

COURSE GUIDE

Cuesta College Fall 2017

Art 249 DE: Digital Photography

Welcome to Art 249: Digital Photography!

This course is taught completely online via Cuesta College's distance education (DE) program. The great thing about a DE course is that you can do the work and participate online according to your schedule—provided that you meet the weekly assignment deadlines. So, if you are a morning person, great! If you are a night owl, that's great too! You will be able to interact with me and your classmates at the times that work best in your schedule.

Please be sure to read all of this material (seven pages) so that you will know how this DE class will operate. If decide that you would rather take Art 249 as a classroom-based course, Cuesta has two on-campus sections scheduled for Fall 2017 (both meet in SLO on Mondays and Wednesdays).

Meet Your Instructor

Name: Syl Arena

Syl rhymes with "Bill." It's short for "Sylvester," which was my dad's dad's name. Like my grandfather, I have bright



red hair—although mine borders on crazy red hair most days. My wife and I first met when we were young children (she literally was the girl across the street). We have three sons and have lived on the Central Coast for 20 years.

My portfolio site: SylArena.com

My blog: PixSylated.com

I have taught photography for many years around the US and in Brazil, Canada, Cuba, and Dubai. I am the author of two popular books on photographic lighting: [*Lighting for Digital Photography*](#) and [*Speedlitter's Handbook*](#). NOTE: We will not be using either of these books in this course. I mention them only so that you'll know a bit more about my background.

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Contact Info

Email: SylArena@gmail.com

Email is the best way to reach me. For emails sent prior to 8:00pm Mon–Thu, I will do my best to reply the same day. When I am extremely busy, you can expect to get a response within one business day (weekends excepted).

Canvas Conversations (Inbox)—If you prefer, you may contact me using the Conversations tool within Canvas. You can access Conversations via the Inbox link. Based on my profile settings, I receive all conversation posts to my email; *so you do not need to send your message to both places.*

Canvas Q&A Forum—For general questions (those that other students would be interested in) please use the Q&A Forum that can be accessed from the link at the top of our course homepage or from the Discussions page. Please keep in mind that posts & replies in this Q&A forum are visible to the entire class (which is why you use the Q&A Forum vs. sending a private message via email or Conversations).

Class Specifications

- CRN 73432
- Start Date August 21, 2017
- Course Duration: 18 weeks
- Mandatory meetings: *None*, 100% online
- Assignments must be submitted weekly

Cuesta Catalog Description

Introduces the processes, principles, and tools of digital photography. Topics include the development of technical and aesthetic skills, the elements of design and composition, camera technology, materials and equipment, within an historical and contemporary context.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Implement photographic technical skill sets including camera controls, image exposure/capture, image manipulation, processing, image output, printing, and the handling and maintenance of equipment and materials in finished photographic works.
2. Demonstrate the use of formal and conceptual qualities in finished photographic works.
3. Present a portfolio of photographic works that implements photographic technical skill sets and displays a synthesis of formal and conceptual qualities.
4. Examine, evaluate, analyze, and describe historical and contemporary photographic works in regards to trends, language, aesthetics, and contemporary culture and media through the use of relevant terminology and concepts.

Our Primary Channels for Learning

1. *Creating Photographs*—using the camera’s mechanical vision, exposure, etc.
2. *Managing Photographs*—using the Lightroom app to import and process photos
3. *Sharing Photographs*—for Art 249DE this will be online in a variety of venues, (In a studio course this would include physical as well as online presentations.)
4. *Aesthetics of Photography*—foundational concepts involving the elements of art, principles of design, compositional techniques.
5. *Examples of Photography*—using the works of historic and contemporary photographers that reinforce the above four channels.

