

# PHOTOGRAPHY 245: NATURE & LANDSCAPE GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

## **COURSE INFORMATION**

**T**his document contains the information for Photo 245, Nature and Landscape Photography, for Spring 2011. This data is provided to give the student information that will help them complete assignments, anticipate grading, and help gain the maximum educational experience from the material.

### **OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the course are to provide the student with a working knowledge of the principles and techniques involved in the production of professional level nature and landscape photography. Following completion of the course with a grade of “C” or higher the student will be able to

- Plan a photographic field trip to gather photos including scouting locations and planning logistics and budgets.
- Identify and select the proper photographic tools for various shooting situations and professional end uses for the photographs and photographic prints. And
- Prepare a portfolio and promotional package to present to art buyers and curators/screeners for display.

### **COURSE CONTENT**

The course covers the planning and execution of Field photography designed to produce professional quality nature and landscape photography. This includes...

- Material on budgeting and travel planning, location scouting, and site/view/weather/time appraisals for future shooting.
- Demonstrations of various cameras, formats, and other photographic tools and techniques used in the acquisition of professional nature and landscape photography.
- Presentations of examples of nature and landscape images from foundational work in painting through various approaches and “schools” of photography. These will include both fine art approaches and professional approaches used to produce work for sale and commercial applications.
- Information on creating promotional materials and the marketing of landscape work both for the purposes of selling art and selling commercial imagery.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Nature and Landscape Photography entails making photographs out in nature. So the class will revolve around a series of field trips where the course materials can be both demonstrated and put into supervised practice. For Spring 2011, the planned longer field trips will be to:

- 1 three-day trip to Owens Valley, CA . This area also contains lots of trails and access to the Eastern slope of the Sierras, the famous Alabama Hills, and the ancient bristlecone pines, all famous shooting locations for landscape photographers. The trip will be Friday through Sunday.
- 1 four-five day trip to Yosemite National Park or other National Park. Some of the

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most famous landscape photos ever done have been in these locations. The trip will be Thursday through Sunday.

Specific trip handouts will be given prior to each trip in plenty of time to plan the logistics in accordance with class materials. A separate Handout will be provided to show typical costs involved in these trips.

You will be able to reduce costs substantially by carpooling and sharing room expenses. Most of the trips involving staying overnight at a location can be accomplished by either camping or using local lodging facilities however one of the weekend overnight trips, if we take it, will be specifically car-camping based.

Specific dates or date-range windows will be provided in advance in a handout to facilitate your planning. These trips are not all mandatory. However they will contain important demonstrations, materials, exercises, and opportunities for project completion directly tied to the class so you should plan on coming along on at least one of the longer ones.

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## REQUIRED TEXT AND READINGS

Minimum required reading materials for this course are the current editions of:

1. **PHOTOGRAPHY** (Textbook)  
Barbara London

The information supplied in the course handouts, department handouts, lab handouts, and lectures, takes precedence over any material in the text. If you have a question about this ASK!

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## ADDITIONAL READING MATERIAL

Other reading may be suggested throughout the class. There are lots of books showing examples of good Landscape Photography. I would especially recommend “**The Art of Seeing**” by **Freeman Patterson**.

On the web become familiar with the site [www.luminous-landscape.com](http://www.luminous-landscape.com). It offers an incredible array of resources devoted to landscape and nature photography.

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## CAMERA REQUIREMENTS

Professional grade landscapes have been produced with virtually every camera format from 35mm to 8x10 and now digital. Interesting and artistic landscapes have been done with plastic cameras, pinhole cameras, phone cameras, indeed virtually any type of camera in existence. We will be discussing pros and cons and the use of virtually all of these formats, however you may take the class using any of them or a variety of them if available. But you will need to be able to control your camera sufficiently to achieve your intended ‘vision’ for the final images.

We do have cameras available for check out but not enough to have you check out a camera for the entire semester. All check-outs are on a first-come-first served basis. Normal check-outs are for 48 hrs or a weekend however, again on a first-come-first-served basis you may check out a camera for the duration of a field trip if that is longer.

