



UNIVERSITÀ  
CATTOLICA  
del Sacro Cuore



**Franklin University Switzerland - Lugano  
Catholic University of the Sacred Heart - Milan  
Forum-Nexus Program  
Course Syllabus**

**PHO 492-SIS  
Photojournalism**

**Course Description**

Photojournalism is a genre of photography that incorporates creative and journalistic elements. Photos and images with a photojournalistic context can serve a variety of purposes, and photojournalism continues to change and evolve as the world becomes more connected. While traveling throughout Europe, students will have the opportunity to study photojournalism in several countries, as well as identify their own moments to capture through photographs to tell a story or show witness to an event. The purpose of this course is to provide students with a thematic overview of the history and development of photojournalism and its contemporary nature. Students will gain an understanding of major theoretical, conceptual, and practical issues confronting photographers in the field today, as well as practice acting as a photojournalist in Europe.

This Supervised Independent Study (SIS) course will guide students through the basic principles of photojournalism, while providing the opportunity for an independent exploration of the subject.

**Learning Objectives**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Understand what photojournalism is and what it is not
2. Identify key publications and outlets for photojournalists
3. Learn about the history and technological developments in photojournalism
4. Explore photojournalism as storytelling
5. Become familiar with key photojournalistic moments in several countries in Europe
6. Elaborate on the ethical challenges and considerations of photojournalism
7. Understand aesthetic principles of photojournalism
8. Consider the social responsibility of photojournalists
9. Reflect on the balance of creativity and journalistic responsibility for photojournalists
10. Gain experience capturing the essence of a moment through photography
11. Reflect on the photojournalist experience

**Course Requirements**

This course requires independent research, organization, and academic discipline. Students are expected to complete the required and additional readings in pace with their assignments and the course outline. Each student is required to participate in a minimum of three professional visits and eight independent cultural visits (ICVs). Students are expected to meet with their SIS Coordinator regularly

throughout the course for consultation and assistance. Please note that your SIS Coordinator may ask you to attend a regularly-scheduled class when that material is relevant. Grading will consist of four essay assignments, a midterm, an oral presentation, and a final, handwritten exam.

### Participation in “Europe Today: An International IQ Seminar”

All students also attend **Europe Today: An International IQ Seminar**, a daily session with occasional distinguished guest lectures. In this seminar, students learn about the culture of each country, gain an understanding of essential European geography and current events, discuss their experiences and cross-cultural interactions, get language tips, and identify ways to have an even more immersive study abroad experience. The material covered in the seminar complements the syllabus for this course, and there will be some exam questions based on the seminar. Knowledge from and participation in the International IQ Seminar is factored into the grade for this course.

### **Assignments and Grading:**

#### **Essays**

After completing the reading assignment for the unit, students are expected to write 900-1300 word essays responding fully to the prompts listed below. Students are expected to make explicit reference to the readings and to cite their references properly (Chicago footnotes style). An essay should have an introduction and conclusion.

#### **Assignment #1 – About Photojournalism Essay (minimum length: 1,500 words)**

- Develop an essay answering the following questions:
  - What is photojournalism?
  - What makes it different from photography or journalism alone?
  - What is a photojournalist?
  - What types of publications or outlets are meant for photojournalism?
  - What “role” would you identify most with as a photojournalist? Why?
  - Explain a major historical event/occurrence in the development of photojournalism in one of the cities visited during the summer.

#### **Assignment #2 – Photojournalism Today Reflection (minimum length: 1,500 words)**

- Identify a significant photojournalistic photo and moment in each of the countries below (preferably in a city you visit during the summer) and reflect on the photo. Include the photo in your document.
  - Spain
  - Italy
  - France
  - The Netherlands
  - Greece
- Explain the photo, when it was taken, by whom, where it first appeared, and why it was significant. Provide any historical or important factors and influences.
- Share your initial reactions to the photo. What did it make you think/feel?
- If possible, visit the site where the photo was taken and compare the place to what the original photo shows (try and take a similar photo, with your own style and highlighting the passage of time). If it is not possible to visit the place, go online and learn how the place has changed, either related to the original event or by other factors. Elaborate on your findings and any significant details related to the photo.

