

REL 260 / MVC 264
Through the Lens of the Soul:
Contemplative Photography
A May Term Travel Seminar

This course trains students to see the natural world in a new way. Student will learn several forms of meditation, then will use these skills to improve their photographic eyes. During the first week, we will learn and practice in the Redlands area, in Mill Creek Can-yon, at Joshua Tree N.P., etc. The second and third weeks we will be on the road: in the Sierra Nevada mountains and along the central California Coast. The final week, we will return to Redlands to process our photos and to exhibit our work.

Course Leaders:

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Prerequisites:

- A willingness to experiment and learn

Readings:

Required:

- Christine Valters Paintner: Eyes of the Heart (2013, Sorin Books: ISBN: 978-1-933495-54-5)
- Brenda Tharp: Creative Nature and Outdoor Photography, Revised Edition (2010, Amphoto; ISBN: 978-0-817439-61-3)

Recommended:

- Andy Karr and Michael Wood: The Practice of Contemplative Photography (2011, Shambala; ISBN: 978-1-59030-779-3)

Required Materials & Expenses:

- Course fee of \$1750:
 - Covers transportation, most meals, and lodging during 14 days of course travel, plus park admissions, guides, and instruction.
 - Covers transportation on field trips during the first week on the Redlands Campus.
 - Does not cover food/lodging while on the Redlands campus, nor free-time dining in Monterey.
- Each student must provide:
 - A still camera (ideally a digital SRL or advanced mirrorless ILC).
 - A very adequate camera and lens can be had for \$400 new; possibly less used.
 - Add in \$100 or so for memory cards, filters, batteries, etc.
 - A copy of Lightroom photo developing software (version 6.5 costs \$149) and
 - A laptop computer (either Windows or Mac).
 - Students can use campus computers and software while we are on the Redlands campus. *Students may arrange to share laptops while we are traveling (2 per laptop max).*
 - Photo paper and copy card if you want to make prints.
 - A sleeping bag for occasional camping while on the road.
 - WARM CLOTHES and rain gear. We'll be in the mountains.
 - Hiking boots.
 - Gloves, scarves, and a warm hat.
 - Money for personal items & incidentals

Course Objectives:

1. Students will learn how to use meditation to transform their awareness, perceptions, and experiences.
2. Students will learn how to use cameras to express their awareness, perceptions, and experiences in photographic art.
3. Students will demonstrate their mastery of technical photographic and photo-development skills at a level appropriate for a LAF course.
4. Students will demonstrate their ability to reflect on what they have learned

Assignments & Grading**Major Assignments:**

1. *Journal:* Students will make daily reflective entries in a journal. They will record their responses to the contemplative exercises and to the photo exercises, evaluating what they have learned. These entries should be thorough and deep. Taken as a whole, the entries will demonstrate students' progress on course objectives 1 and 2. The instructors will collect the journals before each of our three days off, for grading.
2. *Public Presentation of Artwork:* Students will make a public presentation of their artwork on Wednesday evening, May 24th. They may either present their work in print or digitally; this art show will be open to the public. This assignment will demonstrate students' progress on course objective 3.
3. *Reflective Paper:* Students will write a personal reflection of 8-10 pages that summarizes their learning for the course. This assignment will demonstrate students' progress on course objective 4.

Grading System:

This course uses a tiered grading system. Rather than giving points to each of your assignments or ranking them as "A", "B", "C", "D", or "F", we simply count them as exceptional, satisfactory, or unsatisfactory. To be satisfactory, your work must meet the standard specified on that assignment's rubric. Exceptional work exceeds that standard, while unsatisfactory work does not meet it.

You will be given the opportunity to redo any unsatisfactory work, so long as you do so within two days of receiving the unsatisfactory grade. (Missing work is not 'unsatisfactory'; it is missing. It will receive no credit.)

To help you adjust your level of effort, satisfactory work on any assignment is the equivalent of a 3.0 or "B" in the standard grading system. Grades are calculated based on the amount of work that reaches each of these levels.