Typical Activities for This Class

- *Online readings and videos*—Each week you will have new information to study that is presented as online readings or videos.
- *Class discussions*—Each week you will have a required online discussion in which you will share your insights and thoughts with your classmates. Civility and kindness are expected at all times. NOTE: Abusive posts will result in dismissal from the course.
- *Shoots*—You will have shooting assignments most weeks. Each assignment will be accompanied by a detailed rubric so that you will know the details of what you are being asked to do. Metadata will be checked to assure that you are submitting photos that you took with your camera during the term of this course.
- *Lightroom*—You will learn to use each of the modules in Lightroom (Library, Develop, ... Web) as the means to manage, process, and present your digital photographs. I will periodically review the details of your work in Lightroom's catalog via shared cloud storage.
- *Presentation of Your Photographs*—In a classroom-based course, student work is typically critiqued as a group activity. For several shooting assignments in this DE course, you will post your “hero” shot online and your classmates will provide their comments (again in a kind and civil manner).
- *Written Analysis of Exemplary Photographs*—Throughout the course, you will learn about the lives of master photographers across a wide range of genres. For each of these photographers, you will have an opportunity to write an analysis and/or reflection on selected photographs.
- *Other Activities*—The above represent the main activities that will be assigned over the course of the semester. Other activities will be assigned on an intermittent or one-time basis.

Weekly Time Commitment

Expect to invest as much time in this course as you would for a traditional on-campus course (which is why you can earn the same number of credits online). Plan on approximately 8–10 hours each week. This includes time for online study, posting to discussions, shooting with your camera, and computer work in Lightroom. Your time requirement will vary based upon your own level of experience with computers and cameras.

Success With Distance Education

Distance Education (DE) is very different from classroom-based education in that you set your own schedule. Remember, however, that you are still obligated to complete and submit your work by the weekly deadlines. Staying motivated and organized are very important.

1. Take this survey to see if DE is right for you > <http://www.cuesta.edu/academics/distance/survey.html>
2. Then set yourself up for success by looking at the Online Student Readiness Tutorials—<http://apps.3cmediasolutions.org/oei/students.html>

Getting Started With Canvas LMS

Cuesta uses Canvas as its learning management system (LMS). If you have not worked with Canvas before, you can get a headstart before the beginning of the semester:

- Cuesta Canvas Student Orientation Videos—http://www.cuesta.edu/academics/distance/fac_de_resources/Student_Videos.html
- Instructure Canvas Student Guides—<https://guides.instructure.com/m/4212>
- Canvas Computer Specifications—https://www.cuesta.edu/student/documents/distance_ed_students/Canvas_System_Min-Req.pdf
- Setting Notifications In Canvas—http://www.cuesta.edu/academics/documents/distance-docs/Setting_Notifications.pdf

Accessing Your Canvas Course

You will be able to access the course starting August 21, 2017. Again, do the online tutorials (linked above) before the start of the semester so that you are familiar with how to use Canvas.

Step 1: There are two separate paths to access your course on Canvas. Try both and then use the one you prefer.

A. My.Cuesta.edu—(Fig. 1) This is the main portal for all of your activity with Cuesta College. It relies upon text organized in blocks (which some find confusing at first).

1. After logging in, click on the Student tab.
2. Click on the Canvas icon on the lower right.

B. Cuesta.Instructure.com—(Fig. 2) This link takes you directly to the Cuesta portal on Canvas. (Instructure is the company that runs Canvas.) After entering your Cuesta username and password, you will head directly to your Canvas dashboard.

Step 2: After you are logged into Canvas (via either method listed in Step 1), you will then see your class(es) listed on the Canvas Dashboard (Fig 3).

Step 3: Double click on the Art 249 tile to launch the class.

Cuesta Technical Help With Canvas

By Phone—805-546-3100 ext. 2802 during the hours of 7:30 am-9:00 pm, Mon.-Thu. and 7:30 am-4:00 pm Fri.

By Email—support@my.cuesta.edu

- Include your name, class (ART 249DE), section number (CRN 73432), instructor's name (Arena).
- Describe the problem you are experiencing.
- This information will be sent to a technical support individual at Cuesta who will get back to you within 48 hours (usually a response will be much sooner).

