**Course Title:** Travel Photography: Around the Corner and Around the World

**Course Code:** PHOTO 226

**Quarter:** Spring 2017

**Instructor Name:** Joel Simon

**Course Objectives:**

- Learn how to use the fundamental elements of photography in ways that convey a sense of place
- Deepen your understanding of the fundamental tools of travel photography—from traditional techniques to the creative use of contemporary digital imaging resources
- Create expressive photographs that reveal your unique impression of a destination through assignments, location shoots and the completion of a personal project
- Reinforce the ongoing creation of travel photography both around the corner and around the world

**Note:** While computers are integral to digital photography, this course is not intended to be an intensive Photoshop class.

**Course Schedule:** This is a 7-week course meeting one day a week. Students can also sign up for an individual instruction session at a nearby field location on a weekend TBA.

**Required Equipment:** A digital camera and a computer with a photography application. Any digital camera and any computer application will suffice, e.g. for Mac users any application from iPhoto through Photoshop.

**Requirements for a Letter Grade and/or Credit:**

- No Grade Requested (this is the default option)
- If you elect Credit/No Credit, attendance will determine your grade
- If you elect to obtain a letter grade, then your grade will be based upon attendance (25%), completion of weekly assignments (25%) and your final project (50%).

*Please Note:* If you require proof that you completed a Continuing Studies course for any reason (for example, employer reimbursement), you must choose either the Letter Grade or Credit/No Credit option. Courses taken for NGR will not appear on official transcripts or grade reports.
Weekly Outline

**Session 1** Why Take Pictures? Course Overview & the Elements of Composition

Discussion Themes:

- What do participants hope to get out of the class?
- What distinguishes or defines the travel photo?
- What does travel photography tell you about a place?
- Is there a message in the picture(s)?
- Composition: the rule of thirds, foreground, middle ground, background
- How cameras portray three-dimensional space in a two-dimensional plane
- Examples created by noted travel photographers

Before class assignment: No later than two days prior to the first session, email the instructor three of your favorite travel photographs—your photos or those taken by someone else. Be prepared to discuss the criteria you used to choose the images. Please also communicate your goals and expectations for the class. What is it that you want to learn?

After class assignment: Following the rules of composition, take 3 photographs exemplifying each of the following:

- Foreground, middle ground, background
- Rule of thirds
- Alternate points of view

**Session 2—Know Your Light**

Discussion and Demonstration Themes:

- Diffuse light
- Specular light
- Back-lighting
- Reflected light
- Ambient light
- High key light and low key light
- Modifying available light
- How to effectively use small strobes and reflectors to modify or augment natural light
- Understanding and setting the appropriate white balance

Assignment after class: Following the rules of light, take 3 photographs exemplifying each of the following:
Available natural light (sunlight)
Available artificial light
Modified available light
Backlight
Specular light
Golden to diffuse light

Session 3 — Fundamental Photographic Techniques for Travel Photography

Discussion of basic technical elements:

- The exposure triangle: shutter speeds, aperture and ISO
- Understanding the photographic attributes of various focal length lenses
- Interpreting space through controlling depth of field
- Interpreting time through various shutter speeds (showing/stopping action)

Assignment after class: Take 3 photographs exemplifying each of the following:

- shallow depth of field
- broad depth of field
- fast shutter speed
- slow shutter speed

Session 4 — Designing Photographs: Using light, lenses, perspective, scale and action to link what you see with what a place means to you.

Discussion & demonstration Themes:

- Environmental Portraiture
- Street photography
- Landscapes
- Cityscapes
- Architecture
- Still Life
- Animals
- Action

Assignment after class: Using your knowledge of light lenses, perspective, scale and action, choose three of the above categories and submit 3 images for each category.
Session 5 — Photo Essays: Visually Telling your Travel Stories/ Creating a Visual, Emotional and Intellectual Journey.

Discussion Themes:

- Relating travel photos to one another (distilling visual themes) through subject matter, light, color, composition, texture, pattern, design and detail
- Combining images that take the viewer on an emotional or intellectual journey
- Editing
- Sequencing
- Enhancing with text, music or narration
- Building a body of work

After class assignment:

- Take 5 photos that illustrate a theme
- Create a visual short story using a key shot followed by detail shots

Session 6 — Essential Equipment & Tips for Travel Photography.

Discussion Themes:

- Essential equipment
- Researching a location/subject
- Packing and preparation
- Scouting light and location
- Specialized topics in travel photography (e.g. underwater, cultural considerations, events and festivals, travel in “exotic lands” & artic/polar conditions)

After class assignment: Continue work on your personal project.

Location shoot — Each student will sign up for one ¾ hour session of individual field instruction.
Session 7 — Digital tools for the Travel Photographer and Presentation of Personal Projects.

Digital tools for the Travel Photographer:

- Storing images on the road
- Grandma’s shoebox: How computers can help us organize our images/digital asset management
- Options for backing up your data
- Photo products that enable you to share your images
- Basic digital enhancement techniques

Presentation of Personal Projects. Summary and Review (Q&A).

Review of personal projects, including why you chose your project, photographic rules and techniques used, and evaluation of the results.

------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Personal Project Description: PHOTO 226

As part the curriculum for this course, you will be required to submit a “personal project”. The goal of this project is to produce a body of work that will have lasting significance for you. Within the scope of this course, this will involve travel photographs that have special meaning for you.

The definition of the project is broad. There are no strict requirements for how many images are involved. Instead consider quality rather than quantity.

Also, there are no strict requirements about the “output format” for the project, but some suggestions include:

- Prints suitable for display
- Electronic images suitable for posting online
- A blurb book, or similar “short run” publication
- A packet of small prints
- A personal blog with photos

Keep in mind that you will be asked to give a short presentation to the class at our final meeting to both show and to explain the rationale underlying your project. Please speak with me if you have any questions about the assignment.