- If your grades on all three of the major assignments are satisfactory, you will receive a 3.0 in the class.
- If your work passes the threshold for a 3.0, and at least two of the major assignments are exceptional, you will receive a 4.0 in the class
- If your work does not pass the threshold for a 3.0, then
 - If two major assignments are satisfactory, then you will receive a 2.0.
 - If one of the major assignments is satisfactory, then you will receive a 1.0
 - If none of the major assignments is satisfactory, then you will fail the course.

Intermediate grades will be assigned when the pattern falls between these standards.

Tentative Course Schedule

- Class meets on the Redlands campus during the first week of May Term. The specific times we meet will depend on which photo opportunities are available to us. This depends on the light. Some sessions will be very early in the morning; others will extend through dusk. We will have two local field trips.
- We will be on the road for the middle two weeks of the term. Here, we will definitely keep odd hours: photo shoots at dawn and dusk, morning and afternoon teaching sessions, plus breaks midday.
- After we return to campus, class meetings will be during normal hours. Students will work in the photo lab to prepare for the final public exhibition Wednesday afternoon & evening.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Activities</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Assignments</u>
1 May	Redlands campus	Morning: Introduction to the course. Contemplation training. Photo exercises. Afternoon: Camera basics	TBA	Daily journal reflection.
2 May	"	Morning: Contemplation training. Photo exercises. Afternoon: Introduction to photo processing.	"	Daily journal reflection.
3 May	White-water	Morning: field trip Afternoon: photo processing. <i>[Contemplation training & photo exercises will be daily except days off, so not listed again.]</i>	"	"
4 May	Joshua Tree	Morning to night field trip to Joshua Tree and Big Morongo Canyon	"	"
5 May	Redlands Campus	Mid-morning-early afternoon: Photo-processing Mid-afternoon on: OFF	"	Journal (turn in)
6 May		--- DAY OFF ---		
7 May	Porterville	Drive to Porterville via Red Rock Canyon. Local hikes. Dusk photo shoot.	"	Daily journal reflection.
8 May	Sequoia & Kings Canyon	Drive to Sequoia NP, then Kings Canyon NP. Several photo shoots, including big trees.	"	"
9 May	Yosemite Valley	Drive to Yosemite. Local hikes. Dusk photo shoot.	"	"
10 May	"	Photo shoots. Local hikes. Photo developing	"	"
11 May	"	Photo shoots. Local hikes. Photo developing	"	"
12 May	Monterey	Drive to Monterey Afternoon & evening OFF	"	Journal (turn in)
13 May	"	Dawn at Point Lobos Rest of day on north part of Big Sur Coast		Daily journal reflection. Photo sharing
14 May	"	Morning: Whale Watching or Aquarium Afternoon: People photos. Point Lobos evening photo shoot.	"	"

[These two days may be reversed, depending on when activities are available.]

15 May	Tahoe	Drive to South Tahoe. Photo location TBA.	“	“
16 May	Mammoth Lakes	Photo locations TBA.	“	“
17 May	“	Dawn: Mono Lake Afternoon- evening: Bristlecone Pines or Aspendell (depending on snow level).	“	“
18 May	Stovepipe Wells	Morning: Manzanar Afternoon: Mosaic Canyon, Sand Dunes	“	“
19 May	Stovepipe Wells	Dawn: Zabriski Point Morning/Afternoon: Badwater, Golden Canyon Sunset: Devil's Golf Course	“	“
20 May	Redlands Campus	Dawn: Sand Dunes Morning: Alabama Hills, Olancho Sculptures Probably arrive in Redlands by mid-afternoon	“	Daily journal reflection. Journal (turn in)
21 May	“	--- DAY OFF ---		
22 May	“	Photo developing & printing		
23 May	“	Photo developing & printing.		
24 May		Set up for art show & presentations: Meditation Room (Larsen Hall) 3-7pm.		
25 May		no meeting		Reflection paper due by 5pm <u>FRI-DAY</u> on Moodle