

MULTIMEDIA WRITING

Multimedia Writing introduces journalism and public relations writing and the use of multimedia tools in gathering and disseminating information. Students learn how to use multimedia tools for journalism work, interviewing techniques, AP style and the elements that make a story newsworthy.

COURSE GOALS + OBJECTIVES

This course was designed to encourage you to be proactive in your learning by requiring you to apply the concepts learned in each module to answering discussion posts that prompt critical thinking, and completing assignments that develop and demonstrate your writing and communication skills. The ability to critically think and write and communicate clearly will benefit you whether you choose a career path in communications or another field.

In this course you will learn:

- Terms and concepts used in the media industry
- How to communicate clearly and accurately in a variety of media styles: news story, news feature, profile story, news releases, broadcast scripts, Twitter, and blogging
- How to take photos that follow basic photojournalism rules. You will demonstrate your photography skills in a photo essay.
- Best practices for blogging. You will create and maintain a blog throughout the course.
- Best practices for creating a professional digital portfolio. You will create a portfolio on your professional/blog website.
- What makes a story newsworthy. You will pitch and write your own environmental, health, science, or technology story.
- How to use social media to create a professional brand
- How to use social media to engage in live reporting
- How to locate sources and conduct interviews for stories
- To edit your work, using correct spelling/grammar and following AP Style
- To provide constructive feedback to your classmates by participating in peer reviews
- To apply concepts learned through readings and lecture videos to complete assignments and engage on the discussion board with classmates.

YOUR INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Megan E. Mallicoat
mmallicoat@ufl.edu

I prefer for you to message me through the Canvas system (doing so helps me stay organized and immediately identifies which class you're enrolled in). However, if you do want to use traditional email to reach me, please be sure to include our course number (JOU 3109C) in the subject of your message.

OFFICE HOURS

I don't live in Gainesville, so I don't have an office on campus. I'm happy to meet by phone, email or video chat, though. Message me and arrange a time.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Rich, Carole (2016). *Writing and Reporting News: A Coaching Method* (8th edition). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.

Associated Press (AP) Stylebook (newest edition). *The AP Stylebook is published each year in the spring. Each edition includes new terms and guidelines, as well as changes in previous rules (such as changing from e-mail to email). You may purchase the book in hard copy or in [digital form](#).*

Digital subscription to The New York Times.
([Free to UF Students.](#))

RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOK

Straus, J. (2014). *The Blue Book of Grammar and Punctuation*. (11th edition). San Francisco, CA: Wiley

TO ACCESS THE
COURSE, LOG IN
TO CANVAS ON
E-LEARNING
<http://elearning.ufl.edu>

COURSE STRUCTURE + EXPECTATIONS

The course is designed to include a variety of instructional methods. The majority of modules include at least one video lecture. In some modules, guest speakers join us for lectures, and in some modules, we go on location, such as to the Innovation News Center and the Career Resource Center. Each module includes assigned readings and activities to be completed; such activities include practice writing assignments, quizzes, class discussions, and a major writing assignment for the module. The major writing assignment draws upon all that you have learned and practiced within the module. Some of these major assignments can become part of your professional portfolio.

Course Relation to Student Learning Outcomes in the College of Journalism and Communications

Multimedia Writing provides you with the opportunity to develop and practice skills that are part of the core competencies of all majors in the college – conducting effective research, conducting interviews, writing in different media formats, developing a professional online brand, taking effective photographs, and demonstrating the ability to write with correct grammar and word use and using AP Style.

Submitting Assignments and Receiving Feedback

You'll submit most of your writing assignments in a Microsoft Word format (.doc or .docx). This does not mean that you need to use Microsoft Word to create your document (I don't use it either), but it does mean that you must use word processing software that can generate a .doc or .docx file. If you submit your assignments in a format other than the requested format, you'll receive a zero for the assignment. (Canvas's DocViewer feature only works with Microsoft Word files...so if you upload a Pages file, for example, it will not work and you will receive a zero. There are plenty of other, more interesting ways to lose points on these assignments. Don't lose points because you upload the wrong file type!)

You will submit your assignments in eLearning, and I will provide feedback meant to encourage you and help you improve.

Depending on the assignment, you will see feedback in one or more of the following ways:

- A summary comment
- Annotated comments that can be read in DocViewer
- A completed rubric
- An attached file in the summary comment box
- An announcement providing feedback to the class on an assignment

You are future communications professionals, and I have very high standards for your work. **You will likely have a lot of errors at first; it's part of learning this style of writing.** You are strongly encouraged to ask me any questions you might have or talk about any struggles you experience. Don't wait! The longer you put off getting help with the course, the harder it is to get back on track. If you have specific questions or concerns about a grade on an assignment, discussion post, quiz, etc., please message me within a week of the assignment's deadline.

