

Don't Forget

What you have to remember to bring with you for the digital photography class

- () **laptop** with plenty of space on your hard drive to download and archive photos
- () the **charging cord for your laptop** with **adapter** for Italian electrical outlet
[check to see if your charging cord is compatible with 220 European electricity]
- () **PhotoShop Elements 13** already loaded onto your laptop and working
- () **Digital camera** in perfect working condition
- () **Your camera instruction book**, or obtain one from the web. You need to have one.
- () **battery charger** if your camera needs one [adapter for Italy and check voltage specs]
- () **memory cards** for your camera, one to use plus a spare for when #1 is full
- () **card reader** (optional) to download image files to laptop, or proper **cord for transfer**
- () **all course handouts** I provided to you
- () **4 passport sized photographs** of yourself from AAA or CVS

Optional, suggested

- () Obtain an **extra battery** for your camera is **strongly recommended**. Your original battery going dead will be an issue for you sometime during the term. It is best to have a second spare battery as backup. If you battery is disposable, make sure to have an extra battery with you.
- () Consider having a **card reader** even if you have only used the supplied usb cord that came with your camera to transfer images from your camera to laptop. Card readers are inexpensive and usually more convenient than hooking up your camera to your computer. If you have a mac laptop, you may have a slot to insert your memory card into.

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Tentative Schedule for Florence term 2015

Students may arrive at their homestay on Saturday, March 28 or Sunday, March 29.

You do need to arrive definitely by Sunday at a reasonable hour. You will need to inform your homestay host, prior to your arrival, about the time and day you will be there.

Week 1

Monday, March 30

9:30am - Meet at Eurocenter

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

2pm – Orientation and walking tour [phones, bus passes, books]

Tuesday, March 31

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

1:30-4pm – Photography class

3:30 – *Prof. Benjamin office hours*

Wednesday, April 1

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

1:30-4pm – Architecture introductory class

Thursday, April 2

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

1:30-4pm – Photography class

3:30 – *Prof. Benjamin office hours*

Friday, April 3

Good Friday, observed holiday

Saturday, April 4

Easter weekend

Sunday, April 5

EASTER

Week 2

Monday, April 6

Easter Monday, National Holiday

no classes

Tuesday, April 7

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

1:30-4pm – Photography or Architecture class/tba

3:30 – *Prof. Benjamin office hours*

Wednesday, April 8

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

1:30-4pm – Architecture

Thursday, April 9

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

1:30-4pm – Photography class

3:30 – *Prof. Benjamin office hours*

Friday, April 10 - Day excursion to Siena

Saturday, April 11 - open

Sunday, April 12 - open

/

Week 3

Monday, April 13

10am-12pm – Italian Language
Lunch Break 12-1:30pm
1:30-4pm – Architecture

Tuesday, April 14

10am-12pm – Italian Language
Lunch Break 12-1:30pm
1:30-4pm – Photography
3:30 – *Prof. Benjamin office hours*

Wednesday, April 15

10am-12pm – Italian Language
Lunch Break 12-1:30pm
1:30-4pm – Architecture

Thursday, April 16

10am-12pm – Italian Language
Lunch Break 12-1:30pm
1:30-4pm – Photography
3:30 – *Prof. Benjamin office hours*

Friday, April 17 - **Day Excursion – Carrara and Pietrasanta.**

Saturday, April 18 - open

Sunday, April 19 - open

Week 4

Monday, April 20

10am-12pm – Italian Language
Lunch Break 12-1:30pm
1:30-4pm – Architecture

Tuesday, April 21

10am-12pm – Italian Language
Lunch Break 12-1:30pm
1:30-4pm – Photography
3:30 – *Prof. Benjamin office hours*

Wednesday, April 22

10am-12pm – Italian Language
Lunch Break 12-1:30pm
1:30-4pm – Architecture mid-term exam

Thursday, April 23

10am-12pm – Italian Language
Lunch Break 12-1:30pm
1:30-4pm – Photography
3:30 – *Prof. Benjamin office hours*

Friday, April 24 - **open**

Saturday, April 25 - open

Liberation Day – National Holiday

Sunday, April 26 - open

Week 5

Monday, April 27

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

1:30-4pm – Architecture

Tuesday, April 28

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

1:30-4pm – Photography

3:30 – *Prof. Benjamin office hours*

Wednesday, April 29

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

1:30-4pm – Architecture

Thursday, April 30

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

1:30-4pm – Photography

3:30 – *Prof. Benjamin office hours*

Friday, May 1 - open

Labor Day – National Holiday

Buses, trains and public services reduced, museums closed, everyone has the day off.

Saturday, May 2 - open

Sunday, May 3 - open

Week 6

Monday, May 4

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

1:30-4pm – Architecture

Tuesday, May 5

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

1:30-4pm – Photography

3:30 – *Prof. Benjamin office hours*

Wednesday, May 6

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

1:30-4pm – Architecture

Thursday, May 7

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

1:30-4pm – Photography

3:30 – *Prof. Benjamin office hours*

Friday, May 8 - Rome [overnight]

Saturday, May 9 - Rome [overnight]

Sunday, May 10 - Rome

Train back to Florence

Week 7

Monday, May 11

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

1:30-4pm – Architecture

Tuesday, May 12

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

1:30-4pm – Photography

3:30 – *Prof. Benjamin office hours*

Wednesday, May 13

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

1:30-4pm – Architecture

Thursday, May 14

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

1:30-4pm – Photography

3:30 – *Prof. Benjamin office hours*

Friday, May 15 - open

Saturday, May 16 - open

Sunday, May 17 - open

Week 8

Monday, May 18

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

1:30-4pm – Architecture

Tuesday, May 19

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

1:30-4pm – Photography

3:30 – *Prof. Benjamin office hours*

Wednesday, May 20

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

1:30-4pm – Architecture

Thursday, May 21

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

1:30-4pm – Photography

3:30 – *Prof. Benjamin office hours*

Friday, May 22 - open

Saturday, May 23 - open

Sunday, May 24 - open

Week 9

Monday, May 25

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

1:30-4pm – Architecture

Tuesday, May 26

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

1:30-4pm – Photography

3:30 – *Prof. Benjamin office hours*

Wednesday, May 27

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

1:30-4pm – Architecture

Thursday, May 28

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

1:30-4pm – Photography

3:30 – *Prof. Benjamin office hours*

Friday, May 29 - open

Saturday, May 30 - open

Sunday, May 31 - open

Week 10

Monday, June 1

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

1:30-4pm – Architecture – final presentations

Tuesday, June 2

No Classes

Republic Day – National Holiday

Buses, trains and public services reduced, museums closed, everyone has the day off.

Wednesday, June 3

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

1:30-4pm – Architecture – final presentations

Thursday, June 4

10am-12pm – Italian Language

Lunch Break 12-1:30pm

1:30-4pm – Photography – final class – portfolios are due

3:30 – *Prof. Benjamin office hours*

6:00 PM – final dinner, location tba

Friday, June 5

Term is completed at 1 PM.

Florence, Italy study term abroad – Spring 2015

Professor Martin Benjamin

email - benjamim@union.edu

Dates

The dates for the term are March 29 – June 5, 2015. You should plan to arrive in Florence on Sunday, March 28 to settle into your home-stay. Home-stays are available on Saturday, March 28 also by contacting your family. You may not depart from Florence before 1 PM on Friday, June 5.

Housing and meals

Your housing arrangement will be a home-stay, where your Italian host family provides breakfast and dinner daily. Students get a food allowance for lunches via stipend [cash] from Union. You will be placed in a home stay with an Italian family and will live with one or two other Union students, or you may choose to seek a home-stay without another Union student. It is a requirement that you live and sleep at your home-stay as part of the Italian term abroad experience.

Eurocentres

Eurocentres is the facility we partner with in Florence. Eurocenter is located in Piazza Santo Spirito in Florence.

Classes

This is where you will attend language classes and my digital color photography class. ~~The third class is about the architectural history of the Florence and will generally meet at on-site locations around Florence, with occasional classes at Eurocentres.~~

Study Tours

There will be one-day study tours of Siena and Carrara/Pietransanta and a longer 3 day/2 night study tour of Rome. There MAY be other excursions possible as they become available either through Eurocentres or our own itinerary. Any “study tours” will be mandatory, while some “excursions” made available may be optional.

Family and friend visitations

Students should plan any visits to Florence by family and friends for when the term ends on June 5 or prior to the term beginning. Students cannot be granted excused absences from classes or study tours because of visitors or other personal travel plans.

Digital Color Photography Class

The photography class is *Photographing Another Culture: Italy*. It will be taught as an introductory digital photography class and students will learn the basics about photography, PhotoShop image editing software, archiving and storing photo files, and sizing and preparing images for making photographic prints. It does not matter what your level of expertise is in photography – the course is designed so that each student can either learn from the beginning or take off from whatever level of expertise you have. While learning the skill, craft and art of making sophisticated visual images, the projects assigned during the term are designed to immerse you into the life and culture of Italy by making photographs. Each student will have a cohesive unified body of work upon completion of the assignments and projects.

