Turn in 5 images of different foods. Make sure each shot is well plated and highlights the right things. 2 of your images should be Macro shots, showing off the amazing texture and detail of your snack. Each image needs to be renamed, captioned and have at least 2 keywords. The class instructor will evaluate these images during the weekly critique session.
- **Critique Session.** Meet with your instructor and classmates for an online conferencing event to evaluate the images turned in for the week's assignment. Each critique session will take into special consideration the techniques learned during the week as well as incorporating all previous learning.

ALPHABETICAL DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS:

Assignment Images

Each week, students are responsible to turn in to their instructor a collection of images demonstrating competence in the techniques and principles taught in the lectures. Each week's assignment builds upon the previous weeks', meaning that students should be incorporating everything they have learned up to that point in their assignment images each week.

Images will be graded on a 5-point scale with 1 being the lowest score for a submitted image and 5 being the highest. Missing images will score a 0. A score of 4 represents the standard of excellence we are looking for in Basic Digital Photography, thus a student can earn extra credit by turning in assignments that score above a 4. Each image score goes toward your final grade for the course. *This scoring scale is different than that used in our DSLR courses.*

Critique Sessions

Each week you will meet with your course instructor for a critique session during which your instructor will review images from the week's assignment. Each critique will be focused on the content of the week's lectures, but will incorporate prior weeks' learning as well. Your instructor will select images from the week's assignment to include in the critique session, being careful to select at least one image from every student. Students are expected to participate in the conversation by asking questions, answering questions, and providing insight into the original intent behind their own images. Students will be graded on attendance and participation. Students who are unable to attend will be able to watch the recorded session and earn 75% of the possible points for participation by emailing their instructor a summary of the critique of their own image(s).

Lectures

This course consists of 16 lectures that are approximately 10 minutes each. To receive credit for watching these lectures, you must send your instructor a one-paragraph response to each lecture. A "response" doesn't mean agreement or disagreement; rather, it is a "takeaway"—a reflection of what you learned from the lecture and would like to apply to your own photography.