

VCPH-2991: PROFESSIONAL BUSINESS PRACTICES AND PORTFOLIO PREP FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS

Cuyahoga Community College

Viewing: VCPH-2991 : Professional Business Practices and Portfolio Prep for Photographers

Board of Trustees:

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Academic Term:

Fall 2020

Subject Code

VCPH - VC-Photography

Course Number:

2991

Title:

Professional Business Practices and Portfolio Prep for Photographers

Catalog Description:

This course will introduce students to the business and marketing practices common to photography. Emphasis will be placed on developing professional objectives based upon careful consideration of their personal goals and the financial, legal, organizational, interpersonal and ethical practices particular to photography.

Credit Hour(s):

4

Lecture Hour(s):

3

Lab Hour(s):

2

Requisites

Prerequisite and Corequisite

VCPH-2550 Commercial Studio Techniques II, or concurrent enrollment and VCPH-2450 Digital Imaging II.

Outcomes

Course Outcome(s):

Design and develop marketing materials that present a high level of execution and application of photographic techniques.

Objective(s):

1. Edit and sequence a printed portfolio for maximum visual impact for the purpose of securing freelance or full-time employment as a photographer, retoucher, stylist or in photographer's studio.
2. Create a professional looking web presence that is easily findable via web search algorithms.

Course Outcome(s):

Create a personal business brand identity.

Objective(s):

1. Craft a Mission Statement.
 2. Design and produce a visually compelling business card.
 3. Build a comprehensive resume that translates varied work experience to your desired field.
 4. Configure a realistic Action Plan for entering the professional photography field.
 5. Research and compile an Equipment Wish List.
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Course Outcome(s):

Generate realistic and comprehensive business paperwork.

Objective(s):

1. Configure estimates that accurately address all factors of a job.
2. Produce quotes that accurately quantify a job.
3. Develop and monitor budgets throughout a job.
4. Generate invoices reflective of previously submitted quote and direction changes during production.

Course Outcome(s):

Learn and employ ethical business practices relevant to the photography industry.

Objective(s):

1. Explain the principles and practices of maintaining professional relationships with clients, suppliers, support personnel, colleagues and competitors.
2. Gain understanding of relevant skills, a creative sensibility and a high level of professionalism for a graduate of this class to enter the workplace.
3. Discuss the responsibilities of a small business, freelancer, sub-contractor, sole proprietor, LLC to local, state, and federal tax authorities, with an emphasis on proper maintenance of records.
4. Utilize professional business communications and protocols with prospective clients, employers and guest speakers.

Course Outcome(s):

Complete an end-of-semester portfolio review process.

Objective(s):

1. Successfully present a portfolio and/or web site in an interview situation consistent with professional standards.
2. Utilize professional business communications and protocols with prospective clients, employers and guest speakers.

Course Outcome(s):

Differentiate and assume a variety of roles in a photographic and creative team.

Objective(s):

1. Describe the roles and hierarchy within a studio team.
2. Describe the environment particular to external stake holders.

Methods of Evaluation:

1. Portfolio
2. Presentation of Web Site
3. Written questions
4. Presentation of Identity system
5. Participation in question and answer sessions with industry professionals

Course Content Outline:

1. Materials needed for the purpose of securing freelance or full-time employment
 - a. web site
 - b. The printed portfolio
 - i. Editing and sequencing portfolios for maximum visual impact
 - ii. Photographic portfolio cases, books and boxes, printing techniques and resources, portfolio suppliers, distributors, and online ordering
 - c. A business card, resume, realistic Action Plan and Equipment Wish List for working as a freelance assistant or photographer or establishing one's own commercial photography business.
 - d. Realistic and comprehensive quotes, estimates, budgets and invoices
2. Professional resources
 - a. Photographic equipment rental facilities, modeling agencies and prop rental agencies.
 - b. Business insurance, permits, releases, permissions, rights to reproduction.
 - c. Standard contracts, retainers, and other legal documents

3. Team Roles
 - a. Photographic team
 - i. Studio assistant
 - ii. Digital retoucher
 - iii. Freelance assistant
 - iv. Freelance photographer
 - v. Describe one's responsibilities to other members of the creative photographic team
 - b. Overall creative team
 - i. Art Director
 - ii. Creative Director
 - iii. Copy Writer, Account Executive
 - iv. Sales Representative
 - v. Graphic Designer
 - vi. Computer Artist/Operator
 - vii. Photographer
4. Marketing
 - a. Is marketing an expense or an investment?
 - b. Photography markets and how the business models differ for each
 - i. Commercial
 - ii. Retail, Editorial
 - iii. Stock
 - iv. Weddings
 - v. Seniors
 - vi. Events
 - c. Identifying prospective employers and clients
 - i. As a photographer
 1. Graphic designers
 2. Ad agencies
 3. Direct to clients (industrial, non-profit, editorial, etc.)
 - ii. As an employee
 1. Commercial studios
 2. Employers with in house photography capabilities (NASA, local colleges, etc.)
 - d. Introductory and follow-up correspondence
 - e. Using references and letters of recommendation
 - f. Networking
 - i. Traditional
 1. Via trade organizations
 2. Word of mouth
 3. Direct mail Leave behind samples and mailers
 - ii. Social Media
 - g. Is there a value in being a generalist? Photographic diversification vs. specialization
 - h. Effective telephone etiquette
5. Ethics
 - a. Ethical business practices relevant to the photography industry
 - b. Ethical principles and practices of maintaining professional relationships with clients, suppliers, support personnel, colleagues and competitors.
 - c. The responsibilities of a small business (freelancer, sub-contractor, sole proprietor, LLC) to local, state, and federal tax authorities, with an emphasis on proper maintenance of records
 - d. Systems for the proper archiving and retrieving of all materials related to a job or project
 - e. Poaching clients
6. Communication
 - a. Within a photographic team
 - b. With clients
 - c. With vendors
 - d. With assistants
 - e. Interview strategies and practices including conduct and appropriate dress
7. Mission Statement
 - a. Why you should have one
 - b. What it should say

