

Advanced Digital Production Practicum

JOU 4202 • 2021 Spring

Lecture/Team Meeting: 3:00 p.m. to 4:55 p.m. Mondays, WEILO270

One 4-hour practicum shift per week in the WUFT newsroom as assigned.

Katie Hyson

Supervising Editor of Digital Content, Innovation News Center (INC)

University of Florida College of Journalism and Communications

Office: 2300 Weimer Hall (WUFT newsroom)

Email: khyson@ufl.edu | Twitter: @katiehyson23

Office Hours: By appointment.

There is no required text for this class.

Course Overview

This three-credit practicum is the next step beyond the essentials of digital production. The lecture times will prepare you for weekly newsroom shifts producing for the digital platform of WUFT News.

Students in this practicum will learn the basics of:

1. How to leverage advanced production methods, like SEO and A/B headline testing, to maximize audience impact.
2. How to use a cycle of experimentation and analysis to innovate the platform for growth.
3. How to research and present findings in a team meeting setting to further a digital platform.
4. How to build and publish featured content through WordPress, including using block building and html coding to design non-standard layouts.
5. How to identify material for newsworthy original content that can be covered from the production desk.
6. How to supervise beginning digital production students to ensure their growth while maximizing our team results.

Monday Class

Our Monday class time will be formatted like team meetings. Come ready to debrief the week, analyze what worked and what didn't, brainstorm solutions and pitch new ideas. As 4202 students, you are leaders within the team. Set the tone for an exciting semester of original ideas and outside-the-box thinking.

I may also assign you topics to look into during your weekly shift. You will present your findings and suggested applications/next steps to the team during these meetings.

WUFT Digital Production Shifts

You will be expected to complete one practicum shift in the newsroom per week for the duration of the semester. We will assign these shifts based on your schedules at the beginning of the semester.

This is the minimum. I encourage you to continue working on original content outside of these practicum shifts to get the most out of your practicum experience and to build your portfolio.

I will be your supervisor for these shifts — unless I say otherwise, please do not hit publish on anything until I've approved it. In the event of my absence, you may report to Ethan Magoc for supervision.

WUFT is a professional newsroom. You will be working on the digital platform of your local NPR station. Treat it with the professionalism and seriousness that you would an internship. Your work there matters and will reach a real audience. Depending on how well you use your time this semester, it can greatly help your portfolio and resume.

Most details about how to function for WUFT — from finding stories to writing headlines — are on its intranet (<http://www.wuft.org/newsroom>). The username is **newsroom** and password is INCnewsroom2021* (the O's in newsroom are zeros)

Grading

35% [monthly logs](#)

- This is the main way I will assess and grade your work this semester. I will look for how well you used your time in the newsroom (when things were slow, did you look for stories to cover, ways to engage our audience, new ideas to try, etc.), for growth in your web producing from month to month, but primarily for thoughtfulness about what worked and didn't work and what you and we as a digital team can do better. Because of this, it's in your interest to be as thorough as possible. Show me everything you've put into this practicum. As 4202 students, there is special emphasis on innovation and team leadership. I will also be looking for progress towards your portfolio piece each month.
- Logs are due at 11:59 p.m. on the last day of the month (see Canvas). I will deduct a letter grade for each day the log is late. Please communicate ahead of time if anything will prevent you from turning it in on time. It will help you immensely if you keep track of log-worthy items during your shifts as you go, so you don't have to remember and hunt everything down at the end of the month.

35% professionalism and leadership

- Were you on time and present for all your classes and practicum shifts, and did you stay for the duration? If something prevented you from that, did you communicate with as much advanced notice as you could? Did you engage during class and participate in any conversations or class activities? If you were present in the newsroom or representing WUFT over Zoom, did you dress professionally? If you missed a practicum shift, did you reschedule with me or arrange to swap with another student? Did you take initiative during your shifts to use your time well, were you engaged and active? Did you respond in a timely manner to all communications via Slack, Canvas, and email? Overall, did you conduct yourself with an attitude, work ethic and communication style befitting a professional experience?
- Did you offer consistent support to the 4201's with you on shift? Did you help them troubleshoot issues and get the most out of their shift time? Did you set the tone and help lead conversation during our team meetings? Overall, did you work to ensure the growth of the team as a whole?

