

Video Storytelling For Web: JOU4930

Combining sight, sound and motion for narrative storytelling – Fall Semester 2016

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“We usually enter a story through a character that lures or invites us in, but one of the reasons we stay is because the world he/she inhabits is so vivid. Thus, stories are not just the different and new people that we meet, but also the worlds they inhabit: their apartments, their offices, their cities, their countries.” - The Power of Storytelling

Welcome to Video Storytelling For Web. This course is designed to teach advanced storytelling, shooting, and editing techniques for multimedia journalism in multi-platform environments. The course will teach you to recognize and understand the technical and aesthetic aspects of visual storytelling, and how to build successful visual narratives using a combination of still images, HD video, ambient audio, and natural voices. The course is constructed to prepare you for the “real world,” in which you will apply the journalistic standards of truth, fairness and accuracy with the tools and techniques of multimedia journalism to tell compelling narratives in a professional environment.

Professional camera gear, audio equipment, including microphones and a recorder, and photo and video editing software such as Photoshop and Final Cut or Premiere are necessary. Use of a tripod for video is mandatory.

Before taking this course you need to have demonstrated a base level of experience and understanding of how to shoot stills and video with a professional HD/SLR using manual settings. You must have experience in gathering and editing audio and video using professional editing software such as Final cut or Premiere. This

course will apply professional standards and practices to your work with a goal of preparing you for the next step in your careers.

Student Learning Outcomes:

- To identify and analyze current trends in multimedia storytelling.
- To assess, compare and contrast, and rate the work of professionals and classmates through critique and interpretation.
- To apply journalism ethics of truth, accuracy and fairness to your work.
- To demonstrate the ability to give and receive constructive feedback through group critiques.
- To use still images in video storytelling.
- To demonstrate how to conduct a successful interview on video with good light, composition, sound and content.
- To demonstrate how to capture high quality a-roll and b-roll and use those components to build multimedia stories.
- To demonstrate how to capture and edit high-quality audio with ambient and natural sounds for multimedia narratives.
- To build upon existing editing skills for stills, video and audio using appropriate software including Photoshop, Final Cut and/or Premiere.
- To build upon existing shooting skills to capture professional quality still images and HD video using a HDSLR camera to build multimedia narratives.
- To learn and apply successful mobile multimedia reporting techniques for the field.
- To illustrate how to produce a storyboard for your projects.
- To discover the subject's voice and build the story arch and narrative.

Goals

- To produce a tightly edited and focused multimedia narrative to be used in portfolio for internships or jobs.

- To discover where and how to find internships, jobs, and freelance assignments for multimedia storytelling.
- To present and brand your project in a professional manner online for prospective employers and clients.

Prerequisites for the course: *VIC 3001 Sight, Sound and Motion; JOU 3601 Photographic Journalism; JOU4946 Applied Online Journalism*

Course Materials:

There are six DSLR kits available for checkout from Steven Kippert in the equipment room. You will need to provide your own [SD Card, available from Amazon.](#)

Cameras, Equipment and Supplies: This is a video storytelling class. You must have access to a **HDSLR camera** that shoots video and stills such as the **Canon 5D Mark III** or **Nikon D750**. You will also need a **lavalier mic** or shotgun mic and an **audio recorder**. If you are going to use your iPhone for collecting audio, you must have the necessary microphones and adapters. Here is a good link to get started: <http://www.niemanlab.org/2011/05/reporting-live-from-the-scene-of-breaking-news-on-an-iphone/>

Additionally you must have a **tripod**, preferably with a video head, an **external hard drive** with 500G to 1 TB of space ([LaCie Rugged All-Terrain](#) is a good one). Backups are critical. You don't want to lose all of your hard work.

You will need Final Cut Pro or Premiere as well as Photoshop and/or Lightroom.

You will be able to use this gear well beyond this class. Everything listed is industry standard. If you have any questions about gear or equipment, come talk to me.

Course Communities: We will use Canvas, Vimeo and Medium to create online communities for this course in which to share inspiring work and class information.

Our class Vimeo channel is [Multimedia Narratives](#). You will all be posting your videos to our class channel.

A DropBox or Google Drive folder will also be useful.

