

SYLLABUS

RTV 4930: Fall 2016

(WRITER)



Instructor: Paul Mena, email:

Office: Innovation News Center (INC) an G-044

Office hours: TBA

Location(s): Innovation News Center (INC) and Weimer 1074

Meeting times: Mon. 3rd period (9:35-10:25am), and shifts as scheduled

Objectives: Special study in Spanish language news production. Possible roles include writer, reporter, sports reporter/anchor, and co-anchor/executive producer.

Assigned duties: As described on the yellow form you completed with Dr. Coffey for your role. Writers are expected to complete 8-10 hours weekly in their role.

Evaluation: Writers' semester grade will be determined in the following way:

Class Attendance: 10%

Fulfillment of weekly hours: 20%

Teamwork, attitude, and professionalism: 20%

Effort & Improvement in all tasks of role: 10%

Quality of work, including reporting/writing/anchoring: 20%

Meeting deadlines; completion of assigned work: 20%

Grading:

A 94-100%

A- 90-93.95

B+ 87-89.95

B 84-86.95

B- 80-83.95

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| C+ | 77-79.95 |
| C | 74-76.95 |
| C- | 70-73.95 |
| D+ | 67-69.95 |
| D | 64-66.95 |
| D- | 60-63.95 |
| E | Below 60 |

Required Materials:

There is no required text. However, you do need your own thumb drive for this class, to save story scripts and audio files. We recommend at least 8GB of storage.

Recommended: While there are high quality Edirol audio recorders assigned just to Noticias WUFT for check out (Equipment Room, lower level of Weimer) and these are our preferred recording device, you may also wish to invest in a year-long subscription to an app called TapeACall (\$9.99/year), for situations in which you get a last-minute interview or one after business hours, you are not in the newsroom, and did not have a chance to check out a recorder. However, remember you must always get consent from any interviewee, prior to making a recording of your interview.

Weekly Responsibilities:

- Attend the Monday class (Noticias Plus). Come prepared to this meeting by being an informed news consumer at the local, state, national, and international level. By 3pm each Saturday prior to the Noticias Plus class, you will email me your ideas at [INSTRUCTOR EMAIL HERE](#) . You should think of two story ideas from each category (local, state, national, international, sports, calendar): One story for the current week, and the other for an “evergreen” show (dates for these shows are at the end of this syllabus, you will need to pick one for each story). A printed copy of your story ideas must be turn in at the beginning of Noticias Plus. Alternatively, please make sure you bring your iPad or laptop to be able to review/share them with your team.

-By 7pm the Sunday before Noticias Plus, listen to the recently aired Noticias newscast (on Dropbox). Submit a brief critique (3 paragraphs) of what worked, what didn't, etc. You will be able to access a digital file of the show if you didn't listen live Saturday AM. These critiques should also be included in your carpeta (see below).

- Bring a positive team attitude, professional behavior and respect for co-workers, good work ethic, strong news judgment and time management skills, and ability to honor and meet deadlines without exception.

- Deliverables: Writers are required to produce approximately 5 “readers” (brief news stories) each week, or a combination of SOTs and readers, though this number can vary based on show needs. These will be a combination of current stories that would air that same week, and “evergreen” readers (a feature-type story that will not be dated, which can be aired during a holiday or school break week). Writing assignments are due at the end of your Noticias shift (firm deadline). Keep in mind that some of your Noticias time will also need to be completed outside of your newsroom shift. Please also be an attentive communicator (e.g. check email and phone messages regularly). Your scripts will usually need revisions before they are ready for air, and you will need to respond to revision requests in a timely manner in order for show production to stay on schedule. Your communication with me as your Noticias instructor is important, but your communication with the rest of the team is also important.

- Digital Carpeta de Noticias: At the end of each week you will need to review all edits to the stories you produced that particular week and save digital files of them. Once you are done reviewing, please make digital copies with tracked changes so that you have that ready for your one-on-one meeting with the instructor. Make sure to include your story ideas and Asuntos Públicos description with the stories produced each week. Also include a digital copy of the web blurb you submitted for each week. The one-on-one meetings will occur at least once every other week. Your newscast critiques should also be included in the digital carpetas.

