

# Multimedia Reporting

## Jessica Sparks

Instructor • summer 2021 • section 7G98

**Class:** CSE E121; Lecture: Wednesday, 11 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.; Lab: Wednesday, 2 - 4:45 p.m.

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# Course Summary

This three-credit intermediate journalism course marries traditional local news reporting with the multimedia skills required of reporters today. Multimedia is a broad term. For this class, it means using more than one kind of storytelling tool for each assignment: text, images, audio, video, data, etc.

You will learn to identify, pitch, produce and deliver a local news story to an online audience. We will conduct ourselves as if reporting and editing for a news website. Given the community-based story opportunities, this course will help prepare you for not only advanced journalism courses in the College of Journalism and Communications, but also an internship and or a job before or after graduation.

## Course Objectives

### Students in this course will learn and or understand the basics of:

1. Achieving greater clarity, consistency, accuracy and authority in their newswriting and attribution.
2. Identifying and pitching a local news story (government, education, business, public safety, etc.).
3. Finding news in the community using official and unofficial sources as well as other means.
4. Gathering facts and information via interviews, public documents, Google, online repositories, etc.
5. Determining which storytelling tool best suits a particular story – and maximizing the opportunity.
6. Developing a “hire me” mindset that includes sharing one’s work as socially and smartly as possible.

## Noteworthy

### Each student is responsible for:

1. Reading, understanding and abiding this syllabus and its contents and directives. This includes doing all of the work assigned – from the first module to the last. Regardless of why he/she/they are unable to do so, a student who does not may be withdrawn from the course per UF policy.
2. Completing all assigned readings as class participation and quizzes will affect grading.
3. Abiding any announcements or directives the instructor sends the class – or any one of you individually – most likely via Slack but even if email or Canvas. Expect to see interaction from the instructor via Slack concerning relevant matters that will be discussed as a class soon after.

### In addition:

- Outreach to the instructor is welcomed but should be short, course related, grammatically correct and necessary. Replies from the instructor will be short and sweet and as soon as possible.
- A security reminder: Your UF password is the only thing protecting you from pranks or more serious harm when using Canvas. Don’t share your password with anyone. Change your password if you think someone else might know it. Always logout when you are finished using the system.
- Unauthorized recording and or sharing of recorded materials from this course is prohibited.
- If your performance in this course is impacted by your experiences outside of class, let me know.

## Technical Support

Call 352-392-HELP (4357) for help resolving computer-related and other technical issues related to accessing or using Canvas, connectivity (wireless, VPN), email or software configuration, and browser and GatorLink authentication issues. Any requests for make-up consideration due to technical issues should be accompanied by the ticket number received from the Help Desk when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You should e-mail your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if requesting make-up consideration.

**UF Computing Help Desk:** <https://helpdesk.ufl.edu> or [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu)

**Walk-In Support:** HUB 132

## Students With Disabilities

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with disabilities and who have registered with the UF Dean of Students Office. This office will provide relative documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodations.

**UF Disability Resource Center:** <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

## Counseling Center

Personal or health issues such as depression, anxiety, stress, career uncertainty and or relationships can interfere with your ability to function as a student. UF's Counseling and Wellness Center (CWC) offers support for students in need. CWC is located at 3190 Radio Road and open each weekday from 8 to 5.

**UF Counseling and Wellness Center:** <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc>

## Required Texts

- “Field Guide to Covering Local News: How to Report on Cops, Courts, Schools, Emergencies and Government,” Bayles © 2012.
- “The Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law” – [apstylebook.com](http://apstylebook.com) and #apstylechat.
  - access free via <https://www.apstylebook.com/smathers-libraries-at-the-university-of-florida>
- “Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism (3rd Ed.),” Tim Harrower © 2013.
  - Available in digital form for free on Perusall through the Canvas page
- “Mobile and Social Media Journalism: A Practical Guide,” Adornato © 2018.

- PDF of assigned chapter is provided within Canvas, so you don't have to buy this book otherwise.
- WUFT.org; Gainesville Sun and gainesville.com (UF subscription to Access World News database).