The Camera

You will need a modest digital camera. Sheet handout on cameras.

Laptop requirements

You will need to have your laptop for the color digital photography class.

You will need enough hard drive space available on your laptop to download your photographs. At least 10-20 gigabytes should be available on your hard drive to allow you to work on digital photography on a regular basis throughout the term.

Portable hard drive

A portable hard drive is a good **option** for backing up your photographs and using for movies or music you might be bringing. In the event you do not have a portable hard drive, I will have a hard drive to back up your photographs through the term.

PhotoShop Elements 13

You are required to purchase and install PhotoShop Elements 13 on your computer prior to arriving in Italy, and to make sure it was installed successfully and that it works.

PhotoShop Elements 13 is available from software maker Adobe and is priced \$79.99. PhotoShop CS4 or earlier versions of PhotoShop are also fine for use. Adobe was recently advertising a special for \$69.99. The Union bookstore may sell it to students at an education discount price.

What to acquire

You might want to acquire and bring the most recent edition of **Lonely Planet guidebook** to Italy. This will give you general information about cost of a taxi from Florence airport to Florence, a bus or train [and which one] from the airport to Florence, and other pertinent information you will need to plan ahead for your arrival and the rest of your time in Florence and Italy.

Acquire a **good map of Florence**. There is one titled “Streetwise Florence” – you will probably find a better one in Florence, but you should have a map to help you get to your home-stay. Acquire a good map of Florence ahead of time and mark your home-stay and Eurocentres on it clearly – you will need this immediately to navigate yourself to your home-stay and to Eurocentres the next morning.

A pocket sized Italian phrase book. These are available in Amazon, Barnes & Noble, etc.

What to pack

- An extra set of eyeglasses/contacts if you need those
- Bring a copy your eye prescription if you have one
- A couple copies of your passport page with your photo and information
- A copy of your birth certificate
- 4 passport size photos of yourself [AAA or CVS]

- All medications necessary for 10 weeks – work on this very much in advance. Some prescription pharmacy insurance require okay from your insurance company require a “travel waiver” or some okay from your doctor in order for you to be able to get a 3 month supply of a prescription drug ahead of time. You

may want to bring additional copies of any medical prescriptions from your doctor.

- A small portable umbrella to carry when necessary
- Good walking shoes to wear almost everyday
- A second pair of shoes
- Small backpack for camera and daytrip items [map, guidebook, rain jacket, umbrella, etc.]
- Necessary clothing, but limit the volume of clothing you bring
- Warm clothes for April, cooler clothes for May.
- A light rain jacket or poncho
- Comfortable layered clothes you can adjust for changes in the weather.
- Sweatpants and gym shorts and flip flops are not appropriate garb in Italy for attending classes, visiting churches and museums, or going about during the day in a sophisticated city like Florence. Italian students dress more like adults than some American college students – they dress well. [I do not mean expensive clothes].
- Necessary toiletries, but these are readily available in Italy for purchase. Limit the volume.

Photography Course – Photographing Another Culture: Italy

- Laptop
- Camera
- Extra memory card for camera
- Extra camera battery
- **Battery/camera charger [this is imperative NOT to forget]**
- Cord for connecting camera to laptop for transfer of image files
- PhotoShop Elements already loaded and working on your laptop
- Optional - Card reader to download images
- Optional – you may wish to have an external hard drive to store your photos on also, or an external hard drive for music, movies, and other data you might need. You definitely need to have a good portion of your laptop hard drive free to be able to download photos.

Pack light. You will have to carry your suitcase to and at airports, possibly up stairs, and get it to and from the home-stay on your own. Everything you bring, you need to be able to carry [on your own] up and down stairs, to and from buses, etc.

You need to have luggage tags on your bags and backpacks with a destination address. I would use the Eurocentres address, so if luggage gets delayed and have to be delivered they can be delivered to you at Eurocentres:

Your Name

c/o Eurocentres Firenze

Piazza Santo Spirito

1050125 Firenze

ITALIA

Change the luggage tag information to a new address when you leave.

Carry On Items

Pack all important items – eyeglasses/contacts, medications, laptop, camera, battery/charger, your Florence map with home-stay marked etc. in carry on bag so you have the imperative items in the unfortunate event that your suitcase gets lost.

Cell phones

You can acquire cell phones and minutes cheaply when you get to Florence or you can check online and acquire one in advance and have it sent to you. Your current US plan and phone can be VERY expensive to use abroad, especially data, text and roaming charges. If you intend to use it, check with your carrier about charges to avoid any surprises.

Bus Pass

Get a bus pass and use it – they are monthly and they allow you to ride the buses in Florence anytime – they have to be renewed monthly. You need passport-size photographs for this. Otherwise, and on your first days, make sure you acquire bus tickets at a Tabacchi store, which are located all around the city in each neighborhood. You must stamp your ticket when you get on the bus in the ticket machine. It is a 45 Euro fine to ride the bus without paying the fare or stamping your ticket. A few of my previous students were caught and fined in the past – they do check regularly. The bus driver does not sell tickets.

ID photos

You will need passport-size photographs of yourself. CVS pharmacy does six of these very cheaply. You will need them for bus passes and possibly Visa extensions or other things that Eurocentres arranges.

Plan ahead to relieve the stress of travel

Traveling to a foreign country on your own the first time [or anytime] can be stressful – but should be exciting and exhilarating at the same time. Proper preparation helps.

“Getting there is hard” – comment by Union student on evaluation form

You will travel to your home-stay on Sunday, March – and have to make it from the Florence airport to the address in Florence on your own or with your roommate[s]. If possible, it is a good idea to travel with your roommate to Florence or arrange to meet at the airport to go to your home-stay together.

Prepare to get to home-stay

Prepare ahead of time with the Lonely Planet guidebook and Florence map for how you will get from the airport to your home-stay. If you are arriving from another destination other than the Florence airport – arrange the route to your home-stay accordingly.

Clothing and alcohol

Dress appropriately, by Italian standards, at all times. A new book, *The Italians*, states: If you dress like a slob, Italians will treat you like a slob. Alternately, if you dress provocatively by Italian standards, you can expect unwanted attention and pestering from some unsavory types. In churches, and at other cultural and historical sites, there will usually be dress codes, and they are enforced. Obviously, no hats in places of worship and shoulder have to be covered and gym shorts or short shorts will get you denied for access. While most Italians do not dress fancy, they usually do dress nicely, and for

foreigners who do not, there may be a different reaction or even different level of service less than a well mannered, nicely dressed person would get.

In Florence and other Italian cities, your appearance is also a question of your safety and security. It will be more secure for you to not look or act obviously like a tourist. Tourists can be targets for pick pockets, muggers and beggars. Not to stick out of the crowd is a good strategy to follow. Flip flops, gym shorts and a college t-shirt may not be the best option for respectable attire, especially in nicer places or establishments. Italians are prone to like really loud or neon colors. Italian may frown upon flip flops, gym shorts and men without shirts. Flip flops really equate to tourists to Italians. Italians dress way better than Americans, in general.

Obviously, being publicly drunk is another risky endeavor, in addition to the inherent risks of how people will perceive you. Italians drink socially, and do not drink to inebriation like some American college students. If you are publicly intoxicated, you would probably be looked upon as “another drunken American student.” This is not be a good way to be perceived in any country you are trying to experience fully.

Stranger in a Strange Land

You may encounter the feeling of being a stranger in a strange land when you arrive in a foreign county. This can be exciting at the same time as daunting.

Expected responses

- Everything is different
[language, food, tv, sports, pastimes]
- Missing unlimited connectivity 24/7
- Being uncomfortable [with the unfamiliar]
- The language barrier
- Encountering rudeness & unhelpfulness
- Homesickness
- Missing friends and significant others
- Missing creature comforts and your ‘stuff’
- Missing normal routines

Negative outcomes to watch for and avoid

- Resenting the culture and people you are thrust into
- Mocking your new culture and it’s people
- Depression and alienation
- Being rude or abrupt yourself
- Being loud or abrasive [don’t be “the Ugly American”]
- Becoming overly impatient with things that will take longer to
- Taking risks walking in traffic or late at night alone
- Participating in other risky or dangerous behavior

Books, study spots, quiet retreats

Biblioteca delle Oblate

Via Dell' Oriuolo 26, Florence

+39 055 2616512

http://www.biblioteche.comune.fi.it/biblioteca_delle_oblate/

This is a great spot. This library is filled with young students.

It has an incredible view of the Duomo from the terrace on the 3rd floor. It is also a good stop for power or wifi, which can be challenging to find around Florence. It has a great little café on outdoor covered balcony [espresso, drinks, champagne] and also a concert series many nights with violin, jazz and other music from 18:30-22:00. You need your passport [and maybe student ID] to get a library card here and it is easy to do. They are open for extensive hours.