- Dress Code: There is a newsroom (INC) dress code which must be followed at all times. You will receive a copy for reference. If you want your sources, employers, and others to take you seriously as a professional, this is the first step. If in doubt, take it “up a notch” for the newsroom, and keep it more conservative/professional. ☺

- Food and Drink Policy: Beverages with lids ONLY are permitted in the newsroom. Otherwise, there is absolutely no food or drink permitted. (Break room with refrigerator is upstairs.) Please set an example for others, and if you see any violations, kindly remind others of this policy as well.

- Workspace Courtesies: Please keep your workspace clean. There are many others who will use the same computer or seating areas throughout the day. Whether you are working in the designated Noticias workspace (table) or elsewhere in the newsroom, please clean up after yourself and respect the environment. In addition, do **not** leave your work on the newsroom computers’ desktops (unattended). It is likely to get erased. Save your work

often and on your personal jump drive or thumb drive. Also, please make sure you follow all the steps for saving your scripts and audio as described in El Cuaderno.

- Attendance: Consider your participation on the Noticias WUFT news team as a job—that's exactly what it is, although you are also learning how to be a journalist. Everyone else on the Noticias team is counting on you. Thus, you are expected to be here at the assigned times and complete all weekly assignments. If for some reason you have a family emergency, become ill, etc., you must contact me to let me know.

- Timesheet: Please fill in your electronic timesheet daily for the hours worked each day. Tabulate at the end of each day, so that you do not lose track. You will receive an email with the link to this electronic timesheet the first week of classes. A printed copy of this timesheet should be included in the "carpeta" at the midpoint of the semester as well as at the end of the semester.

- Tips: Take advantage of my office hours for feedback on your writing, interviewing, and reporting skills. You will enhance your learning, and learn quicker, by seeking this feedback during my office hours (in newsroom). In addition:

- Always have a backup plan (Plan B, Plan C). Often, your first story idea will not pan out. Be ready in case it doesn't. The show still has to go on the air.
- Allow more time than you think you'll need to complete your stories. Whether writing a reader or a wrap, sometimes things take longer due to needed fact-checking, rescheduling of interviews, the storyline changing by the minute, etc. Better to get the story done a bit early than not make deadline.
- Ask for help when you need it. Whether it's who to contact as a source for a story, or how to adjust the audio level or microphone when recording, don't be afraid to ask questions. At the end of the day, our highest concern must be the editorial and production quality of our newscast. Don't feel embarrassed... we are all learning, and asking questions is one of the best ways to do so!

Other Notes, Resources

Students requesting classroom/newsroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. This office will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide this to his/her instructor when requesting accommodation.

UF Counseling Services: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx> or call (352) 392-1575.

Schedule (tentative and subject to change)

Week of (all dates listed are Monday):

- Aug. 22** Welcome to Noticias ~ Introduction and Orientation
Regular week. *Note: A regular week consists of producing content for the current week's show and evergreen content during shifts.*
- Aug. 29** Regular week.
- Sept. 5** NO CLASS. Labor Day holiday. *Produce regular show this week during your shifts. If your shift is Mondays, you need to arrange an alternative shift time for this week's shift with the instructor.*
- Sept. 12** Regular week.
- Sept. 19** Regular week + **Approval of Nov. 26 show.**
- Sept. 26** Regular week + Carpeta de Noticias due at the beginning of Noticias Plus.
- Oct. 3** Regular week.
- Oct. 10** Regular week (**However, show approval will occur on Thurs., Oct. 13 due to UF Homecoming holiday on Fri., Oct. 14.**)
- Oct. 17** Regular week + **Approval of Dec. 10 show**
- Oct. 24** Regular week + **Approval of Dec. 17 show.**
- Oct. 31** Regular week + **Approval for Dec. 24 show.** New team begins training.
- Nov. 7** Regular week. (However, show approval will occur Thursday due to Veterans Day holiday on Friday, Nov. 11.) New team continues training.
- Nov. 14** Regular week. + **Approval of Dec. 31 show.**
- Nov. 21** Evergreen show airs for Thanksgiving weekend. Work on special project (TBA) this week.
- Nov. 28** Regular week
- Dec. 5** Last day of Noticias Plus. Editing and approval of special project (TBA) show this week (Jan. 7 show).
Carpeta de Noticias due at the beginning of class.

Evergreen shows air November 26, December 10, 17, 24, 31 and Jan. 7. (Jan. 7 will be the special project show.)