30% portfolio piece

- You will develop one main idea from conception to execution over the course of the semester. The idea is to develop an innovation for our platform that you can show a potential employer. Being able to show real results, reflected in analytics, stemming from your innovation will be invaluable to future job applications. I am very flexible on what this is. I encourage you to focus on something *you* find endlessly engaging, something you could research and pour hours into without getting bored, and something that will be applicable to the field you'd like to go into. The only limit is that it must justifiably fit within the realm of digital production. I will work with you at the beginning of the semester to identify and refine your idea.
- I want to see progress towards this each month in your log. At the end of the semester, you will present your portfolio piece to the class.

Information on UF's current grading policies for assigning grade points can be found [here](#).

The official university policy on attendance can be found [here](#).

COVID-19 Precautions

- You are required to wear approved face coverings at all times during your shift and within buildings. Following and enforcing these policies and requirements are all of our responsibility. Failure to do so will lead to a report to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution.
- The newsroom and our assigned classroom has enough capacity to maintain physical distancing (6 feet between individuals) requirements. Please utilize designated seats and

maintain appropriate spacing between students. Please do not move chairs, desks or stations.

- Sanitizing supplies are available in the newsroom and in our assigned classroom to wipe down your desks prior to sitting down and at the end of the class.
- Follow your instructor's guidance on how to enter and exit the classroom. Practice physical distancing to the extent possible when entering and exiting the newsroom and the classroom.
- If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms ([click here for guidance from the CDC on symptoms of coronavirus](#)), please use the UF Health screening system and follow the instructions on whether you are able to attend class. [Click here for UF Health guidance on what to do if you have been exposed to or are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.](#)

Diversity and Inclusion

The University of Florida's College of Journalism and Communications Department of Journalism embraces a commitment toward an intellectual community enriched and enhanced by diversity along a number of dimensions, including race, ethnicity and national origins, gender and gender identity, sexuality, class and religion. We expect each of our journalism courses to help foster an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society.

You will do your best work as a journalist when you feel comfortable bringing your whole self to the table. Please let me know what I can do to make sure you feel respected and welcomed in this space.

- If you have a name and/or set of pronouns that differ from those that appear in your official records, please let me know.
- If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to come and talk with me. I want to be a resource for you.
- If you prefer to speak with someone outside of the course, Joanna Hernandez, CJC director of inclusion and diversity, is an excellent resource. You can email her at jhernandez@jou.ufl.edu.
- If something was said in class (by anyone) that made you feel uncomfortable, please talk to me about it.

I am committed to creating an inclusive environment in which all students are respected and valued. I will not tolerate disrespectful language or behavior on the basis of age, ability, color/ethnicity/race, gender identity/expression, marital/parental status, military/veteran's status, national origin, political affiliation, religious/spiritual beliefs, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status or other visible or non-visible differences.

Especially as a team of community storytellers, our differences will be one of our greatest strengths. I look forward to discovering those differences together and learning from each other.

Students With Disabilities

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with disabilities and who have registered with the UF Dean of Students Office. This office will provide relative documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodations.

UF Disability Resource Center: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

Counseling Center

Personal or health issues such as depression, anxiety, stress, career uncertainty and or relationships can interfere with your ability to function as a student. UF's Counseling and Wellness Center (CWC) offers support for students in need. CWC is located at 3190 Radio Road and open each weekday from 8 to 5.

UF Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc>

Resources

The University of Florida offers an abundance of resources that can help students throughout their academic career. Each student is encouraged to make use of these resources, which include but are not limited to the library, tutoring, career resource center, etc.

UF Student Resources: <http://ufadvising.ufl.edu/student-resources.aspx>

Academic Integrity

The College of Journalism and Communications is committed to upholding the university's academic honor code. Academic dishonesty of any kind shall not be tolerated in this course. The university's guidelines provide additional details, which each student is expected to understand. To be certain, academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to using any work done by another person and submitting it for a class assignment; submitting work done for another class; copying and pasting text written by another person without quotation marks and or without complete attribution, which usually includes a link to the original work; using images produced by someone else without explicit permission by the creator. Attribution is not the same as permission. Most images found online are not free to use.

UF Student Honor Code:

<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the final weeks of the semester. Students will be given specific dates when they are open.

Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.