South Plains College NEWS PHOTOGRAPHY - Fall 2025

Instructor: Kati Moody

Class Meeting Times: Mondays & Wednesdays, 9:00 AM – 10:45 AM

Class Dates: August 25, 2025 – December 11, 2025

Location: CM 156

Contact: kmoody@southplainscollege.edu

Office Hours

M/W: 11 a.m. – 12 p.m. & 3 – 4 p.m. T/Th: 9:30 a.m. – noon & 4:30 – 5 p.m.

Friday: 10 a.m. - noon

Course Description

This course introduces students to the fundamentals of news photography, including both traditional DSLR camera operation and the use of modern tools such as smartphones and video. Students will explore the ethics, composition, and technical aspects of capturing compelling, journalistic images and learn how to differentiate general photography from visual storytelling for the news.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of DSLR camera settings (ISO, shutter speed, aperture).
- Differentiate between DSLR and mirrorless camera systems.
- Apply principles of composition, lighting, and moment-capturing to produce newsworthy images.
- Use smartphones and video tools effectively to cover breaking or feature news events.
- Critically analyze news images for storytelling impact and ethical considerations.
- Understand the basics of photo editing and file management for newsrooms.
- Develop a photojournalism portfolio that includes caption writing and ethical sourcing.

Classroom Policies

Attendance:

Attendance is required. More than three unexcused absences may impact your final grade. Students are responsible for any missed work or deadlines.

Phone Use:

Smartphones are allowed for assignments or designated class activities, but should otherwise be silenced and put away.

Plagiarism:

All submitted work must be your own. Any form of plagiarism, including turning in someone else's photos or falsely captioned images, will result in a zero for the assignment and possible disciplinary action.

Artificial Intelligence Use:

AI tools may be used for image captioning or project brainstorming with instructor approval, but AI-generated images are not permitted in any assignment or final project.

Grading & Assignments

Point System (Total: 1000 points)

Discussion Board Posts (Biweekly): 100 points (10 posts x 10 pts)
 Photo Assignments (Biweekly): 300 points (6 assignments x 50 pts)

• Mid-Term Exam: 100 points

• Final Exam: 150 points

Final Project Portfolio: 250 points
Participation / Attendance: 100 points

Photo Assignments:

Each photo assignment must include a submission of at least five original photographs, along with accurate captions. Students will present their work in class and receive peer and instructor feedback. For every assignment, students must also select one standout photo to submit to the Texan Mosaic for potential publication. Assignments will be based on life at South Plains College and should focus on capturing campus events, faculty, student organizations, and daily student life to help document and promote the SPC community.

News Photography Assignments Overview

Assignment 1: Rule of Thirds & Composition at SPC

Due: Week 4 (Sept 15, 17)

Skills Applied: Composition techniques, framing, rule of thirds

Prompt: Capture five images of SPC students or faculty in everyday campus life using the rule of thirds and strong visual composition. Avoid posed photos—aim for natural, candid moments that tell a story.

Submission Must Include:

- 5 photos + captions
- One selected for Texan Mosaic submission
- Brief reflection on how composition affected storytelling

Assignment 2: Light & Timing at Campus Events

Due: Week 6 (Sept 29, Oct 1)

Skills Applied: Exposure triangle, light awareness, timing

Prompt: Attend an SPC event (club meeting, classroom interaction, athletic practice, etc.) and capture how light shapes the mood and clarity of the moment. Use manual settings and adjust for available light.

Submission Must Include:

• 5 photos from a single event

- ISO, aperture, and shutter speed for each image
- One selected for Texan Mosaic submission

Assignment 3: Mobile Journalism on the Move

Due: Week 9 (Oct 20, 22)

Skills Applied: Smartphone photography, speed and accessibility in news

Prompt: Cover a breaking or timely moment at SPC using only your smartphone. Think:

construction updates, pop-up events, crowds, or spontaneous student life.

Submission Must Include:

- 5 smartphone photos + captions
- Screenshot of editing app/tools used (if any)
- One photo for Texan Mosaic with a social-friendly caption

Assignment 4: Capturing Motion in SPC Athletics or Activity

Due: Week 11 (Nov 3, 5)

Skills Applied: Shutter speed control, capturing action

Prompt: Photograph a dynamic scene involving motion—such as a game, dance class, marching

band, or any physical activity on campus. Include both frozen and motion-blurred shots.

Submission Must Include:

- 5 photos showing movement
- Settings for each image and technique used (e.g. panning)
- One selected for Texan Mosaic submission

Assignment 5: SPC Faculty/Staff Environmental Portraits

Due: Week 13 (Nov 17, 19)

Skills Applied: Depth of field, contextual storytelling, environmental portraiture

Prompt: Select a faculty or staff member and capture them in their work environment. The

surroundings should help tell their story. Conduct a short interview to write an extended caption or micro-profile.