Reading List:

Required:

- [Video Journalism For The Web : A Practical Introduction to Documentary Storytelling](#)
- [Mediastorm – Field Guide to Powerful Multimedia Storytelling - iPad App- \\$9.99- Highly Suggested if you have an iPad.](#)

Suggested:

- [In the Blink of an Eye](#) – by Walter Murch
- [The Bare Bones Camera Book](#) – by Tom Schroepel
- [Sound Reporting: The NPR Guide to Audio Journalism and Production](#) – by Jonathan Kern
- [Photojournalism: the Professionals Approach](#) – by Ken Kobre
- [Jessica Abel and Ira Glass – Radio: An Illustrated Guide Reality Radio – John Biewen Cutting Rhythms: Shaping the Edit](#) – by Karen Pearlman
- [Lynda.com](#)
- Additional readings will be posted throughout the course
- Keeping up with current multimedia projects throughout course is expected – each student will be required to suggest at minimum two different multimedia stories for the class to watch and analyze throughout the semester. We will discuss some sources for quality multimedia such as [Mediastorm](#), [Strawhat Visuals](#), [L.A. Times](#), [Washington Post](#), [New York Times](#), [NPPA POY](#) and [CPOY](#), and non-profits like [Open Society Foundations](#) and [PhotoPhilanthropy](#).

Attendance: Attendance is necessary for constructive in-class critiques and group evaluations. You are expected to attend labs and

lectures. Excused absences include family emergencies, illness, jury duty, military service, and professional conferences where you are presenting a paper, speaking on a panel, or accepting an award. If you must miss class, please contact me BEFORE class, unless otherwise unavoidable. All work must be turned in on time unless other arrangements are made with me. Arriving late or leaving early is disruptive to creating a critical learning environment. Please be on time and remain until class is dismissed. Your participation in class not only benefits you, but everyone else in the class. We need you there for the entirety to elevate the experience for everyone.

Be Respectful: We will be using technology on many different platforms throughout the course for myriad reasons, however, turning off your cell phone and laptop during lectures or critiques enhances the learning environment for everyone. Please limit any unnecessary disruptions or distractions during lectures, critiques and labs.

Classroom Procedures: No food is allowed in class or lab. The technology we will be using during the course is highly susceptible to damage from food and drinks. We will have breaks during class to provide you the opportunity to eat a snack. You may bring drinks to class, but please have a secure lid on the container or bottle. Do not set your drinks near laptops, computers or keyboards. Please dispose of all food and drink containers, wrappers, bags, etc... outside of the classroom and lab.

Grading: Grading for this course will be at times, subjective. I will do my best to be fair and balanced. Each assignment will be judged through the lens of professional quality journalism as it pertains to accuracy, craftsmanship, effort and enterprise.

Take risks: You are encouraged to take risks in this class. We learn the most from our mistakes. Don't just emulate what you have already seen. Innovate. Try something new and different. Fail and try again. You need to know and understand the basics first, but from there you can push through to new and exciting territories.

Carry it forward: You will have opportunities to carry your peer and instructor feedback forward to improve your grade throughout the course. Your effort and participation in the learning process are the most critical components to your grade. Your final grade will depend mainly on the quality of work you hand in with special emphasis on your improvement throughout the course.

Deadlines: Missing deadlines is unacceptable in the “real world” and will significantly lower your grade. If you miss the deadline, you will lose one letter grade for each day the assignment is not turned in, up until the third day. After the third day, you will receive zero points for the assignment. We need everyone to turn in their assignments on time to have constructive critiques, even if the assignment or project is not perfect. In the real world, it doesn’t matter how good a story is if it is turned in after deadline and nobody gets to see it. We will stick firmly to these principals.

Class Schedule: * *Course schedule subject to change*

| Week | Date | Topic |
|---------|--------------|--|
| Week 1 | August 23 | Course Intro |
| Week 2 | August 30 | Stills |
| Week 3 | September 6 | Sequencing/Silent Film |
| Week 4 | September 13 | Character Driven Narratives/ Profiles |
| Week 5 | September 20 | Interviewing |
| Week 6 | September 27 | Team Project 1 Proposals |
| Week 7 | October 4 | Rough Cuts |
| Week 8 | October 11 | Project 1 Presentation and Critique |
| Week 9 | October 18 | TBD/Guest Lecture |
| Week 10 | October 25 | Issue Reporting/Live Event/Mobile Video |

| Week | Date | Topic |
|---------|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| Week 11 | November 1 | Project Proposals/Story Boards |
| Week 12 | November 8 | Working Lab |
| Week 13 | November 15 | Project Rough Drafts |
| Week 14 | November 22 | Work Lab |
| Week 15 | November 29 | Final Project Feedback |
| Week 16 | December 6 | Final Project Revisions |
| Week 17 | December 13 | Finals Week (Grades Due on Dec. 19) |

