

UNC ART DEPARTMENT ANALOG PHOTOGRAPHY LAB RULES and PROCEDURES

I. GENERAL

A. Enrollment/Use

Students must be enrolled in a Photography class in the current semester (or working w/ permission as a grad student or other special designation) in order to use the darkrooms and attendant resources. Since this is a shared facility, mutual respect, consideration, helpfulness, and neatness are required for its smooth functioning. Students may forfeit darkroom privileges for unsafe, illegal, or extremely irresponsible behavior.

B. Lockers

Your instructor will assign hall lockers during the first two weeks of class (first-come, first served basis). Your enrolment in a photography class entitles you to (but does not guarantee) the use of a locker for the duration of the semester. Put your own lock and a tape name label on the locker assigned to you immediately. *At the end of each semester, you must empty your locker by the building clean-up day, or we will cut the lock and confiscate the contents.* There is to be no storage of any personal items in the darkrooms except: Oversized photo paper on the shelf under the heat press, and food & drink, bags, and backpacks in the cubbies at the entrance of the lab. The Photography Lab assumes no responsibility for locks, materials, or personal items.

C. Safety

Safety in all areas and functions in the lab is paramount. We welcome and encourage your suggestions to improve safety and operations.

Safe use of equipment is the responsibility of the user. Instructors will teach proper and safe use of the equipment to insure its integrity and reliability as well as the user's safety. Electrically-powered items such as timers, enlargers, quartz lights, and strobe equipment pose serious risk to users if not properly used and maintained. Ask your instructor if you have any questions. Do not use equipment if you have not received instruction! Experimental photo ideas must be approved by your instructor/lab coordinator. Electricity and water together, as well as some fairly un-exotic photo chemical techniques can be dangerous to you and damaging to equipment if you don't know what you are doing.

If you think that something is not working properly, do not attempt to use or repair the device. Immediately inform your instructor, a lab assistant (GA) or the lab coordinator (Gesche Wuerfel, rm. 311B) of any malfunction, and insure (through signage) that no one attempts to use the equipment before the lab coordinator can inspect it and remove it safely for repair or maintenance. Small broken items and parts can be moved to the "broken" bin and noted.

It is imperative that we understand and observe safe procedures when handling and using equipment and chemistry. We must all work together and communicate with one another when we see a potential problem or unsafe conditions in the lab. Safety is a group effort dependent upon open lines of communication and timely exchange of information. Your participation and suggestions on safety and operations are welcomed and encouraged. The whiteboard will be a way to relay messages between classes, users, and staff so check and utilize the board as you use the lab. Be considerate with your words.

D. Chemistry

Only photo lab staff & instructors will mix chemistry; when something seems to be running low, politely note this on the whiteboard so we can address the need.

Basic chemicals are kept in the lab for established lab procedures. Several of the chemicals that are used are potentially hazardous to lab users. Instructors will review chemical safety issues, procedures, handling & disposal of fixer, and the use of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) with their students.

Certain toners and other process chemistry can be very dangerous! Instructors should alert the lab manager (Gesche Wuerfel) and carefully supervise students during the mixing, use, and disposal of these chemicals (ex. Selenium and other toners, Pyro, Lith. chems.)

As required by federal law, MSDS (Material Safety and Data Sheet) forms for all chemicals used in the lab are available; these are kept in one of the lab cubbies. You should inform yourself and your health professional especially if you have health issues that may be exacerbated by chemical exposure.

No chemicals can be brought into the lab without prior approval of the lab coordinator. If the chemical is approved, the user must supply three copies of the chemical's MSDS. One copy stays in the lab for review, one copy goes to the art office, and the third copy goes to campus EHS. Failure to follow this procedure results in a violation of applicable Federal and State OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) regulations and potentially exposes students and staff to unknown risks. Any violation of this rule will result in serious consequences.

EHS (Environmental Health and Safety) has more information concerning chemical safety procedures on campus. They can be reached online and at 962-0227.

