

## **COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT**

**Academic School/Department:** Communications and The Arts

**Programme:** Art History and Visual Culture  
Film & Photography

**FHEQ Level:** 4

**Course Title:** History of Photography

**Course Code:** AVC 4210

**Student Engagement Hours:** 120

Lectures: 22.5

Seminar / Tutorials: 22.5

Independent / Guided Learning: 75

**Semester:** Fall or Spring

**Credits:** 12 UK CATS credits

6 ECTS credits

3 US credits

### **Course Description:**

This course explores the relationship between photographs and the social, artistic and historical currents existing during their time of production. It also traces the evolution of the camera and the chemical and technological progress which enabled photography to advance.

The course consists of lectures, discussions, in-class practical exercises, visits to museums, galleries and collections which together will allow the student to explore the photographic image in terms of its style, subject, medium and authorship and to place it within its visual and social context.

### **Prerequisites:**

None

### **Aims and Objectives:**

- To introduce the history of photography in social contexts
- To explore the theories and methods art historians have used to examine photography
- To examine photographic representation in mass culture as well as museums and galleries
- To analyse a range of case studies of photographic images and contributors to photography's histories
- To develop visual literacy including formal analysis

## **Programme Outcomes:**

Art History and Visual Culture: A4(i), A4(ii), A4(iii); B4(i), B4(l), B4(ii), B4(iii), C4(l)  
Film and Photography: A4(i), A4(ii), A4(iii); B4(i), B4(l), B4(ii), B4(iii), C4(l)

A detailed list of the programme outcomes are found in the Programme Specification.

This is maintained by Registry and located at

<https://www.richmond.ac.uk/programme-and-course-specifications/>

## **Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of this course, successful students should be able to:

- Show a detailed understanding of theories, methods and concepts appropriate for the study of the history of photography
- Demonstrate a detailed understanding of key periods, photographers and works in the history of photography
- Show a critical understanding of and engagement with the ways in which the history of photography is framed by specific cultural, social and political contexts (technological and ideological)
- Develop his or her understanding of key terms, concepts and critical theories in the histories of photography while demonstrating an engagement with images and a selection of critical texts and processes
- Complete assigned work with a degree of clarity, technical competence and critical thinking, and a degree of independence and capacity for self-evaluation, appropriate for a level 4 course.

## **Indicative Content:**

- The histories of photography in specific socio-cultural contexts
- Various technical processes in their creative and historical contexts
- The evolution of the camera
- Photography in museums, galleries and site-specific installations
- A range of case studies of important photographic images and image makers
- Visual literacy including formal analysis
- In-class practical exercise

## **Assessment:**

This course conforms to the University Assessment Norms approved at Academic Board and located at: <https://www.richmond.ac.uk/university-policies/>

**Teaching Methodology:**

The course will be taught through classroom lectures and seminar classes, and through a series of closely guided site visits, with the intent of using London itself, and its environs, as the second classroom. Lectures will follow the schedule detailed in the syllabus and are structured as surveys and overviews of both accepted knowledge and current debate on each theme/topic. Short seminars will be held as feed-back opportunities in the subsequent session following each site visit, with a view to ensuring the integration of individual learning/interpretation from each site into the learning of the whole class. Seminars rely upon active student preparation, note-taking and response to each site, and will consist of student-led discussion of historical, perceptual and heritage issues arising from each site. Visits will comprise tutor mini-lectures and explanations, student independent exploration, small group and full group exploration and guided discussion.

**Indicative Texts**

- Barthes, Roland. *Camera Lucida*, Flamingo Press, 1980
- Cotton, Charlotte. *The Photograph As Contemporary Art*. 4th ed. London: Thames & Hudson, 2020
- Fried, Michael. *Why Photography Matters as Art as Never Before*, Yale University Press, 2008
- Marien, Mary Warner. *Photography: A Cultural History*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, Laurence King Publishing, 2021
- Sealy, Mark. *Decolonising the Camera: Photography in Racial Time*. Lawrence & Wishart Ltd, 2019
- Sontag, Susan. *On Photography*, Picador, 2001 (originally published in 1977)
- Wells, Liz. *Photography: A Critical Introduction*, Routledge, 2015.

See syllabus for complete reading list.

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Change Log for this CSD:

Major or Minor Change?	Nature of Change	Date Approved & Approval Body (School or LTPC)	Change Actioned by Academic Registry
	Various updates as part of the UG programme review	AB Jan 2022	