

RTV 3304: Advanced Audio Storytelling Spring 2021 – University of Florida

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Office Hours: Tuesday, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.
(and by appointment)

RTV 3304 is an advanced radio reporting class designed to improve storytelling and production techniques by practicing in-depth reporting at a higher level. The course emphasizes that there is more to electronic journalism than just the basic facts of “who, what, where, and when” as we seek to focus more on the “why” and “how” in the stories we tell.

The work done in this class will primarily be aired on WUFT-FM in our morning and afternoon feature segments. You may also have the opportunity to serve as a correspondent on WUFT-TV’s evening newscast “WUFT First at Five” to cross-promote and present coverage of stories you’ve produced. You are also expected to produce web versions of your stories that will be published on the WUFT.org website.

Building on what you learned in RTV 3303 (Radio News 1), you will now spend time producing longer news pieces that delve deeper into the issues beyond a typical sound story or wrap that would be featured in an hourly newscast. These long-form pieces will vary in length from 3 to 5 minutes and should feature a variety of natural sound and interview sources.

You will learn digital editing in Adobe Audition, which allows for more sophisticated production techniques, including more intricate incorporation of natural sound in your pieces. All stories will require photos that can be featured on our website. In most cases, you will be asked to use video cameras (e.g. DSLRs, smart phones, etc.) for multimedia coverage.

There may come a need to implement weekly current event quizzes on national and local/regional news reported on the WUFT.org website as well as other news outlets based on class news consumption. You will be allowed to drop one quiz grade for the semester. A quiz can only be made up due to sickness (with documentation from a physician) or a family emergency (with appropriate documentation). This will replace your class participation or 10% of your grade. Don’t take it too lightly – it can make the difference on your final grade if you’re average is teetering on a letter grade borderline.

Objectives:

Objectives and goals of the course include:

- (1) writing radio feature stories acceptable for on-air use
- (2) becoming proficient with the Adobe Audition editing software

- (3) creating an opportunity and an expectation that work produced for the class and the newsroom can and will be used on-air and on the web
- (4) providing an opportunity to voice your work, live or recorded, to be aired on WUFT-FM
- (5) gaining a better understanding of local and regional news and current events
- (6) developing an understanding of web research and producing content for the web
- (7) developing a better understanding of the roles and duties of radio positions in a professional newsroom, including multimedia aspects

Optional Texts:

Kern, Jonathan. *Sound Reporting: the NPR guide to audio journalism and production*.
Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008.

Required Equipment:

Equipment will be provided for you by the College. Equipment used during a newsroom shift should be checked out in the newsroom by a news manager, whereas equipment used for projects should be checked out via Steve Kippert in the equipment room in Weimer G020.

All equipment must be returned in a timely fashion in the same condition as it was checked out, per the established student/course access policies. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in suspension of equipment checkout privileges. Students who check out gear are also responsible for paying for any damage to equipment beyond normal professional wear and tear, etc. See the equipment policy for full details.

General Classroom Rules:

Please arrive on time to class. We will begin class with current events quizzes each week, so consider that incentive to not be late! If you arrive late, settle in with minimum disturbance. PLEASE DO NOT USE YOUR CELL PHONE DURING CLASS. That means no texting, social media, etc.

A course grade of incomplete will be permitted only for serious illness documented by a physician. A timetable for completing the coursework must be set before the incomplete is given.

Course Evaluation:

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Students will be given specific times when evaluations are open later in the semester. Summary results of these and previous assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

Zoom Professionalism:

Please be mindful of maintaining a professional appearance and conduct via our remote lecture meetings. Consider your wardrobe and hygiene just as you would were we all in the same room, as well as your audio and visual backgrounds.

You are expected to have your camera on during Zoom sessions. If you go to black screen for a significant amount of time, points will be deducted from your attendance/participation score at the instructor's discretion. Note that lectures will be recorded for educational purposes. If you have extenuating circumstances or concerns about Zoom attendance, please see the instructor.