## Other Readings and Resources

- Journalism websites, including, but not limited to those of national, regional, local, alternative and campus news outlets – newspapers, magazines, television and radio and online-only.
- Journalist's Resource, Harvard University Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy
  - <https://journalistsresource.org>
- Journalist's Toolbox, presented by the Society of Professional Journalists
  - <https://www.journaliststoolbox.org>
- Mobile Reporting Tools, by Richard Koci Hernandez, Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism
  - <https://multimedia.journalism.berkeley.edu/tutorials/mobile-reporting-field-guide>
- "Aim for the Heart: Write, Shoot, Report and Produce for TV and Multimedia," Tompkins © 2018.
- Style guides on grammar, spelling, punctuation, special interest, etc., including but not only:
  - <https://www.nabj.org/page/styleguide> and <https://www.aaja.org/aajahandbook>
  - <https://www.diversitystyleguide.com> and <https://www.nlgja.org/stylebook>
- Other materials provided via email from the instructor and or via our spaces on Canvas or Slack.

## UF Resources

UF students have access to tutorials (video-based and otherwise) from which to learn – outside of class time – certain software and equipment needed to accomplish various required tasks this semester. These resources include but are not limited to the library, tutoring, career resource center, etc.

**UF Student Resources:** <http://ufadvising.ufl.edu/student-resources.aspx>

## Course Evaluations

At the end of the semester, please offer feedback on the quality of the course instruction via GatorEvals.

**Guidance on all things GatorEvals:** <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students>.

**Evaluation results:** <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results>.

# **Attendance, Attention, Deadlines and Academic Integrity**

## **Attendance and Lateness**

Students are responsible for satisfying all academic objectives as defined by the instructor and in this syllabus. Absences count from the first class meeting. Students are to show respect for one another as well as for the instructor. Those who come to class each session and on time will be rewarded.

Each absence may result in a 10-point penalty toward the class contribution portion of your grade (see page 12 of this syllabus). Lateness or unwarranted disruptions may likewise result in up to a 5-point penalty, per each occasion. Students absent from or late to class are responsible for learning about any missed material and or meeting subsequent assignment deadlines. They should do this by consulting another student after class; they can also consult with the instructor via office hours or via the course platform on Slack. The instructor wishes to be helpful but is unlikely to review an entire class afterward.

Regardless of why he or she was absent, a student who misses too many classes risks not mastering the coursework. In such a case, he/she/they may be withdrawn from the course per UF policy.

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

## **Mobile Devices**

Mobile devices must be out of sight and unused during class – unless the instructor directs them to be used for purposes specific to a particular class session. Do not check text messages, social media, email, etc., during class, as this is rude. Give your full and undivided attention to anyone who is speaking in class, including your classmates. Anyone seen checking social media or any other websites unrelated to topics discussed at that moment in class shall be considered disruptive and potentially asked to leave.

## **Deadlines**

Late assignments are not accepted unless an emergency can be documented. This means that an assignment submitted late is graded as a zero. 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 true emergency, written documentation will be mandated ASAP.

Generally speaking, we will function as if working in a professional workplace. In the real world, you don't show up for work (on time) or don't do your work (on time) – you risk losing your job. In other words, students who don't come to class and or miss deadlines will suffer consequences.

## Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty of any kind shall not be tolerated in this course. To be certain, academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to using any work done by another person and submitting it for a class assignment; submitting work done for another class; copying and pasting text written by another person without quotation marks and or without complete attribution, which usually includes a link to the original work; using images produced by someone else without explicit permission by the creator. Attribution is not the same as permission. Most images found online are not free to use.

**UF Student Honor Code:** <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>

## COVID-19: Guidelines for JOU 3346L Field Assignments

These remain extraordinary times. However, even during a pandemic the requirements of this intermediate journalism course can provide opportunities to pursue creative yet productive alternatives to traditional field reporting. Remote or virtual newsgathering techniques such as video or phone interviews, social media and records-based research, user-generated content, etc., shall be utilized in ways not typically allowed during a semester in which COVID-19 was not still an everyday concern.

What follows are guidelines intended to help instructors and students understand the journalism department's expectations for maintaining everyone's health and safety – including those sources whom we hope to cover and inform – with respect to field assignments this semester.

If you have questions about doing field assignments that are not covered here, please contact your lab instructor or a member of the department task force in advance of going to a place that is concerning.