If you are using a professional camera such as a field or view camera or many medium format cameras you will also need a lightmeter. We will discuss the uses of various types in class.

You will need a good, sturdy tripod, the best you can afford and carry. We will also discuss various types of tripods and tripod heads in class.

You may shoot film or digital, color or B&W for this class.

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**GRADING BASIS**

This is a professional, college level course. It is also an upper level photography course that requires your attention, discipline, and some hard work to complete. All work you perform as projects, tests, or other assignments, will be given a numerical point value determined by the instructor. The points are based on the relative difficulty or complexity of the assignment or test.

I will evaluate work based on the technical competence and skill elements involved, the aesthetics of the finished shot, and the use of natural (or in some cases additional artificial) lighting to achieve the stated objectives. I'll also grade heavily on your effort and growth and your willingness to "stretch." Successful professional landscape photographers require no less commitment and passion than any other genre of photography. I'll expect to see that level of commitment in the class.

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**POINTS AND GRADES**

Materials you are assigned or given to produce for the class will be graded and given either a numerical grade or a letter grade.

- **Tests** will be assigned specific points per question based on difficulty or type. A wrong answer gains zero points, a correct answer gains all the points assigned that question. The percentage of correct-to-possible points will determine your grade.
- **Photo Projects** will be graded technically, aesthetically, and also professionally for such elements as following directions accurately and turning it in on time. They will be awarded a point score defined below.
- **Written Assignments** will also be awarded a point score.

The handout for each assignment will list all items to be turned in to be considered complete. **This includes the handout itself.** Without the handout the project is incomplete.

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**POINT SCORE/LETTER GRADE MEANINGS**

For project and written assignments a letter grade will be given. Grades are not entitlements and are not given based on student wishes or desires but are earned based on student performance. This is an upper level class. I will expect to see all basic and intermediate level tools and techniques demonstrated to that appropriate level.

- A. **90-100 points = an "A" is given for *Excellent* work.** "A" work is free of flaws and technically perfect in its production and presentation for its given level of progress. It took the assignment specifics and elevated them and is as good as could possibly be expected for this level of class.
- B. **80-89 points = a "B" is given for *Superior* work.** "B" work is very good but might contain a few very slight issues. However it is above average quality and is of a quality acceptable for commercial display and viability.
- C. **70-79 points = a "C" is given for *Average* work.** "C" work is competent but not professional grade, it may show a reasonable composition but has a number of flaws or issues that make it less than professional or unacceptable for commercial display. It followed the assignment to the letter and ended there.
- D. **60-69 points = a "D" is given for *Below Average* work.** It is filled with flaws both technical and aesthetic and is above failing mostly because it got turned in on time and more or less followed instructions.
- E. **0-59 points = an "F" is given for *Failing* Work.** It did not follow the instructions or, even if it did, is so poorly done it does not even rise above poor work on a basic level.

Getting a good grade is easy: do EXCELLENT work, show up, get involved, and dedicate yourself to improving your work and being as good as you can possibly be.

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**CLASS GRADE COMPONENTS**

During the course of the semester you will be assigned and perform various kinds of projects and work. Your final grade will be based on the following criteria and approximate percentage breakdown:

- ◆ 90% on Photo Project Assignments, Written Assignments, tests, etc.
- ◆ 10% on attendance, participation, conduct in class and your individual progress and effort. (Refer to the section on attendance for further information on how this can have an effect your grade.

**EFFECT OF FINALS**

The final projects and/or final exam will have a critical effect on your grade regardless of how well you have done up to that point. They usually are worth at least twice a normal project grade.

