



Digital Architectural Photography 421

Units: Two

Fall Semester 2024, Thursdays

Location: WAH B2 (Photo Lab) (Basement Corner)

Instructor: Stephen Schafer

Office: WAH B2

Office Hours: Thursday 2:15-3:15 p.m.

(please make office appointments via email)

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Course Description

Perceiving and documenting the built environment through the two-dimensional perspective and frame of the digital camera. Mastering the basic principles of the digital image through an understanding of framing, light, exposure, color, and output.

This course will teach students to see and create successful images of all aspects of the built environment and explore the varied approaches to architectural photography from the strictly documentary in nature to the creatively enhanced. The student will become a highly competent, creative, digital photographic image creator. They will develop an understanding of accurate exposure, color management, resolution, and printing output. Students will successfully use digital tools to enhance their architectural images, correct distortion and control mixed lighting. Students will have higher visual standards and be able to utilize proper digital file management and photographic software in new ways.

Learning Objectives

Comprehensive understanding of natural and artificial architectural lighting.

Heightened sensitivity to light and how it strengthens architectural design.

Control of Parallax to correct distortion and perspective.

Intermediate ability to photograph architectural models and small products.

Creation of exceptional images with light and architecture, including dusk imagery.

Use of manual camera functions, including: angle of view, exposure, speed, depth, and color temperature.

Use and knowledge of Adobe Lightroom and Photoshop for color management and processing.

Use and knowledge of High Dynamic Range (HDR) multiple exposures to create images.

Prerequisite(s): None

Course Notes

Assignments (deliverables) will be delivered digitally as a "presentation" on **FLICKR.com**. Work will be graded and critiqued from this online presentation. The FLICKR presentations will also be viewed in class as projected images for discussion and critique. Students will be expected to create professional quality photographs and present them on FLICKR in an album format. Students will post selected images and final projects online and produce a Print-on-Demand book of their body of work as the final.

Software Required

Flickr.com (free). Uploading images, adding captions, adding photographs to albums and joining the class group. Class assignments are will delivered via upload to **Flickr.com**

By Week 3: BOTH Adobe Lightroom (Classic/CC) monthly subscription through December 2024.

And Adobe Photoshop (you do not need online Adobe storage; we will discuss at first class)

Optional: Photo Book design software like InDesign if you do not want to use Book module in Lightroom

Hardware Required

1. Interchangeable-lens Digital camera* with manual mode. (We will discuss the first day of class).
2. Super-Wide angle lens or Super-wide angle zoom lens.
3. ** Tripod.
4. Polarizing filter.
5. Camera SD card 16-32 GB. (Possibly an extra battery).
6. Smart phone with camera and video capability.
7. Computer to run Lightroom and Photoshop. (see instructor about potential for Tablet options.)
8. New architectural magazine (Dwell, Architectural Digest, Fine Homebuilding, Log Cabins, Etc.)

Always bring your camera to class.

* Some old USC digital cameras are available for 24 hour checkout from the photo lab.

** Tripods are available for checkout from the photo lab.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

Required readings, videos, tutorials and webinars will be listed during the class.

Sign up at BLURB.com for online sales E-mails so you can get a discount on your final project (usually 30 to 50%) We will watch the Black Friday deals.

Optional Reading

Don't Shoot | 66 Reasons Not to Become a Professional Photographer. By Stephen Dirk Schafer

Download PDF free here:

<https://66reasons.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/01-ds-review-sample-book-optimized.pdf>

Joseph Rosa and Esther McCoy, A Constructed View: The Architectural Photography of Julius Schulman

Grading Breakdown

There will be a photography assignment every class-week. Assignments are to be turned in (delivered) on the due date (usually by midnight the day before class). In this class, one grade level will be deducted for each class session (week) an assignment is late. Assignments may be redone for a better grade if originally posted on time. Extra credit work is encouraged, check with instructor.

Table 1 Grading Breakdown

Assessment Tool (assignments)	Points	% of Grade
Active Participation/Attendance	10	10%
UPLOADED assignment presentations	60	60%
Final POD Book	30	30%
TOTAL	100	100

Grading Scale

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale:

Letter grade	Corresponding numerical point range
A	95-100
A-	90-94.9
B+	87-89.9
B	83-86.9
B-	80-82.9
C+	77-79.9
C	73-76.9
C-	70-72.9
D+	67-69.9
D	63-66.9
D-	60-62.9
F	59.9 and below

Assignment Submission Policy

Weekly presentation assignments are to be uploaded on (by midnight) the day before class. Assignments presentations (deliverables) will be uploaded to Flickr. Exact digital format TBD. Final POD book will be brought to class December 12 (or sooner with instructor approval).

Grading Timeline

Grades will be posted within 96 hours after the assignment (deliverable) due date.