II. Working In The Lab

A. Use & Times

Instructors have priority over the entire darkroom for the duration of their class period for demos and their students' work time. Students may work outside of class time (check the dkrm schedule posted on the darkroom door; room 316) or you may ask in instructor for permission to use a part of the darkroom they are not presently using. Be polite, ask each time, and respect the instructor's wishes. Access is 24 hr, but common sense says working alone and working when fatigued is ill advised. **It is now required that closed-toe shoes be worn in the darkroom/lab areas. If you must wear sandals during the day, keep a pair of suitable work shoes in your locker for work time.**

B. Enlarger Use

All enlarging equipment in the gang and advanced darkrooms is marked for a corresponding enlarger station, and should not be moved, "borrowed", or traded. This rapidly starts a snowball effect where nothing is at its correct station, and we cannot keep track of equipment. **Never shift equipment between drawers or enlarger stations.** If there is a problem with a piece of equipment at a station, let us know by writing on the whiteboard. Always keep whatever belongs to a station but is not being used, in the proper numbered drawer (glass/foam, easel, ex.). We will show basic troubleshooting steps for enlargers. **Always turn off enlargers and digital timers (+ room exhaust in color darkrooms/film loading rooms). Bulbs/lamps are not cheap!**

C. Print Drying Racks

To make sure there is always room for ongoing work and to prevent contamination, we enforce these procedures:

- Place only completely washed prints on the drying screens.
- No RC print should be placed on these screens before it has been washed for a minimum of five minutes in running water.
- Fiber-based prints must be washed for at least twenty minutes following the correct first wash and hypo-clearing agent.
- Never move the prints of other students (only photo lab staff should do this).
- Remove your prints from the drying racks promptly when they are dry (within 24 hours).**
- Remove even your “bad” prints and dispose of them as you like.
- If prints accumulate, they will be pulled from the racks. Your last chance to retrieve prints is from the “Abandoned Prints” cube.
- NEVER leave any test strips on the drying racks.

D. Film drying closets

Film drying cabinets have limited capacity. Hang your wet film as far to the rear of the right-hand cabinet as possible to make room for others. Remove your film promptly when it is dry, usually in 1 hour or less. Be careful when hanging or removing film to avoid contact with other film. Film left for more than 2 hours (and fully dry) may be moved to the left hand cabinet (no drier but clean and dust free). Abandoned film will be pinned to the corkboard outside the film developing room.

E. Chemical trays

Trays are marked (established at the beginning of the semester) for designated areas and specific use. They are never to be used in any other area or for any purpose. Contamination of prints and chemistry and premature aging of the trays occurs when trays are used with different chemicals. Try to keep tongs in their correct tray while working. **Soak tongs in clean water baths (5-10 min) to wash, then dry on the "roof" of the overhead vents.** If you have used tray chemistry, and it is not depleted, cover the trays with the Plexiglas sheets and indicate (on the white-boards in darkroom) date and time mixed. If you “inherit” previously mixed chemistry and you are the last person in the darkroom, dump the chemistry (fixer into the holding jugs) and clean trays, tongs, covers, and sink.

F. Wash Stations

Turn off water when you are not using it!

Run wash tanks and trays with moderate flow only—you don’t need water full blast. If a print washer is empty, you will need to fill it before washing. Do not fill or drain a washer without removing the low dividers. Before filling a print washer, make sure clamps are closed on the emergency drain hose and that both hoses empty into the sink (or large wash tray). After the washer is full, place the low dividers (notches up) in the EcoWash. The low dividers fit into the grooves at the bottom of the washer forming a seal.

Never place anything, especially viewing trays, on top of the washers.

Rinse empty viewing trays and return them to the darkroom. (See: pet peeves)

Always turn off water when you are not using it!

Turn water off and find a photo staffer if you notice a flood or excessive water beginning to

pool on the floor!!!!

G. Clean up after yourself after loading films. This means packaging will go in the trash. Don't sit on tables or damage easels.

H. Print Finishing

Absolutely no trays, chemicals, or other liquids are allowed on the print finishing areas; these are dry areas only. Print finishing areas include light tables, rotary paper cutter tables, & dry-mount presses. Do not take the cutters anywhere! (There is one small cutter for test strips in the gang dkrm). Get to know how to use the equipment before operating it.

The light table is for film viewing only. Do not place anything wet or sharp on its surface.

Do not use the dry mount press without instruction. There are 2 "hot" presses for drying and mounting prints, and one "cold" press (no power) for weighting prints as they cool. Check manufacturer's guidelines (drymount tissue, etc.) for correct temperatures. To avoid burning your work, do not set the heat on tacking irons higher than medium.