- ◆ If you do not take the final exam or do not submit an acceptable Final Portfolio Project, your maximum attainable grade for the course will be a "D" *regardless* of your other points earned to date.
- ◆ If your Final Project achieves less that 60% of the possible points your maximum attainable grade will be a "D"
- ◆ If your final Written Exam achieves less than 60% of the possible points your maximum attainable grade will be a "D"

**FINAL GRADES**

Your final grade will be determined by your cumulative points as a percentage of the total possible points. That percentage will yield a letter grade based on the following table:

<b>90% - 100%</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>A</b>
<b>80% - 89%</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>B</b>
<b>70% - 79%</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>C</b>
<b>60% - 69%</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>D</b>
<b>0% - 59%</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>F</b>

**ATTENDANCE**

Attendance is not just mandated by student policy, it is vital to your learning capabilities. The college has set very strict guidelines for instructors to follow relative to student absences and tardiness. The following rules will be followed closely.

- ◆ Three (3) consecutive unexcused absences or five (5) total unexcused absences in a semester allows me to automatically drop you from the class. I won't do that (see below on dropping the class) but it WILL cost you a letter grade.
- ◆ Unexcused tardiness will be counted as an unexcused absence. Unexcused absences (and tardiness) WILL count against your grade.

If you anticipate a legitimate absence then tell me BEFORE or have a really good excuse and tell the nurse to have a pathetic voice when you call from your hospital bed! Attendance is a factor in your grade and it can be enough to lower you a letter grade. And here is something *really* important for you to understand relative to attendance...

**DROPPING THE CLASS.** Once you are on the roster, I will expect YOU to take responsibility for whether or not you continue in class. If you decide to drop, or need to drop because timing and scheduling is unworkable, YOU must take the initiative to let the school admissions office know that you have dropped. I WILL NOT DO IT FOR YOU simply because you are no longer showing up. Why is this important?

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Because if we get to the final grade roster and your name is still on it I must input a grade or the computer will not accept my input. That grade will most likely be an “F” since it takes very few missed assignments to drop the grade to that level. To avoid that, follow through on your own decisions and let the school know if you must drop. It would be nice to let me know so I don’t keep calling your name, but you **MUST** let the school know or risk failing a course with the attendant hit on your GPA.

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## TARDINESS

Tardiness is rude, an insult to me, disrespectful to your fellow classmates, disruptive of the class, and will effect the attendance part of your grade. If you have some work-related reason for continuing tardiness make an office appointment and discuss it with me ASAP. Otherwise show up on time. If you come in late, do not expect me to take time to re-present material already covered or to answer questions designed to fill in the blanks you missed by being late.

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## ATTENDANCE IN LAB CLASSES

Unless the instructor *specifically* excuses you, missing a lab class is an unexcused absence.

Labs are for the work on and toward the completion of your projects but I also sometimes use them for impromptu demonstrations of equipment or techniques that I’ll expect everyone to know and use from then on as appropriate. You will be able to use the wet darkroom or the computer labs to work on your projects.

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## THIS IS A “WEB-ENHANCED” CLASS

You are now in the world of digital photography, a world heavily dependent on computers where your success will be dependent on your ability to use them in a number of functions. This class is being run as a “web-enhanced” class in which you will interface with the District’s Online Learning System, “Blackboard/Vista” to receive materials, turn in projects for grading, and other chores. Some of you may already be familiar with this program from other classes but I will go over it in detail early in the course.

You can access your area in Blackboard from any computer that has internet access. Its direct URL is <http://online.sdccd.edu>. Your Username is your CSID and your password is your birth date in mm/dd/yyyy format.

On Blackboard you will find copies of all handouts specific to assignments and projects as well as a copy of this course syllabus/outline.

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## PROJECT SUBMISSION

Each photo project assignment will have a description and complete instructions in Blackboard and will include a handout you can download also explaining in detail the requirements for that project. **Read each project instructions carefully for the specific instructions to be followed for that project.**

Generally I will be asking for electronic contact prints of the work shot on the field trips to be submitted via Blackboard.

The primary work required will be in the form of a final portfolio of work. This portfolio may be in any form or format which you think best conveys your vision to the images chosen however ALL images in the portfolio will need to be presented together AS a portfolio not simply a pile of independent prints. We will discuss this thoroughly in class. This portfolio will be presented to the class at the end of the semester and a contact file of the portfolio images will be submitted to Blackboard.