Submission Must Include:

- 5 photos (at least one wide, one medium, one close-up)
- Captions including quotes or key details from the subject
- One photo for Texan Mosaic submission

Final Project: SPC Photo Story Series

Due: Week 15 (Dec 1, 3)

Skills Applied: Story development, narrative cohesion, visual editing

Prompt: Produce a photo story around a single SPC-related topic (e.g., an organization's fundraiser, campus construction, a student athlete's journey, a day-in-the-life of a first-gen student).

Submission Must Include:

- 5–7 photos that together tell a cohesive story
- Captions and a short introduction paragraph (100–200 words)
- Present in class; 1–2 photos submitted for Texan Mosaic consideration

Tentative Course Schedule

Week 1 (Aug 25, 27):

Course Introduction, What is News Photography?

Week 2 (Sept 1, 3):

DSLR Basics / Exposure Triangle

Week 3 (Sept 8, 10):

Composition & Light / Discussion Post 1

Week 4 (Sept 15, 17):

Photo Assignment 1 Due / Caption Writing

Week 5 (Sept 22, 24):

Ethics in Photojournalism / Discussion Post 2

Week 6 (Sept 29, Oct 1):

Smartphones in News Photography / Photo Assignment 2 Due

Week 7 (Oct 6, 8):

Mirrorless vs. DSLR / Discussion Post 3

Week 8 (Oct 13, 15):

Mid-Term Review / Mid-Term Exam

Week 9 (Oct 20, 22):

Video for Photojournalists / Photo Assignment 3 Due

Week 10 (Oct 27, 29):

Editing & File Management / Discussion Post 4

Week 11 (Nov 3, 5):

Capturing Action & Events / Photo Assignment 4 Due

Week 12 (Nov 10, 12):

On-Location Practice / Discussion Post 5

Week 13 (Nov 17, 19):

Photo Assignment 5 Due / Building a Portfolio

Week 14 (Nov 24):

Thanksgiving Week (Class on Monday only)

Week 15 (Dec 1, 3):

Final Assignment Due / Final Project Presentations

Week 16 (Dec 8, 10):

Final Exam / Wrap-Up & Reflection

Required Equipment:

- DSLR Camera (Canon models provided in class)
- Smartphone with camera (optional, but recommended)
- SD card (class will provide or recommend specific model)

Note: This syllabus is subject to change at the instructor's discretion. Students will be notified in advance of any updates or changes.

Intellectual Exchange Statement

In South Plains College courses, the instructor will establish and support an environment that values and nurtures individual and group difference and encourages engagement and interaction. Understanding and respecting multiple experiences and perspectives will serve to challenge and stimulate all of us to learn about others, about the larger world and about ourselves. By

promoting intellectual exchange, we will not only mirror society as it is, but also model society as it should and can be.

Disabilities Statement

Students with disabilities, including but not limited to physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities, who wish to request accommodations should notify the Disability Services Office early in the semester so that the appropriate arrangements may be made. In accordance with federal law, a student requesting accommodations must provide acceptable documentation of the individual's disability to the Disability Services Office. For more information, call or visit the Disability Services Office at Levelland (Student Health & Wellness Office) 806-716-2577, Lubbock Centers (located at the Lubbock Downtown Center) 806-716-4675, or Plainview Center (Main Office) 806-716-4302.

Non-Discrimination Statement

South Plains College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Vice President for Student Affairs, South Plains College, 1401 College Avenue, Box 5, Levelland, TX 79336. Phone number 806-716-2360.

Title IX Pregnancy and Parenting Accommodations Statement (Rev. 6/11/2024)

If you are pregnant or parenting (paternal or maternal) with children under the age of 18 per Texas Education Code 51.982 and Title IX you have a right to reasonable accommodations to help continue your education. To activate accommodations you must submit a Title IX pregnancy and parenting accommodations request, along with specific medical documentation, to the Health and Wellness Center. Once approved, notification will be sent to the student and instructors. It is the student's responsibility to work with the instructor to arrange accommodations. Contact the Health and Wellness Center at 806-716-2529 or email reanon@southplainscollege.edu for assistance.

CARE (Campus Assessment, Response, and Evaluation) Team

South Plains College is committed to ensuring the safety, health, and well-being of its students and community. To support its campus community SPC has a CARE Team. This is a dedicated group of campus professionals responsible for assessing and responding to students who could benefit from academic, emotional, or psychological support, as well as those presenting risk to the health or safety of the community. If you see someone experiencing challenges, appearing

distressed, posing a threat to their safety or someone else's safety, or causing a significant disruption to the SPC community, please submit a <u>CARE Team referral</u>. You may also submit a referral for yourself if you would like additional support. NOTE: In cases where a person's behavior poses an imminent threat to you or another, contact 911.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Government Code 411.2031, et al. authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in South Plains College buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and South Plains College policy, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations and Frequently Asked Questions, please refer to the Campus Carry page

at: http://www.southplainscollege.edu/campuscarry.php

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all South Plains College campuses. Report violations to the College Police Department at 806-716-2396 or 9-1-1.

