**University Studies Cluster 5B:   
Learning Through Engagement**

**RATIONALE**

**DES 481 Photography 5**

DES 481 Photography 5 satisfies University Studies 5B Learning through Engagement. All sections of the course include an assignment that is a community project for an entity/organization with shared goals with the University. This project meets the objectives of Cluster 5B in the following manner:

1. Students will *identify the needs and resources of the communities to which they belong* by identifying the needs of the stakeholders (e.g., museum, school, organization, business, resource center, and so on) and needs of the people these entities serve.
2. Students will *apply knowledge and skills gained through academic study to real problems and/or opportunities within their communities* by researching and solving a problem posed by the stake holder (e.g., creating an identity, a poster, an exhibition design, a presentation on a topic of interest to the community, a studied analysis and written proposal, a newsletter, and so on.)
3. Students will *describe the connections between learning on campus and the issues and needs of broader academic, professional or civic communities* via reflective writing in which they answer the questions: Why would a community organization need a photographer? What can a photographer bring to the project? How did I meet the needs of the stakeholder?
4. Students will *articulate the value of engagement to other members of their communities* by writing a letter to next year’s students. In the letter, they will give advice, reflecting on whether or not the engagement was valuable (and why), and making suggestions for improvement (if any).

DES 481 Photography 5 Master Syllabus

Course Overview:

In Photography 5, students work on producing and refining the body of work that will lead to their senior thesis.

Students may continue to work on a theme they have already begun and they wish to continue or take in a new direction. Students may begin to work on a new theme. At this point it is not necessary for students to have a clear idea of precisely what their senior exhibition work will look like. However, students are expected to have a clear idea of their content/subject matter as well as some idea of their thesis presentation by final crits in December.

Students are expected to use Photography 5 to establish their ideas, to produce work, to take risks. Students are expected to figure out what their senior thesis theme is, and how they will produce it technically. They are expected to take this time to experiment and get feedback, to decide what their medium will be and why, to identify what their content/context/ideas and influences are. It is the time for students to research other artists and/or movements that have made similar or relevant work. Photography 5 creates the foundation for a successful implementation of the senior thesis in Photography 6.

In addition, students will complete the Learning Through Engagement (5B) University Cluster. The Learning Through Engagement assignment will focus on a community project for an entity/organization with shared goals with the University, and will vary in scope and content depending on the community partner.

Learning Outcomes:

Course-Specific Learning Outcomes

1. Develop the skills necessary in the field of professional photography:

* Focus on a project
* Develop discipline, work ethic, and time management necessary in execution of chosen project.
* Technical: further development toward professional-level shooting and printing skills

1. Critical thinking: participate in frequent class critiques in order to push selves to a greater understanding of the decisions, goals and outcomes of their work.
2. Oral skills: become conversant in conceptual and technical dialogue.
3. Written skills: present and write the first draft of your personal artist statement, gaining an understanding of writing about your own work.
4. Final Portfolio: submit all of the Photo 5 class work at semester’s end, gaining the practical skills of industry standards for the submission of professional work, and the requirements of a professional portfolio.

University Studies Cluster 5B Learning Through Engagement   
Learning Outcomes

1. Identify the needs and resources of the communities to which you belong.
2. Apply knowledge and skills gained through academic study to real problems and/or opportunities within their communities.
3. Describe the connections between learning on campus and the issues and needs of broader academic, professional or civic communities.
4. Articulate the value of engagement to other members of their communities.

Examples of Texts and/or Assigned Readings:

* *Art & Fear: Observations On the Perils (and Rewards) of Artmaking,* David Bayles

Example Assignment: University Studies Cluster 5B   
Learning Through Engagement

Portrait of New Bedford

We will spend Tues afternoon Lab times during the month of November shooting in the field, unifying short interview questions, then selecting, editing, printing, and organizing a presentation of portraits of and interviews with members of the New Bedford community. Each student will photograph and interview two different people within the community, creating fine-art color prints with printed interview along side. Thus, each student will be responsible for submitting two photographs/interviews for exhibition in a public New Bedford space (e.g., at the New Bedford Library). Upon completion of the project and exhibition students will submit a short paper reflecting upon the experience of this specific community engagement.

This project meets the objectives of Cluster 5B in the following manner:

1. Students will identify the needs and resources of the communities to which they belong by crafting interview questions that pertain to specific issues within the community of New Bedford.
2. Students will apply knowledge and skills gained through academic study to real problems and/or opportunities within their communities; for example by negotiating ethical issues involved in approaching strangers to photograph them.
3. Students will describe the connections between learning on campus and the issues and needs of broader academic, professional or civic communities via reflective writing in which they answer the questions: Why would a community organization need a photographer? What can a photographer bring to the project? How did I meet the needs of the stakeholder?
4. Students will articulate the value of engagement to other members of their communities by writing a letter to next year’s students. In the letter, they will give advice, reflecting on whether or not the engagement was valuable (and why), and making suggestions for improvement (if any).

Sample Course Outline:

*Note: Photography 5 is a 6-credit course, and meets 12 hours per week.*

Project 1 (Refine Body of Work Preparing for Senior Thesis): Weeks 1–Final

* Establish ideas through working and taking risks.
* Figure out what you are doing for Senior Thesis, how to accomplish it technically, what your medium will be and why, what your content/context/ideas/influences are.
* Take the time to experiment and get feedback.
* 30 minute critique every other week with a minimum of 8 prints on the wall.

Project 2 (Cluster 5B Learning Through Engagement): Concurrently Weeks 7–10

Example: Shoot in the field, unify short interview questions, then select, edit, print, and organize a presentation of portraits of and interviews with members of the New Bedford community.