8. Branding
 - a. Identity package: logo, letterhead, business card
 - b. The values of creating an identifiable brand
 - c. What a brand represents
 - d. Determining the market within your desired client base
 - i. Identify competition
 - ii. Research market(s).
9. Estimating and Pricing
 - a. Create a new job questionnaire form
 - b. The psychology of pricing
 - c. Breakdown the real and variable costs used to achieve a profitable estimate
10. Contracts
 - a. Understanding the importance of a contract
 - b. Understanding Terms & Conditions
 - c. Usage rights
 - i. Advertising
 - ii. Editorial
 - iii. Advertorial
 - iv. Personal
11. How to achieve a breakeven analysis of a business
 - a. Costs
 - i. Variable
 - ii. Fixed
 - b. Products and Services
12. Copyrighting your work
 - a. Model releases
 - b. Intellectual Property
 - c. Trademarks
13. Negotiation
 - a. Valuing your own work
 - b. Standing firm
 - c. When to negotiate price to land the project
 - d. Recognizing the difference
 - e. How to get compensation when you lower your price
14. Business software
 - a. Quickbooks
 - b. Other
15. Credit and Finance
 - a. Utilizing credit cards
 - i. Payments
 - ii. Purchase
 - b. Forms of Online payment (ex. Venmo)
 - c. Accounts with vendors
 - d. Cash flow
 - e. Discounts for repeat customers
 - f. Separation of business and personal expenses
16. Business types
 - a. LLC
 - b. Sole Proprietor
 - c. Partnership
 - d. S Corp
 - e. How to apply for your federal and state Tax ID numbers
17. Insurance
 - a. Liability, equipment, property
 - b. Group vs individual
 - c. Riders for specific shoots
 - d. Professional Photographers of America (PPofA) trust fund coverage <https://www.ppa.com/benefits/protection/basic-equipment-insurance>
18. Taxes

- a. Filing estimated quarterly taxes
- b. Forms needed
- c. Sales Tax – State (& City in Ohio)
 - i. Who pays
 - ii. Who doesn't

19. Considerations for retirement for the self-employed

Resources

Harrington, John. *Best Business Practices for Photographers*. 3rd. San Rafael, CA, 2017. 2017.

Resources Other

1. Lab facilities: access to digital post-production and printing facilities, lighting and grip equipment can be signed out with permission, access to internet.
2. A variety of instructor provided handouts covering technical, creative, and business principles and practices.
3. Organizations
 - a. <http://www.aiga.org/> The American Institute of Graphic Artists
 - b. <https://www.ppa.com> Professional Photographers of America
 - c. <http://asmp.org/> American Society of Media Photographers
 - d. <https://www.pdnonline.com/> Photography industry trade publication
 - e. <https://www.spenational.org/> Society for Photographic Education
 - f. <http://www.ai-ap.com/> American Illustration + American Photography; annual showcase of professional photographic work
4. DIY Web Site Builders
 - a. www.squarespace.com (<http://www.squarespace.com>)
 - b. www.wix.com (<http://www.wix.com>)
 - c. www.format.com (<http://www.format.com>)
 - d. www.behance.com
 - e. www.photoshelter.com (<http://www.photoshelter.com>)
 - f. www.wonderfulmachine.com (<http://www.wonderfulmachine.com>) find a photographer web site
 - g. www.zonezero.com/zz (<http://www.zonezero.com/zz/>) Online portfolios and exhibition opportunities
 - h. Adobe Portfolio Included in Adobe Creative Suite
5. Portfolios and Books
 - a. <http://www.blurb.com/> Online self-publishing web site
 - b. www.brewer-cantelmo.com (<http://www.brewer-cantelmo.com>) High quality portfolio books, binders and boxes
 - c. <http://www.lulu.com/> Online self-publishing web site
6. Business cards and Promotional Materials
 - a. www.moo.com (<http://www.moo.com>)
 - b. www.jakprints.com (<http://www.jakprints.com>)
 - c. www.overnightprints.com (<http://www.overnightprints.com>)

www.paperhaus.com

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