1. As in any semester, the health and safety of our students, faculty, staff and sources is paramount.
2. As in any semester, no reporting assignment is worth endangering anyone's health.
3. The university's rules regarding the wearing of face coverings, social distancing, frequent hand washing and disinfecting surfaces will apply to field assignments for this course.
4. That means that students on field assignments for this course should not only wear face coverings but also maintain appropriate social distancing from their story subjects and others.
5. The instructor and student should review reporting plans before the student ventures into the field.
6. As in any semester, any student worried that a field assignment may endanger him/her/them are urged to speak with their instructor about the concerns. The student and instructor could mutually agree on how to modify the assignment so that the concerns are allayed. If that isn't possible, the student and instructor should agree on another assignment without undue penalty for the student.

7. As in any semester, if an environment during an assignment becomes untenable, students are encouraged to remove themselves from the situation immediately and to contact the instructor.
8. Outdoor assignments are preferable unless an indoor environment has appropriate ventilation.
9. Students shall avoid going into a source's home or place of business unless approved in advance by the instructor. It shall always be preferred this semester that field interviews be done from outside.
10. Students shall be encouraged – even expected – to travel to their field assignments by foot or bicycle or alone in personal vehicles. When driving or riding in vehicles with multiple passengers is absolutely necessary, the student should wear face coverings and otherwise abide social distancing.
11. There may be exceptional occasions when a story of transcendent importance demands in-person coverage in an environment that otherwise would not be allowed. In such a case, the assigned student(s) should remain on the periphery, that is where social distancing remains possible.
12. Creative solutions with respect to pursuing multimedia are encouraged. That could include, for example, asking an interviewee to record audio or video from their surroundings and then sharing with you; disinfecting your phone and asking an interviewee to use it to record a conversation, then disinfecting it before returning it; having interviewee attach lavalier mics to their own clothing, etc.
13. Students should apply disinfecting wipes to any CJC-loaned equipment before and after using it.
14. You have the assurances of all three lab instructors for 3346L as well as the journalism faculty and our friends at WUFT News that safety during COVID-19 is the highest priority. Still, though, if you wish to rearrange your schedule and take this course another semester, everyone will understand.

## **COVID-19: NPR Station Field Assignment Guidelines**

**From “A Field Guide to Reporting on COVID-19 (Bring Plastic Wrap)”  
– [training.npr.org](https://www.npr.org/2020/05/12/848888888), May 12, 2020**

“Newsrooms realize that the risks of covering the pandemic in person are high. At both NPR and member stations, editors are telling reporters to stay out of the field whenever possible. ... Reporters need to get field assignments approved by multiple editors. ... Staff members could come forward at any time to express discomfort with an assignment and that would always be respected.”

Here are guidelines – adapted from criteria NPR, WNYC in New York and WBUR in Boston – for reporters and editors to discuss before a field assignment is approved:

- Is the field assignment necessary? Can the story be reported reasonably without the field element? Are there alternative methods of capturing scene and characters without going into the field?
- How will you safely conduct any interviews or take photography or pursue videography?

- Can the reporting be conducted while maintaining a minimum 6-foot distance from others? Can the essential elements be gathered via phone, voice memo, video conference or other remote recording?
- Avoid entering buildings, including houses, especially those of people who might be sick. To keep an appropriate distance, use fish poles and or shotgun mics if you are using a field recording kit.
- Stay away from groups of more than 10 people. Avoid contact with any frequently touched surface.
- If you're uncomfortable with the setting or circumstances of an interview, cancel it and walk away.
- Don't shake hands, even with your interviewee. Keep interviews and scene visits as brief as possible.
- Avoid public transportation and ride-shares. Use your own car if possible; disinfect after every trip.
- Tell your manager immediately if you start to feel sick.
- Wearing a face mask can also keep you from touching your nose and mouth – and show publicly that you respect other peoples' health concerns.

## **COVID-19: Guidelines for Face-to-Face Interaction**

In response to COVID-19, should we have any face-to-face instructional sessions to accomplish the learning objectives of this course, 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. 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 the instructor and your classmates. Do not move desks or stations.
- Follow your instructor's guidance on how to enter and exit the classroom. Practice physical distancing to the extent possible when entering and exiting. Sanitizing supplies are available in the classroom if you wish to wipe down your desks or seats prior to sitting as well as at the end of the period.
- If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, please use the UF Health screening system and follow the instructions on whether you are able to attend class. 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.

