Quick Guide to IrfanView

The goal of any good web designer is to keep the size of any given web page under 50K in order to assure quick loading of the page. One or more improperly saved photos or graphics can make that goal completely unattainable.

File Compression
The physical size of the file may be improved through the compression features of the software. So, even if your image is just the right dimensions, contains just the right subjects, and doesn't need any adjustments to the colors or sharpness, it may still benefit from something as simple as saving it in IrfanView, and in so doing, compressing the file down into a more reasonable size. By default, IrfanView, sets the save quality at 80: the higher the setting, the better the quality of the image, but also the larger the file size. The default setting of 80 should be adequate for most users.

Simply open the image in IrfanView, and **Save** it.

If you are working with a GIF image, and wish to make the background transparent (so that your background "shows through" around the image, rather than seeing a big white box around the outer edges of the image), be sure to select that option _before_ you save the image.

Open the image in IrfanView, and select **File**, then **Save as**. When the Save Picture As… dialog appears, under the GIF section in the box on the right, select **Save Transparent Color** and then **Choose transparent color during saving**.
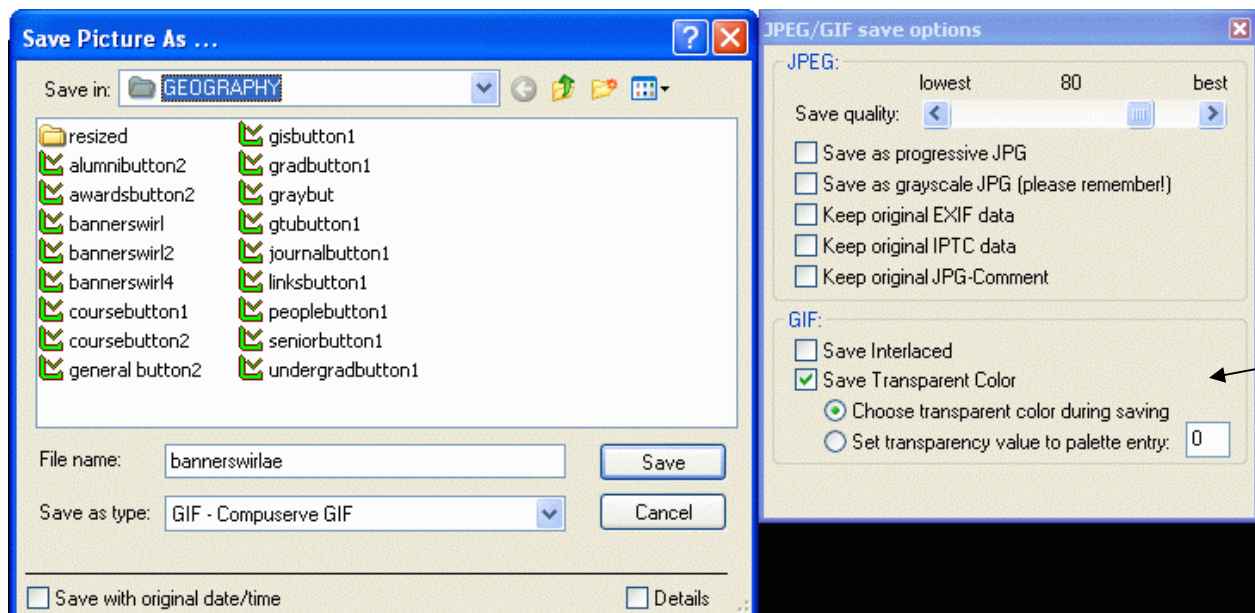
Once you have selected **Save Transparent Color**, and **Choose transparent color during saving**, name your file and click on the **Save** button. Another dialog box will open. Simply click on that portion of the image that you wish to be transparent. In most cases you will simply

click on any part of the white box around your image. The image will be saved so that the white will be rendered transparent when viewed on your web page.
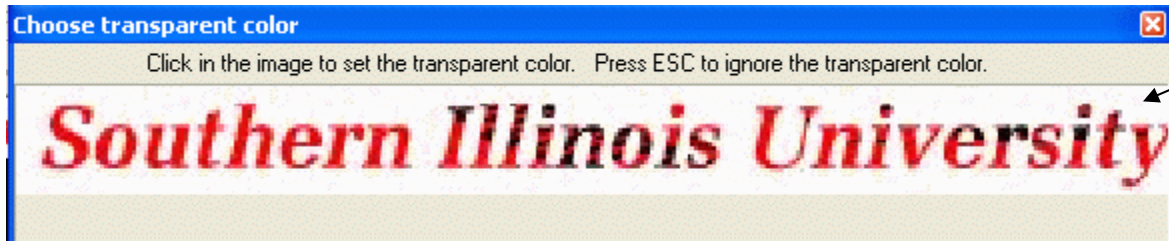