Library hours

9:00 - midnight Tues-Sat

14:00 -22:00 Monday

Closed Sunday

From Stephanie U. on Yelp:

Biblioteca delle Oblate occupies what was once a convent. The internal courtyard still retains a rarefied feel, even when high school and college kids are milling around. On the ground floor there is a study space and a conference room. On the first floor you can find the main library and media center, which in itself can be a bit confusing to get around because of the library's labyrinth structure. After registering, you may check books, periodicals, and DVDs. And since it is part of the network of public libraries, your registration here is valid at the other Biblioteche Comunali in Florence. The second floor holds the children's library (which I highly recommend, it's so cute), the covered outdoor terrace, and the Caffetteria dell'Oblate. I used to study in the terrace, and the key is to get there early if you want one of the few electrical outlets for your laptop. When you register, you can also request WiFi access. You have a three hour daily WiFi allowance on your laptop, and if you use one of the library's computer terminals it is limited to an hour. The Caffetteria holds concerts, readings, and the like. You could also simply stop by for an espresso or a pastry, with the Duomo as your backdrop. It's a beautiful place, and it still surprises me how few people know about it.

There are branches of the library system all over Florence. Another branch that is centrally located:

Biblioteca Palagio di Parte Guelfa

Piazzetta di Parte Guelfa

Tel: 055 2616029 – 2616030

The British Institute of Florence

Lungarno Guicciardini 9, Florence

+39 055 267781

<http://www.britishinstitute.it/en/index.asp>



The library is at the British Institute, which is located near Eurocentres, looking out to the Arno River just across the street and below. They have student memberships for 3 months. Open times M-Fri 10:00-18:30 [very limited hours, mostly while you are in other classes].

Feltrinelli International bookstore

Via Cavour 12
+39 055292196

This is usually where we go after your first day of classes to obtain some textbooks or show you where to go back to for your textbooks. This shop has the largest assortment of foreign language books in Florence.

Paperback Exchange

Anglo-American Bookshop in Florence
Via dell' Oche 4r, Florence
+39 055 293460
<http://www.papex.it/>

BM Book Shop

Borgo Ognissanti 4r
email: bmbookshop@dada.it
tel: 055-294575

“This funky store is filled to the gills with books and other stuff including vintage jewelry. They have a good selection of the usual stuff – fiction, florence-interest, travel – but their strong points are books on interior design and graphics, history of the renaissance, and cooking. They also have a beautiful selection of rare and collectible books in English, including a number of Berenson books.”

New book of note: *The Italians*, by John Hooper

<http://unamericanaaroma.com/2015/02/03/john-hooper-the-italians-review/>
available at Apple, Kindle, or in hardcover

***Lives of The Artists*, by Giorgio Vasari**

This was a best seller in 1568! This book is intensely readable today. With chapters on Giotto, Brunelleschi, Donatello, Botticelli, Da Vinci, Raphael, Titian and Michelangelo and many more, the book gives a real, living at that time feeling and knowledge about all these most important Italian Renaissance artists you will be seeing in museums and other sites all term. You receive the chapter on Michelangelo from me as required reading, but the rest of the book is a must read for anyone enthralled by these Italian Renaissance artists. [inexpensive new or used paperback]

Cameras

POINT & SHOOT Cameras

SONY Cyber-shot

DSC-W300 (or other DSC-W models) Super Steady Shot

13.6 megapixels

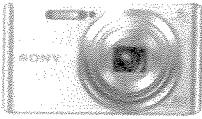
This camera is an amazing little camera for a simple point and shoot. It makes files that could be printed very large. It has Super Steady Shot that is very effective at shooting in lower light and getting sharp images. This model – DSC W300 – is at the top end of the line, but all of the SONY Cybershot models that are “DSC-W###” are great.

I discovered this when I taught this course in Florence in the past and I noticed some of the student cameras produced somewhat sharper and very realistic looking photographs. When I looked to see what those students were using, each three of them were coincidentally shooting with one of the models from this SONY DSC-W series.

If you decide to acquire a SONY Cybershot, I would stay within the series of “DSC-W###” I have recommended them to many friends since and they have all thanked me! I own one.

For example, this versions is available from Amazon:

Sony DSCW830 20.1 MP Digital Camera with 2.7-Inch LCD (Silver)
by Sony



Click for product details *✓Prime*
Get it by **Monday, Feb 9**

More Buying Choices
\$54.99 used & new (30 offers)

☆☆☆☆ (259)
Trade-in eligible for an Amazon gift card

Product Description
... permission is prohibited. Sony, Cyber-shot, SteadyShot, Smile ...

Electronics: See all 98,588 items

Single Lens Reflex Digital Camera (SLR)

You may own a digital SLR, and that would be great to use for the class.

Other options

Just about any digital camera, besides your cell phone, can be adequate for this class. We will be working on concepts such as composition, form, shape, content, narrative, documentary and fine art, expression, light, and content – so the tool you use to make your own images is less important than the the thought, time, exploration and expression you put into your work as you make photographs.

However , if you are purchasing something modest for this experience and have limited funds, please seriously consider the SONY CyberShot DSC-W series.

Requirements and Suggestions for the Florence photography course

PhotoShop Elements 13 [REQUIRED] - Photo Image editing software

This is the software we will use for the class. If you have a different recent version of PhotoShop Elements, that is fine. If you have a full version of PhotoShop that works, that is good to use. You must have this installed on your laptop and working before you come to Florence. We will not discuss any other photo image software in this course, therefore you must be using PhotoShop software for this class.

Photoshop Elements 8 - \$60 - \$70. Make sure you get the Mac or PC version depending on your operating system. Also, bring the PhotoShop disks and any instructions with you.

Extra Battery and Memory Cards [Highly Recommended]

I highly recommend you obtain an extra memory card and an extra battery for your camera. It pays to have an extra battery always charged. You will find it very convenient you will be able to keep photographing when your first battery goes dead.

An extra memory card means you can swap it out and keep shooting if you have not had time to download photos and you fill your card up. Memory cards have come way down in price recently, so you can obtain an extra a nominal cost. Capacity sizes determine how many photographs you can store on a single memory card – and it also depends on how big the files are that your camera can record. We will be shooting in high resolution [or raw, if your camera supports it], so an extra memory card is an excellent idea. You will probably want 16, 32, or 64 GB cards.

Exterior Portable Hard Drives [optional]

You MAY want to obtain an additional portable hard drive.

Memory Card Reader [optional]

I prefer a memory card reader rather than using cords supplied with the camera. It is portable, fast and easy to transfer your photographs this way. It does not necessitate needing the camera manufacturer software for transfer of images to your laptop. A mac laptop may have a slot to insert your memory card directly into. Also, be sure to bring your original USB cord and software supplied with your camera to be able to download your images that way in the event your card reader fails or has a problem. I will have a couple of card readers for people to share in class also.

March 30 – 9:30 AM

First group meeting - Eurocenter

Orientation, General Information & Guidelines – MB

Welcome and information from Eurocentres.

First Digital Photography Class – Tuesday, March 31 – 1:30 PM

Classes are scheduled each Tuesday/Thursday from 1:30-4:00 pm; some will be for in classroom photo classes; so may be utilized for site visits around Florence; some may not be held as classroom time, but may be utilized for students to be able to photograph around Florence.

Required Journal

Each student is required to participate in keeping a journal – writing entries consistently throughout the term about all field trips in your journal with specific entries about all museums, churches and historical sites included. These can be hand written or done electronically. I can review handwritten journals periodically, while digital journals need to be emailed to me for review and final submission. I assume most students will do these digitally, but anyone who wishes to may make a handmade/hand written journal. This can be a series of reflective responses to your experiences in Italy and also about specific events and activities of your classes and what you are learning.

Week 1

Assignment #1 – “Where I Live” - 8 photographs

Photograph the immediate neighborhood and the building you live in. Photograph your walk to the bus and other details immediately around and in your home-stay. Finished requirement – 8 photographs

Read the ‘Digital Photography’ handout.

Read the chapter about ‘Michelangelo’ by Vasari’s from *Lives of the Artists* [handout supplied]

Week 2 – Week 5

Assignment #2 - The Language of Photography

These are digital color photography exercises to explore with your camera. This works no matter what your level of photography experience is. It is 8 digital photography assignments to help familiarize yourself with your camera and color photography. Also, make any other photographs when opportunities and inspiration arises. Do not limit yourself to these exercises. [refer to assignment sheet]. **25 photographs**

Students will share their work with the class through digital presentations.

Week 5 – Week 7

Assignment #3 - Photographing People – 8 photographs

Photograph Italian people. It is illegal to photograph children without parental/guardian permission.

- Portraits [a portrait is a photograph of a person who agrees to be photographed] 3 photographs.
- Street candid photography – photographs of people candidly as elements in the urban landscape, the decisive moment and/or any other candidly made photographs of people. These can be made anywhere public – parks, streets, events, piazzas, etc. [3 photographs]
- People at their jobs or homes [photographs of people in the environment of their workplace] 2 photographs.

Make photographs of Italians [not tourists or Americans]. There must be Italians in the photograph. **8 photographs**

Week 8 – Week 10**Assignment #4 – A personal photograph project – 10 photographs**

Final Project - A series of 10 photographs about something. You may pick anything – a place, a topic, a theme, a person, a conceptual idea, or your favorite place in Florence. This project has to be about Italian culture [Italian locations, people, and culture].

