University of Waterloo
School of Environment, Resources and Sustainability

ERS 375 Photography for Sustainability

Fall 2017

Dr. Rob de Loë

Class sessions: Wednesdays 9:30 AM to 12:20 PM (Design Studio – EV3)
Lab sessions: Thursdays 12:30 PM to 2:20 PM (DMC – EV2 2052)

1. CONTACT INFORMATION

Office:	EV2 2029	**Office**	• Wednesdays and Thursdays for drop-ins
Telephone:	519-888-4567 x38648	**Hours:**	(see course web site for details)
E-mail:	rdeloe@uwaterloo.ca		• Otherwise by appointment

2. ABOUT THE COURSE

What does sustainability look like? Can we know it when we see it? Is every picture of bicycles and windmills necessarily showing "sustainability"? In this course, you'll learn how to use photographs to communicate ideas effectively and with greater impact in presentations, posters, theses, scientific reports, campaigns and other work. You'll develop and strengthen practical photography skills such as composition, exposure, digital image processing, photographic workflows, printing, and curation.

You'll use the photography skills you learn in the course to create a major project that combines text and images that communicate challenges and opportunities relating to a sustainability topic that interests you.

3. APPROACH

I will teach the course using a studio and lab model. Each week will involve a three hour hand's-on learning session in the Faculty of Environment's Design Studio, and a separate two hour lab session in the Faculty of Environment's Design and Modelling Centre (DMC).

- Through a series of small assignments, described below, you'll build your technical skills.
- The main assignment in the course will focus on the course theme of "photography for sustainability". To complete this assignment, you'll develop a portfolio of images designed to communicate sustainability or unsustainability, and you'll prepare supporting text.
- Peer mentoring and support are critical during the course, not only during critique sessions (where we help each other strengthen our images and ideas) but also during labs.

4. WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM THE COURSE

By the end of the course, you will develop knowledge and skills in the following areas relating to *photography*:

- Basic digital photography techniques
- Photographic composition
- Digital image processing with Lightroom
- Photographic workflows
- Printing
- Curation
- Photography as a tool for communicating ideas about sustainability

Additionally, through individual research and study relating to your major assignment topic, you will strengthen your understanding of *sustainability* challenges in a specific area of your choice.

5. REQUIRED READINGS

Required and recommended readings are identified on the course's LEARN web site. We will be using the following text as a required basic resource:

Long, B. (2015). *Complete Digital Photography* (8th ed.). United States: Cenage Learning.

The Bookstore couldn't order the text, so you have to find your own copy of the book from one of the many online retailers that carry it. Make sure that you buy the 8th edition. If you stick with photography after the course, this book will remain a very useful resource for many years.

We will also be using other books and resources that I will loan out during the term, and readings that are available through the course's LEARN site.

> *This is a reading-heavy course*. Readings are critical to learning in this course because I am not using class time to deliver typical content-heavy lectures. You have to fill gaps in your knowledge through the readings I suggest, and through your own reading.

6. CAMERA EQUIPMENT

This is a digital photography course, and you are responsible for supplying your own digital camera and accessories. There's information on the course website about the type of camera you need; I also provide buying/borrowing advice on the website.

7. COMPUTING RESOURCES

The Design and Modelling Centre (DMC) located in EV2 2052 is the computer lab we'll use for the course. The DMC will be available for your exclusive use during the scheduled lab time. In case we need to use it during class sessions, it will be available then too. It's also available when it isn't being used by other courses (see schedule on the door).

The DMC is a Mac lab. *If you're not a Mac user, you'll have to learn how to use OS X and Mac computers on your own*. You are also responsible for learning how to log onto the computers and the network, and for making backup copies of all your work.

We're using Lightroom CC/6 for image processing and cataloguing. I will provide some LR training during lab sessions, but for the most part *the onus is on you to learn how to use Lightroom CC/6 and any other software we're using*. The course web site will point you to good Lightroom resources on the Internet, and I've purchased copies of excellent books you can borrow.

If you're willing to purchase your own license for Lightroom you can do so and install it on your own computer. Lightroom CC/6 for Mac and Windows are basically the same, so if you prefer to do all your work on your own Windows or Mac laptop computer this is an option to consider.