Resizing
It is better to actually physically resize an image than to have the browser resize it for you. For example, an image that is 650 x 650 pixels that you wish to display as 350 x 350 should actually be resized to that 350 x 350 size in your imaging software.

In IrfanView, first open your image. Select **Image** from the toolbar, and then click on **Resize/Resample**.
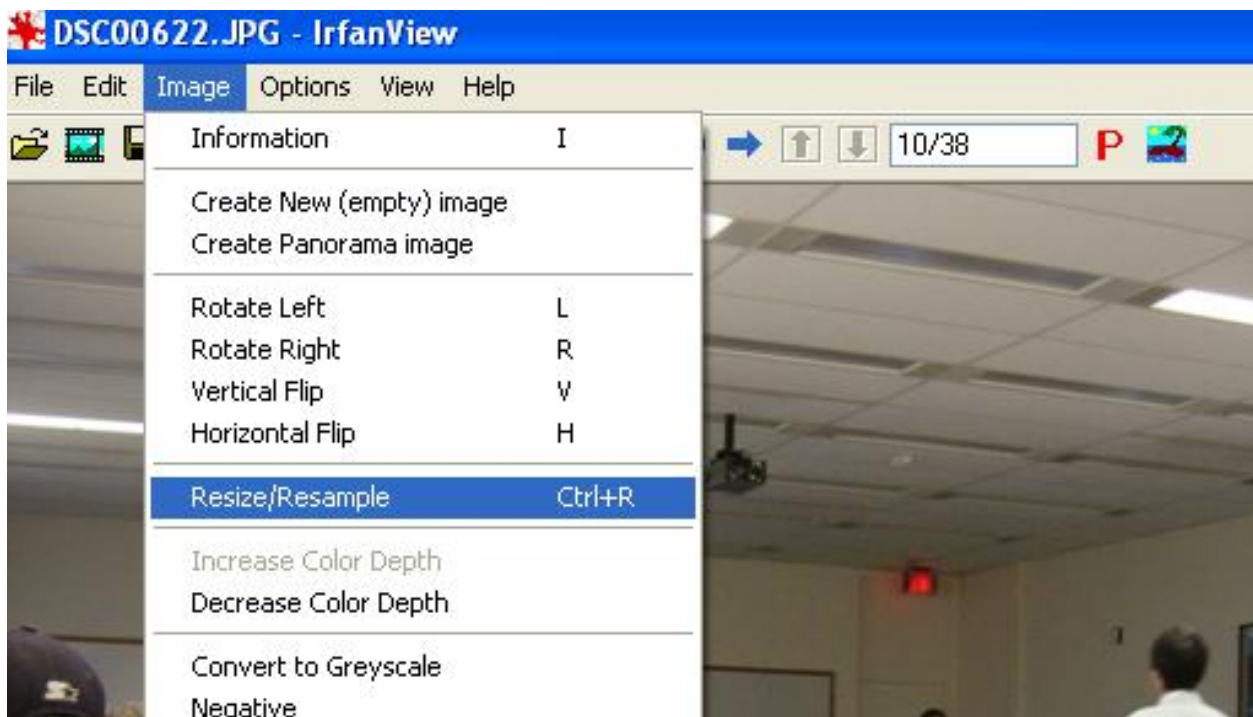
Another dialog box will open. You can either select to resize the image by specifying the pixel by pixel dimensions, or you can simply make the image a percentage smaller than the original. The dialog box will indicate the current dimensions of your image. Beneath that, you will find the **Set new size:** radial button selected by default. You can choose to reset the dimension there, or you can select **Set new size as percentage of original:** and make the image a percentage smaller than it was. In the example that follows, this latter option was selected and we selected