Prepare written "photo project" proposals to hand in to me.

The Final Photography Project proposal must contain:

A working title [required]

Brief description up to ½ page including the following:

1 What

2 Where and When

3 Why

Also, you are required to have 2 backup ideas with brief descriptions and working titles.

Your assignment for the next two weeks is to have your first photographs for you Photo Project completed.

Week 10**Assignment #5 – “Where I Live” – 8 photographs**

Make additional new photographs of “Where I Live”

Thursday, June 4 - Final portfolios due – 54 image files [6 of which can be duplicates of “Where I Live” for a total of 48 original unique photographs]

Additional Field Trips during photography class time:

Accademia – The David

Bargello

The Alinari Museum and Archives

Other photography exhibits as available

Final essay - final reaction paper – due June 4, 4PM

This is a final paper written about your experiences in Florence and Italy, your experience in your home stay, and general commentary about your 10 weeks in Florence. You may write it in any way, but you should consider how your impressions of Florence, Italy and Italians has changed over 10 weeks, and what your most valuable experiences and take aways from the term are. You must include some observations about your home-stay experience.

This can be 3-5 pages in length and must be emailed to me by 4PM on June 4.

Thursday, June 4 - Final group dinner [location tba]

Friday, June 5 – group meets after Italian Language finals before departing

June 5 - Final itineraries for leaving Florence due to faculty director.

Term Ends – June 5, 1 pm.

Summary – what is due for photography class

54 photographs from 5 assignments, labeled as directed

Journal

Final essay

Assignment #2 - The Language of Photography – Weeks 2-5
The Language of Photography

Week 2 – Week 5

Assignment – The Language of Photography

These are digital color photography exercises to explore with your camera. This works no matter what your level of photography experience is. It is 8 digital photography assignments to help familiarize yourself with your camera and color photography. Also, make any other photographs when opportunities and inspiration arises. Do not limit yourself to these exercises. [refer to assignment sheet] **25 photographs**

Here are some digital photography assignments that are meant to help familiarize yourself with your camera. Also, make any other photographs when opportunities and inspiration arises. Do not limit yourself to these exercises.

For all assignments, each picture should be entirely different than the others. In all cases, shoot many more and edit the photographs for each category down to your best five to turn in for the assignment.

1. **Light** – Every photograph is “about light,” because you need light to make a photograph. Make a series of photographs where the light is the most important element in the photograph. Select your best three. **[3 photographs]**
2. **Color as Emphasis** – Compose a scene where your eye is drawn to one area because of its strong color. **[3 photographs]**

3. **Vantage Point** – experiment with vantage point. Vantage point is where “you see” the image from. It is where you put the camera – what angle, looking up or looking down, seeing from behind or the side. **[3 photographs]**
4. **Close-up** - Isolate a part of your subject and shoot it in “macro mode” or as close as your camera will focus. Learn how close your camera can focus. **[3 photographs]**
5. **My Room/My Home** – these photographs can be the best 3 from your Assignment #1 & Assignment 5. **[3 photographs]**
6. **My Neighborhood** – these photographs can be the best 3 from your Assignment #1 & Assignment 5. **[3 photographs]**
7. **Night** - Use long exposures to capture color at night. Use different settings and compare. Steady your camera on a solid surface. **[3 photographs]**
8. **Times of Day** - Pick a place you can go to often. Photograph it at different times of the day to see how the light changes – early morning [within the first 1 hour of sunlight], middle of the day, late afternoon, and evening [after dark]. Pick an interesting scene where light changes during the day. Make a series that is as interesting as you can make because of how the light changes from image to image. Take every photograph from the exact same vantage point. Submit the series of 4 and number them according to the order of the time of day – and note the exact time of day in the title of each file turned in. If the light is poor during any of the times, go back and shoot it at the same time again in better light. **[One place, same vantage point and composition shot 4 times - 4 photographs]**

Assignment - *The Language of Photography*

Prepare your image files according to the directions below.

- Due for the assignment – **25 photographs**
- **Do Not** submit more than the correct number for each assignment.
- The files **MUST** be jpegs only.
- You will turn in your photographs to me on a thumb drive I will provide.
- Label your file: **Lastname_LOP_Italy2015**

- Make a file with this title: **yourlastname_LOP_ Italy2015**

Put into this follow the following image files titled as below:

Label your files this way:

Yourlastman_A2_LOP1_Light1
Yourlastman_A2_LOP1_Light2
Yourlastman_A2_LOP1_Light3

Yourlastman_A2_LOP2_color4
Yourlastman_A2_LOP2_color5
Yourlastman_A2_LOP2_color6

yourlastname_A2_LOP3_vantage1
yourlastname_A2_LOP3_vantage2
yourlastname_A2_LOP3_vantage3

yourlastname_A2_LOP4_close1
yourlastname_A2_LOP4_close2
yourlastname_A2_LOP4_close3

yourlastname_A2_LOP5_home1
yourlastname_A2_LOP5_home2
yourlastname_A2_LOP5_home3

yourlastname_A2_LOP6_home1
yourlastname_A2_LOP6_home2
yourlastname_A2_LOP6_home3

yourlastname_A2_LOP7_night1
yourlastname_A2_LOP7_night2
yourlastname_A2_LOP7_night3

yourlastname_A2_LOP8_time1	<i>[sunrise or very early morning light]</i> do not include in label
yourlastname_A2_LOP8_time2	<i>[noon]</i> do not include in label
yourlastname_A2_LOP8_time3	<i>[late afternoon]</i> do not include in label
yourlastname_A2_LOP8_time4	<i>[night]</i> do not include in label

You work will be transferred to me with a thumb drive to a portable hard drive.

Other assignments are to be labeled similiarly, and turned in a thumb drives provided in class.

Yourlastname_A1_home[numbers 1-8]
Yourlastname_A3_people[numbers 1-8]
Yourlastname_A4_project[numbers 1-8]
Yourlastname_A5_home2[numbers 1-8]

When renaming your files you **MUST NOT DROP THE .jpg** from the file.

Double check you final files to turn it.

The must all be jpgs.

All final files should be in a file labeled: **yourlastname_PAC_italy2015**

They must all be labeled according to directions and your image files when “view as list” should look like this:

Name

Yourlastname_A1_home1.jpg
 Yourlastname_A1_home2.jpg
 Yourlastname_A1_home3.jpg
 Yourlastname_A1_home4.jpg
 Yourlastname_A1_home5.jpg
 Yourlastname_A1_home6.jpg
 Yourlastname_A1_home7.jpg
 Yourlastname_A1_home8.jpg
 Yourlastname_A2_LOP1_Light1.jpg
 Yourlastname_A2_LOP1_Light2.jpg
 Yourlastname_A2_LOP1_Light3.jpg
 Yourlastname_A2_LOP2_color1.jpg
 Yourlastname_A2_LOP2_color2.jpg
 Yourlastname_A2_LOP2_color3.jpg
 Yourlastname_A2_LOP3_vantage1.jpg
 Yourlastname_A2_LOP3_vantage2.jpg
 Yourlastname_A2_LOP3_vantage3.jpg
 Yourlastname_A2_LOP4_close1.jpg
 Yourlastname_A2_LOP4_close2.jpg
 Yourlastname_A2_LOP4_close3.jpg
 Yourlastname_A2_LOP5_home1.jpg
 Yourlastname_A2_LOP5_home2.jpg
 Yourlastname_A2_LOP5_home3.jpg
 Yourlastname_A2_LOP6_home1.jpg
 Yourlastname_A2_LOP6_home2.jpg
 Yourlastname_A2_LOP6_home3.jpg
 Yourlastname_A2_LOP6_night1.jpg
 Yourlastname_A2_LOP6_night2.jpg
 Yourlastname_A2_LOP6_night3.jpg
 Yourlastname_A2_LOP6_time1.jpg
 Yourlastname_A2_LOP6_time2.jpg
 Yourlastname_A2_LOP6_time3.jpg
 Yourlastname_A2_LOP6_time4.jpg
 Yourlastname_A3_people1.jpg
 Yourlastname_A3_people2.jpg
 Yourlastname_A3_people3.jpg
 Yourlastname_A3_people4.jpg
 Yourlastname_A3_people5.jpg
 Yourlastname_A3_people6.jpg
 Yourlastname_A3_people7.jpg
 Yourlastname_A3_people8.jpg
 Yourlastname_A4_project1.jpg
 Yourlastname_A4_project2.jpg
 Yourlastname_A4_project3.jpg
 Yourlastname_A4_project4.jpg
 Yourlastname_A4_project5.jpg
 Yourlastname_A4_project6.jpg
 Yourlastname_A4_project7.jpg
 Yourlastname_A4_project8.jpg
 Yourlastname_A4_project9.jpg
 Yourlastname_A4_project10.jpg
 Yourlastname_A5_home1.jpg
 Yourlastname_A5_home2.jpg
 Yourlastname_A5_home3.jpg

Final Project

This project has to be about Italian culture [Italian locations, people, and culture].