Participation and attendance

Active participation and attendance – **10%**

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class. This is a small interactive class with field surveys around campus; your presence is necessary. If you do miss class, it is your responsibility to get the assignment and obtain information (from another student.) If for some reason you find that you must be absent or late it is essential that you notify instructor in advance by email.

Course Specific Policies

Assignments 60%

Assignments must be turned in (uploaded) on time. Some assignments are not graded on quality. These assignments are for your learning and practice of basic principles. Other assignments will be graded. You are expected to backup assignments and files/photos in case Flickr fails or your laptop gets hacked. You are expected to download and organize all your camera files and videos in case your camera breaks or is stolen. Photography assignments should not be captured in a location you live or work in, please no photos of your bedroom or workplace – get out there into the unfamiliar and solve problems.

Final Project – 30% (Book cost should be approximately \$50.00 without discounts)

You will create a Print-On-Demand (POD) book of twenty to thirty of your best photographs from the class. You can select a single building and do an immersive book. You can do a documentation of a place, building or district. You could create a how-to book of before and after photographs showing how you initially approached each building and how, after taking the class, you chose to make the final images differently. You can explore light on many buildings and structures and create a book of HERO photographs. Or (with prior instructor approval) you can ideate a unique book that enhances or dovetails with your other USC architecture classes. You will need to consult with the instructor by the October 24 (midterm class) to conceptualize and plan the book topic and design.

Classroom norms

Photography is a creative process where progress is a slow evolution and may not be as obvious as technical mistakes. I see both failures and successes as critical milestones in the creative process, and both should be viewed as valuable. Critiquing presentations will involve exploring your successes and failures. The small class size facilitates an open, workshop dialog. A collaborative approach to exploring successes, failures, solutions and new ideas is desired. Lectures should be respectfully interrupted for clarity or to explore alternate viewpoints and ideas. Curiosity is a contagious asset, interaction with the instructor and fellow students is your responsibility. Not every topic will be posed as a question; it is in your best interest to pose questions for the instructor during class to catalyze discussion. Part of your participation grade is based on in-class interaction. Bring examples and questions to class for discussion. Be respectful of fellow students when posing questions and responding to discussions.

Course Schedule & Description and Assessment of Assignments

August 29 - Class 1: Architecture Photography Basics | Syllabus Review, Photography Architectural Photography general lecture. Goal: Comprehensive understanding of natural and artificial architectural lighting.

Assignment A-1 (due: two weeks) 10 points: Smartphone architectural photography of buildings in Downtown LA (other locations with instructor approval).

September 5 - Class 2: Manual Digital Camera Use 1 (intro) | Goal: Use of manual camera functions, including: angle of view, exposure, speed, and ISO.

Assignment B (due: one week) 5 points: 5-Stop Bracket Assignment.

September 12 - Class 3: Seeing Light 1 | Goal: Heightened sensitivity to light and how it strengthens architectural design.

Assignment C (due: one week) 10 points: Location photography in various natural lighting environments.

September 19 - Class 4: Artificial vs. Natural Light 1 | Goal: Heightened sensitivity to light and how it strengthens architectural design. Bring Architectural Magazine to class. PLUS photography with AI architecture exercise.

Assignment D + AI (due: one week) 5 points: Location photography under various artificial lighting types.

September 26 - Class 5: Lightroom and Photoshop 1 (intro) | Goal: Use and knowledge of Adobe Lightroom and Photoshop for color management and processing. Goal: Control of Parallax to correct distortion and perspective.

Assignment LR (due: one week) 5 points: Post processing, transformation, manipulation and enhancement with Lightroom.

October 3 - Class 6: Architectural model tabletop studio workshop | Goal: Heightened sensitivity to light and how it strengthens architectural design & ability to photograph architectural models and small products.

Assignment E: TBD.

October 10 - Fall Break – No class. (Sign up for BLURB.COM discount Emails!)

October 17 - Class 7: HERO Twilight Photography 1 | Goal: Creation of exceptional images with light and architecture, including dusk imagery. **USC campus field work: This class will convene 1 hour before sunset; bring a jacket.**

Assignment HERO (due: one week) 10 points: Location photography at dusk.

October 24 - Class 8: Using HDR for interiors | Goal: Use and knowledge of High Dynamic Range (HDR) multiple exposures to create images & understanding of natural and artificial architectural lighting.

Assignment HDR (due: one week) 5 points: HDR photography using various camera settings on a tripod and processing in Lightroom.

October 31 (Halloween) - Class 9: Architecture Photography Final Project Prep (two-week) | Goal: Understanding of natural and artificial architectural lighting.