You are personally responsible for storing and managing your own Lightroom catalogues and image files on your own external device. If you don't own a good quality, fast external storage device, you need to buy one for the course. You will also need at least one backup device, and, ideally, a cloud-based backup service. See the course web site for additional information.

8. LAB FEE

The course will involve a lot of printing. Normally students would pay a lab fee to cover the cost of printing. For this offering, the Faculty of Environment is paying reasonable expected printing costs, and Retail Services is giving us a major discount, so there's no lab fee.

9. PROVISIONAL SCHEDULE

During September and October, a lot of learning will happen during class and lab time slots. You'll complete many smaller assignments and you'll lay the foundation for your major project. During November, the focus shifts to development of your major project.

A detailed weekly schedule showing topics and due dates is available on the course web site.

10. EVALUATION

Details regarding graded course components are provided on the course web site. This section provides a brief overview.

Major Project (60%)

We're going to spend a lot of time in the course on photographic techniques and skills. However, this is not primarily a photography course. Our overarching focus is on *photography for sustainability*. In the major project assignment you're going to use your photography skills to make a suite of images that communicate one or more key *ideas* relating to a sustainability topic of your choice. You're going to conduct extensive background research and write supporting text, and you're going to put it all together in a public exhibition.

Your project can focus on any relevant theme, scale or topic. Importantly, to complete your major project you will have to conduct extensive literature-based research to develop the sophisticated understanding of what sustainability means in the context of the topic you've selected.

Skills Building Assignments (32%)

Four skills building assignments are worth 8% each. In these assignments, you'll make photographs that explore four core photographic themes: idea, subject, light, and composition.

Class Contributions (8%)

The quality of our collective learning in the course is going to depend strongly on the quality of individual contributions during class/studio sessions. For example, when called upon during critique sessions and project share-out sessions, you'll be expected to offer thoughtful, constructive insights into your peers' work.

> **This experiential type of course needs to be a bit more flexible than a regular classroom course. I've designed the schedule and assignments as carefully as possible, but I may need to make changes to the course as described here so that it works better. I will let you know in advance. On rare occasions a change may have to be unilateral and mandatory.**

11. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This section is divided into two parts: (1) my policies regarding consultation, use of computers and tablets during class, email, late assignments, etc., and (2) specific University policies that you need to understand. Contact me to discuss any concern you have regarding your rights and responsibilities as outlined here.

(1) My Policies

Consultation

Feel free to visit or phone me during my scheduled office hours (see page 1); check the schedule on the course web site for times when I'm likely to be in the office. If I'm with someone else or on the phone when you drop by, please wait until I'm finished before knocking.

On the remaining days of the week, I'm going to be busy with administrative tasks, course preparation and marking, other classes, research projects, graduate student supervision, writing, scheduled appointments and other tasks. Please don't disturb on these days unless it's a dire emergency.

If you need to see me in person outside of my scheduled office hours, I'm always happy to make an appointment.

Laptops, Tablets and Mobile Phones

Mute your phone before class and do not make or receive calls, texts or emails. You may use your laptop or tablet to make notes or to access course materials during class sessions, but do so discretely. Checking email, browsing web sites, shopping, posting comments on Twitter, updating your Facebook page, etc. during class time is unprofessional and disruptive.

Recording During Class

With prior permission from me, you may record *audio* during class for your personal use only. You may not make video recordings. Violation of these rules may be deemed academic misconduct under University of Waterloo Policy 71.

Consent to Photography

I would like to make photographs of you during class times. These images may be used for social media, to advertise the public presentation, and for related educational purposes. I will ask you to complete a permission form online.

Email Policy

Email is an excellent way to contact me about straightforward problems and questions – and you don't have to wait for my scheduled consultation time. I will respond to your emails as promptly as possible. However, please be aware that I usually receive 50 or more emails per day that require a response. Therefore, it may take me a day or two to reply to your message.