50% as the percentage we wished to use. Note that the **preserve <u>aspect</u> ratio** box is selected. When this is selected, you will note that any change you make to the width of the image will be made proportionally in the height. If you deselect this feature, (<u>*not* recommended</u>) you will be able to reset the dimensions without regard to the height and width ratio: your images will most likely end up distorted either vertically or horizontally. Click on **OK** and then save your image.
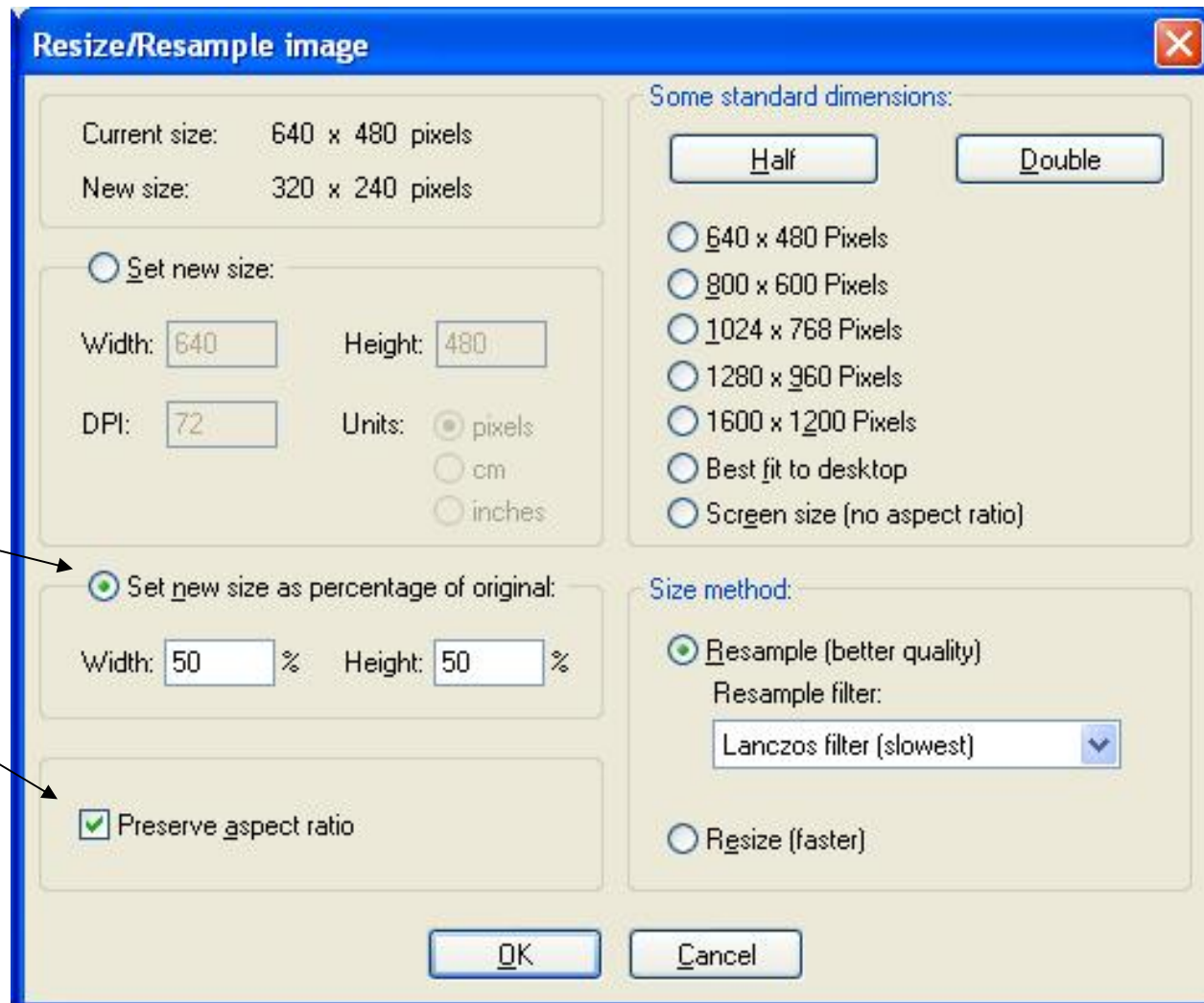

Cropping
There are times when an image can be improved with some strategic cropping. This often occurs when you really want to focus on the primary subject(s) in a photo, and cropping out the background allows you to eliminate extraneous material.