### **Assignment #3 – Practicing Photojournalism (minimum length: 1000 words)**

- Using your camera, capture 3 separate moments that each tells a story, preferably in different cities/countries and related to very different environments and/or situations. Edit the photos to the best of your ability.
- Create a document to share your photos. Reflect on the following for each photo:
  - What attracted you to that moment? What made you capture it?
  - What is the story you are trying to tell/what are you attempting to show witness to?
  - What do you want your audience to think/feel as a result of seeing your image?
  - What publication would be ideal for your image to appear in? Why?

### **Presentation**

Deliver a 15-minute PowerPoint presentation summarizing the main findings of your independent study.

Required components include:

- Summary of your goals and objectives
- Recap of photojournalism
- Highlight 3 of your photographs
  - Show the images before and after editing
  - Add a caption to each
  - Tell the story behind each photo
- Reflection on what you've learned through the course

### **Midterm & Final Exams**

The midterm and final exams will assess your overall progress throughout the study abroad semester. You will be asked not only to demonstrate knowledge based on the readings, but also to make connections between the various course units and reflect holistically on the knowledge you have gained in this independent study.

### **Required Equipment**

Students may choose any camera, as long as it has the option of choosing shutter-speed and aperture manually. Most laptops have a built-in editing software, but students may download or purchase software.

### **Required Reading**

#### **Understanding Photojournalism**

by Jennifer Good and Paul Lowe  
Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017  
(Kindle version recommended)

### **Course Outline**

#### **Module 1: What is Photojournalism?**

- Historical and critical context
- Perceived cultural associations
- The relationship between theory and practice
- The importance of visual literacy for the photographer and the viewer

#### **Module 2: History and Development of Photojournalism**

- Key historical aspects of photojournalism's development

- Technological factors
- Economics factors

**Module 3: The Single Image and the Photostory**

- The photostory format
- The relationship between words and photographs
- Transformations in the digital age

**Module 4: Photojournalism Today**

- The ongoing evolution of photographic methods and technologies
- Business and distribution models

**Module 5: Power and Representation**

- The power of photojournalism to represent people
- Social and ethical responsibility for photographers

**Module 6: Ethics**

- The ethics of manipulation
- The ethics of representing graphic violence

**Module 7: Aesthetics**

- The relationship between content and form

**Module 8: A Network of Trusted Witnesses**

- Balancing creativity with journalistic commitment
- Conclusions

**Components of Final Grade**

Essay #1	10%
Essay #2	15%
Essay #3	15%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%
Final Presentation	20%

**Grading Scale**

93-100 %	A
90-92.9 %	A-
87-89.9 %	B+
83-86.9 %	B
80-82.9 %	B-
77-79.9 %	C+
73-76.9 %	C
70-72.9%	C-
67-69.9 %	D+
63-66.9 %	D
60-62.9 %	D-
Below 60 %	F

## **Academic Integrity**

Franklin University Switzerland, and Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore place a high value on the integrity, good conduct, and academic honesty of all students. Students are expected to maintain high standards of academic integrity at all times. Any instance of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, will result in a grade of F for the course.

## **AI Policy**

The use of generative AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT, Dall-e, Grammarly, etc.) is permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Brainstorming and refining your creative ideas for specific writing assignments;
- Finding information on relevant topics related to the course;
- Checking spelling on your writing assignments and presentations.

The use of generative AI tools is not permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Generating a draft of your writing assignments and final presentation.
- Writing entire sentences, paragraphs or responses to complete class assignments.

In sum, any content that you hand in must not be generated by AI software, but it has to represent your intellectual contribution. Unauthorized use of artificial intelligence tools to write your paper or disguise plagiarized work is considered unauthorized assistance in this course and will result in a failing grade on the assignment.