Virtual backgrounds

You are encouraged to use virtual backgrounds for Zoom if you want to protect the privacy of your environment or surroundings. Please be respectful. I can provide some basic backgrounds to you as well if you would like.

There is some aspect of this course that may require face-to-face instruction or interactions to accomplish the student learning objectives of this course. In response to COVID-19, the following policies and requirements are in place to maintain your learning environment and to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions.

- You are required to wear approved face coverings at all times during class and within buildings. Following and enforcing these policies and requirements are all of our responsibility. Failure to do so will lead to a report to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution.
- This course has been assigned a physical classroom with enough capacity to maintain physical distancing (6 feet between individuals) requirements. Please utilize designated seats and maintain appropriate spacing between students. Please do not move desks or stations.
- Sanitizing supplies are available in the classroom if you wish to wipe down your desks prior to sitting down and at the end of the class.
- Follow your instructor's guidance on how to enter and exit the classroom. Practice physical distancing to the extent possible when entering and exiting the classroom.
- If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms (Click here for guidance from the CDC on symptoms of coronavirus), please use the UF Health screening system and follow the instructions on whether you are able to attend class. Click here for UF Health guidance on what to do if you have been exposed to or are experiencing Covid-19 symptoms.
- Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work. Find more information in the university attendance policies.

Our class sessions may be audio visually recorded for students in the class to refer back and for enrolled students who are unable to attend live. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera

off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the "chat" feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live. The chat will not be recorded or shared. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.

Late Work:

As the news industry is built around time management and down to the second timing, late work will not generally be accepted without penalty unless prior arrangements have been made, and a doctor's note or another letter (preferably from the university or a university-sponsored group) accompanies the work. While the news industry is strict on time, I understand sometimes life happens. If you for any reason feel your work will be late, PLEASE approach me before the due date to work out an acceptable alternative timeline. Unless extenuating circumstances exist, any work presented without prior alternative plans will not be accepted.

The Ethical Warning:

You may not interview a family member, friend, fellow fraternity/sorority member, coworker, neighbor or any other close associate for an assignment. We, as journalists, refer to these relationships as conflicts of interest in your reporting. They can be valuable sources of tips, story ideas, or background information that you can then verify. Interviewing one, however, will result in **automatic failure of the assignment**.

Academic Misconduct:

Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. This is even more important if you're planning to tell true stories. You should be sure you understand the Honor Code, found at <http://bit.ly/dontcheatUF>. If you are found to have fabricated or cheated any part of an assignment, **you will fail this course**. In our field that includes copying and pasting content from other sources into your story, passing off other reporter's work as your own, and making up content. There are far worse consequences for academic misconduct than an F, so make sure you are very acquainted with this policy.

Accommodation for 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.

You Matter:

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 are in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu so that its team can reach out. 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 many helping resources. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.

Diversity Statement:

The University of Florida's College of Journalism and Communications Department of Journalism embraces a commitment toward an intellectual community enriched and enhanced by diversity along a number of dimensions, including race, ethnicity and national origins, gender and gender identity, sexuality, class and religion. We expect each of our journalism courses to help foster an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society.

This classroom whether online or in person is meant to be a safe place where we can share ideas and opinions without being judged or ridiculed for those expressions. It is common to have critique in class but all criticism is respectful and constructive. I do not tolerate disrespect or any other behavior that is divisive or hurtful to anyone in class because of age, background, belief, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, ability – and other visible and nonvisible differences.

If anything strikes you as counter to the above statement in class please notify me as soon as possible so we can address it. If you would like to speak to someone outside of this course, Joanna Hernandez, CJC director of inclusion and diversity, is an excellent resource. You can email her at jhernandez@jou.ufl.edu.