## **COVID-19: Recordings, Face-to-Face, Zoom and Netiquette**

Our lecture and lab sessions shall be recorded via Zoom-enabled videoconferencing for you and your classmates to refer back to after class – as well as for enrolled students who are unable to attend live.



Students who participate with their camera engaged or use a profile image are agreeing to be recorded. Those who are unwilling to do so should keep their camera off and 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 unwilling to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the “chat” feature that allows students to type questions and comments live. The chat will not be recorded or shared. Those who want to protect the privacy of their environment or surroundings are encouraged to use virtual backgrounds for Zoom.

Contact the instructor if you have extenuating circumstances or concerns about your Zoom experience.

Otherwise, each student is expected to have his/her/their camera on during our Zoom sessions. Please maintain a professional appearance and conduct during our Zoom sessions and meetings with your instructor. Consider your wardrobe and hygiene – as well as your audio and visual backgrounds – just as if we were all in the same classroom. If you go to black screen for a significant amount of time during a lecture or lab, points may be deducted from your class contribution grade at the instructor’s discretion.

In response to COVID-19, should we have any face-to-face instructional sessions to accomplish the learning objectives of this course, 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. 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 the instructor and your classmates. Do not move desks or stations.
- Follow your instructor’s guidance on how to enter and exit the classroom. Practice physical distancing to the extent possible when entering and exiting. Sanitizing supplies are available in the classroom if you wish to wipe down your desks or seats prior to sitting as well as at the end of the period.
- If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, please use the UF Health screening system and follow the instructions on whether you are able to attend class. 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.

All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy with respect to all email messages as well as any other threaded discussions and chats conducted via Slack or otherwise.

## Diversity Statement

The UF 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 all 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.

Students are at all times to show respect for one another as well as for the instructor. If something was said in relation to this class (by anyone) that made you feel uncomfortable, please talk to me about it.

## Sources, Diversity and Conflicts of Interest

Whenever possible during this course, students shall pursue storytelling that is fair, accurate and complete – and based on information gathered from a variety of sources. A greater understanding of the cultural and ethnic differences in our society will enhance the learning experience, and help students develop habits and sensitivities that will be of great value in their workplaces and communities. This emphasis on diversity of sources shall not focus just on race and ethnicity or sexual orientation, but also age, education, gender, geography, occupation, politics, religion, socioeconomics, etc.

Abide related content – “Diversity in News Coverage,” pages 88-89 – in course textbook by Harrower.

**Avoid conflicts of interest at all times.** Students in this course shall not be used as sources for your field assignments. The same applies to relatives, roommates, friends (from campus or back home), sorority sisters, fraternity brothers, or members of any other co-curricular or extracurricular organizations to which you belong. Interviewing UF faculty, staff, or employees may be allowed provided they and the student do not have a prior relationship – and only with prior approval from the instructor.

**Sources must be interviewed either in person or on the phone.** Email interviews are discouraged and permitted only with the instructor’s permission in advance of the particular interview. Sometimes a source will want you to let him read a story before it is submitted or published. Do not do so. It may be appropriate – sometimes, depending on the story, even ideal – to call the source back to confirm facts or context, or even to read the person’s direct or direct quotes to him or her. Be wary, however, of allowing someone else to determine or undermine your reporting or story approach for nefarious reasons.

**In nearly all cases, multiple sourcing is required** – and by sources we mean interacting with at least two real human beings, and not simply relying on organizational statements, news releases or websites. This also involves contacting as many people or obtaining as much related

documentation as possible. It is wise to interview as many sources as possible, so you have more than you need for your story.

**All facts and opinions in your story must be attributed to sources.** Anonymous or off-the-record material is not acceptable any more than the use of fictional people. If there's a compelling reason to not use a source's full name in a story, it must be explained to the instructor in advance for approval.

Submitted assignments not abiding these sourcing, diversity and interview mandates shall be penalized.

**One more thing regarding sourcing – an end of semester lab assignment:** WUFT News has come to view its global source listing as a living document generally in need of updating at least once a year.

Given you will have spent all semester cultivating sources, perhaps developing a beat and, yes, learning the nuances of community journalism, there will be time during the final lab period to share that wealth of knowledge and information with the student reporters who will follow you in the weeks and semesters to come. Think: What do I wish I would have known when starting this course?

