

# JOU 4930: Health Media Innovations



Fall 2016 Innovation News Center, Room 3324

Tuesdays 5:10 - 6 p.m.

Thursday 4:05 - 6 p.m.

Instructor: Tom Burton

tburton@jou.ufl.edu or [twburtonmedia@gmail.com](mailto:twburtonmedia@gmail.com)  
407-257-5602

Office Hours: Tuesday afternoons by appointment

---

## *What is The Student Body?*

The Student Body is a digital magazine focused on health and wellness for college-age individuals. It was launched in mid-November 2015 by a group of 13 UF students. The Student Body has received social media mentions and press attention from NPR's health blog, The Salt, Men's Health Magazine, Well+Good, and more. The Student Body maintains active social media presence on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, and YouTube.

## *Goals*

As part of this class, you will:

- Learn the fundamentals of health writing, which includes obtaining and vetting peer-reviewed health studies for inclusion in your articles
- Write articles on a variety of health topics including fitness, nutrition, sleep, beauty, mental health, social health, and more
- Understand and partake in handling the responsibilities associated with operating a digital magazine
- Learn to brainstorm alternative and innovative approaches to story presentation including interactive multimedia, video and first-person essays.
- How to write content with appropriate tone suitable for publication on the Student Body Magazine's website
- How to use social media, multimedia, photography, and other features to engage viewers
- Prepare a digital portfolio showcasing your work over the course of the semester

## *Class setup*

The two-hour block on Thursdays will typically be spent in the lab, in a "workshop" style environment in which you will receive time to work on your articles, conduct interviews, obtain feedback from the instructor, and engage in peer editing. On Tuesdays, we will be lecturing on innovation media, project reporting, and other in-depth approaches. Due to the changing

nature of the magazine and our needs, the course schedule is tentative and subject to change –however, the instructor will provide information about these changes.

### *Classroom Policies*

Attendance is required and expected each week unless you have a documented absence, such as illness, jury duty, university event, etc. If you have an extenuating circumstance, please speak to Tom beforehand. More than one unexcused absence will result in a 10-point deduction from your overall grade for each absence.

You are permitted to use devices such as phones, tablets and laptops, especially during the lab sessions in which you will receive time to work on articles. However, use of these devices must be related to the course and assignment at hand.

In lieu of a course management site, we will be keeping in touch using a Facebook group (you will receive an invite during first week of class), email, and Google docs, so make sure you have a functional Google account.

Students requesting special classroom needs must first register with the Dean of Students Office, which will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide the documentation to instructor.

Violation of the honor code includes plagiarizing material from other sources or fabricating material, as well as other forms of cheating. Violations will result in a failing grade, and you will be dismissed from the journalism program and reported to the Honor Court. See the Department of Journalism web site for specific outline of honor code violations.

### *Evaluation & Grading Scale*

- Evaluation of written articles (includes how well you adhered to deadlines, breadth of your research, quality of writing—how well you addressed all of the questions in the assignment sheet) up to 600 points
- Participation (includes attendance, speaking in class, providing ideas, peer editing, working with instructors & peers) up to 200 points
- Evaluation of your work as aggregator up to 100 points
- Midterm portfolio up to 50 points
- End of term portfolio & self-evaluation up to 50 points

(Maximum score out of 1,000 points)

1,000-950 A; 949-899 A-; 898-848 B+; 847-797 B; 796-746 B-; 745-695 C+; C 694-644; C- 643-593; D+ 592-542; D 541-491; D- 490-440; 439-0 E

There will be a handout for a detailed description of assignments, which includes a general rubric for writing articles. In general, you'll be graded based on quality of writing, breadth of research, adherence to all deadlines, etc.

If you have a question about your grade or progress in the course, please make an appointment with Tom to discuss.

*Course schedule (subject to change based on needs of the magazine)*

Tu 8/23 First day of class. Syllabus, student/instructor introductions

Th 8/25 Fundamentals of health writing. Aggregation guidelines

Tu 8/30 Finding credible health research and sources – guest speaker CJC librarian April Hines

Th 9/1 Individual meetings/discuss article ideas; Student Body site ideas/projects

Tu 9/6 Fundamentals of interviewing; identifying sources

Th 9/8 Digital vs. print magazines; Class workday – work on article 1

Tu 9/13 **Article 1 due; peer editing**

Th 9/15 Social media/strategic promotion of our brand. Second story idea review

Tu 9/20 Burton out Guest speaker TBA

Th 9/22 Burton out

Tu 9/27 Team involvement – social media, art, freelance; roundtables and alt form content

Th 9/29 Class workday – work on article 2

Tu 10/4 **Article 2 due; peer editing**

Th 10/6 TBA

Tu 10/11 Midterm evaluations

Th 10/13 TBA

Tu 10/18 GCreating an effective portfolio

Th 10/29 Staff meeting – content planning

Tu 10/25 Article critiques

Th 10/27 Turn in midterm portfolio via email by midnight

Tu 11/1 Class workday – work on article 3

Th 11/3 **Article 3 due; peer editing**

Tu 11/8 TBA

Th 11/10 Article updates – individual meetings

Tu 11/15 How to create a strong digital writing portfolio

Th 11/17 Class workday – work on article 4

Tu 11/22 **Article 4 due; peer editing**

Th 11/24 No class; Thanksgiving holiday

Tu 11/29 Long-term content maintenance planning/pros & cons of aggregation; discussing continued involvement

Th 12/1 Portfolio workday; deadline for all “loose ends” to be tied up

Tu 12/6 Course evaluations; Last day of class & End-of-semester review; Portfolios due via email by midnight.

Tom Burton @twburton on Twitter

Tom Burton is an independent photojournalist and filmmaker. He is the assistant editor for publications for the National Press Photographers Association, managing their online and social media communications. He is the former Director of Photography/Video at the Orlando Sentinel. He directed award-winning coverage of the end of the space shuttle program and was the coordinator for courtroom pool photography from the trials of Casey Anthony and George Zimmerman. Burton was also one of the first newspaper photographers to introduce video into daily coverage.

## ADVISER

Ted Spiker @ProfSpiker on Twitter

Professor Ted Spiker is the chair of the UF department of journalism and has overseen the department's magazine courses since he arrived at UF in 2001. A graduate of the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism and a former articles editor at Men's†Health, Spiker has had work published in [TIME.com](http://TIME.com), [Esquire.com](http://Esquire.com), *Outside*, *O the Oprah Magazine*, *Fortune*, *Men's Health*, *Women's Health*, *Runner's World*, *Reader's Digest*, *Best Life*, and many others. He is also the author of *DOWN SIZE* and the coauthor of a dozen books, including the national bestselling *YOU: The Owner's Manual series*.