Assignment A-2 (due: two weeks) 5 points: Advanced location photography of buildings with manual camera on tripod. (due date - November 14)

November 7 (Halloween) - Class 10: Visual Acoustics Movie Report | Goal: Heightened sensitivity to light and how it strengthens architectural design.

Assignment MR (due: one week) 5 points: 1-page report on VA movie plus Shulman photo GCI Archive search.

November 14 - Class 11: Print on Demand Book Lecture. Final project discussion & image selection and editing. Book workshoping lab.

Assignment FINAL (due: Dec 12):

November 21 - Class 12: Final project reviews, printing lab, & book workshoping lab.

Assignment FINAL BOOK DIGITAL UPLOAD TO BLURB (upload by Nov 22):

November 28 - Thanksgiving - No class.

December 5 - Class 13: Architectural model studio lab, printing lab, studio workshop.

December 12 - Class 14: Final books due in-class, in-person. **30 points**

Assignments are due weekly on or before midnight before the next the class session.

Academic Integrity

The University of Southern California is foremost a learning community committed to fostering successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Academic misconduct is in contrast to the university's mission to educate students through a broad array of first-rank academic, professional, and extracurricular programs and includes any act of dishonesty in the submission of academic work (either in draft or final form).

This course will follow the expectations for academic integrity as stated in the [USC Student Handbook](#). All students are expected to submit assignments that are original work and prepared specifically for the course/section in this academic term. You may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s). Students suspected of engaging in academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Other violations of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage. Academic dishonesty has a far-reaching impact and is considered a serious offense against the university. Violations will result in a grade penalty, such as a failing grade on the assignment or in the course, and disciplinary action from the university itself, such as suspension or even expulsion.

For more information about academic integrity see the [student handbook](#) or the [Office of Academic Integrity's website](#), and university policies on [Research and Scholarship Misconduct](#).

Please ask your instructor if you are unsure what constitutes unauthorized assistance on an exam or assignment or what information requires citation and/or attribution.

Policy for the use of AI Generators in this course

In this course, ONLY the AI PHOTO GENERATION assignment will require use an artificial intelligence (AI)-powered program(s) for creation of the deliverable. You must cite the AI-generated material (e.g., text, images, etc.) included or referenced in your work, and provide the prompts used to generate the content.

For all other assignments (deliverables) in this course, this course aims to develop creative, analytical, and critical thinking and image making skills. Therefore, all assignments should be prepared by the student working individually or in groups. Students may not have another person or entity complete any substantive portion of the assignment. Developing strong competencies in these areas will prepare you for a competitive workplace. Therefore, using AI-generated text, code, or other content is prohibited in this course, will be identified as plagiarism, and will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

If found responsible for an academic violation, students may be assigned university outcomes, such as suspension or expulsion from the university, and grade penalties, such as an "F" grade on the assignment, exam, or in the course.

Course Content Distribution and Synchronous Session Recordings Policies

USC has policies that prohibit recording and distribution of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment.

Recording a university class without the express permission of the instructor and announcement to the class, or unless conducted pursuant to an Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) accommodation. Recording can inhibit free discussion in the future, and thus infringe on the academic freedom of other students as well as the instructor. ([Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook](#), page 13).

Distribution or use of notes, recordings, exams, or other intellectual property, based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study. This includes but is not limited to providing materials for distribution by services publishing course materials. This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to all information, which had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relation to the class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the internet, or via any other media. Distributing course material without the instructor's permission will be presumed to be an intentional act to facilitate or enable academic dishonesty and is strictly prohibited. ([Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook](#), page 13).

Statement on University Academic and Support Systems

Students and Disability Accommodations:

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. [The Office of Student Accessibility Services \(OSAS\)](#) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for

each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at osas.usc.edu. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu.

Student Financial Aid and Satisfactory Academic Progress:

To be eligible for certain kinds of financial aid, students are required to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) toward their degree objectives. Visit the [Financial Aid Office webpage](#) for [undergraduate](#)- and [graduate-level](#) SAP eligibility requirements and the appeals process.

Support Systems:

[Counseling and Mental Health](#) - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

[988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline](#) - 988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline consists of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new, shorter phone number makes it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273-8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

[Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services \(RSVP\)](#) - (213) 740-9355(WELL) – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm (including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking).

[Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX \(EEO-TIX\)](#) - (213) 740-5086

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

[Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment](#) - (213) 740-2500

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

[The Office of Student Accessibility Services \(OSAS\)](#) - (213) 740-0776

OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

[USC Campus Support and Intervention](#) - (213) 740-0411

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

[Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#) - (213) 740-2101

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

[USC Emergency](#) - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

[USC Department of Public Safety](#) - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call

Non-emergency assistance or information.

[Office of the Ombuds](#) - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

[Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice](#) - (323) 442-2850 or otfp@med.usc.edu

Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.