

CAMERA FOR A DIGITAL CURRICULUM:

Effective in January of 07 we have taken our "core" curriculum digital. Conventional materials will continue to be addressed, but in other courses such as Intermediate Photo (Phot 110) and several advanced courses, rather than Beginning Photography. Color Photography is largely digitally based already.

That means that you will be spending much less on consumable supplies (film, paper and lab services) but will need a "good" full-function digital camera of 6 megapixels or more. We are making this move now because it is clearly time - traditional materials are getting more expensive, harder to obtain and very much less relevant – plus Digital Single Lens Reflex (DSLR) cameras are now competitively priced with film cameras. The savings obtained in the digital environment are significant – about equal to half the price of a good "starter" DSLR camera – per class/semester.

Generally, any DSLR will work nicely, but small point-n-shoot type cameras WILL NOT. Why this is so will become evident early in the class. Cameras midway between the tiny point-and-shoot and the DSLR may work adequately for the entry-level class. These mid-range cameras, often called super-zoom cameras, MUST have FULL MANUAL controls to be considered acceptable, and it is preferred that they have a lens diameter as physically large as possible. This has to do with "depth-of-field", a major image-control tool that small lenses defeat.

If you are a PHOTOGRAPHY MAJOR then we strongly recommend that you start with a Canon or Nikon DSLR. They tend to be slightly more expensive than cameras by Olympus, Pentax, etc but you will more than recover that investment if you can stay with one system as you mature as an image-maker.

A comprehensive and highly respected source for information and reviews is found at <http://www.dpreview.com/>. There is a fairly comprehensive review of Digital Cameras in the November 2006 Consumer Reports magazine and again in the July 07 issue.

The program has a few digital cameras that we were using as in-class loaners with our previous "blended curriculum." If you want to delay the camera acquisition until you are more familiar with the issues that is possible, but please be aware that this is just a temporary offer. Supplies are limited, there may not always be a camera available for you, and you will be expected to purchase a camera of your own after the first few weeks.