To help set the next student reporter up for success – and WUFT to maintain continuity of coverage across the region through semester transitions – each student will submit a written summary. It will consist of people and contact information (email and street/postal addresses, phone numbers, social media handles, etc.), along with what you learned about reporting, advice about where to find stories, story ideas you did not get to tackle and other helpful tips. Act as if writing your own letter of reference.

## Course Representation

In dealing with news sources for course assignments, you may be asked, “Who are you with?” In most cases, you should state that you are a reporter for WUFT News, though in some instances it could be for another news organization as permitted by the instructor. If pressed, it is acceptable to state that you are enrolled in a reporting course at the University of Florida College of Journalism and Communications. Whenever necessary or prudent, you may refer a source's questions and or concerns to your instructor.

Class assignments are not required to be published in order to get a decent grade. Your lab instructor will discuss this further when the section meets. In any case, your work should not be posted on the internet or shared with a recruiter as examples of your writing or reporting ability until published or graded. Sharing material substantially edited by an instructor as your own work could be dishonest. No student shall use another's story idea developed for this course to benefit a separate news organization.

## Professional Standards

This course will benefit anyone interested in a career in any communications field, because he or she must be able to write clear and concise copy, with care and precision, often on deadline, and that is fair and accurate. One major American daily newspaper defines the skills it expects of its reporters this way:

**Writing ability** – grammar and spelling; ability to tell a good story well; use of quotes, anecdotes and descriptive detail; use of active voice and strong verbs; ability to write inviting leads that hit the point of the story; ability to write tightly and to organize information in logical, compelling sequence.

**Reporting ability** – pursuit, digging, enterprise, diligence; able and eager to see and pursue promising angles; able to seek and obtain anecdotes, details and quotations that provide documentation and add liveliness to copy; able to see need for and to get both sides of the story; able to cultivate good sources.

**Speed, productivity and efficiency** – speed on deadline; speed and efficiency in completing non-deadline assignments; ability and willingness to manage more than one assignment at a time; ability and willingness to make frequent, substantive contributions to the content of the paper.

**Accuracy** – skill with basic factual information such as names, addresses, dates and figures; ability to identify and make use of the best sources, whether they are documents, references or people.

**Work habits** – punctuality, reliability, readiness to go beyond the minimum requirements of the job; interest in assuming and ability to assume more than minimum responsibility; ability and willingness to anticipate and fulfill the demands of an assignment without prompting; ability to deal even-handedly with peers and supervisors, to accept constructive criticism and to offer constructive suggestions; interest in all areas of the news operation; knowledge of community, regional, national and international events; regular and thorough reading of the newspaper.

**Judgment** – commitment to fairness and balance; ability to recognize and assess possible adverse consequences of actions; knowledge of, respect for and observance of the news department's policies.

**Potential** – likelihood that the reporter is a candidate for a more challenging reporting assignment or a supervisory position; evidence that he or she possesses the characteristics of leadership and supervisory ability expected of supervising editors.

## Social Media

Social media is now essential – on many storytelling fronts – in gathering and presenting information, to report and filter the news, and or to distribute content across multiple news platforms. In this course, we may use Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Medium, LinkedIn, TikTok and or other social media for reporting, and to communicate with one another and people we may never meet. We will also use these tools to better present ourselves and demonstrate our value to potential employers.

## Associated Press Style

**Cannot stress this enough.** Helpful hints (no particular order): capitalization, numerals, dates, decades, years, Roman and Arabic numerals, percentages, a.m., p.m., times, ages, boy, girl, infant, youth, hyphens, directions and regions, highway designations, composition titles, magazine names, newspaper names, titles, military titles, courtesy titles, legislative titles, race-related, religious titles, academic, abbreviations and acronyms, second reference, social media, state names, abbreviation of state names with cities, gender, dateline cities, distances, percents, dimensions, foot, cents, dollars, millions, fractions, addresses.

## Submitting Writing Assignments

**All writing assignments should be turned in:**

- On a Word file with 1-inch margins (top, bottom, left, right) and 12-point Times New Roman font.
- With the file named as either lastname\_storyslug.doc or lastname\_storyslug.docx.
- With your name, slug (approved by the instructor) and date, all single-spaced in the top left corner.
- With the text in single-spaced, block format (no indented paragraphs; single spaces between them).
- With quotes typically as their own paragraphs.
- All field assignments must be submitted into Canvas and Slack by the specified deadline. Keep electronic copies of all assignments. Email a copy of each in-class one once completed – along with your notes – to yourself. Don't get caught having to say your only copy is on the lab computer.
- Failure to abide by these stipulations may result in a grade penalty at the instructor's discretion.
- See file, "Story Template" in Canvas for a reminder of these formatting rules.

