



**JOHN FELICE
ROME CENTER**

FNAR 115: Digital Photography in Rome

John Felice Rome Center

Summer 2026

Tuesdays & Thursdays | 9:00-12:20pm

Professor **Federica Valabrega**

Email: fvalabrega@luc.edu

Office Hours: by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

In this introductory class, students will explore the visual language of digital photography exploring Rome. The technical component of the class consists of mastering manual digital camera operation and exposure concentrating on the dynamics of composition using color and natural light. A variety of subjects will be covered between street photography, and portraits and all in between so that students can become comfortable in more than one genre. There will also be individual and group photography critiques, and photographic field trips. Students also learn to use Adobe imaging software and to organize and enhance their images in post-production. Students will gain an understanding of the aesthetic possibilities of photography through weekly assignments and power point presentations on both historic and contemporary photographers. Students will be expected to complete a final portfolio by the end of the semester that may or may not be exhibited around the school premises.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: An understanding of the basic concepts of photography: how cameras, lenses, and digital imaging work; photographic composition; lighting conditions and lighting techniques; editing and presenting photographs; building a portfolio of images; individual and group analytical photography critiques.

REQUIRED MATERIALS: Students must have a DIGITAL CAMERA with the ability to be used in manual settings. A digital DSLR camera is preferable. Consumer grade cameras may be compatible with this class IF THE CAMERA ALLOWS MANUAL SETTINGS.

Also required: a camera storage card and a spare card (minimum of 2GM); a card reader and/or USB connection for camera to download images; storage device such as a large flash drive (4 to 10GM) or a small external hard drive (20 to 50GB). A laptop computer with photography editing software from Adobe: Lightroom Classic, Photoshop and Adobe Illustrator is recommended.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS, ASSIGNMENTS, SCHEDULE: In this class there will be individual weekly photographic assignments; a Camera Skill quiz; a Mid-term Exam where students will show their first images; a FINAL organized portfolio of your images to make-up for a photographic project (which will serve as the Final Exam).

Week	Topic	Date	Details
1	Introduction to the Course: Camera Manual Exposure Functions (ISO, Aperture, Shutter Speed)	May 19 th	<p>Overview of syllabus, class requirements, expectations, grading policy and review of students' camera equipment.</p> <p><i>The basic principles of photography I:</i> camera controls such as image quality (raw); white balance; ISO; aperture and shutter speed.</p> <p>Read: Review your camera manual prior to next class.</p> <p>In class: image quality (raw), white balance, ISO, aperture, shutter speed cheat sheet and explanations with real time exercises.</p> <p>Site Visit: Outside walk in Balduina/Trionfale to practice with ISO, aperture, shutter speed and light with teacher.</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <p>Deliver 6 images working with three different types of ISO and changing aperture and shutter speed accordingly to the light sources found. (more explanation in class).</p>
	The importance Of Light in an Image Composition Framing Layering & Depth of Field	May 21st	<p><i>The basic principles of photography II& III:</i> light as a paintbrush for photographers. Learn how to see light as a guide inside/to an image. Composition, framing the subject, geometrical design elements, rule of thirds. What is Depth of Field and how to achieve it.</p> <p>Read: Power Point presentation on Light, Composition, Framing and Dept of Field.</p> <p>In Class: Look at previous class assignment and critique. Camera function review and in-class questions on what it's light and how do we "see it."</p>

			<p>Site Visit: Outside walk in Balduina/Trionfale to practice the use of Light, Composition, Framing and Depth of Field on people walking about.</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <p>Take 3 images using one source of natural light and three images using one source of artificial light.</p> <p>Take 6 images total - three using shallow depth of field and three using deep depth of field. Pay attention to using an interesting and unique composition & framing in all of them.</p>
2	Field Trip	May 26 th	<u>Class outdoors – Meet at Mercato Testaccio for some on site photography applying all that we learned so far.</u>
	Digital Work Flow I: Lightroom & Photoshop	May 28 th	<p><i>The digital workflow I.</i> Data capture, file management, basic corrections in Lightroom: how to create your own photography catalogue (contact sheet) and export your images in JPG for showing during in-class critiques.</p> <p>Read: Lightroom & Photoshop tutorials on Canvas.</p> <p>In Class: Look at previous class assignment and critique. Practice with Lightroom and Photoshop in class with the teacher.</p> <p>Assignment: Take 10 Photos before and after postproduction.</p>
3	Portraiture	June 2nd	<p><i>The basic principles of photography IV.</i> What makes for a good Portraiture.</p> <p>Show historical Portraiture photographers and talk about the relationship needed between subject and photographer to capture the best Portraits that documents something and how to produce it.</p> <p>Read: Power point on historical Portraiture & Documentary photographers on Canvas. We will discuss this in class on June 4th</p> <p>Assignment: Take 6 portraits of friends or unknown people in 2 different light settings- natural or artificial.</p>