Pick something you are interested in investigating, learning about, exploring and experiencing. Bring your WRITTEN "photo project" proposals to class to hand in to me at the beginning of class.

Photo Project Proposal

Your project proposal should contain:

- working title [required]
- brief narrative description

Three sentences or more:

- 1 What
- 2 Where and When
- 3 Why

Also, you are required to have 2 backup ideas.

- Use working titles and write a one or two sentence description of both of these.

Your assignment is to shoot your project numerous times, in good light conditions, and to make a body of work [10 photographs] that is about your project idea. Shooting this more than several times will result in a better edit of pictures for your final results. You will see things from each shoot to the next, and figure out how to do the picture better, or over again in some cases. It is important to explore many approaches and concepts in the first shooting to be able to leap from there to your better pictures and ideas on subsequent shoots.

A pitfall for a student in a photo project is leaving all the effort until the end of the time period allotted and then regretting not having started seriously earlier. Get off to a quick, motivated start so you can build momentum and make something significant and expressive from you project idea.



Ruth Orkin, *American Girl*, Florence, 1951

Photo Project Proposal

- working title [required]
- brief narrative description

- 1 What
-

- 2 Where and When

- 3 Why

Also, you are required to have 2 backup ideas.

- Use working titles and write a one or two sentence description of both of these.

Some important photographers that you could look up and study that relate to this class:

Color photography

William Eggleston – The first photographer to have a color exhibition in the Museum of Modern Art, NYC. *The Democratic Camera. William Eggleston's Guide.*

<http://www.egglestontrust.com>

Stephen Shore – Dry views of banal urban landscapes and views that take on significance for the way they are observed and rendered. Stephen is considered to be an important photographer for the advancement of color photography in the art and museum world.

People

Viviane Maier - There is a wealth of sources about her on the web. View the CBS Sunday Morning segment about her found work. We will watch a movie about her in class.

Diane Arbus – She photographed the marginalized of society to look normal, and the wealthy and well-to-do in ways that made them look exaggerated, if not freakish.

Garry Winogrand – candid street photography by a very fast and furious shooter. Camera tilted at times to make a better composition, Winogrand's books and photographs from *Women Are Beautiful* and *The Animals* are important works.

Projects

Cindy Sherman – self-portraits for more than 40 years where she portrays different women [and men] in history, in gender roles, and as characters in fictions and fairy tales. Her early career 100+ series of 8x10 prints from *The Untitled Film Stills* series was acquired by the Museum of Modern Art in NYC made possible by Madonna donating a million dollars [\$1,000,000] for the purchase and gift.

Nan Goldin – *Ballad of Sexual Dependency* – her important series, book and eventual one person exhibition at the Whitney Museum is significant in the study of photography. Her insider look at her personal world of sexual situations, domestic abuse, drug use and deaths of young friends is an important body of work.

Richard Rinaldi – *Touching Strangers* – this series and book about photographing complete strangers touching intimately is an interesting juxtaposition to the direction American society is heading. It is a sensitive and powerful body of work. There is also a CBS Sunday Morning segment about this project that can be found online.

We may also see work by **Herbert List**, **Charles Traub**, **Shelby Lee Adams**: *The True Meaning of Pictures*, and **Ruth Orkin**: *American Girl in Florence 1951*

<http://www.orkinphoto.com>

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

Many of the most important photographs made in the history of photography were made with simple cameras without sophisticated technical controls. Edward Weston's important photograph, *Pepper #30*, was made under a skylight with natural light – a manual view camera – slow speed film available at the time [1930's] – and with an exposure of over 30 minutes. The print of the 8x10 negative was made with a bare light bulb – no enlarger was involved. It was very simply made, but remains one of the most important photographs ever made and it was critical in the invention of modernism in photography.

Henri Cartier-Bresson changed the history of photography again in the 1940's with his "Decisive Moment" approach. In an essay by the name for an exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in 1944, he wrote about his candid approach to photography, where the perfect moment to press the shutter button was when everything was correctly arranged in the frame and those moving in the scene were in exactly the right place with the correct gesture.

Every great photographer has become familiar with their camera to the point where it became an extension of their body and mind. A photographer wants to become familiar and comfortable with their own camera to the point that it is an extension of themselves to express their ideas and point of view, not a technical problem to overcome every time they make a photograph. This is your goal in order to make fluid and lucid expressions of what you see and experience and want to share with others.

Personal style can emerge quickly in photography. Many great photographers make pictures in very natural ways, where you do not feel the presence of the photographer in their making or your viewing the photographs. Many great photographs come easily and seem like no special effort was made, but this is a trick by great photographers. They often have so much practice or intuitive and instinctive skills that their pictures look simple in the making. Are there "lucky photographs?" Occasionally this may be true, but the good photographers always make most of the "lucky photographs." Luck is when skill and opportunity come together.

Where and when to make photographs

When you find a good place to take photographs, return to it again and again to shoot! Your photographs will get better each time as you learn about the place/space and learn what time is best to make photographs [based on light and activities].

Some of the best photo opportunities are right in front of you – where you live or where you walk everyday. Always have your camera and be ready to use it – the special moments you encounter are random, so have your camera ready to shoot. Do not take the approach of "Oh, I will see that again" or "I will come back here" because it will never be the same the next time. It might be better or it might not be better next time, but it will not be the same. Each moment is an instant.

Your camera either makes an image that is 3x4 or 3x4.5 inches in proportion. It is a rectangular image and depending on your camera it is one of these formats, the second being a little longer in length and corresponding to 35mm film format.

Obviously, you photographs can either be made as a horizontal image or a vertical image. Experiment with both ways of making photographs.

Do not center the subject. Occasionally centering the subject does make a solidly grounded image that is interesting, but centering the face from too far away is the quintessential snapshot, and we want more from our photographs than casual unconsidered point and shoot pictures. You should strive to make considered compositions each time you make a photograph.

Consider the rule of thirds as a simple way to start making more sophisticated compositions. If you divide your viewfinder into thirds, both horizontally and vertically, and you place subjects on those lines [like figures, horizon line, faces] you will be creating a photograph were the viewer will be more engaged in moving their eyes around the picture frame. It creates more movement in the picture viewing experience. If you have juxtaposition of 2 or more things at these points your photograph will be a more interesting and engaging visual experience. This works both in the horizontal and vertical formats.



Go to extremes

Extreme angles or extreme vantage points often yield the most “uncommon” views and picture experiences. Get TOO CLOSE. Shooting from ground level [lie on your stomach] or from extremely high up is usually more interesting views because they are unusual. Standing on something or putting the camera near the ground is an easy way to explore different and uncommon vantage points.

Many professional photographers that shoot with a film camera shoot many rolls of film a day. They may shoot the same thing at different exposures, many different angles, different distances, and different compositions. They review the contact sheets or slides later and do a final edit of the best frames. With digital you can instantly view the photo, but do not let that stop you from trying different exposures, angles, distances and compositions. Keep pushing each particular photo idea to get the most dynamic and unusual view. **DO NOT JUST TAKE SNAPSHOTS.**

Backup accessories

Always have a backup battery ready and charged. Also a second digital storage media should be carried with you so you can shoot more when your media fills up. As required, you need to have your instruction book with you to refer to often to understand camera settings, camera functions and camera controls.

LIGHT

Most Important Tip

Shoot in good light!!!! Your natural inclination is to focus your attention on the subject in the photograph. Next you might learn to consider the composition of the frame. However most important is the quality of the light in the photograph. You need to concentrate on the light and start to observe light in all situations you encounter. The light you will observe in Renaissance paintings you view may awaken your senses to how important light is in image making. By shooting on the better side of the street, or picking your shooting times more carefully, or seeing odd light at odd times you will shoot better looking photographs. Light early in the day and later in the day is usually what professional photographers will choose to utilize, because the angle of the light is more acute and the light is generally 'sharper.' This light adds dimension and depth to your images because of shadows and texture. The angle of the light at those times result in stronger texture, longer shadows, form rendered more distinctly and the color of the light being more interesting. If the sun is high in the sky the light is usually less interesting. If the subject is backlit, should you move around to the other side? Should you ask the subject to turn for you? The golden hours of light during the last few hours of daylight are special for photography, especially in color. The crispness of early morning light is also often magical in photographs. Shooting exclusively in the middle of the day will reveal the least interesting light in your photos. However light can become magical at any time, depending on reflectivity, atmospheric conditions, or clarity of the day. Try to observe light quality all the time. The more you take advantage of good light, the better your photographs will be. Shooting at sunrise is especially magical. I may give extra credit to those whose shoot often at sunrise – even though it will be unnecessary because those students will have the better portfolios at the end for having done that.