Open your image in IrfanView. Using your **left mouse key**, place your cursor where you wish to begin to crop your image**. Click and hold down the left mouse key**, pulling your cursor across your image until you have defined the area you wish to crop. **Release the left mouse key.** You will see a line around your selection. You can mouse over those lines and when an arrow appears, grab them and move them in or out to adjust the area you plan to crop. When you are

happy with the area you have selected, go up to the task bar, click on **Edit**, and select **Crop selection**.
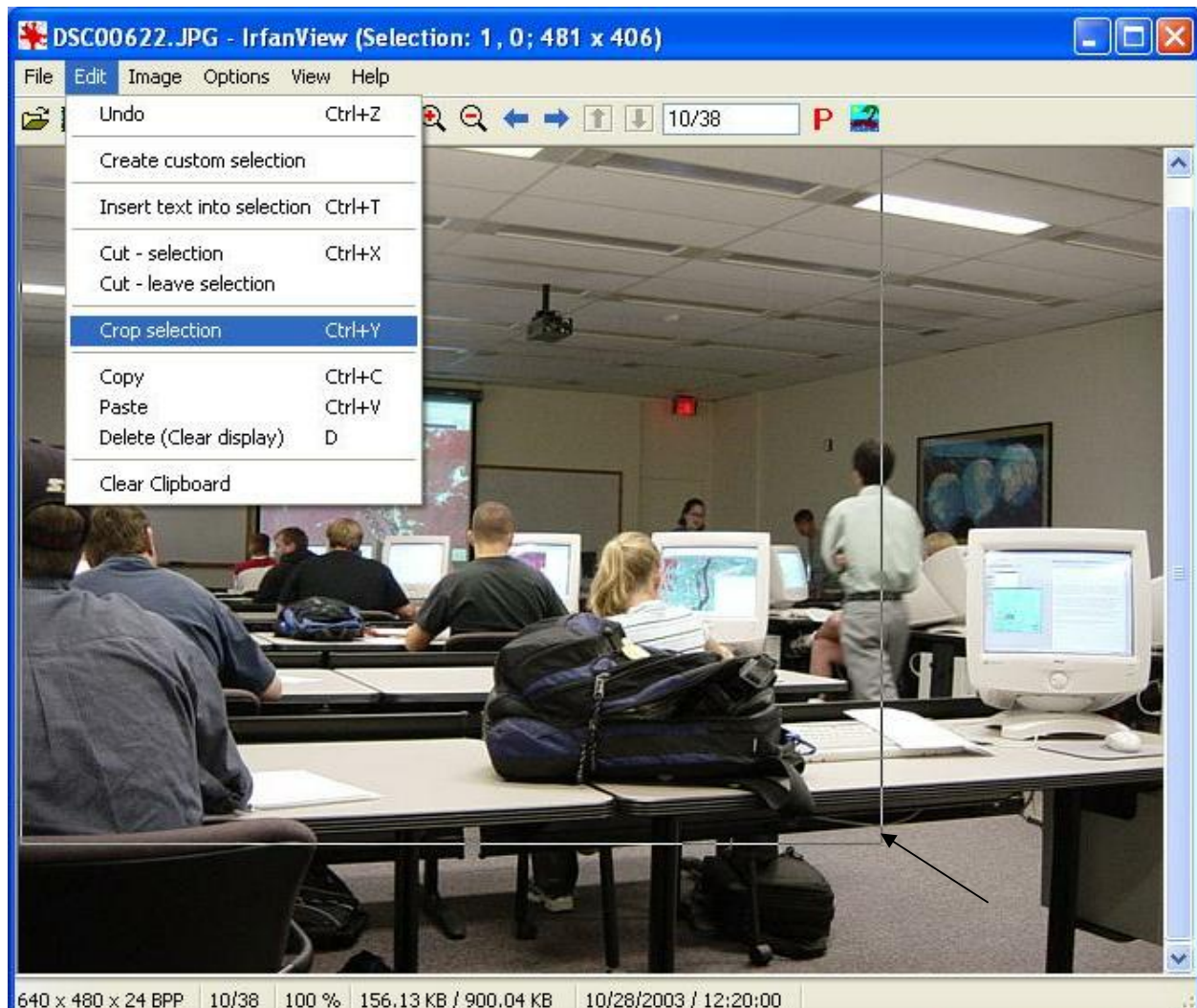

Enhancing Images

Lighting conditions are often out of our control when taking photos, particularly those taken at events. The end result may well be a photo that is overly dark to the point that you cannot distinguish facial features, or one that is washed out by bright light. It is possible to touch up photos to diminish these flaws.