## Budget Lines and Story Pitches

Budget lines and story pitches are a staple of any newsroom (see Harrower, pages 18-19).

They enable reporters and editors to preview, describe and or detail what content is proposed or publishable – and why, most importantly, the audience should care. Budget lines typically focus on impact, immediacy, proximity, prominence, characters, novelty, conflict, emotions, etc.

Therefore, **a budget line must be submitted for each field assignment via the form at <http://bit.ly/loweclasspitch>**. Not doing so on time and as instructed may result in a grade penalty.

More importantly, though, it could mean someone else who pitches it via the form first would most likely be granted permission to pursue the story instead of you. It is strongly advised that even if you suddenly come across a story, and begin reporting it, remember to pitch it via the form right away.

## WUFT News

This course is aligned significantly with WUFT and its aligned websites. These are not campus stations. They are professional news outlets serving 19 counties across north central Florida. So for this class, think and act like a professional journalist. In other words, treat this like a job or internship. If you do, you will get better clips, you will better prepare yourself for a job and you will get a better grade. It also will prepare you for working in a professional workplace by navigating office politics, communicating your ideas, garnering attention and interacting with management. Even if a job in journalism is not your desired destination, you will gain valuable work experience to apply toward your chosen profession.

Most details related to WUFT – from finding stories to writing headlines — are on its intranet site (<http://www.wuft.org/newsroom>). The username is **newsroom**; the password is **INCnewsr00m2021\***

There is no required equipment or software for this course – other than most likely a smartphone and one knowing how to use what is taught in the college’s Sight, Sound and Motion course.

## Slack

All JOU 3446L students shall pitch their story ideas via <http://bit.ly/loweclasspitch> no later than the night before each lab session. All pitches will automatically load into a daily story budget (a Google Doc) and be viewable via the course Slack channel. Feedback for your idea will come from your lab instructor – and or a WUFT editor – via Slack. Failure to monitor these forms and channels could be costly.

## Story Submission

- All text stories and associated story assets (photographs, video or audio files, data visualizations, etc.) considered ready for publishing shall be submitted to the instructor, who would then process it according to WUFT mandates and traditional editing circumstances. Students shall not move stories or assets to a WUFT editor for publishing unless expressly directed to do so by the instructor.
- Your submission shall include a headline and multimedia assets and abide social media mandates.

Always remember: All field assignments will be submitted twice, first in Canvas, as well as via Slack, regardless of any external publishing. Your submission to Canvas is for your grade. Failure to submit to that platform by the deadline will result in, at best, a point reduction, and if not at all, zero credit.

## Grading (Part I)

The instructor will judge each assignment as a newsroom editor focused on accuracy, craftsmanship, effort and enterprise, not to mention how well the student reporter abides directives, instruction and feedback. Other considerations: relevancy or urgency (front-page news or just a brief); the quality of sourcing; the depth of interviewing; attribution; the power of quotes; story flow (is it logical); adherence to AP style, not to mention grammar, spelling and punctuation; and gumption and ingenuity.

An A indicates superior performance; B, highly competent, above-average work; C, average; D, below average; E, unsatisfactory. Use and manage your time efficiently. You will be rewarded for results, not simply for effort. Steady improvement, however, will earn additional equity.

**Final grade calculations: 930-1,000, A; 929-900, A-; 899-870, B+; 869-830, B; 829-800, B-; 799-770, C+; 769-730, C; 729-700, C-; 699-670, D+; 669-630, D; 629-600 D-; 599 and below, E.**

## Field Assignments

Here is the rubric for the six field assignments each student is expected to submit during the semester:

### TEXT (60 points)

- Lead: Generally looking for an anecdotal lead – a revealing little story that lures the reader in.
- Nut graph: Why does this person, activity, agency, etc., matters now; it should otherwise help the reader know why this is a story worth reading. A supporting nut graph may be ideal.

- Chronology/What lies ahead: Efficient use – and definitely not overuse – of background information. Provides context. Moves the story forward. Doesn't slow it down.
- Transitions: Do they help move the story along, give it life and urgency and context.
- Quotations/Attribution: Is it clear who's saying what, where and when and why?
- Prescription: Does the story fall within the expected length given the assignment?