Student tab on My.Cuesta.edu

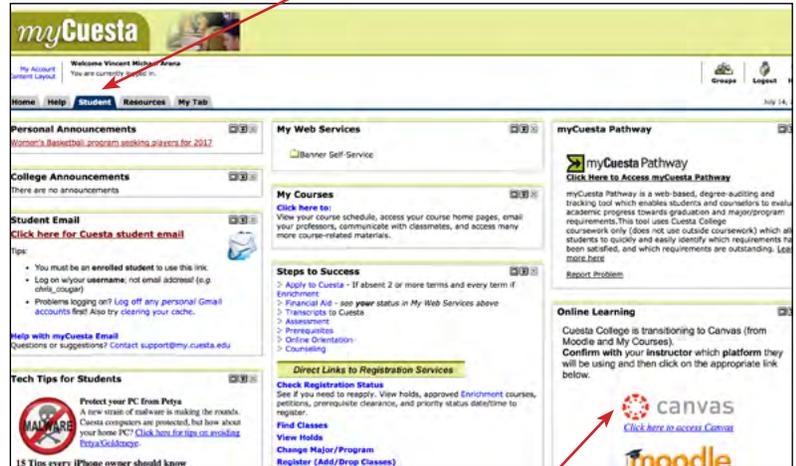


Fig. 1—My.Cuesta Canvas Access

Canvas logo

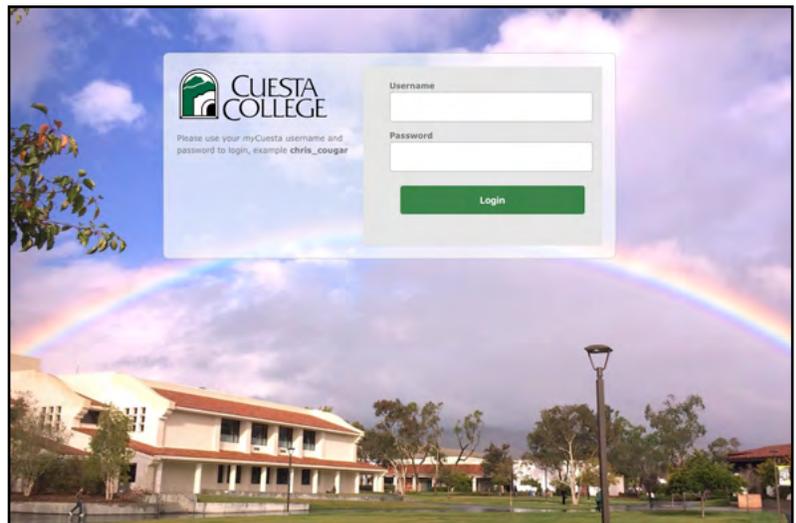


Fig. 2—Cuesta Log In Screen at Instructure.com

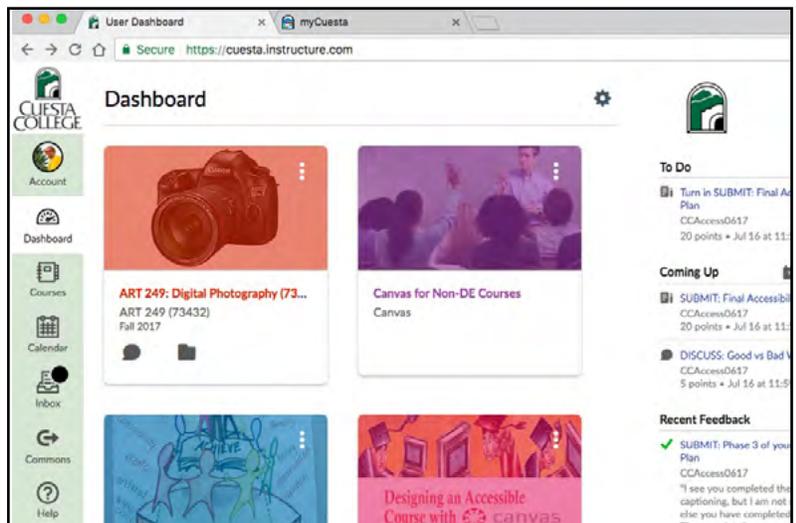


Fig. 3—Canvas Dashboard showing class tiles

Your Class as an Online Community

While you will not be seated next to your classmates (as you would in a classroom-based course), you will be interacting with them every week online in discussions, critiques, etc. Your contributions are as important as those of your classmates because they strengthen and diversify our group.