Note that email is the official channel of communication between the University and its students. You are required to check your *uwaterloo.ca* email account regularly; I recommend that you check for course-related emails at least once per day. *If you use another email service (e.g., GMail), it is your responsibility to ensure that mail sent to your uwaterloo.ca account is forwarded to your other account.*

Course LEARN Web Site

The following material is available on the course web site:

- Announcements
- Schedule of dates
- A schedule of my general availability
- Instructions and handouts (e.g., detailed instructions for the assignments)
- Week-by-week overview of topics covered, along with readings and copies of slides from lectures
- Resources (e.g., links to key web sites, lists of journals, feedback on assignments)
- *It is your responsibility to learn how to use the course web site, and to check regularly for information and updates.*

Login to LEARN via: http://learn.uwaterloo.ca/   Use your WatIAM/Quest username and password. Documentation is available through the LEARN website.

When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement Due to Illness or Other Reasons

If you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of medical, compassionate or other reasons, please advise me *by email*; make sure to include the course number and name, your name and student ID number in your message. Where possible, you must contact me in advance of the assignment due date, but otherwise as soon as possible after the due date. As a rule, you must provide appropriate documentation, for example, a note from your doctor indicating the dates during which you were ill, and describing the severity of your illness.

Manage your time carefully. Pressure of work, computer glitches, etc. are not an acceptable reason for seeking an extension without penalty.

Assignment Submission and Late Penalties

Assignments must be submitted through the course web site by the time and date specified in the instructions for that assignment. I will not accept assignments submitted any other way, e.g., in hard copy, or sent as email attachments.

Unless I have indicated otherwise, I will accept late assignments. However, late assignments normally will be penalized at the rate of 5 percent of the value of the assignment per day, including Saturday and Sunday. I will not accept assignments more than 5 days after the due date unless we have a prior arrangement.

Required Style Guide

Subject to special instructions contained in supplementary course material, assignments for this course must be completed according to the instructions in the following booklet. I will provide you with a paper copy of the booklet. An electronic copy of the booklet is available through the course web site.

> de Loë, R. 2017. *Writing Effective Essays and Reports*. 7th edition. Waterloo, ON: University of Waterloo.

Group Work and Collaboration

Discussing assignments with your colleagues is an excellent way to learn from your peers and to test your ideas. However, unless otherwise noted, you must complete assignments individually.

Use of Turnitin

I'm not using Turnitin in this course.

(2) University of Waterloo Policies

The following policies apply to all students and are pertinent to all undergraduate courses at the University of Waterloo.

See https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat-general-counsel/policies-procedures-guidelines

Academic Integrity

In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. See http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/. Students who are unsure what constitutes an academic offence are requested to visit the on-line tutorial at: http://www.lib.uwaterloo. ca/ait/

Hurried or careless submission of work does not exonerate students of responsibility for ensuring the academic integrity of their work.

Research Ethics

The University of Waterloo requires all research conducted by its students, staff, and faculty which involves humans as participants to undergo prior ethics review and clearance through the Director, Office of Human Research and Animal Care (Office). The ethics review and clearance processes are intended to ensure that projects comply with the Office's Guidelines for Research with Human Participants (Guidelines) as well as those of provincial and federal agencies, and that the safety, rights and welfare of participants are adequately protected. The Guidelines inform researchers about ethical issues and procedures which are of concern when conducting research with humans (e.g. confidentiality, risks and benefits, informed consent process, etc.).

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If the development of your research proposal consists of research that involves humans as participants, the please contact the course instructor for guidance and see: http://iris.uwaterloo.ca/ethics/

> *This course is not using photography for research. The research you conduct for the major project will involve literature reviews. We are using photography only for communication of your ideas about sustainability – not for research.*
>
> *It's very important that you do not describe your photography as being "research" when you talk to people about your work. For example, if people who appear in your photographs think they are research subjects, then the rules regarding research with human subjects would apply.*

Note for Students with Disabilities

The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.

Religious Observances

Please inform me *before the end of the first week of class* if you need me to make special accommodations for religious observances that are not otherwise accounted for in the scheduling of classes and assignments.

Grievances

A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4. When in doubt, please contact your Undergraduate Advisor for details.

Discipline

A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offence, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71, Student Discipline. For typical penalties, check Guidelines for Assessment of Penalties.

Appeals

A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71 – (Student Discipline) may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72 (Student Appeals).

Consequences of Academic Offences

Students are strongly encouraged to review the material provided by the university's Academic Integrity office. See http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/Students/index.html