	Midterm exams	June 4 th	<p>Midterm: Students present a selection of 7-10 photographs to the class reasoning their choices based on what we learned so far. Collective discussion and critique of student's work presentation based on Lighting, Composition and Depth of Field with all images retouched in Lightroom Classic.</p> <p>Grades will be delivered after class via email and on the school portal.</p>
4	Digital Work Flow II: Prepare your images for printing	June 9 th	<p><i>Digital Work Flow II:</i> More resizing and color correcting for printing. Tutorial on Adobe Illustrator to create your digital Artboard or PDF.</p> <p>In class: advanced editing, retouching, and resizing of images taken at home the prior weeks for final selection to print. Learn Adobe Illustrator to create your own Artboard or PDF for the FINAL presentation.</p> <p>Assignment: practice with Adobe Illustrator creating a canvas with 20 images. Prepare your images to print for the next class.</p>
	Artist Statement	June 11 th	<p><i>The basic principles of photography V:</i> Lesson on what is an Artist statement and how do you write one.</p> <p>Read: Power Point Presentation on Artist Statement.</p> <p>In class: Look and read different Artist statements from photographers worldwide.</p> <p>Practice writing your own Artist statement in class.</p> <p>Assignment: Write your own Artist statement to show for next class to review before Final Exams.</p>
5	Adobe Illustrator & Print works	June 16 th	<p><u><i>Class outdoors – Meet at Stadio dei Marmi for some class photography.</i></u></p> <p>Students will be able to ask teacher questions regarding final exams during the day outing.</p>

	Final Exams	June 18th	<p>FINAL EXAMS: Group critic of class work with artist statements and PDFs as a FINAL exam.</p> <p>Grades will be delivered after class via email and on the school portal.</p>
--	-------------	-----------	---

ATTENDANCE POLICY: In accordance with the Rome Center mission to promote a higher level of academic rigor, all courses adhere to the following attendance policy. Prompt attendance, preparation and active participation in course discussions are expected from every student. Any lateness or leaving class early will impact the final course grade. Attendance is mandatory at every class meeting for each course. Absence due to sickness or injury needs to be corroborated by a doctor's note. Students late to class twice will be credited with one absence in accordance with the JFRC's Attendance policy. Three (3) absences will result in an automatic failure (F). Travel does not constitute reason to miss class.

GRADING POLICY: Each individual assignment will count as one grade and the Final Semester Project counts as two grades. A written Mid-Term Exam will count as two grades.

All grades will be averaged for the final course grade. Late or incomplete assignments will be penalized by one grade (an A becomes a B, etc.). One week before the class ends, students wishing to improve their grade may have an opportunity to do so by taking on an additional assignment. The additional assignment can only improve the grade; it will not be used to compute the final grade if by including it the final grade would decrease.

Grades: A = 94-100; A- = 90-93; B+ = 87-89; B = 83-86; B- = 80-82; C+ = 77-79; C = 73-76; C- = 70-72; D+ = 67-69; D = 63-66; D- = 60-62; F = 0-59. A/A- = Excellent command of the photographic language, image structure sophisticated, project organization is high, software application is advanced. B+ = Very good command of the photographic language showing very few errors, image structure is advanced. B = Good command of the photographic language, competent use of image structure, evidence of development and complexity, work will generally be above average. B- = Satisfactory command of the photographic language, image structure will be simple, medium number of errors. C+ = Some evidence of ability to control the photographic language, image structure is simple, frequent but not serious errors. C/C- = Some evidence of the ability to control the photographic language, high frequency of errors. D = Little evidence of the ability to control or apply the photographic language, failure to execute a photographic project, frequent errors. F = No evidence of the ability to apply the photographic language and failure to make a photographic project.

FINAL EXAMINATION: There will be no written Final Exam. The Semester Project serves as the Final. On the last day of class (Thursday, June 18) there will be an extensive individual and group critique of the semester's assignments and the Semester Project. Students will present, and attendance is mandatory.

FEES FOR EXHIBITIONS: There will be field trips to two or three museum or gallery exhibits, so please set aside twenty to thirty Euro for fees.

SUGGESTED SOFTWARE: Adobe Photoshop / Lightroom Classic and Adobe Illustrator.

STATEMENT ON CHEATING & PLAGIARISM: A student whose actions are deemed by the school to be out of sympathy with the ideals, objectives or the spirit of good conduct as fostered by the school and academic community, may be subject to discipline, including dismissal, by the school. Cheating is a dishonest action out of sympathy with the ideals, objectives and spirit of the university. Cheating reflects negatively on one's personal integrity. Cheating is unjust to those students who have studied. A student who commits an act of academic dishonesty will receive a failing grade on the work in which the dishonesty occurred. In addition, acts of academic dishonesty, irrespective of the weight of the assignment, may result in the student receiving a failing grade in the course. Instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the dean, who has the final decision on the outcome of the student's grade and status.

NO AI and CHAT GPT will be allowed in the course.

- **Accessibility Accommodations:** Students registered with the Student Accessibility Center (SAC) requiring academic accommodations should contact the Academic Affairs office at the John Felice Rome Center during the first week of classes.
- **Statement on Title IX:** The Rome Center follows Loyola's [Comprehensive Policy and Procedures for Addressing Discrimination, Sexual Misconduct, Retaliation](#) and will comply with those as indicated and instructed.

