

ART 331 JACKSON HOLE PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

West Virginia University's Jackson Hole Photography Workshop is a 10-day intensive field course that explores the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem in remote northwestern Wyoming. Daily excursions exploring this stunning region are complemented by digital work sessions, critiques of work in progress, gallery visits, and evening presentations. The program is limited in size to insure a close working relationship with the faculty and a significant amount of one-on-one attention. For more info visit: www.jhpw.wvu.edu

COURSE LOCATION:

The town of Jackson, WY (pop. 10,200) sits at almost 6,500 ft. elevation and is surrounded by the largest nearly-intact temperate ecosystem in the world. The Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem (GYE) encompasses almost 35,000 square miles (roughly the size of West Virginia) and includes the world's largest concentration of geysers and hot springs, the largest glaciated region in the contiguous United States, the largest elk herd, the largest bison herd and the largest number of grizzly bears and wolves. It is a United Nations Biosphere Preserve and a World Heritage Site. The list goes on and on.

Situated in the heart of the GYE, the town of Jackson, WY is also one of the epicenters of the art and photography world. Surrounded by pristine wilderness and iconic American landscapes such as Grand Teton National Park and Yellowstone National Park along with a definitive Western identity, photographers and artists from around the world have flocked to the area. A number of well-known landscape and wildlife photographers have successfully established galleries in downtown Jackson, and in recent years the contemporary art world has taken notice. The workshop takes advantage of this flourishing art scene with visits to the galleries in town and a tour of the impressive National Museum of 'Wildlife Art.

We will be splitting our time on the workshop at two historic ranches inside Grand Teton National Park. Our home base for the first half of the workshop is the historic AMK Ranch, a University of Wyoming Research Center and National Register of Historic Places situated on the picturesque banks of Jackson Lake in Grand Teton National Park. The second half of the workshop will be spent at the Murie Ranch, a National Historic Landmark just two miles from Moose, WY. Sitting at the base of the Teton range, and the heart of the American wilderness, the Murie Ranch is known as the birthplace of the Wilderness Act and the modern conservation movement.

COURSE CONTENT:

The workshop covers a broad range of photographic practices and principles with an emphasis on instruction targeted to the individual level of the student. Primary instruction is done with digital SLR cameras. Students will also be exposed to 35mm film cameras, medium and large format film cameras, and mixed media processes. In addition, required readings and discussions on the history, culture and environment of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, will add to the students' exploration of a new geography.

Throughout the ten-day workshop, students will be encouraged to experiment with various forms of image making, developing creative approaches to the medium in order to create unique individual expressions in response to space and place. Subject matter can vary from concepts that pertain to interpretation of the landscape, to intimate nature studies, to social documentary and portraiture. Among the locations visited during the workshop are Grand Teton National Park, Yellowstone National Park, the National Elk Refuge, the historic Mormon Row homestead site, an authentic western rodeo, and a variety of neighboring locations.

Lectures and demonstrations will cover basic camera operations, beginning to advanced Adobe software techniques, alternative camera use, mixed media processes and more. In addition, there will be several presentations and technical demonstrations by professional artists working in the field and a tour of the galleries in town.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Apply an understanding of the principles of control in photography: camera, composition and control of light.
- Apply an understanding of the technical aspects and use of digital editing software techniques.
- Design, produce and present a successful portfolio of select images.
- Develop an appreciation for the delicacy and importance of an interconnected ecosystem.
- Execute and present work in such a way that yields successful communicative results.

GRADING:

Attendance/Participation	50 pts.	A = 90-100%	(90+/100 pts.)
Presentation	10 pts.	B = 80-90%	(80+/90 pts.)
Final Portfolio	40 pts.	C = 70-80%	(70+/80 pts.)
TOTAL	100 pts.	D = 60-70%	(60+/70 pts.)