Requirements for each assignment:

Each assignment or project must be posted to Canvas (stills assignment) or on Vimeo (All video assignments) before the class starts or it will be considered late. Remember, it takes time for Vimeo to process your video (sometimes hours). Do not wait until the last minute. If your video is still processing at the start of class, it is late and points will be deducted.

Username and password for the Multimedia Narratives Vimeo Channel are:

Username: multimedianoarratives@gmail.com

Password: videostories

Each video must be accompanied by the following elements on Vimeo:

1. A 240 character description of the story.
2. A longer 250 word description of the story including details like name, age, addresses, etc... This must contain a sentence about the news value of your story. Why is your video and story important and why now?

3. A compelling headline and subhead that are SEO optimized plus at least 5 tags

Film Festivals:

Each week we will share, discuss and analyze inspiring video storytelling and journalism.

Everyone must post a video found on the Internet to the [Multimedia Narratives Medium](#) page each week to be viewed and commented upon by midnight each Sunday. We will discuss the videos and comments each week in class.

In order to post to the Medium publication, you need to open a Medium account with your Twitter handle. I will make you an editor of the page after you have joined.

Each submission should be no longer than 10 minutes unless pre-approved by the instructor.

You may not submit a video that the instructor has shared or posted or has already been seen in class. You are encouraged to find unique, clever, experimental and thought provoking videos. There is no right or wrong here; you are inspiring conversation.

Grading Rubric:

- Weekly Assignments: 50%
- Final Project: 25%
- Medium Posts/Class Participation: 25% (You will post weekly)
- **A** – Work is on time, accurate and publishable, demonstrating an in-depth understanding of the elements of strong visual narrative

storytelling. **All deadlines and assignment expectations have been met or exceeded**

- **B** – Work is almost publishable with basic understanding of visual storytelling. **All deadlines and assignment expectations have been met.**
- **C** – Effort was made but the quality of the work is not publishable without significant improvements. **All deadlines have been met.**
- **D** – The craftsmanship and presentation of the work barely passes the minimum standards for a student in an advance level class due to a lack of effort or care in the final product. Work is not publishable. **Deadlines and/or assignment expectations have not been met.**
- **F** – Student failed to either produce the required work or put forth enough effort to meet the minimum standards of the course.

Grading Scale

The minimum score to pass this course is a C, or 72.5. Scores are rounded to the nearest whole point: 89.4 rounds down to 89 (B+) while 89.5 rounds up to 90 (A-).

| | Percent | | Percent | | Percent | | Percent |
|---|---------|----|---------|----|---------|----|---------|
| | | B+ | 89-87% | C+ | 79-77% | D+ | 69-67% |
| A | 100-93% | B | 86-83% | C | 76-73% | D | 66-63% |

| | | | | | | | |
|----|--------|----|--------|----|--------|----|--------|
| A- | 93-90% | B- | 82-80% | C- | 72-70% | D- | 62-60% |
|----|--------|----|--------|----|--------|----|--------|

Information on current UF grading policies for assigning grade points
This may be achieved by including a link to the web page: [https://
catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx](https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx)

Accuracy: Proofread all of your work for fact errors or misspellings BEFORE turning it in for a grade. Professional journalists are expected to provide accurate and truthful information. Getting the facts wrong can cost you your job in the industry. Start building good editing habits now.

How do you succeed in this class? Come to every class on time and stay until the end. Great journalists go early and stay late. Use your time wisely to learn, participate and contribute in class discussions, critiques, lectures and labs. Make your deadlines. Take risks. Help your classmates. Ask questions, often. Be ethical. Hold yourself to the highest degree of honesty, integrity and accuracy. Make no excuses. Correct your mistakes. Be humble and positive. Apply the knowledge and skills learned in this class to develop professional quality work. Leave your comfort zone and push the boundaries. Never stop looking, listening and learning.