The rotary cutter (*rotatrim*) is a paper cutter located on the island table. It is only for cutting paper! Do not cut cardboard, matboard, foamcore, or any other material with the rotatrim. Use a straightedge and utility knife to cut heavier stock, on the provided cutting surfaces only. Use good blades; a dull one is difficult to control and more likely to injure. A mat cutter for cutting beveled windows is kept in the print studio (rm 301); your instructor will demonstrate if needed. Throw away paper trims and unwanted materials as soon as you are done working in the print finishing area.

I. Courtesy

Clean up after yourself. Leave your enlarger station, work surfaces, sinks, and floors at least as clean as when you arrived. Remove your negatives from the negative carrier, **return contrast filters to the correct part of the folder set**, and make sure all equipment is in its proper place. Leave yourself enough time before the end of class to do an adequate clean-up; don't take off and say, "I have another class now". Work and communicate with others in a friendly, collegial way; this is not a race!

J. Leaving

Make sure you have cleaned up after yourself! Empty full trashcans and replace the bag/liner. Make sure the water is not running and that the faucets are in the off position! Flooding messes us all up. Don't leave valuables in the darkrooms. Turn off the lights!

III. Pet Peeves (or... things that are really important to Photo Staffers)

Purchase your own pair of scissors, and a sharpie. **Put your name on everything you bring into the darkroom** (paper boxes, notebooks, bags, reusable/personal nitrile gloves). Everyone's paper box looks the same!

No food or drink in the darkroom! No uncovered drinks ever.

Never take plastic film reels apart! Ever! They can be easily ruined by putting them together the "wrong" way. (You may change sizes w/o taking them apart!)

Heed instructions/updates on the whiteboard! We will work on requests.

Return cleaned viewing trays to the darkrooms; rinse & wipe if they are dirty.

Wipe up spills of any kind; use cloth towels or sponges (or a mop).

No tape on easels or enlargers! We will fix the problem/broken easels.

Don't bring dusty, dirty, glittery material into the darkroom. Dust, fur, glitter, sand, spices, powders of any sort, broken glass, & dirt, get into and onto every surface, piece of equipment and, eventually your prints and negatives. It is inconsiderate to other users of the darkroom to contaminate the facility and you will be asked to wipe down, vacuum, and mop up your mess. If you wonder whether your experimental photo project might be ok, ask Gesche Wuerfel for help.

Empty trash from the small bins when they are full. Replace the liner. Never throw wet stuff (paper, film, paper towels) into an unlined trash bin.

Return borrowed items to the beige cabinet! (Don't leave out film cleaner, touch up dyes, Q-tips, etc... always re-cap the film cleaner, minus Q-tips.)

Beginning photo students need specific instruction from your instructor (or lab manager) before using the advanced/back darkroom.

Ask questions if you have trouble using something, or things seem "not right", "broken", not functioning well! Let us fix anything that is out of whack before fiddling makes it worse.

Equipment checkout is available (during cage hours) from the first floor "Cage" adjacent to the digital lab and classroom. Check with Joy Drury Cox for the newest Cage checkout policies.

Let your photo staff (Gesche, GA, or teacher) know if something is broken, missing, or needed; we will work on it in a timely manner, but we usually cannot drop everything else we are doing just at that moment. You may communicate via the whiteboard and know that we are working on solutions. We mix chemistry as often and as best we can, but heavy usage periods may consume all prepared chemistry. **Plan ahead, avoid the rush, and don't wait until the night before a due date to start your project!** We're not planning to come in on weekends.

Put all recovered small parts in the whiteboard tray! They are important!

NO fixer down the drain! Pour spent film fixer into the film room bins and paper fixer into the gang and advanced darkroom bins. Finally, it will go into the blue drum. Cap fixer barrels when not using them.

Memorize (or write down/ key into your phone) **the door combination.** It is an easy pattern. Don't write it on the wall or on the door!

Don't use your phone in darkroom situations.

Lighting studio demos and use comes with another set of guidelines; see the Lab Coordinator (Gesche Wuerfel) when the time comes for that.

Be especially considerate of others with music in the darkrooms. Headphones are strongly discouraged as they will keep you from being able to hear your colleagues' communication (essential when working in low light). Boom-box/iPod dock music must be ok with everyone working in the shared space and remain at a moderate level. Not everyone works well with music so please respect everyone's access to the facilities.

Don't prop the door open (except during class w/ instructor nearby)! This is especially important over evenings and weekends. Even during class time, cameras, computers, and phones in the cubbies have disappeared!

Don't confront unauthorized persons in/around the darkrooms but instead report suspicious persons to Campus Police at either 919-962-8100 or 911.