All projects are to be turned in by the end of the day on the due date. There will be an additional week until the final cut off date for submission but you will be losing points for every late day.

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**EXPECTED WORK LOAD**

This should be a fun course to take but it is, nevertheless, an upper level college course. As is common in college courses, it is expected that you will spend at least as much time out of class on assignments as you spend in class sessions... and probably more. As a general rule you will have two weeks to complete assignments and turn in contacts after a field trip or other specific assignment. Written assignments will each have their own time limit set and listed.

Needless to say if your attendance patterns show that you are not taking advantage of the lab classes, open labs, and other resources it will be difficult to convince me that insufficient time was allotted for the completion of an assignment—especially when most of the class was able to do it.

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**DEADLINES**

Deadlines are sacred in the industry and sacred in this class. Projects turned in late will automatically be deducted 10% of their possible points (basically equal to one letter grade), with an additional point being deducted for **every school day** they continue late.

A project will be returned ungraded if it is incomplete and points deducted as above. However, the project must be corrected and resubmitted or it will achieve a grade of zero (0) points.

If you are having a problem, talk to me, but do so BEFORE a project is due, not after.

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**CLASS CRITIQUES**

Following the grading of projects, they will be critiqued in class. This is NOT a forum to embarrass anyone but a chance to learn and let the entire class learn together from observances about other work. You are students and only expected to perform to student levels but you need to know where improvement could be made to make the image more professional and competitive. You need to develop a thick skin as I will be a LOT kinder than typical art directors and buyers.

Projects turned in late will not be included in the class critiques.

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**CONTACTING THE INSTRUCTOR**

You may leave the instructor, David King an E-mail (preferred) or phone message as follows:

- Email: [dking@sdccd.edu](mailto:dking@sdccd.edu) **BE SURE TO NOTE THE CLASS** in the subject line or I may delete it accidentally thinking it is more SPAM.
- Phone: my office at school is 619-388-3649
- Office Appointments can be arranged as required
- My website where you can download class assignments, handouts, and other tech data is [www.ndavidking.com](http://www.ndavidking.com) .

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**LAB USE**

The “Lab” time is designed as time for you to use the facilities and take advantage of having an instructor present to help you in your work toward fulfilling class assignments. You may use our facilities or, if you clear it with me in advance, may work in your own darkrooms or at your own computers. Just be sure and clear it with me first. If you do use City College facilities there are some guidelines for you to understand and follow.

**Lab Protocol.** The Student lab is a “public” lab meaning lots of people are working in there at the same time. No one student, no matter what level they are on, is entitled to act as if the lab were set up just for them. And no student will be allowed to act in a manner offensive to another student using the lab.

**Equipment Care.** Take care of the equipment as if it were yours. If you break it, it

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IS yours because you will have to pay to replace it. If you start to set up and discover something is broken tell the lab tech immediately. If not, it will be considered a fair assumption that you broke it.

**Personal Work.** The lab class is still part of class and designed primarily to give you time and facilities to complete your projects and assignments. If you have finished your assignments however, then in my class you may use that time for other work. But note: other instructors may have different rules about this.

Photography covers a wide range of genre and types of images, some of which may be controversial. Keep in mind the above rule: no student will be allowed to produce work that is offensive to others working in the lab. And before anyone raises it, this is not a first Amendment issue; it is a rule laid down by the people who are providing educational facilities for you to use unless you abuse the privilege.

**Attendance in Lab.** A reminder! You are required to receive a certain amount of instruction over the course of the semester and that number is derived including the lab classes. However, this is, to some degree, your own time to work on and produce your assignments and practice the techniques involved in this level of photography. Skipping out on Lab is only hurting yourself and in some cases only hurting your grade. **The only time you will be excused from lab is with instructor permission.**

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## USING DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

It is clear that photography is moving rapidly toward the digital arena. Sooner or later most work will be done, both in the acquisition and in the production, via digital means. However, learning to master the traditional film/wet lab techniques will put you several steps up the ladder toward mastering the digital world.

