Journalism Capstone: Coding

JOU 4930 | Spring 2018 | Section 08E5 | 3334 Weimer Hall
Thursdays 11:45 a.m.–2:45 p.m. (periods 5, 6, 7)

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WEBSITE: https://webappsplus.wordpress.com/

Course Description

A capstone course is one in which you bring to bear all the skills you have acquired throughout your four-year degree program. Students work in small teams to produce portfolio-ready projects. This is a journalism capstone, and all projects will result in apps, tools, resources or stories that a professional journalism organization could be expected to produce. The intended audience for or users of the resulting product might be members of the public or journalists or both. A significant portion of each project must involve JavaScript, Python and/or some other programming language.

Prerequisites: JOU 3363 Introduction to Web Apps for Communicators and JOU 4364 Advanced Web Apps for Communicators

Course Objectives

In this course, students learn how to:

1. Work as part of a team to complete a collaborative journalism coding or data-driven project by a fixed deadline.
2. Lead and manage a project team.
3. Conceive and pitch projects suitable for a team effort.
4. Assess project proposals and give meaningful feedback about them.

Attendance and Attitude

Students are expected to show respect for one another and for the instructor. Attendance and arriving on time for class are necessary. *Lateness and unexcused absences will result in a lower final grade* (see details below for point breakdown). If you have been absent, you are responsible for finding out about any missed material by consulting another student and/or going to the instructor's office hours. These matters will not be handled via email.

Mobile devices must be turned OFF and placed out of sight during class. Do not check text messages, social media, email, etc., during class, as your instructor considers this quite rude and therefore grounds for disciplinary action. Give your full and undivided attention to anyone who is speaking in class, including your fellow students.

Students are expected to use their own laptop computer during class. However, if you are seen checking social media or any other sites unrelated to the immediate topics being discussed in class, penalties will be imposed. Penalties range from a warning (first offense) to grade point deductions, starting at 50 percent of one assignment for the second offense and up to half a letter grade for the course for chronic issues. Please give your full attention to the class while you are in the classroom.

See **Attendance and participation** under "Course Requirements" below for grading specifics.

UF Attendance Policies
> https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx

Course Deadlines and Makeup Work

Late assignments are not accepted unless an emergency can be documented. This means that an assignment submitted late is graded as a zero. Assignments are not accepted via email unless requested by the instructor. If an illness or a personal emergency prevents you from completing an assignment on time, advance notice and written documentation are required. If advance notice is not possible because of a genuine emergency, written documentation will be required. No work for "extra credit" is accepted.

NOTE: Assignment deadlines in Canvas are usually set for 11:59 p.m. If you submit after the deadline, your assignment is late.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty of any kind is not tolerated in this course. It will be reported to the student's department chair and to the university's Dean of Students. *It will result in a failing grade* for this course.

UF Student Honor Code
> https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/1617/advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

▪ Using any work done by another person and submitting it for a class assignment.
▪ Submitting work you did for another class.
▪ Copying and pasting code written by another person without attribution (attribution may be provided in comments or in the README).

Required Books and More

There are no required books for this course. Some readings will be assigned (see Canvas for links).

GitHub

Each student must have his or her own GitHub account.

> https://github.com/

Site hosting

If a **github.io** site is not sufficient to host your team's live project, you may need to buy hosting on a *cloud service* such as AWS or Heroku. Be prepared to pool funds with your teammates to support this. Alternatively, you may host your project on a student's personal website. For portfolio purposes, however, it would be best to have a standalone domain.

Laptop

All students in this course must own a laptop they can bring to class with them. A tablet will NOT be sufficient for this course. Any operating system is okay, but Mac OSX is *strongly preferred.* For assistance with your operating system or hardware, please use the UF Computing Help Desk if you cannot solve a problem. *Bring your power cord to class with you.*

Students with Disabilities

Students requesting accommodations must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodations.

UF Disability Resource Center
> https://drc.dso.ufl.edu/

Course Requirements

Read this entire document in the first week of classes. If anything is not clear to you, ask me for clarification on or before Jan. 12, 2018. This syllabus is a contract between you and me.

There is no external course website for this course. All materials will be provided via Canvas (UF eLearning).

> https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/349607

Be sure to check **your UF email** at least once a day for communications from your instructor.

Projects

Each student will work on three projects, mostly outside of class, with a team. **Exact deadlines:** In Canvas. Each project grade will be a team grade. That is, the project is graded, and all team members receive that grade for the project.

Project leader role

Once during the semester, each student will be a team leader. For this role, an individual grade is given based on both the instructor's observations and the team members' assessment of your leadership.

Project proposals

Three times during the semester, all students will write and share an individual proposal for a team project. From these proposals, the actual projects will be chosen. Students will be graded individually on their proposals.

Feedback on project proposals

For each of the three proposal assignments, each student will write and publicly post a feedback critique for two of the proposals submitted by other students. Since we have three rounds of proposals, each student will write six feedback critiques (two for each round). These will be graded individually.

Attendance and participation

All students are expected to attend class as scheduled and participate in discussions. Points will be subtracted if you miss more than one (1) class meeting, are chronically late, or repeatedly show inattention. Absences due to illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements, etc., will be handled in accordance with UF policies, to which you will find a link on page 2 of this syllabus.

Grades and Grading Policies

Projects (3 @ 100 each)	300 points
Project leader role	50 points
Proposals (3 @ 30 each)	90 points
Feedback critiques (6 @ 5 each)	30 points
Attendance and participation	30 points
TOTAL	500 points

92–100 percent	A	72–77 percent	C
90–91 percent	A–	70–71 percent	C–
88–89 percent	B+	68–69 percent	D+
82–87 percent	B	62–67 percent	D
80–81 percent	B–	60–61 percent	D–
78–79 percent	C+	59 percent or below	E

UF Policies about Student Grades

> https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx

UF Dates (Spring 2018)

Classes begin	Jan. 8	MLK Jr. Day	Jan. 15
Drop/Add	Jan. 8–12	Spring Break	March 3–10
Classes end	April 25		
Final Exams	April 28–May 4		

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online: 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: https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/

Course Schedule and Required Readings

Please note that many important details are in Canvas and do not appear herein. Assigned readings, links to resources, exact deadlines for work, etc., are all in Canvas (UF eLearning).

Week 1 | Jan. 11
Introduction to the course, projects, and team structure.

Week 2 | Jan. 18
Start Project 1 this week. Teams will be assigned in class.

Week 3 | Jan. 25
Work on Project 1.

Week 4 | Feb. 1
Work on Project 1.

Week 5 | Feb. 8
Work on Project 1.

Week 6 | Feb. 15
Project 1 due.

Week 7 | Feb. 22
Start Project 2.

Week 8 | March 1
Work on Project 2.

Week 9 | March 8
Spring Break — class does not meet.

Week 10 | March 15
Work on Project 2.

Week 11 | March 22
Work on Project 2.

Week 12 | March 29
Project 2 due.

Week 13 | April 5
Start Project 3.

Week 14 | April 12
Work on Project 3.

Week 15 | April 19
Work on Project 3. Note that there is an additional week, April 32–27, when class does not meet. Your team or team leader can meet with me by appointment during that week as needed.

Finals Week | May 3
Project 3 due.

Weekly topics are subject to change. Please check Canvas Announcements for the latest updates.