Window light & "Rembrandt lighting"

Window light can be a great way to photograph a subject or portrait. It will usually be soft and diffused and brighter near the source than the background of the setting. Light coming through a sheer translucent drape will be soft and very diffused. You can easily mimic "Rembrandt lighting" this way with the window at a 45 degree angle to the subject to light one side of the face and letting light spill past the nose to create a triangle of light under the eye farther from the window. This lighting describes the face and the structure of the bones vividly and can surely be observed in numerous Renaissance paintings you will be looking at as well as many of Rembrandt's portraits and self-portraits.

The eyes

Most portraits have what is called a 'catch light' revealed in the subject's eyes. This is a reflection of the light source that is illuminating the face – a window, the sky, or an artificial light. You want to focus on the catch light in the eye closer to you when making a photographic portrait.

Reflectors and reflecting light

You can add natural light to a subject with a reflector. Many photographers use a reflector often to 'kick' light onto the subject to reveal more shadow detail and to 'open up' the shadow a bit. Watch for natural reflectors like windows, a light colored wall that 'kicks' interesting light onto the shadow side of the street, or even something as subtle as sun reflecting off a shiny brass doorbell plate and reflecting the golden light onto a face. You can obtain a piece of white mount board for this purpose or a disk reflector made commercially [and available at Fontani Foto] is ideal.

Light direction

It is often useful to know where east, south, west & north directions are, since north light is always diffused [the sun is never there], east light is sunrise, south light is all through the day and West light is late afternoon and sunset. Painters and photographers often prefer a studio with windows or skylight facing north, since it never gets hard direct sunlight, but always soft diffused light reflected off the north sky like a giant reflector.

Great photos often require extraordinary effort

Great photos often require extraordinary effort like getting up before sunrise to shoot "quiet Florence" or waiting for a longer time at a spot you think is good for the right thing to come along into the composition or waiting for the light to change. Most often it is hard to shoot in a group – you need to go out on your own or with one other photographer to be able to lurk and linger when necessary.

Utilize all light possibilities

When shooting conditions seem poor it is possible to utilize the conditions to your advantage. A downpour of rain can leave everything glistening when it stops or puddles of rainwater can reveal terrific reflections. Wind might make it hard to make sharp close-up photos of blowing things, but the blur may be interesting. Atmospheric conditions like mist and fog can be good photo ops, especially as the sun first break through them. A passing storm might result in beautiful sunlight emerging with a dark ominous sky still receding in the background near the edge of the storm. Dark subdued light has a different mood than bright sunlight so try all kinds of light for shooting.

CAPTURING LIGHT AND IDEAS

Digital photography is all about capturing light on the image sensor in the camera. The better the light is that you capture, the better the image will be rendered. Light can change moment to moment. Making great pictures takes patience. Very great light moments can be rare in a day, so utilize it when you see it and stay with it until you get the image you want.

Changing weather conditions often reveal very special light. Clouds can filter light in special ways to yield interesting light. Even upper atmosphere moisture that is not

CAMERA SETTINGS

Monitor, viewfinder and technical readouts

It is extremely important that you understand the information read outs revealed on your monitor screen, in your viewfinder [if any], or elsewhere on your digital camera. There will be icons that correspond to different functions and indicate what the functions are set at presently. They are usually: amount of exposures left and/or taken, metering mode, shutter speed, aperture setting, image quality setting, flash setting, and possibly the ISO setting.

Words may also be shown that refer to the functions of the buttons off the LCD next to the words, such as monitor, menu, or playback.

It is important that you examine your camera closely, refer to your instruction book and run through all the settings to understand what they are, what they control and how to set them. At the same time you should come up with your own standard set of settings to always have dialed in for everyday shooting, changing to other settings if you need to adjust for the light intensity, use of flash, image quality, etc. This can seem complicated on electronic digital cameras, but if you go over it a number of times while practicing it with the camera it will all eventually make sense and enable you to ensure you can set the camera for normal circumstances and eventually start to adjust settings for special circumstances.

Camera Menu

Your camera menu can be equally confusing at first glance. However if you slowly go through all the menu items and camera functions adjustable through the menu items, you can come to understand what the menu items mean and how you want each of them set.

Standard menu items will be camera setup, date and time, sequence of file numbers, user settings, folders, auto focus, ISO [maybe], auto focus illumination, auto exposure lock, white balance, and other items. The more sophisticated the camera the more likely it is that your menu has more items to choose from for different functions.

Again, you need to slowly and carefully go through your camera menu and while consulting with your instruction book, start to understand what each menu item means and what functions of the camera they control.

At a minimum, you need to set your date and time accurately and set your sequential numbering at continuous for your picture file numbering system. File numbering is important, because you should have unique numbers on each photo you take so that they are easily identified uniquely for archiving purposes. If sequential numbering is not set properly, each time you insert a media storage disk into your camera it will start numbering your pictures over again starting with 0001 or something similar. This means if you shoot on the same media storage card 20 times you will end up with 20 files numbers of 0001 and 0002 etc. This can make archiving the pictures difficult and lead to copying over photos you meant to save as you download the card time and time again. Your camera may number 0001 to 9999 before starting over again, enabling you to have 9,999 unique file numbers to your pictures before it starts over. You will prefer continuous numbering to make your archiving easier to deal with.

reaching the ground as rain can diffuse light in magical ways. It can happen any time so the serious photographers have their cameras with them all the time and are ready to take it out and shoot at any moment. This is especially true when a photographer is actively engaged in a current project, such as each of you are with our “Photographing Another Culture: Italy”.

Consider that you are on call all the time to photograph that special light, special subject or unusual encounter when you come upon it. You need to be looking all the time and lingering when necessary. You want to observe and capture nuances of the Italian culture, mannerisms, gestures of people, the clothing [fashion] they wear, appearances of things, figures against a background, the light on the wall, the composition of figures in the Piazza, aspects about architecture, the awkwardness of adolescents, the quietness of early morning, to warmth of late day light, and all other things you encounter that are special.

Concentrating your observation and perception in this way leads to experiencing life more richly and deeply and for travel in different places and cultures it leads to a more enriching experience. Above all, do not disrespect anyone or anything, and don't disregard or take lightly the special experience and opportunities you have ahead of you on your term in Italy. Use the opportunity to look outside yourself into the greater world around you. You should be awestruck at numerous moments during your daily lives. I especially utilize these “awestruck moments” as my special photo opportunities. If moments like these comes together with special light and good composition that is when you make the best photographs.

Every photograph is more than just a likeness of the subject. Photographer Diane Arbus wrote in the 1960's, “No photograph looks exactly like what it is of. It is either better or worse, but never the same.”

Garry Winogrand when asked in 1971 why he made photographs replied, “I photograph to see what things look like photographed.”

Photographs that ask questions

Photographs that ask questions can be more interesting and engaging than photographs that give all the answers. Make photographs that intentionally omit elements that would reveal entirely what is happening – or make a photo of just part of a subject to let the viewer imagine what the rest of the subject might look like. You might photograph the shadow, not the object.

This approach continues to be a major thrust in many recent post-modern photographic artist works such as those by Andres Serrano [“Piss Christ”] and Cindy Sherman's [self-portraits] during the 1980's and 90's. Currently artists such as Gregory Crewdson and Brazilian photographer Vik Muniz are pushing the boundaries of photographic expression to new places by making curious photographic works that challenge the viewer to question what is real and what is not in their work.

The Secret of Photography

Your pictures will be your own and they will be about you and your sensibilities. It is unavoidable. As Walker Evans wrote in his journal, “The secret of photography is that the camera takes on the character and personality of the handler. The mind works on the machine.”

Setting your camera

The more you alter the settings on your camera, the more the possibility is that you may shoot what could have been a good photograph at the wrong settings. The most common settings that can ruin photographs if not set appropriately are exposure compensation, white balance, ISO setting and image size. Learn the settings you need to use most often and check the camera before you start shooting to make sure your settings are correct.

Caution - I recommend you do not let others handle or “play” with your camera, as they will inevitably change crucial settings that you may not know have been altered that will negatively effect your photos or make it difficult to unset.

ISO setting

You get the best picture quality [sharpness and clarity] by using the lowest ISO setting your camera offers [i.e. ISO 100]. Higher ISO settings are better in lower light so you do not shake the camera, but higher setting such as ISO 400, 800, 1600 have considerably more “digital noise.” Digital noise is similar to excessive grain in film photography. A photograph made at the lower ISO settings has a higher quality and smoother appearance.

Image resolution

Image resolution is important. By reducing image res to be able to store more photographs on your storage media, you lose the ability to crop or make a larger print later. Leave your camera resolution or image quality set to fine for all serious shooting.

You may want to use medium for snapshots that you will never print larger than 4x6 or that you will never be able to crop.

Caution – Many digital cameras let you change the brightness of the LCD viewing screen used to view your pictures. Changing brightness level or viewing the screen in bright light can cause you to misread your picture exposures.

Focal Length

A normal lens is 50mm focal length. If you look through a camera lens that is 50mm or a zoom set at 50mm the scale of the subject and scene is the same as when you look at it directly with your eyes. A wide-angle takes in more angle of vision – a 24mm, 28mm or 35mm are wide-angle lenses. Wide-angle images give the feeling of exaggerated space. Telephoto lens settings magnify the image [move it closer to you] and also flatten the image. Telephoto lenses are good for isolating subject matter in the frame and for portraits.