Open your image in IrfanView. Select **Image** from the toolbar, and then **Enhance Colors**. A dialog box will appear. If your picture is too dark, you can slide the **Brightness** bar toward the right to lighten you image. You may find that as you brighten the image, it looks washed out. Move the **Contrast** bar toward the right to improve the contrast in the image. You can compare your original with the edited version. When you have achieved the results you were seeking, click on the **Apply to original image** bar. Click **OK**.
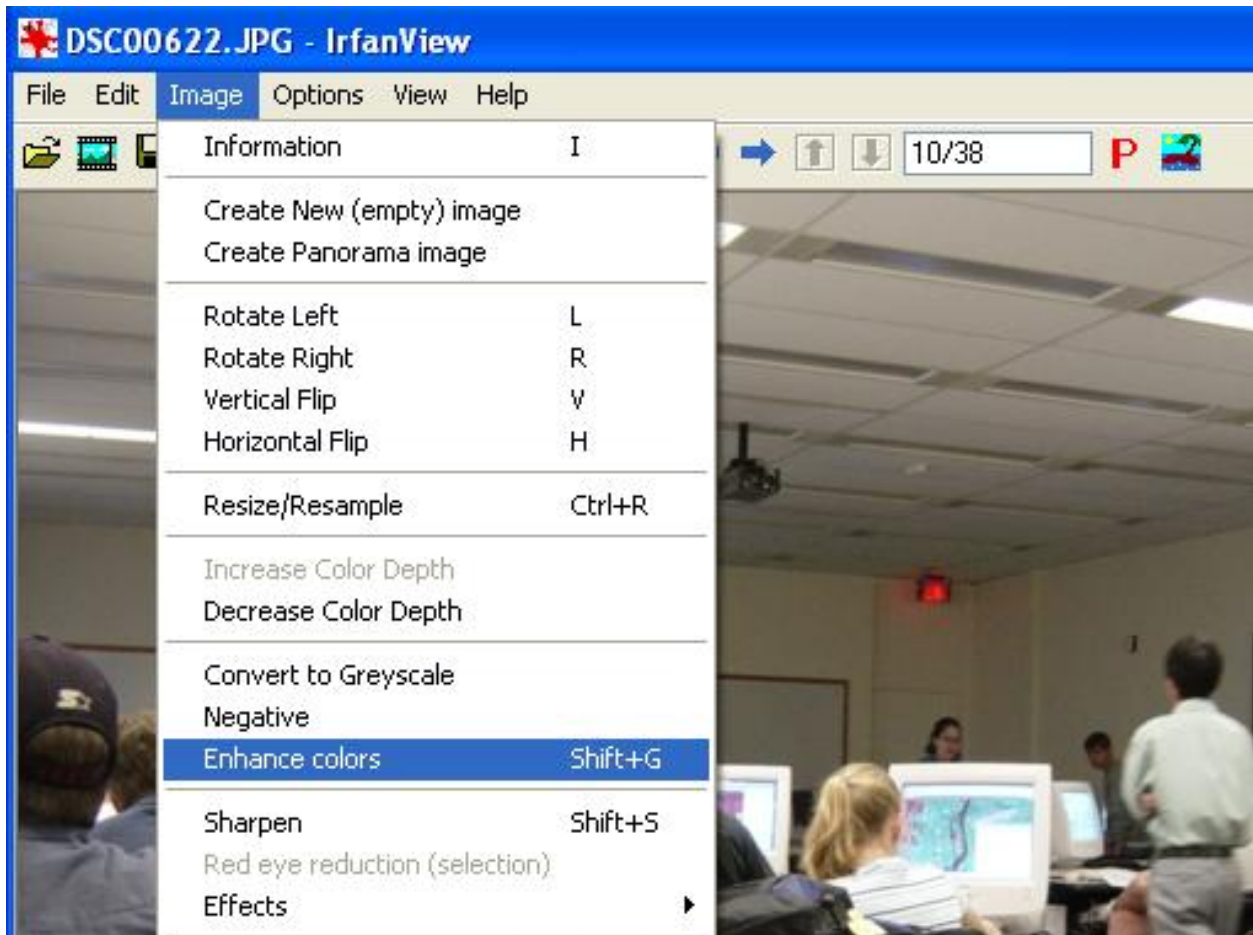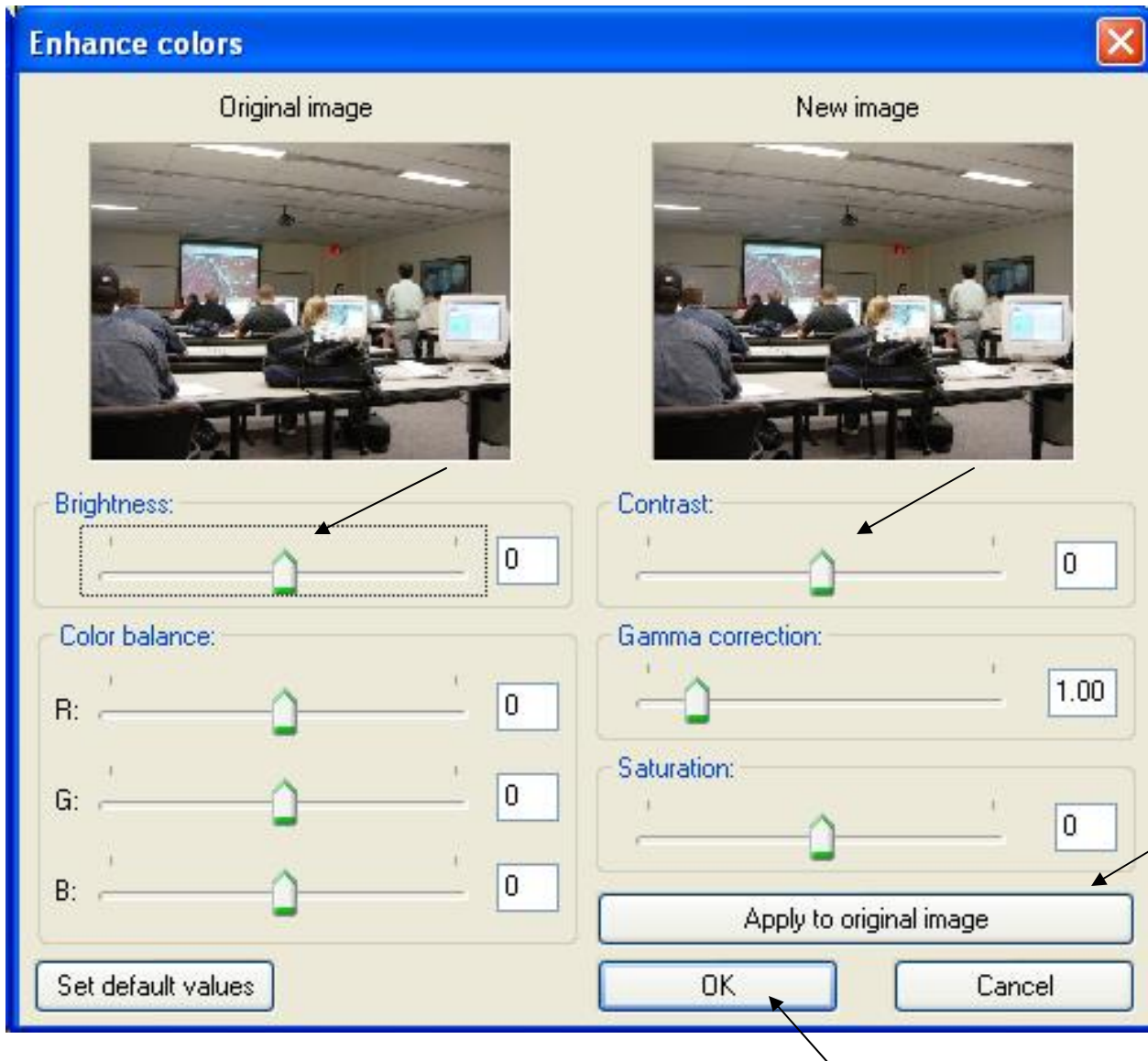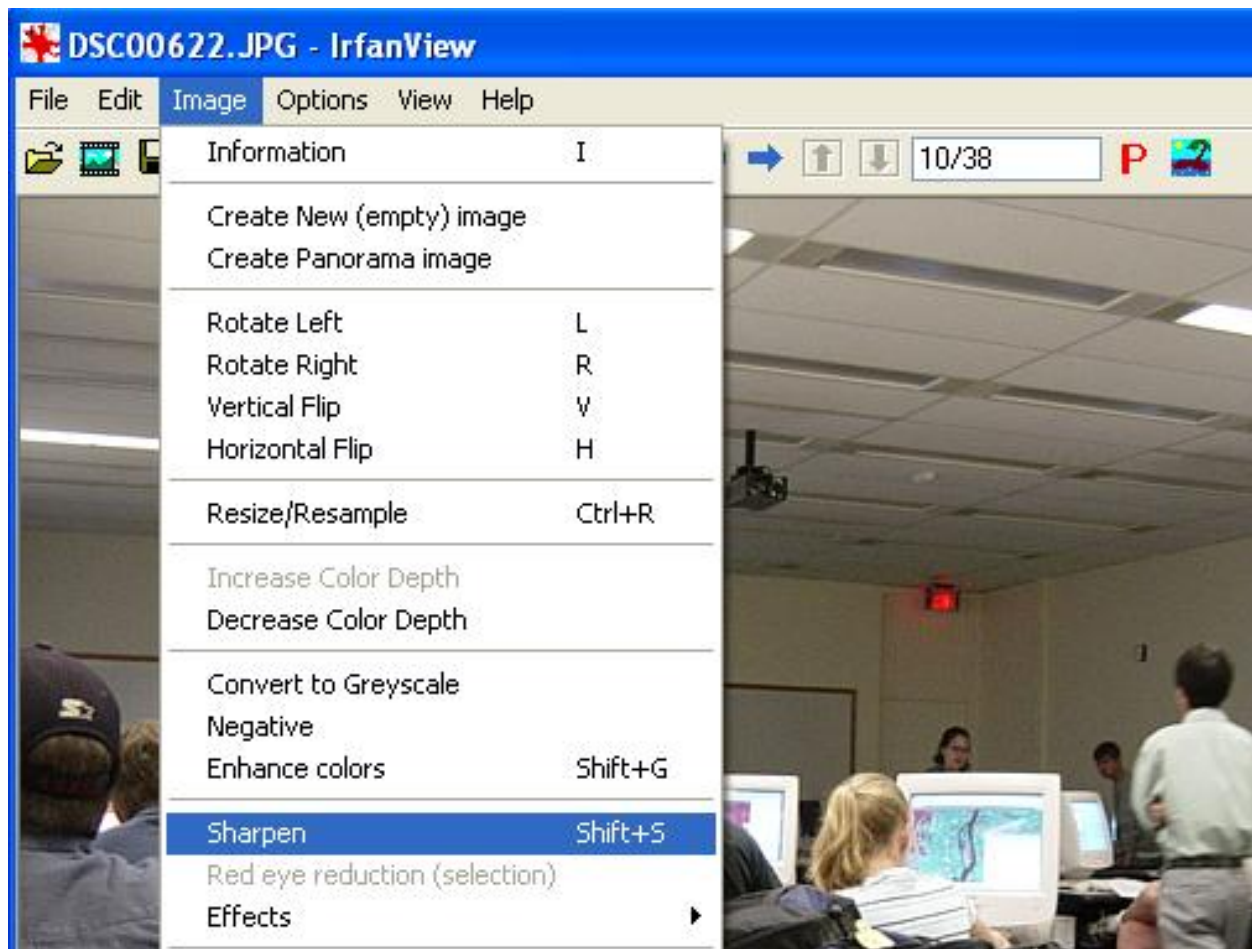
Sharpen

An image may benefit from sharpening if it is not as clear as you would like it to be. If your photo is not as crisp as you would like, try using Sharpen.

Open your image in IrfanView. Select **Image** from the toolbar and then **Sharpen**.

Notes:

You can make multiple edits of an image (resize, crop, enhance, sharpen) and save the end
product just once. You do not need to save individual adjustments as you go along.

In most cases, each of the features above allows you to **Edit** and **Undo**, in the event you find that
the end product is not what you wanted. Simply closing the software also allows you to quit
without saving the edits you have made.

You may well want to keep your originals intact, and save your edited image file in a "resized"
folder with either the same name or a different name. That way, you can always start anew
editing your original image.