EVALUATION:

A = exceptional work in which the student shows that he or she has firmly grasped and achieved objectives and expectations of the course (excellent)

B = very good work and considerable grasp of the essentials of the course (above average)

C = good work and a useable grasp of the essentials of the course (average, acceptable)

D = definite, but not necessarily coherent, knowledge of the course (below average)

F = student has not achieved even a minimum grasp of the essentials of the course or failure to withdraw officially from the course (failure on multiple levels)

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION:

Attendance and participation is the most important aspect of this course. Attendance is mandatory and essential for learning and understanding the techniques introduced throughout the ten-day workshop.

Attendance and participation includes: photo shoots, lab sessions, reading discussions, evening artist lectures and a museum visit.

There will be many required photo shoots scheduled throughout the ten-day workshop. If you miss more than one photo shoot your grade in the class will be automatically deducted one letter. Three or more unexcused absences will result in automatic failure.

There will also be several lab sessions at various times throughout the ten-day workshop. Unless otherwise stated, you are required to show up to every lab session. If you fail to participate in a lab session your grade in the class will be automatically deducted one letter. Simply showing up to lab sessions with nothing to work on is equivalent to marking you absent. The lab sessions are absolutely critical to the success of your work. You will be evaluated on your commitment to your work and overall improvement throughout the ten-day workshop.

There will be multiple evening artist presentations and a museum visit. You are required to attend all of these events. **If you fail to attend an artist presentation, or the museum visit, your grade in the class will be deducted one letter for each absence.**

Finally, it is important to note that our time in the field is equivalent to time spent in the classroom. **CELL PHONE USE IS NOT PERMITTED IN THE FIELD.** Engaged participation in all course outings is expected and will be noted. Excessive distractions and otherwise apathetic attitudes will be detrimental to your final grade.

READING & DISCUSSIONS:

The Jackson Hole Photography Workshop Reader is the only required text for the course. The Reader is organized into two parts. We will have planned discussions based on the required readings as noted in your course schedule. It is your responsibility to be prepared for these discussions and to provide your own constructive, thoughtful input to the conversation. Once again, your participation in these discussions, or lack thereof, will be noted.

PRESENTATION:

On the final day of the workshop, students will present on the work they have created over the course of the ten days. The final images will be projected in digital format. Students should be prepared to discuss their techniques and choices along with the content of the images.

FINAL PORTFOLIO:

For your final portfolio you will submit up to 20 of your best images from the workshop in digital format. All the images need to be flattened jpegs saved at the highest quality setting. You may want to think of it in terms of a completed body of work, which communicates an idea or concept, rather than a technical exercise. However, it is not necessary that your work have a theme. Your work will be critiqued and assessed according to its creative value as well as technical strength. In other words, aesthetic concerns, content, and individual creativity in photography will be as important as your knowledge of its mechanics.

SAFETY:

Due to the nature of this course, there is some assumed risk involved. The town of Jackson, Wyoming is situated at over 6,500 ft. elevation. Most of our excursions will be at an even higher elevation. You may experience some symptoms of altitude sickness, including: fatigue, dizziness, dehydration, upset stomach, and a bloody nose. Please be sure to drink plenty of water and slow down if you begin feeling any of these symptoms. There will also be opportunities for hiking throughout the 10-day workshop. The area surrounding Jackson is an extreme vertical environment and it's up to you to gauge your conditioning level.

FINAL NOTES:

The area surrounding Jackson, Wyoming is a truly special and magical kind of place. It is the largest, most intact, pristine wilderness area in the lower 48 states. It is very important that you respect every detail of the spaces and places we will be exploring. Lower your voice, open your eyes and ears, mind your manners, tread lightly and leave no trace!

INCLUSIVITY STATEMENT:

The West Virginia University community is committed to creating and fostering a positive learning and working environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with the Office of Accessibility Services (293-6700). For more information on West Virginia University's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives, please see <http://diversity.wvu.edu>.

The schedule and procedures in this course are subject to change in the event of circumstances beyond the instructor's control.