Lenses are referred to as “fast” or “slow” depending on what their widest lens opening [aperture] is. For instance, an f2 or f2.8 lens is a “fast” lens compared to a lens that opens to f5.6 [“slow lens”] at its widest aperture. Faster lenses are better for low light shooting because they enable you to use a quicker shutter speed so you do not shake the camera. Fast lenses or digital cameras with faster lenses are more expensive and generally the lenses or cameras are much larger and heavier.

Zoom lenses and optical zoom vs. digital zoom settings

Zoom lens cameras have an x-rating for the lenses, like 3x or 8x. This means the lens operates at a minimum focal length to 3 or 8 times that focal length by using the button that zooms the lens back and forth. For instance, a Nikon Coolpix 5700 has a

4x zoom, which means the longest focal length is 4 times greater than the shortest focal length. Digital cameras may have an optical zoom range with an additional digital zoom range. Optical zoom settings use the glass of the lenses while digital zoom only magnifies the center of the image sensor digitally. Optical zoom settings should be used exclusively because digital zoom settings result in far inferior image quality pictures.

Establishing Focus

Focusing is critical. Many digital cameras have selective auto-focus points that allow you to focus on off-center subjects. Depending on your camera, selectable auto-focus points may not work with all metering modes [spot or center weighted] and may default to average metering. Check your instruction book to determine this.

Focus lock

Most digital cameras allow you to point to where you want to focus [and even meter] and then point elsewhere while holding the shutter release button down half-way to keep the focus locked. This is necessary to do to focus and then point the camera for a better composition. Otherwise, you may instinctively just always leave the subject and focus area in the center of the frame – making an ordinary snapshot rather than a sophisticated composition.

Focus confirmation

Many cameras may have an indication on the LCD screen or elsewhere that confirms when the image is sharply focused. It is a useful tool if you have it to ensure that your picture will be sharp.

Focus area selection

Select the area in the picture you want to establish the most critical focus on and establish focus on that point. For close-ups it is even more important. With a portrait you usually want to focus on the eye closer to the camera. After selecting the focus point, you simply re-compose and take the picture.

LIGHT METER

Light meters on your cameras can often be set several different ways to make a photograph. These settings are important. A spot meter setting will read one particular area of the photo correctly [good for when the significant light is in one particular area]. A center-weighted meter will measure light correctly in a selected larger, but still selective area of the photo [good for a person in strong backlighting – sky background or in front of a window or doorway]. An average meter setting – or matrix metering – is an average of many different spots of the frame for an average reading [this is the best setting for everyday shooting unless the lighting is extreme or unusual]. These options need to be understood through reviewing them in your instruction book, as they will vary from camera to camera.

When shooting with a digital camera you usually want to use exposure settings to properly expose for the highlight area of a scene.

Priority Modes for Exposure [more for Single Lens Reflex cameras]

You may want to start with the A [automatic setting] until you are comfortable enough in shooting photographs with your camera to switch to other modes like manual. As you progress, other modes may give you more control over how the

photograph will be made to appear, so you are encouraged to learn the different modes of your camera by reading and re-reading your camera instruction book for a complete understanding of all your camera functions and capabilities.

Priority modes for shooting offer easy methods to shoot certain ways. Shutter-priority lets you select the shutter speed and the camera automatically sets the aperture. Aperture-priority lets you select the lens opening setting and the camera selects the proper shutter speed. Manual mode allows you to set both shutter speed and aperture settings manually, using the light meter scale to determine correct exposure.

Exposure compensation

Using an exposure-compensation feature is the easy way to modify the built-in metering system to get the exposure you want. You have a control setting on your camera to compensate for the exposure your meter is giving you. You can usually go +1 or +2 to brighten the image or -1 or -2 darken the image. Be sure to reset the exposure compensation back to 0 when you are done.

Silhouette

Backlighting is when the light is much stronger in the background than on the subject in the foreground. You can create a silhouette by metering off the bright background, using exposure lock or manual metering, and then reposition the camera to compose the image.

By exposing the bright background correctly the backlight subject or figure will appear as a silhouette [black cut form] against the normally exposed background. Getting this situation exposed as you want it can be challenging, so you should bracket using exposure compensation [+/-] to see what different exposures yield as a photograph. You also need to experiment with or practice this technique considerably to master it.

White Balance

White balance is a convenient way to adjust your camera for accurate color under different lighting situations. On A [automatic] program your camera may try to figure out the correct white balance – but it will not always get it right. White balance settings are different selections for sunlight, overcast, incandescent light, tungsten [light bulbs], fluorescent lighting, or flash.

Histogram

A useful feature on some, but not all digital cameras, is the histogram. It is a graphical chart that shows the brightness levels of an image ranging from pure black on the left to pure white on the right in 256 steps. The vertical scale shows how many pixels are found in the image at each brightness level.

Using the histogram you can read the exposure of a photo. The more pixels to the right, the more bright the image is. The more to the left, the darker the image will be.

There is no really correct histogram chart you are trying to achieve when making a particular photograph, because some images are made up of predominantly light values and some can be mostly dark values. You do want to avoid exposures that have too many blown out highlights in the bright areas, as they are impossible to correct even later in PhotoShop image editing software. If your display images flashes in the bright areas of your image after you take the photo and view it, it usually is indicating areas that are without detail in your highlights. You may need to

try the exposure compensation correction to do another picture with -1 or -2 exposure compensation value added.
REMEMBER TO RETURN YOUR EXPOSURE COMPENSATION SETTING TO ZERO WHEN YOU ARE FINISHED.

The histogram chart cannot be dialed in to make accurate exposures all the time, but it is a good reference to use from time to time.

SHUTTER SPEED [the length of time the shutter remains open]

Shutter speed is the amount of time the image is exposed for. Using different shutter speed settings can reveal motion or conversely freeze movement depending on the setting. You need to use a fast enough shutter speed to make a photo without shaking the camera [i.e. $1/60$ or $1/125$]. Slower speeds [$1/15$ or $1/30$] might be possible if you are really careful and steady]. Much slower speeds [1 second to $1/8$] require a tripod or putting the camera on a solid surface and pressing the shutter button carefully or using the self-timer to fire the camera without touching it.

Show motion by using a slow shutter speed. Choosing too slow a shutter speed might yield too much blur; one that is too fast might eliminate the sense of movement. With a little experimentation, you can learn which shutter speed settings will show what kind of motion. Using a slow enough shutter speed may be difficult in bright light even you set the camera at the lowest ISO, since brighter light usually requires higher [faster] shutter speeds [i.e. 250 or 500].

Freeze motion by selecting a faster shutter speed [i.e. 250^{th} or 500^{th} of a second].

Panning

Panning is when you use a slow shutter speed and pan the camera at the same speed as the subject and make the exposure as you continue to move the camera. Getting the right shutter speed for panning requires considerable experimentation. It depends on the speed of the subject that is moving and how close it is to you. You need to consider the background. This requires some skill acquired from practice.

Shutter lag

Most digital cameras have a lag time between when you press the shutter release button and when the exposure is made. You will need to experiment with firing your camera to get a feeling for the lag time if you want to attempt “decisive moment” or candid type photographs where the subjects are moving through the frame. For stationary subjects this is not a factor.

Avoid Camera Movement

When shooting in low light your shutter speed will necessarily be longer so often it is easy to shake the camera while pressing the shutter release button. The same is true for very close-up or macro photos – the camera is focusing so close it is easier to notice camera movement in the image. Use a tripod, the self-timer or place the camera on a solid surface [and use self-timer] to get sharper photos in these situations. **Practice lightly pressing the shutter release button to minimize vibration and the potential of shaking the camera during the exposure.** Camera movement shows up as blur in a photograph making the picture look less sharp.

APERTURE

[The lens opening that determines how much light is captured]

Aperture setting [lens opening] controls the amount of light that exposes on the camera sensor. Aperture setting controls the depth of field in the photo. Depth of field is the area in the picture from the foreground to the background that is in sharp focus. Smaller lens openings [f/16 and f/22] keep more of the area in the photo sharply focused. Larger lens openings [f2.8 and f/4] result in selective focus, with the area that was focused on being perfectly sharp, but the foreground and background looking soft [out of focus].

Depth of Field

Depth of field is the area in your photograph that is in sharp focus. It is controlled by the aperture setting [lens opening], distance from the subject and the focal length of the lens or focal length lens setting on a zoom lens. The smaller the aperture the more depth of field you get [f2.8 or f4 gives little depth of field while f16 or f22 yields greater depth of field]. A lens that is a longer focal length telephoto [100mm, 200mm] will yield less depth of field while a wide-angle [28mm] will yield more depth of field. When you shoot very close [inches to a few feet] to the subject you will get shallow depth of field versus shooting a landscape focused at 30 feet away or more where more of the area in the resulting photo will appear to be sharp.

