MCAD Darkroom Policies and Best Practices

Darkroom is managed by the Media Center, and overseen by Hannah Goodrich. If you have any questions, or need help please contact Hannah or another MC staff member. Hannah is available Mon-Fri 9:30am-5:30pm.

hgoodrich@mcad.edu
media_center@mcad.edu
612-874-3672

Media Center Hours of Operation:

Mon-Fri 8:30am-7:00pm
Sat/Sun 12:00pm-2:00pm

Access to the Darkroom outside of these times is by key card access only

Policies:

- The MCAD Darkroom processes B&W film only. NO COLOR
- The darkrooms are reserved for classes during designated course times. Only the students in those classes have a right to be in the space during the allotted time periods. If the class is not using the darkroom, other students with access may use it
- If a class is using the darkrooms during their class, other students using the space may be asked to leave by the instructor, regardless if there are enough enlarging stations or not. Students may ask for permission from the instructors to use the space during their class times
- Only students with authorized access to the darkroom may use it. If you do not currently have darkroom access, and would like it, please send an email to Hannah and the Media Center
- Handle chemistry with caution
    - Wear PPE (Goggles, aprons, and gloves are provided in darkroom)
    - Do not mix different chemistry together (outside what is directed in processing room)
- All chemistry is mixed and prepared by Hannah and the Media Center
    - Students are allowed to refill trays in Enlarging room if necessary (instructions posted in room)
- Abuse of equipment, purposeful damage, tampering of chemicals, or other general misuse may result in total loss of access to the space

Training:

Darkroom training is provided by Photography instructors for their relevant classes at the beginning of each semester. Darkroom training may also be considered for individuals who fill out a Personal Proposal through the MCAD Intranet. Any training requested through Personal Proposal is considered on a case-by-case basis, and is not a guarantee. If approved, training will be provided by Hannah in the Media Center. Outside of these hours, please contact the Media Center and we will resolve any issues as soon as possible.

Access:

Students will have access to the darkroom if they fall into one of the following categories:
- Are currently enrolled in a photography course
- Have previously completed a 2000 level or higher photography course

Students who have completed darkroom training outside of MCAD may submit a Personal Proposal requesting access. In the proposal please explain your previous darkroom experience, and what you would use the MCAD darkroom space for. Media Center staff may request a meeting to further discuss your proposal.

Personal Proposals:

Any requests for exceptions to any access or usage policies must be submitted to the Media Center using the online "Personal Proposal" form found on the Media Center Intranet page. Please submit AT LEAST three business days before you need the equipment/access. All Personal Proposals submitted are considered on a case-by-case basis. Submitting a proposal does not guarantee it will be approved.

Best Practices:

FILM ROOM
- Make sure someone is not processing 4x5 in open trays before you turn on the lights
- After using Beakers, film processing reel and canisters please rinse thoroughly and dry before storing under sink
- All used fix must be disposed of in Used Fix containers and not poured down the sink
- Make sure the drying cabinet is closed
- Rinse and squeegee the sink after use
- Turn of all running water

PRINT ROOM
- Do not turn on your enlarger light without a lens and negative carrier- white light will fog photographic paper. Keep light to a minimum- look at your negatives and tests outside, and turn off the enlarger when changing filters
- Do not bring cell phones or any device which could inadvertently emit white light into a darkroom (laptops, smart watches, etc.)
- You are responsible for cleaning your enlarger area. Recycle used photo paper, and clean up other trash. Remove any masking or clear tape from the baseboard. Re-insert the baseboard if it was removed
- Do not place your plastic trays on the enlarger baseboards. They will leave stains on your prints and chemical residue on the baseboards. Keep them under the sink
- Do not remove enlarger condensers unless you know how- ask your instructor, TA, or Hannah/the Media Center. Replace the condenser at the end of your printing session
- Use only thick sheets of glass that have been taped, or are finished around the edges. This glass is provided in the print darkroom
- Do not remove timers from enlarger booths. If you do not know how to use a certain kind, ask.
- Keep wet prints & test strips in your tray

PRINT CHEMISTRY TRAYS
- Allow your print to drip for 10 seconds before you move to the next chemical while printing. The chemicals will be contaminated, and exhaust quickly if you don't do this
- Use only the designated tongs in each bath. Using tongs from other trays will leave stains on your prints and contaminate the chemistry
- Do not leave prints or test strips floating in chemistry or water longer than necessary.
- Never add prints to the First Wash and/or the Rocker Washer if there are already prints in there, and remove your prints promptly when they are done washing
- If the chemistry seems exhausted (developer & stop will appear very dark), let Hannah/Media Center know. Students are allowed to refill chemistry in trays if necessary. Please follow instructions posted next to the sink
- Never mix any chemicals yourself without training from your instructor or the Media Center

DRYING
- Please don't put RC prints on the drying racks. It is only for fiber, archivally washed prints
- Please don't put RC prints on the Black squeegee board. It is for fiber, archivally washed prints
- Never put your tray on top of the RC dryer, you will leave chemical residue on it.
- Keep dryer doors closed at all times (except when hanging or removing film)

Failure to follow these policies and best practices can result in loss of darkroom privileges