Nevertheless, if you have and want to use digital equipment for acquisition or output you may do so. If you are producing digital output however, please note that it still has to be a good print and subject to the same criteria as traditional B&W or Color prints would face. Bad digital printing is still bad printing and will be graded accordingly.

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## BLACK AND WHITE OR COLOR?

In the photographic arena landscape imagery was traditionally a black and white photo world. But especially for merchandising, work is increasingly done in color. You may follow your own vision here and produce work to suit your personal and evolving style and aesthetic.

For your final portfolio if you are doing a print-based portfolio, I would expect B&W darkroom prints to be archivally made on fiber paper. (For project prints and certainly for contacts that is not required.) For Color or Grayscale Digital Prints, the final portfolio will be archival inkjet or lightjet prints.

We will also discuss other presentations acceptable for this final portfolio including books and electronic media.

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## BEHAVIOR ON FIELD TRIPS

When we go on a field trip we are representing San Diego City College and the Photo program. Any behavior that is inappropriate will result in your expulsion from the field trip. Remember we are guests, often we have been granted special prices or admissions because of our school status, please act with all due respect for the places and people who have welcomed us into their areas.

If you act inappropriately you will be asked to leave the field trip to return home after an apology to our hosts, the class, and me.

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**INCOMPLETES**

School policy is VERY clear on this: an incomplete is to be given ONLY in cases of medical emergencies arising at the last part of the class. They are not given for vacation time, party time, or ANY reason other than a legitimate medical emergency.

You have made a commitment to the school, to me, and to yourself to register for and attend this class from the start to the finish. If you cannot do that or do not want to do that then now is a good time to drop when there are others who would dearly like to register and devote the proper time to it.

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**COMPUTER USE**

You will be able to use the school computers for your assignments both during the lab class and during directed lab periods. But the reality is, if you want to get serious about digital photography then you need to have a computer with sufficient power and applications to download, convert, edit, and then print or transmit your images. In class we will discuss the minimal requirements for a sufficient computer along with some recommendations.

Also, you are free to bring in your own laptops for use during lab periods.

**However, do NOT – REPEAT: DO NOT – work or play with the school’s or your own computer when I am trying to lecture to the class. That is rude and distracting, and won’t be tolerated. Since you are not paying attention then I will mark you as having an unexcused absence for that day. Remember: 3 such days will equal a final letter grade.**

**Plus when I see your screen on the instructor’s station I may, if it looks particularly juicy, simply pipe it through to the projector for all to enjoy...**

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**CELL PHONES**

When you come into class there is a simple rule regarding cell phones:

**Unless you are a medical doctor on-call or a parent with a sick child at home (AND tell me if that is the case)...**

**TURN THE \*#%@\*^@ THING OFF ! ! ! ! !**

You will be able, despite your fears to the contrary, to actually survive for the class duration without getting a call (or making a call). It is an amazing historical fact that just a few years ago you actually had to wait until you got home to have access to a telephone and yet most of those students managed to survive the ordeal (though a few were found quivering in a heap by the campus police dialing an “air phone” and mumbling, “Can you hear me?” over and over, they responded to therapy and have recovered). You can therefore survive for a few hours!

Let your friends know your class schedule and when you are NOT available for calls. Do not use vibrate since I will wonder why you are smiling, nor use the high frequency ring tones because seeing others all look around when I can’t hear anything is still a good clue. **If the phone is more important than class then please spare us the interruption.**

**NOTE: THIS PROHIBITION INCLUDES TEXTING!!!**

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**PROBLEMS WITH THE INSTRUCTOR**

It happens sometimes. There may be a personality conflict, or you feel the instructor did not give you proper credit on something or perhaps unfairly singled out an image of yours during a critique. Any number of things in a venue as dynamic as a creative skills class can lead to a student feeling they have a problem with the instructor. If it should happen, then there is a set protocol and “chain of command” for you to follow to address the situation.

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The first stop is the instructor themselves. Common courtesy demands, and efficient resolution depends on your first making an appointment and talking to them about your issues. Do not be intimidated by this. We really are here to help you learn and if something is standing in the way we will do all we can to correct it including, if it is necessary, helping to get you into another section of the class.