If you follow these guiding principals, you will find success in this class by producing the assigned work, turning it in on time, improving upon it throughout the course, and creating a professional quality multimedia narrative with sound, stills and video that tells a compelling story through a character with an appropriate story arch. Your final project will be used to show prospective employers why you are part of the next generation of visual storytellers.

Critiques:

Giving and receiving valuable feedback is necessary for personal and professional growth. We will be using the class critiques as a forum in which to discover and analyze what makes strong, innovative, communicative visual storytelling. We will discuss what works, what doesn't, and why. The goal is to instill in you a greater appreciation for multimedia narratives, the ability to recognize and evaluate current and future trends, and prepare you to design successful stories using still images, video, and sound for applications in the professional world.

Everyone must take part in the critiques with constructive ideas and suggestions. We must be tough in order to get better, but we must also be respectful and balanced. When receiving a critique of your work, remember that the purpose is to make you a better storyteller and better qualified to enter the professional world. Have a thick skin. You will need it when applying for internships and jobs. Employers and mentors will judge your work with professional standards. You need to be prepared to accept constructive advice in order to grow and learn from it, without getting down or defensive. And remember, if you are fair and balanced when giving critiques to classmates, they will in turn do the same for you.

Lastly, participation in critiques and discussions is a significant portion of your grade. Please come to class prepared to engage in discussion.

Honesty, Integrity and Ethics: UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you

are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. Student conflict and conflict resolutions guidelines can be found at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

All students in this class are expected to adhere to the ethical guidelines and principles of journalism. Some useful resources can be found at <http://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp> and https://nppa.org/code_of_ethics. If you have an ethical dilemma, seek advice from the faculty.

Make sure that what you write, shoot, and edit is your own work. Plagiarism is cheating. Using someone's intellectual property without their permission or attribution is an egregious violation of journalism ethics and principals, one in which you will lose your job and possibly your career. If you incorporate music, sound, still images, video, or written words in your work that is not produced by you and you alone, you **MUST** receive permission to use the material and give appropriate credit. If you have questions or concerns about using a particular photograph, video clip or piece of music or sound, please come talk to me **BEFORE** using it in your story. Any attempt to pass off another person's work as your own **will result in a failing grade and your violation will be reported to the Dean of Students office.**

Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Useful Resources:

- **Division of Student Affairs** (352-392-1261) – Contact this office if you need to miss class due to an on-going medical

- problem or family emergency. The office will send a courtesy email to your instructors about your absence. <http://www.ufsa.ufl.edu/>
- **UF Counseling & Wellness Center** (352-392-1575) – The center provides scheduled and drop-in appointments with counselors to discuss a range of personal issues. <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/>
 - **Disability Resource Center** (352-392-1261) – Students requesting class accommodations must first register with the Disability Resource Center. You will receive documentation to give to each of your instructors. You must meet with your lab instructor and with me during office hours to discuss special arrangements. Please take action immediately. <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>
 - **Communication Coaching Center** (1088 Weimer Hall) – Student members of the Journalism and Communications Ambassadors staff the center. They can provide coaching on writing assignments, grammar and AP style issues. They also can assist you in applying for internships and finding sources for a story. <http://www.ufjca.org/communications-coaching-center.html>
 - **Computers** – Call 352-392-HELP (4357) or email helpdesk@ufl.edu.
 - **Knight Division for Scholarships, Career Services and Multicultural Affairs** (1080 Weimer) -Provides information on scholarships and internships and sets up the College Interviewing Day each semester. Mr. Charles Harris is the director. <http://www.jou.ufl.edu/knight/>
 - **Career Resource Center** – The CRC is located on the main floor of the Reitz Union and provides free career assessment and counseling. Check the CRC website for information about workshops, career and job fairs, or to schedule an appointment. <http://www.crc.ufl.edu/>
 - **SNAP** – Offering pick-up and drop-off services for after-dark safety. Call 352-392-7627 or check online <http://www.police.ufl.edu/community-services/student-nighttime-auxiliary-patrol-snap/> You can get the SNAP App for free by using either the Android Market or Apple App Store and

searching for SNAP UF.

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 last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.