It is OK to express perspectives and opinions that are different from your classmates. These add to the vibrancy of our education. How you express yourself matters at all times.

“Netiquette” (internet + etiquette) is expected for all of your online work. Any form of antagonistic behavior (flaming, trolling, etc.) will result in immediate dismissal from the course without warning.

Please review this brief presentation for insights on the Core Rules of Netiquette >

<https://magic.piktochart.com/output/6004556-core-rules-of-netiquette>

Optional Student Meetups

Although not required, it is possible that some students will want to meet in person for self-organized activities, such as a photo walk or to view an exhibition. Whether you participate in these extracurricular events is completely up to you. These are not graded activities.

More Tips For Success With DE

1. If this is your first online learning experience, expect to invest extra time to orient yourself to the course design and tools.
2. Pay close attention to your due dates at the start of each week’s module. Mark them on your calendar so you stay organized.
3. Block out time in your weekly schedule to do the work. Start your assignments early.
4. Check in on class discussions frequently—at least several times each week.
5. Ask for help when you need it. Assist your classmates when possible.



Required Software

This course uses Adobe Photoshop Lightroom (which everyone calls “Lightroom” to distinguish it from the completely separate program “Photoshop”). We will be working in Lightroom every week. You will need either Lightroom 6 (which can be purchased outright for about \$140, [here on Amazon](#) for instance) or Lightroom CC (which is available for subscription as part of Adobe’s Creative Cloud Photography Plan for \$9.99/month, [here on Amazon](#) and [on Adobe](#)). Please have Lightroom installed and activated by the first day of class (Aug. 21).



Required Textbook

Textbook: *The Adobe Photoshop Lightroom CC Book for Digital Photographers*. Kelby, Scott. New Rider’s Press, 2015.)

Textbook ISBN: 978-0133979794

You can buy the book in the Cuesta bookstore, at other local bookstores, and online ([here on Amazon](#), for instance).

Required Camera

To complete the assignments in the course, you will need (by Aug. 21) a digital camera that:

- shoots RAW format (a camera that shoots only JPEG format will not work for this class).
- has a minimum of 8 megapixel resolution
- has manual exposure control of shutter, aperture, and ISO.



Feel free to email me if you are unsure whether your camera meets these specifications (include the manufacturer and model in your email).

Your camera may be either a digital single-lens reflex (DSLR) or a mirrorless model (such as a Micro 4/3). It is not required that your camera has an interchangeable lens. For this class, a kit zoom lens, such as an 18mm–55mm, will be fine. You will also need at least 16gb of memory cards. Other lenses and a tripod are optional.

Computer Hardware

You will use Lightroom to import your digital photos to your computer for every assignment. Prior to the start of class, check that you have:

- a computer and operating system that will work with Lightroom. See Adobe's recommendations here > <https://helpx.adobe.com/lightroom/system-requirements.html>
- at least 50gb of hard drive storage. This can be internal or external. I have used the Western Digital 'My Passport' drives with good success for many years (such as these [here on Amazon](#), typically \$55 to \$120).
- a card reader that will work with the memory cards that your camera shoots (typically either SD—Secure Digital or CF—Compact Flash. Tethering your camera to your computer to copy files is typically much slower. I have used the Transcend USB 3.0 Multi-Card Reader for many years ([here on Amazon](#), about \$18).

Internet Access

This course is conducted entirely online. So, having reliable access to the internet is essential. You will watch many online videos for this course. If you can watch YouTube without growing impatient with your connection speed, then your internet access is fast enough.

You Need A Screen Snipping App

A screen snipping app is used to take photographs of your computer screen ("screen shots"). Figs. 1–3 on page 4 are screen shots.

Taking screen shots will be a regular occurrence during many assignments. Screen shots are also helpful when asking for help via email.

You will find it very helpful if your screen snipper has the ability to do the following:

- snip just a portion of the screen (rather than the whole screen)
- allows you to rename the file to your needs
- save the file to the place of your choosing (rather than just to the desktop).

