

### Description/Overview:

Photography offers a mode of creative communication as well as a lens into the communities we inhabit and visit. Photographs can capture a range of moments and expressions, people, places, and events. As such, the Office of Academic Affairs and Center for Excellence in Teaching & Learning would like to invite all University of Detroit Mercy community members to submit digital photographs for consideration as part of an ongoing annual photography contest. The contest is open to faculty, staff, students, and administrators to celebrate and display our unique world views. You can submit photographs in the categories listed below (one entry per category). First-place winners in each category will receive cash prizes and an enlarged, mounted copy of their winning photographs.

### All photographs should be submitted using the following guidelines

#### Each entry must include:

- Contestant Name, email, phone number
- A concise photograph title  
(Title on digital entry file must match the entry form. "untitled" or "file number" is not acceptable)
- Date taken and category entered
- Description/Artist Statement of photograph
- A copyright notice (if applicable)
- Camera or device make/model the photograph was taken with
- Photo metadata information (F-Stop, Shutter speed, ISO, Focal length of lens etc.)

### Categories

**Abstract/Conceptual/Manipulation:** Images of unusual patterns, lighting, or objects recognized for their design element (i.e., streaking light photos, mechanical structures, reflections in glass or metal, view from a strange angle). Images can be digitally enhanced or altered beyond the minor adjustments to create an entirely different photograph. Be creative! All images must be produced by the photographer (photos taken by someone else may not be used) the finished entry must still appear to be a photograph – not an artistic impression, drawing, or design.

**People\*:** Photos of people, alone or in a group. Such pictures may be candid, humorous, journalistic, or interpretative portraits where an emphasis placed on the person - not the environment. The main focus should be people.

**Nature/Scenic\*:** Images or scenes of plant life, landscapes, seascapes, underwater, architectural, and industrial scenes. Seasonal scenes which display a fundamental design or mood are also acceptable. The main focus should be nature/scenic.

**Dusk to Dawn\*:** Details the photographic imagery captured after the sun goes down. This includes but is not limited to starry skies, life under neon lights, streaking traffic lights, mother nature at night, scenic landscapes and cityscapes, film noir portraits, creative use of light and shadows.

**Creatures\* (New category for 2025!):** Images or scenes of animal life, wild creatures, insects etc. (i.e., action shots of your pet, giraffes at the zoo, cows on a countryside, banana slugs in the forest). It may be a scenic environment, but the main focus should be the creature(s) or animal(s).

**\*Appropriate and accepted image enhancement in these categories must be limited to minor adjustments such as contrast, exposure, cropping, HDR, dodge and burn.**

### Participants/Eligibility:

- Contestant must be 18 years of age.
- Open to current faculty, staff, administrators, and students
- Final date for entries Sunday November 2, 2025 at 11:59pm.
- Entries must be the original work of the contestant.
- Entries must have been taken between January 1, 2025 and November 3, 2025.
- Contestants may submit a maximum of one entry per category.
- All entries must be high-resolution digital images.
- May be black & white or color, submitted as JPG or TIFF. No GIF, PDF, PNG, RAW, EPS, AI, or PSD files accepted.
- Official photographs taken in the line of duty are ineligible.
- Entries deemed unsuitable for judging or exhibition will be withdrawn by the contest officials.
- Contest officials may disqualify entries that do not conform to size limits or do not have a signed consent form (if applicable).
- Judges may transfer entries from one category to another category if deemed more appropriate or necessary.
- Contestants are not allowed to digitally alter, remove or change objects in a photograph or add special effect enhancements to photo submissions in the following categories: Abstract / Conceptual, People, Nature/Scenic, After Dusk to Dawn. "Overall Color Enhancement," Increased Contrast, Overall Lightening or Darkening, and Image Cropping are the only acceptable enhancements for these categories.
- Contestants who submit pictures in the Digital Manipulation Category are encouraged to extremely digitally enhance, create and alter their images. Be as creative and imaginative as one can be. All combined images must be original photos taken by the submitter. No pictures from the internet or other sources will be accepted and must be of the submitters' work.
- All members of the university community (students, faculty, staff, administrators) are invited to submit a photograph for consideration.
- To be eligible for any category, a photograph must have been shot by the entrant after January 1, 2025. This date applies to all images in a composite. The contestant certifies that they are the sole creator and copyright owner of the submitted photograph.
- Cropped photos are eligible in all categories. Minor adjustments, including the removal of sensor dust or scratches on scans of negatives, dodging and burning, sharpening, contrast, toning, slight color adjustment and conversion to grayscale are acceptable for all categories. The addition and subtraction of objects is not permitted except in the Digital Manipulation category. If the judges determine that a photographer has altered their photo beyond normal photojournalism best practices just mentioned, they reserve the right to move the photo to Digital Manipulation, or to disqualify the submission.
- For a photo in which a person is recognizable, you must be prepared to provide a consent form from the subject or, in the case of a minor, the subject's parent or guardian, to UDM upon request. A Subject Release form is available at: <https://www.udmercy.edu/academics/academic-affairs/photocontest/>
- Similarly, entrants whose photos depict other people's work as the main focus (such as sculptures, statues, paintings, and other copyrightable works) must be prepared to provide a release from the rights holder to UDM upon request. When photographing the work of others, it must be as an object in its environment and not a full-frame close-up of another person's creation. An art release is available at: <https://www.udmercy.edu/academics/academic-affairs/photocontest/>. If the entrant is unable to provide all required releases, UDM in its sole discretion reserves the right to disqualify the submission, seek to secure the required releases, or permit the submission to remain in the contest.