Because the image sensor in compact digital cameras is so small it is difficult to control depth of field – these ‘point and shoot’ cameras always result in photos with great depth of field. This is good in most photographs. Digital single lens reflex cameras with interchangeable lenses utilize depth of field like regular film cameras, where it is easier to make selective focus images.

When doing a portrait, use a longer telephoto lens setting to get the face sharp and the background [or others in the background] to be softer. The telephoto lens yields less depth of field.

COMPOSITION



Your camera either makes an image that is 3x4 or 3x4.5 inches in proportion. It is a rectangular image and depending on your camera it is one of these formats, the second being a little longer in length and corresponding to 35mm film format.

Obviously, you photographs can either be made as a horizontal image or a vertical image. Experiment with both ways of making photographs.

Do not center the subject. Occasionally centering the subject does make a solidly grounded image that is interesting, but centering the face from too far away is the quintessential snapshot, and we want more from our photographs than casual unconsidered point and shoot pictures. You should strive to make considered compositions each time you make a photograph.

Consider the rule of thirds as a simple way to start making more sophisticated compositions. If you divide your viewfinder into thirds, both horizontally and vertically, and you place subjects on those lines [like figures, horizon line, faces] you will be creating a photograph were the viewer will be more engaged in moving their eyes around the picture frame. It creates more movement in the picture viewing experience. If you have juxtaposition of 2 or more things at these points your photograph will be a more interesting and engaging visual experience. This works both in the horizontal and vertical formats.



Go to extremes

Extreme angles or extreme vantage points often yield the most “uncommon” views and picture experiences. Get TOO CLOSE. Shooting from ground level [lie on your stomach] or from extremely high up is usually more interesting views because they are unusual. Standing on something or putting the camera near the ground is an easy way to explore different and uncommon vantage points.

Edges

Experiment with placing subject matter or people on the edge of your composition. Use the focus/exposure lock to lock on the subject and then move the subject to the edge while keeping the focus/exposure locked [holding the button down].

Make photographs with dimension

Make photographs with a strong relationship of foreground, middle ground and background. To do this, frame the photo with a foreground coming right up to the camera [even if it is out of focus] with a subject in the middle-ground and with a background behind it. A photo with strong FG/MG/BG has a stronger feeling of dimension – as opposed to a photo of “just the subject.”

Control your background

Very often beginning photographers do not notice the entire frame of the image while they are making photographs. This might result in unwanted and distracting objects in the background like wires, utility poles, cars, other people, etc. When you frame a photograph you need to concentrate on observing the entire frame – the edges, the background, how close you are, and what the composition looks like. Moving slightly side to side might make a much better composition or eliminate unwanted distractions from the background. Kneeling down is often a good way to see the scene differently, or getting up higher may eliminate unwanted things in the background like wires, too much sky or ceilings. You need to be actively moving around while looking through the camera for better views or more distinctive angles. Some photographers have described their approach to making hand held camera pictures as a very physical activity. Sometimes moving the camera only inches or less yields the better view. You need to practice by “looking” through the camera a lot while moving it before pressing the shutter release button.



Isolate the subject

Keep the composition simple by isolating a subject against a less complicated background. Use a telephoto lens to bring the subject forward and blur the background.

Formal elements and abstraction

Shoot abstract images. An abstract photograph is a picture that relies purely on the formal elements of the image – light & dark [chiaroscuro], line, texture, form, color, and composition. Photographer Aaron Siskind is one of the most revered abstract photographers whose most important work was made in the 1940's and 50's in black and white. Andres Serrano's images of his own body fluids from the 1990's rely visually on abstraction for their beauty even though he titles them specifically to inform the viewer about what they are looking at. With abstract photography, the subject has no intrinsic importance in the visual image, but rather it is the rendition of the pure image that exalts the senses and intellect. The image is appreciated for the expression through the color and formal issues. Like distinctions between wines, appreciation of abstraction is usually an acquired taste from experience, study and reflection.

Patterns and shapes

Shoot for patterns and shapes in the photograph. As a photographer you can use many elements to draw attention to your pictures. Patterns and shapes are often the strongest elements and you can notice them everywhere after you develop a skill for recognizing them. Patterns are formed by repetition of objects, lines, shapes or colors. In our busy and cluttered environments, patterns and shapes can be pulled out of context to make very strong visual statements. Many photos utilize strong elements that are not recognizable. Good photographs can utilize elements of abstraction juxtaposed with elements of representation [figures, architecture, recognizable elements].

COLOR & THE FORMAL ELEMENTS

A photograph can be about more than just the subject – and should be. It should be about light, composition, form, texture, surface, line and color. You can be a colorist photographer where you do a series of photographs 'about yellow.' Blue is a cool color and influences how a viewer experiences the image. Color can be one of the most powerful elements in a picture. Red is easily noticed, even if it is in only a small part of the picture. There is a cliché saying in color photography – “If you cannot make it good, make it red.” Saturated bold colors can be dramatic. Subdued earth colors or pastels are more subtle and soothing. Monochromatic color images with almost no color can be interesting. Different light will change how colors appear. The late afternoon golden light adds warmth to everything. Some colors are more appealing than others. Often color can be distracting in a photograph that might have been successful in black & white. Colors clashing or loud colors can disturb an otherwise interesting scene making it too busy to the eye.

Color needs to be considered carefully and the time of day to shoot a scene must be considered also. You may need to go back to something at different times and different days to make the most successful image of it, depending on light, brightness and angle of the light.

FLASH – ELECTRONIC STROBE

Built-In Flash

Most digital cameras have a built in flash that can be utilized in low light. These can be useful for 'snapshots,' but rarely work well to make a decent photograph otherwise. You need to learn immediately how to turn off the flash, so it does not

automatically go off unintended in low light condition. The built-in flash can occasionally work better very close to the subject, but is basically ineffective at medium distances and almost useless at farther conditions. Photographing the Pope [or Bono] in a stadium with a flash has no potential at all. The light from the flash simply is not strong enough to travel that distance to illuminate either of them. Using the built-in flash at medium distances will often make the photo of the person that looks like the “deer in the headlights’ picture.

Fill-flash mode

Some more sophisticated digital cameras might have a fill-flash mode, and you might experiment with that to see if it has potential. Fill-flash mode adds light to the foreground or person while also leaving the shutter open long enough to make the available light exposure of the rest of the scene accurately rendered. Mixing the flash with daylight or available light is a technique many serious photographers utilize to make striking photographs. Look at your instruction book to see if you have a fill-flash option. Utilizing fill flash is a great way to reveal more detail in a very sharp way. It works especially well with backlit situations.

Red eye

The unwanted red eye appears when the flash is used straight on a person’s face. It is a reflection of the subject’s retina to the camera. Your camera may have a red eye reduction setting, so learn it if you want to avoid red eye in your pictures of people and animals with a built-in flash. An off camera flash does not create red eye.

Turn the flash off

It is very important that you can learn to turn off your built-in flash manually so it does not interfere with you making ‘available light’ pictures. You also want to be able to turn it off when photographing in any situations where flash photography is prohibited. **You need to know how to turn off the flash off quickly and without consultation with me** to be able to do so in churches or other locations where flash photography is strictly prohibited.

WORKING WITH AN IMAGE EDITING PROGRAM

Working with JPEG files

Opening and closing a jpeg does not make it deteriorate, but making ANY changes and re-saving the file does. **Always start by copying the file to work on and leave the original unaltered so that you always have the original to go back to if you need it.**

Each time you save a jpeg file after working on it, you image degrades. You should save **EVERY** image you work on in an editing program [i.e. PhotoShop] as a TIFF image so that it does not degrade.

RAW image files are the best image format to use if you want the best image quality. However, these files are substantially larger than jpeg files – 5 times larger in file size and you would need to use the special camera manufacturer software or PhotoShop RAW software to open these files. Photos made in RAW file format have fewer of the camera settings imposed upon them [white balance, exposure compensation, histogram, etc so you can utilize those corrections later. RAW files are slower to view, require proprietary conversion technology to open, are larger file size and have a slightly wider bit range.

It may be impractical to shoot every photo this way [RAW] because the files are so large, so we will shoot jpeg file format photographs.

Ottica Fontani for prints

Ottica Fontani in Florence is a good professional camera store that caters to amateurs and professionals. If you go to Ottica Fontani to have some prints made, these were the prices they charged 5 years ago:

10x13 or 10x15 prints [about 4x6 inches] are 16¢

12x16 or 12x18 [about 5x7 inches] are 18¢

15x20 or 15x23 [about 6x9 inches] are 80¢

18x24 or 20x23 [about 8x10 inches] are 1.80

24x36 or 24x30 [about 11x14 inches] are 3.00

30x40 or 30x45 [about 16x20 inches] are 4.50

You may ask for Marinella, who speaks English, to help you make your order.

Backing up you work

It is important to back up you work as you proceed through the class. If you have a portable hard drive, you back up your work each time you change files or add files. If you have you laptop crash or get stolen, you could loose all your work for the term. I will have a hard drive to back up student work, on request. Do not assume you could not possibly have a system crash. It happens.

