

# RTV 4930: Online Sports Reporting: Podcasting Spring 2017

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**Monday – Periods 3-5**  
**9:35 AM-12:35 PM**  
**Section 015C**  
**Weimer 3024**  
**Office Hours: Tue. 6-8**

## **Overview and Objectives:**

**RTV 4930 is designed** to offer instruction, analysis and training in sports podcasting and research, writing, interviewing and reporting. Special emphasis is placed on improving sports writing skills, research and analysis of sports events and issues, and basic audio production generation of sports content for an evolving medium on the Internet.

Objectives and goals of the course include:

- (1) to develop skills to effectively research, gather and analyze sports information;
- (2) to develop skills to produce high quality podcasts related to sports for on air radio broadcast and posting on the Internet, and to gain ability to record and edit audio obtained via phone or in-person;
- (3) to enhance understanding of the ethics and values of sports journalism;
- (4) to develop ability to understand relative newsworthiness of sports stories;
- (5) to develop ability to write and report “sound stories and features,” with the expectation work produced can be uploaded to iTunes and/or radio;
- (6) to develop skills for interviewing athletes, coaches, sports managers and owners;
- (7) to develop understanding of the variety of sports sources used as a reporter;
- (8) to enhance skill in voicing work, live and recorded, on-the-air;
- (9) to enhance understanding of UF, local, high school, national and international sports;
- (10) to learn to effectively edit audio using appropriate editing software.

**Course Eligibility:** Students must have received a grade of “C” or better in RTV 2100, MMC 2100 or JOU 3109c. Students must have a passion or strong interest and depth of knowledge in sports.

**Course Fee:** None

**Required Equipment:** Gathering sound (interviews, media days, teleconferences, etc.) is vital, and students will use many different means to collect sound. Before you will be able to check out digital audio recorders for projects, you must receive operational training both with and without a stick mic, as well as other means of audio collection. The newsroom has recorders for you to

use for your projects and the Dept. of Telecommunication has recorders you may check out (See guidelines for checking out equipment).

**IMPORTANT:** Using your personal smartphone is OK to record audio as an alternative to a recorder. However, students are *strongly* encouraged to purchase equipment to ensure audio quality does not suffer. If the audio of your podcasts lack sufficient sound quality, listeners will not remain engaged. Purchasing something as simple as a lavalier microphone (available for less than \$15 on Amazon) can drastically improve audio. You also may purchase recording equipment that plugs directly into a computer (Blue Snoball iCE for \$49, even less on eBay) for even better quality. Remember that this equipment can last you many years and be useful even after you graduate. We will help teach you to use it!

**Software:** This class will use Audacity as editing software. We will provide training. While basic, it's free and works on PC and Mac. Download Audacity at [www.audacityteam.org](http://www.audacityteam.org). You're free to use other editing software like GarageBand and Adobe Audition if you prefer and already understand how to use the software.

**Attendance Policy:** Attendance in the class is required. Excused absences include approved UF attendance exceptions. In all instances of excused absences the instructor and student will work out a plan for completing missed assignments. Attendance otherwise is expected. In case of illness, the instructor should be notified in advance whenever possible, and a physician's note may be required. Multiple unexcused absences will result in a severe grade penalty. If you miss quizzes due to an unexcused absence you will not be able to make up the work.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments and other work in this course are consistent with UF policies which can be found in the online catalog at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Students are expected to participate in all class discussions. Please turn off cell phones prior to class and do not browse the web unless related to class discussion. Sports journalism is a deadline-based profession, so you are expected to arrive on time for each class.

**Academic Integrity:** 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 specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. For more information visit the Honor Code web page at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/> or contact Student Judicial Affairs, P202 Peabody Hall, 392-1261.

You are responsible for knowing the definition of plagiarism and various kinds of academic dishonesty. Ignorance, i.e. "I didn't realize that was plagiarism" is not an acceptable response, and will not excuse you from academic dishonesty violations, if discovered. While you are responsible for reading and understanding UF's policy in its entirety, examples of academic dishonesty include:

- Using phrases or quotes from another source without proper attribution or quotation marks. For purposes of this class, five or more words (verbatim) from a source without proper attribution or quotation marks will be considered plagiarism. Paraphrasing without proper attribution also is a violation.
- “Forgetting” to source material you use (same as above, intentional or not)
- Passing off others’ ideas as your own
- Turning in the same assignment or paper for two courses, i.e. “dual submission.”
- Stealing and/or copying other students’ work, whether on a test or assignment
- Fabrication of material

If you have any questions about plagiarism, or how to properly cite or attribute sources, please ask. I am always happy to show you how to do this correctly in your scholarly or professional work.

**Students with Disabilities:** Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

**Course Evaluations:** Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on a minimum of 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these evaluations are available to students at the above website.

**Course Grading:** Students will be graded in accordance with UF policies for assigning grade points as articulated in the link that follows.  
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.a>

<b>Course Grading Components</b>	<b>(1,000 points)</b>
• Current Events Sports Quizzes	100 points
• Attendance/Participation	100 points
• Favorite Team	50 points
• Super Bowl Preview	100 points
• Super Bowl Recap	50 points
• Game Recap (Twice)	100 points
• Specific Topic	100 points
• Conversational	100 points
• Interview/Feature	100 points
• Branded Podcast	200 points

*There will be no opportunity for extra credit assignments other than assignments that may be offered to the entire class.* Because there are strict deadlines in the profession, any project turned in late will be penalized at least 50% with no exceptions. Projects will be emailed or otherwise sent to the instructors.

