

University of California, Berkeley
DESINV 98 – Photography Principles

Course Credit: 2 units (credit/no credit)

Fall 2025, UC Berkeley

Wednesday 6:30 P.M. – 8:30 P.M.

Facilitators:

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Course Description:

Photography Principles is a 11-week long introductory course designed for students with an interest in learning photography. During the first half of the course, we will learn the basics of photography (i.e. camera manipulation & shooting in RAW), quickly move onto composition and principles of design, and post-processing with Adobe Lightroom. In the second half, we will focus on exploring different styles of photography ranging from portrait, studio, landscape, and much more.

No previous experience is required as this course is intended for beginners with little to no knowledge of photography. It is expected that students are passionate, open-minded, and excited about exploring the topics at hand.

If you would like camera recommendations, you can find them [here](#).

Key Learning Outcomes:

In this class, students will be introduced to the history, art, and practices of photography in the modern world. Students will learn how to manually operate a digital SLR camera, how to use lighting in conjunction with posing to create compositions, and how to post-process RAW photos. Different disciplines will also be taught and include portraiture, landscape, architecture, product, studio and more. Over the semester, students will learn critiques of photos and develop a more artistic eye for photos.

Lecture & Attendance:

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A two-hour lecture every week will include learning new material, homework reviews, photo critiques, guest speakers, and photography exercises. This course relies on building skills that are best honed through regular practice. Thus, attendance and participation for this course is mandatory. Each student is allowed a maximum of **two (2) absences**. We highly encourage you to save your two free absences for special occasions, illnesses, or days you really need a break. Use your two free absences wisely! Excessive absences may affect one's ability to pass the course.

Grading Policy:

Student performances will be monitored through weekly homework assignments that are graded based on completion, effort, and demonstration of ability to use tools taught in class. Attendance and participation is required and essential for your growth throughout the course.

70%+ is required to pass the course:

Attendance & Participation (*two freebies*) – **30%**

Weekly Homeworks (*drop lowest score*) – **20%**

Midterm Project – **20%**

Final Project – **30%**

In addition, we take academic dishonesty extremely seriously. Under no circumstances is it appropriate to pass off another person's work as your own. If you are struggling in the course or anything comes up in your life, please reach out to us! We understand that there are tough situations that arise—we want to give you the time and resources that you need.

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Course Schedule:

Week 1 – Introduction to Photography & Camera Basics

- Basic Camera Functions

Week 2 – Composition & Technical Skills

- Basic Technical Skills & Compositions
- Principles of Design

Week 3 – Lightroom 101

- Lightroom Tutorial
- Editing Workshop

Week 4 – Color Theory & Moodboarding

- Color Theory
- Brainstorming & Communicating Concepts
- **Midterm Released**

Week 5 – Studio Portraits

- Portrait Practice & Techniques
- Studio Photoshoot

Week 6 – Midterm Presentation

Week 7 – Astrophotography & Light Painting

- Long Exposure
- Light Painting Activity

Week 8 – Spring Break

- **No Class**

Week 10 – Publications & Zines

- Design Principles & Typography
- Magazine Cover Photo Workshop
- **Final Project Released**

Week 11 – Landscape & Street

- Finding the Beauty in the Everyday
- Field Trip/Photo Walk

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Week 12 – Wild Card

- Student's Choice

Week 13 – Final Project Showcase