Your computer's operating system likely has a basic screen snipper built in.

- Windows > <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/13776/windows-use-snipping-tool-to-capture-screenshots>
- Mac OS > <https://support.apple.com/en-la/HT201361>

On Mac, I have used Sharpshooter for many years. I greatly value the advanced features and flexibility that it provides > <http://www.kerlmax.com/products/sharpshooter/>

You Will Want A Web Archiving App

You will be exposed to many websites and online resources in this class. Take time to develop a process for bookmarking pages and making local copies of content for future reference.

If you don't have a web archiving tool in mind, one option is to set up a free account at a social bookmarking site like [Diigo](#). Diigo is an easy way to tag and bookmark websites, providing you with the ability to access them from any computer with an internet connection and share them with others.

For more robust features and offline access, consider [Evernote](#). I have been an active Evernote Plus user for many years. With Evernote you can capture bookmarks or download content to your local computer for later reference.

Accessibility / Accommodation

Everyone learns differently. This course is designed using Canvas as an accessible learning management system, and course materials have been created with ADA compliance in mind.

If you have a learning difference and might need accommodations in this class, such as extended time on assignments or other resources, please contact me as soon as possible. Also contact Cuesta DSPS (Disabled Student Programs & Services) at 805-546-3148 or <http://www.cuesta.edu/student/student-services/dsps/index.html>

You Must Do Your Own Work

Unless specifically stated in the assignment specifications, you may not submit work created prior to the first day of this course or work created by another person. To confirm that you are doing your own work on a timely basis, the following will be standard practices:

- All photographs submitted must contain complete metadata. This includes the date and time shot, the model and serial number of the camera, exposure mode and settings, and the model / focal length of the lens used to make the photograph. Don't worry. This information is automatically recorded by a digital camera every time a shot is made. I will show you how to see it in Lightroom.
- For every assignment, you will submit evidence of how many photographs you made to complete the work. This sometimes will be a screenshot of the Library Grid view in Lightroom. At other times, I will open your Lightroom catalog directly via the cloud.
- Individual photographs may be submitted to Google Image Search for additional verification that an image was not downloaded from the web.

The bottom line here is that the details of how and when a digital photograph was created are easy to verify. As long as you do your own work, these verifications will not be a burden.

Should you submit work that does not meet my expectations for authenticity (such as work created by another person or work done prior to this class), you will be referred to Cuesta administration for disciplinary action—which may include dismissal from this class.

Academic Honesty Policy

All students attending San Luis Obispo County Community College District at any district site and when representing Cuesta College in any off-campus activity, assume an obligation to conduct themselves in an acceptable manner compatible with the Student Code of conduct: http://www.cuesta.edu/student/documents/admissions_records/code_of_conduct.pdf

Non-Participation Drop Policy

If you do not log in and actively participate during the first week of class or if you have not submitted 60% of the assignments at any point during the semester, you may be dropped from the course without notice.

Withdrawing

Cuesta has a generous policy for withdrawing from the course. When you drop determines how much (if any) money you get back. If you decide not to continue, you must go through the steps to withdraw officially. If you just stop submitting work, you will still be considered as a student in the class and graded accordingly.

You can read the procedure for withdrawing > <http://cuesta.edu/student/studentservices/admreg/arpolicies/dropcourse.html>

You will find Cuesta's student calendar here > https://www.cuesta.edu/student/documents/admissions_records/studentcalendar.pdf

Waitlist Policy

If you want to be waitlisted for this class, please review Cuesta's waitlist procedure and instructions. I add students whenever possible but you must be on the waitlist to be considered. When you receive an add code you must add immediately: <http://www.cuesta.edu/student/student-services/admreg/arpolicies/Waitlist.html>

Syllabus To Come

While this *Course Guide* is loaded with important details, it is not the same as the *Course Syllabus*. This *Guide* contains general info about the course and how to maximize your success as a distance education student. The *Syllabus* contains specific information about submitting assignments, how they will be scored, etc. It will be distributed when the semester starts. You are expected to be familiar with the contents of the *Guide* and *Syllabus*.

Questions?

Send an email to SylArena@gmail.com