- Photos must be taken in accordance with federal, state, and local laws. Photos that violate or infringe upon another person's rights, including but not limited to copyright, are not eligible. Photos that contain sexually explicit, nude, obscene, violent, or other objectionable or inappropriate content, as determined by UDM in its sole discretion, are ineligible for all categories of this contest.

### **Ethics:**

Entrants must disclose the circumstances under which an image was captured as well as any instructions given to a subject. The welfare of a subject and its environment must be placed ahead of the desire to capture a photograph. Upon entering the contest, entrants certify that subjects were treated with respect and dignity, and that no people, wildlife or the environment were harmed in creating a photograph. Special equipment such as camera traps and drones used to capture the photograph(s) must be disclosed. Live baiting of wildlife is not permitted.

### **Submission of Entries:**

- Each entry must be submitted in digital format through the online submission form.
- No slides, prints, or transparencies accepted. Slide and print photographers must scan their slide/photo(s) to be entered as digital images through the online submission form.
- A signed release form is to be submitted when applicable.
- Should you need assistance, direct questions to [photocontest@udmercy.edu](mailto:photocontest@udmercy.edu)

### **Digital Image Requirements:**

- Images should be submitted in JPG or TIFF format at high-resolution. No PDF, PNG, GIF, RAW, EPS, AI, or PSD images will be accepted. File size should not exceed 50-megapixels.
- Shortest side of the photo should be no smaller than 3000 pixels. (eg., 3024x4032) BIGGER IS BETTER
- Entrant may submit 1 photo per category for a total of 5 photos.
- A separate entry form to be completed for each photo submitted.
- No more than one contestant per email address will be permitted.
- Photographs will not be accepted as a printed hard copy (only digital submissions allowed either in person or via online submission form).
- High-quality scans of non-digital printed photographs are acceptable as long as the photo was taken during the entry period window.
- Images should also be identified, dated, and include camera-recorded metadata.
- Photos must comply with Community Standards (see section below)
- The photo cannot have been submitted in a previous University of Detroit Mercy contest.

Finalists must be prepared to submit an original, unedited digital file or an original negative, print or slide. The University of Detroit Mercy reserves the right to disqualify incomplete entries and/or contestants who are unable to submit, upon request, a high-resolution photograph of at least 3000 pixels on the shortest side. Any photos that do not meet this requirement may be asked to resubmit or are at risk of being disqualified from judging. UDM may collect a photograph's metadata upon entry.

You retain your rights to your photograph; However, by entering the contest, you grant the University of Detroit Mercy a royalty-free, world-wide, perpetual, non-exclusive license to publicly display, distribute, reproduce and create derivative works of the entries, in whole or in part, in any media now existing or later developed, for any purpose, including, but not limited to, advertising and promotion for The University of Detroit Mercy and its website, exhibition, and commercial products (this includes any sales of products utilizing the photograph). Any photograph

reproduced will include a photographer credit based on the university's discretion. The University of Detroit Mercy will not be required to pay any additional consideration or seek any additional approval in connection with such uses.