If, after meeting with the instructor you feel the issues was not resolved to your satisfaction the next step is the Chairperson of the Department. Currently that is **June Richards**. She will ask if you have spoken with the instructor and if not you will be sent back down to try that first.

If after meeting with the Chair you still feel the situation is unresolved then you can make an appointment with the Dean of the Arts and Humanities School. Currently that is **Trudy Gerald**. She too will ask if you have worked your way up the chain of command.

If you still have not received satisfaction then the Dean can recommend the next steps for you to take. This may involve a group meeting to mediate the situation.

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***NOTES:***

## **REQUIRED EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES**

Take this sheet with you as a check list when you buy your original supplies. I assume you may have some of these supplies left over from the other classes; please feel free to use those items. This should be viewed as a bare minimum supply list as you may well use more!

### **EQUIPMENT**

<b>CAMERA</b>	35mm or larger with adjustable focus, aperture, and shutter; if it won't do this it won't work for the class. You will also need to be able to fire a strobe/flash from a PC connector or adapter on your camera.
<b>LIGHT METER</b>	A hand held meter is HIGHLY recommended. One that reads flash exposure will help a lot.
<b>SHUTTER CABLE RELEASE</b>	9" to 12" long or an electronic remote release if your camera requires. Important!!!
<b>TRIPOD</b>	The absolute best you can afford to buy. Don't leave home without it.
<b>CAMERA FILTERS AND MOUNTS FOR B&amp;W FILM</b>	Minimum set would include: Medium or Dark Yellow (K2, K3, G15) and Red (25A). Size for largest lens plus step-up adapters for others.
<b>PORTFOLIO CASE</b>	Large enough for your portfolio prints. We'll discuss this in class.

### **EXPENDABLE SUPPLIES**

<p><b>FILM and DIGITAL</b></p> <p><i>You may shoot with any film you wish. However I'd recommend you wait for class discussions before purchasing as there may be information about specific assignments that suggest certain characteristics over others.</i></p> <p><i>If you are shooting digitally, you will need sufficient flash card capacities and batteries for our shooting trips and/or you may need the resources to down-load images to other storage to free up your cards. We will discuss these needs in detail in class.</i></p>	<p>10-15 rolls</p> <p>7-10 rolls (35mm or equivalent frames in other formats)</p>
<p><b>OTHER EXPENDABLES</b></p> <p>Since this is an upper level class you all know the drill by now for what it takes to produce prints for a semester. It typically takes about \$300 for film-based print supplies though digital could be significantly less.</p>	<p>Paper, neg sleeves, mat board, etc.</p>

### **TRAVEL/FIELD TRIP COSTS**

<p>I will provide a separate breakdown of these estimated costs. At this point they could range from \$400 (camping only) to whatever your budget would allow for nice lodging and fancy meals.</p>	<p>Gas, lodging, meals, supplies</p>
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<b>PROJECT / ASSIGNMENT LIST BY TITLE</b>
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This is a quick checklist of a possible and very *tentative* project list by title and/or quick description. The individual project handouts will give you the precise instructions and requirements for the completion of the assignment. **Be aware that this is only a preliminary guideline.** As the class progresses and special class-wide needs or abilities surface, the instructor may remove, add, or substitute a different assignment for one of those listed below to address those needs or to explore those strengths. NOTE: It is also not necessarily in the order they will be assigned!

#	Title/Description	Due
1	(shooting/processing) System Calibrations	
2	(Photo) Creating your own 'universe'	
3	(Written) Report on Landscape photographer, style, approach, school, etc. from exhibit.	
4	(Photo) Contextual Shot – The “Grand Landscape”	
5	(Photo) Isolation Shot – The “Symbolic” View	
6	(Photo) Surreal Shot – The “Equivalent” or ‘other’ view	
7	(Photo) Owens Valley	
8	(Photo) Yosemite	
9	(Photos) Final Portfolio	
10	Final Exam	