Grading:

A	94-100%
<u>A-</u>	<u>90-93.95</u>
B+	87-89.85
B	84-86.95
<u>B-</u>	<u>80-83.95</u>
C+	77-79.95
C	74-76.95
<u>C-</u>	<u>70-73.95</u>
D+	67-69.95
D	64-66.95
<u>D-</u>	<u>60-63.95</u>
E	Below 60

For more information about minus grades and UF grading policies, visit <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/1415/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Grade Evaluation:

Newsroom shifts	20%
Projects	50%
Class Participation/CE Quizzes	10%
Multi-platform participation	20%

Newsroom Shifts:

In lieu of the traditional newsroom shift. I am allocating time in this class for a new endeavor we will be launching this semester. As part of your work on podcasting which is incorporated into this course schedule, you will be responsible for sourcing and promoting Untold Florida. As part of this you will be required to go out into the community and spread the word about the Untold Florida podcast and attempt to solicit ideas that will help you in compiling season two which will hopefully air in the spring. This could include attending tabling events at local libraries, farmers markets, and weekend city and county events or conducting Zoom events with groups of individuals.

The only acceptable excuse for missing a newsroom shift is illness or an immediate family emergency backed up with proper documentation. You are permitted to switch shifts with instructor approval, and you are required to make up any missed shifts. **An unexcused absence on a news shift is penalized by a letter grade deduction on your final average.** The same applies to deadlines for projects, which are due at the start of class; your project will drop a letter grade if it is late. That's not fun, so don't do it!

Projects:

During the semester you will be responsible for a total of 4 projects: Two produced radio features that run 3 to 5 minutes which will run on air and help compose the Untold Florida podcast. These will be features you do entirely on your own, outside of your regular newsroom shift. They are intended to demonstrate your grasp of writing and production skills.

You will also personally be responsible for producing one episode of the Untold Florida podcast with help from your peers.

And for your semester long project you will pilot a podcast from start to finish and all that entails.

The requirements are as follows:

- (1) the stories must be original, undated work and may not incorporate sound or any material gathered during your newsroom shift
- (2) the stories should include *at least six* sound bites from at least **three** different sources
- (3) the stories should include *at least three* pieces of natural sound
- (4) You cannot turn in the same projects for Radio 2 and another course in this college. This will result in a ZERO for the project.**

Projects should be handed in on a memory stick or through e-mail with a paper copy of the script (including an anchor intro and tag).

Each project will be graded accordingly:

Audio quality	30%
Writing/organization	25%
Newsworthiness	25%
Production	20%

The “audio quality” portion of the grade will include delivery and the quality/variety of the bites and natural sound. The “production” portion will include audio levels, fades, mixing, etc. There should be **NO phone sound of anyone who works or lives in Alachua County or within an hour’s drive**. Exceptions must be approved before the project is submitted.

Natural sound cannot be taken from sound effect recordings and must be work gathered from the field. It must not be “created” for the projects—that is deceptive, inaccurate reporting. The sound must come from actual events/sounds occurring as you are recording. **Any violation of this policy will result in a ZERO on the project.**

COURSE SCHEDULE

Note: I believe the semester plan outlined in the calendar is realistic. Nonetheless, I reserve the right to adjust the course content and scheduling based on the class's ability to maintain pace.

There is also the potential for an out of class exercise that will take place on another date and possibly the weekend. It may replace a scheduled class time.

Date Topic Readings Due

01/13 Introduction, Finding Stories and Feature Reporting

01/20 Editing with Adobe Audition and Introduction to Untold Florida/Audio Postcard assigned

PITCH PROJECT 1

01/27 Audio Postcard in Class editing due

02/03 Storytelling - Class exercise

Discuss semester-long Podcast Project

02/10 Documentaries

02/17 **PROJECT 1 DUE**

PITCH PROJECT 2

02/24 Podcasting- Idea to Concept

03/03 Podcasting - Production

03/10 Podcasting – Distribution

03/17 **PROJECT 2 DUE, PITCH PROJECT 3 EPISODE IDEA.**

03/24 Producing Multi-Platform Stories

03/31 **PROJECT 3 DUE/PODCAST Episode Rough Draft Due**

PODCAST PILOT CHECK-IN

04/07 Ethics

04/14 **PODCAST PILOT AND PITCH DECK DUE**

04/21 In Class Pitch Session/**PODCAST Completed Episode Due.**