



Essentials of Photography I

Four Weeks, 10 Hours of Instruction — All Skill Levels Welcome

The goal of this course is helping teachers to improve their own photography by understanding how professional photographers approach their work and create lasting, remarkable images. The course emphasizes the concept of “Shooting with Intention,” which focuses on making an image versus taking an image. Each class is aimed at key photographic concepts and skills, with hands-on time to practice skills, and ample constructive feedback. The sessions are highly individualized. Among the topics covered are the key elements of composition, the exposure triangle, the language of photography, shooting in natural light, adding light, and at twilight, and effective and simple editing. A related focus is on understanding how to effectively use the camera you have with you to make the most of any photographic opportunity.

Texas teachers can earn 10 hours of CPE credit across the four sessions of this course.

Week One

- **Know your camera.**

Whether an iPhone or a sophisticated professional camera body and interchangeable lenses, knowing your most essential tool is absolutely key to making great images.

- **Shoot with intention.**

The difference between taking or capturing a shot and making an image.

- **Use the rules of composition.**

How the eye moves through an image: Rule of Thirds, Leading Lines, Focus, Luminance.

Shooting Goals

Wander the alley and environs of the Art League, considering shots and opportunities. Emphasis on murals and street shots, with LJ moving through the students checking on their work. Encourage them to learn to shoot in manual if their cameras support that.

Critique

Help students understand how to select 3 photos for sharing and critique — what to learn from critique, and how to do constructive critique.

Week Two

- **Exposure made easy.**

Learn how you can evaluate exposure intuitively (motion blur, lens blur, depth of field, noise, blown out images that are too dark or too bright) easily from the images themselves. Knowing these elements of exposure will help you shoot more intentionally. Learn why having a camera that you can adjust the elements of exposure on will make you a better photographer — if you let it. (*Slideshow of pics you can't take on an phone*).

- **The Language of Light.**

There are several things that you can easily modify in almost any photographic situation to make it optimal.

These are:

- 1) the Amount of Light (do you need to add, flag or screen off light?).
- 2) the Quality of Light (using reflectors and light modifiers).
- 3) the Color of Light (tungsten vs fluorescent vs daylight vs softlight bulbs), and adding gels to change the color. White Balance is a setting on your camera or in editing software that can change how your camera interprets color.
- 4) the Direction of Light and its impact on shadows and textures;
- 5) knowing the difference between Hard Light and Soft Light and when to use or take advantage of each.
- 6) the Ambient Light can help or hinder setting the mood of your image.

Shooting Goals

Modifying natural light. Windows, sheers, reflectors, constant light, v-flats.

Critique

Students submit 1-3 of their photos for constructive feedback on how to improve them.

Week Three

- **Follow the Light: Golden Hour, Blue Hour, and Astronomical Twilight.**

Learn how to follow and use natural light, which includes Golden Hour, Blue Hour, and Astronomical Twilight of which two are really only visible to your camera. Understand generally how (and why) the time of day can drastically affect how to shoot in natural light. Consider how shadows are affected by the time of day, and the angle of light from the sun. Learn about apps that can help you plan for the light, and when you will need a tripod.

Shooting Goals

Look for opportunities to capture Golden Hour light.

Critique

Students submit 1-3 of their photos for constructive feedback on how to improve them.

Week Four

- **Why you should edit your images.**

Correcting color, focus, noise, or other issues. Correcting for clutter or awkward backgrounds. Learn how to shoot for post-shoot editing, for example, shooting wide, with cropping in mind.

- **Essential Editing Tools.**

iPhone edit tools.

Lightroom, Photoshop, and other professional editors.

Shooting Goals

Three general themes -street/urban photography; difficult shots; capturing historic locations.

Critique

Students submit 1-3 of their photos for constructive feedback on how to improve them.