GRADING POLICIES + SCALE

Your grade in the course is based on completing several activities within each module. You can see the exact schedule within Canvas. It's a good idea to link your calendar device (phone, computer...whatever you use) with the Canvas calendar so that you see all our deadlines on the calendar you regularly look at.

Instructions will accompany each assignment, quiz, and discussion board you need to complete. A rubric will be provided for each assignment and discussion board; use the rubric as a checklist as you complete the assignment. Please ask questions if you need clarification on the assignment or how you will be graded.

Accuracy is a key component in each writing assignment. Accuracy of facts and careful editing of your own work are important qualities to set you apart from other writers. To help encourage careful editing of your own work, points will be deducted in each written assignment for typographical and grammar errors. In Module 3 you will start to receive deductions for AP Style errors and fact errors. Examples of fact errors include incorrect information, misspelling a proper noun and having an incorrect number. Each fact error is -20 points.

In working on your assignments, be sure to allocate time to carefully proofread your work. Some strategies to assist you in editing your work include:

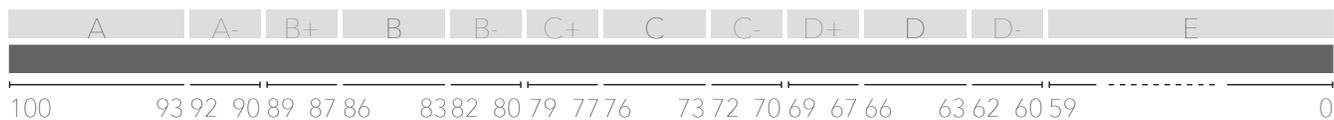
- Reading your work aloud.
- Reading your work backwards (last line on the last page to first line on the first page) to catch misspellings/typos.
- Highlighting each proper noun and number to remind you to check each for accuracy.
- When you use a comma, ask yourself what the rule is for the comma's use to make sure a comma, in fact, is needed.

EXTRA CREDIT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH STUDIES

A maximum of two extra credit points (equivalent of 2%) will be offered for research participation through CJC's SONA research system (<https://ufl-cjc.sona-systems.com>).

Please register a SONA account and choose studies to participate in to receive extra credit for this class. Check SONA regularly to see what studies have become available. Typically, studies won't become available until around the third week of the semester. Do NOT wait until the last minute to sign up, because research opportunities may be limited by the end of the semester. In fact, it is probably wise to participate early in the semester when your course loads are the lightest. Please see this video on how to set up your SONA account: https://youtu.be/_1OnT2ZU6QQ. Questions? Contact the CJC SONA administrator: uf-cjc-sonasystems@jou.ufl.edu.

GRADING SCALE



For more information on current UF grading policies, visit <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

THE FINE PRINT

COURSE STRUCTURE

This is an asynchronous online course. In other words, we have no scheduled meeting time. This can be convenient for you, but it also means that it is absolutely essential for you to be an organized, motivated student. The course will be managed through Canvas in eLearning, and is structured in a series of topic-based units. Do not let yourself fall behind! You are expected to submit all assignments on time. Deadlines are given in Eastern time. If you are in a different time zone, adjust your Canvas settings accordingly. **Late work – if accepted – will be heavily penalized.** (I will consider making exceptions for documented extreme circumstances, however, so you should discuss them with me.)

COURSE TECHNOLOGY + TECH SUPPORT

This goes without saying in an online course, but I'll say it anyway: **You will need reliable Internet access and a reliable computer.** You will also need word processing software that can generate a .doc or .docx file. You don't have to use Microsoft Word to create your documents, but you will have to upload them to eLearning in that format.

For issues with technical difficulties in Canvas, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

- Learning-support@ufl.edu
- (352) 392-HELP - select option 2
- <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>

** Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues MUST be accompanied by the ticket number received from LSS when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You MUST e-mail your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request make-up work.

Other resources are available at <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/getting-help-for>:

- Counseling and Wellness resources
- Disability resources
- Resources for handling student concerns and complaints
- Library Help Desk support

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must first register with the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. You must submit this documentation prior to submitting assignments or taking the exams. Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the office as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations.

COURSE EVALUATION

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last part 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>.

UMATTER, WE CARE

Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All UF students are expected to adhere to the Student Honor Code:

Preamble: In adopting this Honor Code, the students of the University of Florida recognize that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students who enroll at the University commit to holding themselves and their peers to the high standard of honor required by the Honor Code. Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the Honor Code is bound by honor to take corrective action. Student and faculty support are crucial to the success of the Honor Code. The quality of a University of Florida education is dependent upon the community acceptance and enforcement of the Honor Code.

The Honor Pledge: We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty 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."

Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. When you use information (including images) from any source, you should cite it appropriately. I am more than happy to help you understand plagiarism. Just ask. **All work submitted for this class must be your original work. You may not reuse assignments created for other purposes, including other courses.** Academic integrity violations will result in a failing grade for the course, without exception.