### **In-Person Submission:**

You may turn in your submission(s) in digital format in person to The Center for Excellence in Teaching & Learning on the 3rd floor, McNichols Campus Library, room 326. You may call with additional questions at 313-993-1127

### **Use of your personal data:**

Participation in the contest requires the collection of your name, phone, and university email address. By entering this contest, you are consenting to the use of your name phone and/or email address for further communications regarding this contest.

### **Judging:**

Open call to staff, faculty, & students (judges TBD).

**If you are interested in becoming a judge, please reach out to [photocontest@udmercy.edu](mailto:photocontest@udmercy.edu) or 313-993-1127. Judges of the photo contest are not eligible to submit photos to the contest.**

Rubric criteria to be implemented in determining the winner for each category. Photo entries will be judged based on required elements, creativity, quality (focus/lighting), originality, responsiveness to the prompt, overall impact, and composition. The University of Detroit Mercy will select three finalists per category, a winner from the finalists for each category, and a best of show winner from the 15 finalists. The 15 finalists will be notified of their status and appear on the contest website by spring 2026. The grand prize winner and category winners will be revealed online in spring 2026. One winner and 2 honorable mentions per category plus one overall winner for Best of Show. All dates are subject to change. The University of Detroit Mercy will notify winners via the contact information provided at the time of entry; UDM may disqualify anyone who fails to respond to the notification within five business days.

### **Prizes:**

**Six prizes will be awarded as follows:**

**Best of Show:** \$500 and their printed photograph mounted on ¾" framed foamcore.

**Category Winners:** The first-place winners of each of the five categories will receive \$100 and their printed photograph mounted on ¾" framed foamcore. One cash prize per person; winners may receive additional non-cash prizes. All prizes are awarded "as is" and non-transferable.

#### **Online Features:**

The University of Detroit Mercy may select photos for highlight on its website or display in a publicly accessible contest archive. Such selections will be made at UDM's sole discretion.

#### **Contest Exhibition:**

Entries will be displayed online via the University website. Winning first place photographs per category will be printed and displayed on the McNichols Campus, location to be determined. Second and third place winners, receive honorable mentions (no cash prize or print). Display location may be subject to change.

### Community Standards:

- The photo must not contain material that violates or infringes another's rights, including but not limited to privacy, publicity or intellectual property rights, or anything that constitutes copyright infringement.
- The photo must not be a promotion of brand names, trademarks, or social media account(s).
- The photo must, in its entirety, be a single work of original material taken by the contestant.
- The photo must not contain content that is inappropriate, indecent, obscene, hateful, tortuous, defamatory, slanderous or libelous.
- The photo must not contain material that promotes bigotry, racism, hatred or harm against any group or individual or promotes discrimination based on race, sex, religion, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or age.
- The photo must not contain material that is unlawful, in violation of or contrary to the laws or regulations in any state where the photo was created.

### Conditions of Entry:

All entrants hold the Sponsors and their respective regents, directors, officers, employees, emeriti, fellows, interns, research associates, and volunteers (the "Indemnified Parties") harmless from and against all claims of any nature arising in connection with entrant's participation in the contest and acceptance or use of a prize. The Indemnified Parties are not liable for any costs, damages, injuries, or other claims incurred because of entrants' participation in the contest or winner's acceptance and usage of a prize. The Indemnified Parties are not responsible for incomplete or misdirected entries, technical or network malfunctions or failures, or causes beyond their control. Entrants are solely responsible for their entries. Entrants may not submit materials that introduce any software viruses, worms or other programs designed to damage software, hardware or telecommunications equipment or are off-topic, partisan-political, contain advertising, nudity, personal attacks or expletives, or is otherwise abusive, threatening, unlawful, harassing, discriminatory, libelous, obscene, false, sexually explicit, or that infringes on the rights of any third party. The contest is void where prohibited or restricted by law. The University of Detroit Mercy reserves the right to cancel the contest or modify these rules at its discretion. In the event of a dispute regarding the winners, UDM reserves the right to award or not award the prizes in its sole discretion. UDM reserves the right to disqualify any entrant whose entry or conduct appears in any way to: inhibit the enjoyment of others; tamper with the competition; violate these rules or other applicable law or regulation; infringe on the rights of third parties; or act in an unsportsmanlike or disruptive manner. Decisions of the University of Detroit Mercy are final and binding.

### Questions:

Contact Anthony Cressey, 313-993-1127 / [photocontest@udmercy.edu](mailto:photocontest@udmercy.edu)