COVID-19 (Rev. 8/17/2024)

If you are experiencing any of the following symptoms, please do not attend class and either seek medical attention or get tested for COVID-19.

- Fever or chills
- Cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Muscles or body aches
- New loss of taste and smell
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Nausea or Vomiting
- Diarrhea

Please also notify DeEtte Edens, FNP-C, Associate Director of Health & Wellness, at dedens@southplainscollege.edu or 806-716-2376

1. SPC will follow the recommended 3-day isolation period for individuals that test positive.

a. Please note that day 0 is the date of positive test. Day 1 begins the first full day after the date of positive result.

2. COVID reporting

- a. Please have students and employees notify DeEtte Edens, FNP-C if they have tested positive to verify dates before returning to class or work.
- b. The home tests are sufficient but students need to submit a photo of the positive result. The date of test must be written on the test result and an ID included in the photo. If tested elsewhere (clinic, pharmacy, etc.), please submit a copy of the doctor's note or email notification. Results may be emailed to DeEtte Edens, FNP-C at dedens@southplainscollege.edu.
- c. A student is clear to return to class without further assessment if they have completed:
 - The 3-day isolation period, symptoms have improved and
 - they are afebrile for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.
- d. HEATH SCIENCE PROGRAMS ONLY: Due to clinical requirements, students in health science programs returning to class or clinical from a positive test will be required to wear a mask in the health sciences areas including offices, hallways, and classrooms, as well as in the clinical setting for a 10-day period from date of positive test.
- 3. Please instruct students and employees to communicate with DeEtte Edens <u>prior to their</u> <u>return date</u> if still symptomatic at the end of the 3-day isolation.
- 4. Exposed individuals will not be required to quarantine. If exposed, SPC does request individuals closely monitor themselves. If an individual does become symptomatic, please do not attend class or work and be tested.

Artificial Intelligence Statement

· Purpose of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Applications:

AI applications are advanced language models designed to aid and engage in meaningful conversations, as well as, generate and revise content. AI is intended to supplement learning, stimulate critical thinking, and enhance academic discourse. However, its use comes with certain responsibilities.

· Academic Integrity:

Using AI to generate academic work, including essays, reports, or assignments, without proper attribution is a violation of SPC academic integrity policies. Plagiarism undermines the learning process and is strictly prohibited. Students must ensure that their work reflects their own ideas, research, synthesis, and analysis and appropriately cites all sources, including AI.

· Collaboration and Consultation:

While AI can be a valuable resource, it is essential to strike a balance between seeking assistance and maintaining personal responsibility. Collaboration with peers, consulting instructors, and utilizing other approved learning resources should be prioritized. Overreliance on AI for solutions without actively engaging in the learning process is discouraged and can be grounds for academic integrity violations. Utilizing AI as a tool for brainstorming or research is allowed but the writing should be the student's own work and thoughts.

· Critical Thinking and Originality:

AI usage can provide suggestions and information, but it is essential to critically evaluate the responses and exercise independent thought. Relying solely on AI for answers deprives students of the opportunity to develop their analytical and problem-solving skills. In assignments where originality, creativity, and independent thinking are valued, AI would be detrimental to the student learning process. Critical thinking and originality emphasize the importance of independent thinking in all academic endeavors as part of the student's learning experience apart from outside influence and offers the student the opportunity to refine their unique, individual voice through academic discourse with other students and faculty.

· Ethical Use and Bias Awareness:

AI is trained on large amounts of data from the internet, which may include biased or inaccurate information. Be mindful of the potential for bias and critically evaluate the responses provided by AI. Therefore, when using AI, just like with using any other database, students must verify that the information is from reliable sources, question any potential biases, and ensure that the information and sources used in the paper are neutral, peer-reviewed sources.

· Responsible Engagement:

Students should engage with AI in a respectful and responsible manner and avoid using offensive language, discriminatory remarks, or engaging in any form of harassment or inappropriate behavior. Students should also uphold the standards of respectful communication in addressing both AI and fellow classmates.

· Compliance with South Plains College Policies:

Policies regarding the appropriate use of AI in South Plains College courses are set by instructional departments and individual instructors. Appropriate use of AI may range from strict prohibition to assignments they may require the use of AI. Misusing or violating the guidelines outlined in this syllabus warning may result in disciplinary action, including academic penalties. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with the specific course policies regarding the use of AI and adhere to them throughout the semester.

Remember, AI can be a tool to support your learning in certain courses and assignments, but it cannot replace the critical thinking, creativity, and independent work that are integral to your overall academic growth.