<b>Grading Scale:</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>(930+)</b>
	<b>A-</b>	<b>(900-929)</b>
	<b>B+</b>	<b>(870-899)</b>
	<b>B</b>	<b>(830-869)</b>
	<b>B-</b>	<b>(800-829)</b>
	<b>C+</b>	<b>(770-799)</b>
	<b>C</b>	<b>(730-769)</b>
	<b>C-</b>	<b>(700-729)</b>
	<b>D+</b>	<b>(670-699)</b>
	<b>D</b>	<b>(630-669)</b>
	<b>D-</b>	<b>(600-629)</b>
	<b>E</b>	<b>(under 600)</b>

### **Sports Knowledge Quizzes:**

Multiple times throughout the semester at the beginning of class, the instructor will administer a current information sports knowledge quiz containing information about UF, State of Florida, national or international sports. The instructor will inform the students of the general topic prior to the quiz. Working in sports requires a well-rounded understanding of sports and the quizzes serve as a motivation to learn as much as possible about the field in which students will be working.

### **Podcast Projects**

Note: For podcast assignments, in a special circumstance, you may request and seek approval a different topic of interest.

#### **Favorite Team Podcast:**

A 2-minute podcast on what your favorite team is (any sport) and why.

#### **Super Bowl Preview:**

A 3-4 minute podcast previewing why one team will win the Super Bowl. Opinion is encouraged here, but be sure to back it up with facts.

#### **Super Bowl Recap:**

A 4-minute podcast recapping the game and its biggest storylines. Pretend someone didn't watch the game and they're listening to your episode for the news. What are the most relevant things? Use at least two sound bites from Westwood One in your story.

#### **Game Recap:**

A 3-minute recap on a specific game to be chosen by the instructor. Similar guidelines from the Super Bowl Recap apply.

#### **Deep Dive Topic:**

A 4-5 minute podcast where you choose a very specific topic and do research on it to produce an interesting episode on something not generally known.

- Example: Don't tell me how good the Golden State Warriors' offense has been. Tell me about how their three-point shooting has changed this season compared to last, which has led to their current record.
- Example: Don't tell me how the Chicago Cubs are going to be a good team again. Tell me about the specific offseason moves (if any) they made to become an even better team.

### **Conversational Topic:**

An 8-10 podcast where you have a conversation with someone on a current sports topic. It's OK to have the conversation with a friend or family member (even better if the person has expertise in the area), but the person should be knowledgeable. This podcast is to help you learn how to carry an interesting discussion on something and help see something from a point of view other than your own. In addition, this podcast will have two live-reads (i.e. commercials) at specific intervals dictated by the instructor. *Note: A classmate cannot be your partner for this podcast.*

### **Interview:**

A 5-6 minute podcast where you interview a specific subject and tell us what you learned about them. You'll splice their sound bites into your narrative.

### **Branded Podcast:**

An 8-10 minute podcast that'll serve as a pilot to a series you'd want to continue after class.

- It can be about any sports topic
- It can be any format – solo, conversational with a friend, interview
- Must have an interesting, catchy name
- Must have a 2-3 sentence summary to give new listeners what they can expect from your series

All projects will be expected to be of high quality work. The pitch deadlines indicated in the syllabus are only the final deadlines. You may pitch your project topics at any time.

**Website:** Your goal should be to have your work seen by as many people as possible to improve your brand and to begin to establish yourself as a professional and experienced sports reporter. To do this, you'll create a free Soundcloud account. This is where you'll upload your completed podcasts throughout the semester. It should help the instructor and yourself keep your work organized. Make sure all your work is set to public.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

Week One (Jan.9):	Intro to class and review of syllabus; the basics of podcasting; Audacity walkthrough. Soundcloud walkthrough and sign up.
Week Two (Jan.16):	<i>Martin Luther King Day. No Class.</i> <b>Due:</b> Favorite Team Podcast
Week Three (Jan.23):	Sports Quiz. <b>Due:</b> Game Recap #1
Week Four (Jan.30):	<b>Due:</b> SuperBowl Preview
Week Five (Feb.6):	Sports Quiz. <b>Due:</b> on Tuesday, Feb.7, Super Bowl Recap
Week Six (Feb.13):	<b>Due:</b> Game Recap #2
Week Seven (Feb.20):	<b>Due:</b> Specific Topic podcast

Week Eight (Feb.27): Sports Quiz

Week Nine (March 6): *Spring Break. No Class*

Week Ten (March 13): **Due:** Conversational Podcast

Week Eleven (March 20): Sports Quiz

Week Twelve (March 27): **Due:** Interview Podcast

Week Thirteen (April 3): ---

Week Fourteen (April 10): Sports Quiz

Week Fifteen (April 17): **Due:** Branded Podcast.

**\*NOTE: Topic schedule subject to change based on guest availabilities and other factors. There will be no change in project due dates.**