### **SOURCING (10 points)**

- Is everyone who should be included? Do they in total provide sufficient depth (information and insight), context (broadening understanding) and reliability? Are there enough sources to lessen the chance for bias and inaccuracy? Is demographic diversity factored?

### **MECHANICS (10 points)**

- Avoids errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation or AP style, not to mention wordiness and undue repetition or redundancies, prepositional traps and run-on sentences; no form errors or obvious layout concerns based on class instruction; demonstrates quality proofreading.

### **IMAGE(S) (10 points)**

- Did the reporter take the image(s)? (Courtesies are only OK if contextualizing someone's past.) Are basic competencies such as exposure, focus and composition (framing, rule of thirds) exhibited? Are they cropped 4 x 6 or 2 x 3 horizontally and ordered in such a way to represent an obvious story with a variety of shots (tight, wide, super tight, medium, point of view, etc.)? Are the captions sufficient in length and abiding grammar, spelling, punctuation, AP style and course instruction?

### **HEADLINE (10 points)**

- In addition to abiding mechanics (see above) and course instruction (especially new industry norms), does it sufficiently reflect the story's news value? Is it likely to help attract an audience to the story?

Rubrics for the multimedia and social media assignments that each student shall complete during the semester – all designed to help develop one's journalistic toolbox – will be revealed separately via Slack and or Canvas. Tease: For the audio or video assignments, can we readily discern who did what? Does the story convey emotion, motion, a central character, tension, intimacy, shock and awe? Does it aim for the heart? For the data visualization, does it reflect a creative or alternative way in which the audience can access additional and compelling information. As for social media, how well are you engaging your audience, mining it for story ideas and sources, and sharing your published work as broadly as possible?



## Factual Errors

- Factual errors are embarrassing and intolerable. They can range from an inaccurate street address or time element (even if the effect on the story is relatively insignificant) to a misspelled name of a person, business, agency or institution (on any reference), to a misquote; or just plain inaccuracy.
  - If a student realizes and corrects a fact error before it is edited, there shall not be a penalty.
  - If an editor finds one or more fact errors, there will be a five-point penalty (possibly for each one).
  - If a source/reader reveals a fact error, a 10-point penalty shall occur – and likely for each one.

## Grading (Part II)

### Class Attendance and Contribution (10 percent)

- Be prepared for in-period polling and testing to help determine who's present – and demonstrate your understanding of the material covered by the instructor during the lecture periods.
- In addition to extending lessons introduced during lecture, our lab sessions will focus on working collectively to help each other identify, pitch and develop the best story packages possible.

### Canvas Quizzes (15 percent)

- Expect weekly quizzes related to the assigned readings as well as assessing your understanding and application of what's in the The Associated Press Stylebook and at #apstyle on social media.

### Field Assignments (50 percent)

- Each student will identify, pitch, report and produce four news reporting assignments during the course – according to prescribed types, lengths, objectives, etc. – that aim to determine the level of proficiency to which one has learned the concepts taught in the course to date.
- At least one field assignment – but no more than two – will be done as a “daily deadline.” A second one would require a significant multimedia effort, that is, with a strong audio and or video outcome.
- The other assignments should reflect two weeks of reporting and will be due every other Friday.
- Each student is urged to do a range of stories, ideally one each involving government, public safety, courts, health, the environment, education, business, economic development, technology, etc.

### **Multimedia Components (15 percent)**

- Each student shall submit at least three multimedia reporting components (each worth 5 percent of the total course grade) as per course instruction. Each one will accompany a field assignment.
- These three shall include 1) a NPR-style audio “wrap”; 2) a multiple-source video, a source-narrated audio or a source-narrated video, 3) a data visualization (interactive timeline/map, bar/pie chart, etc).
- Each field assignment does not have to have all types of multimedia, though, stories that have multiple components will be rewarded greatly. However, by the end of the semester each student must have submitted a multimedia component from each of the three groups listed just above.

### **Source Development (5 percent)**

- Each student shall demonstrate a capacity to develop and cultivate a diverse array of sources that reveals a willingness to interact with multiple human beings per story – and getting the deets.
- Each student shall submit a written summary about one’s sourcing this semester (as per on page 4).

### **Social and Sharing (5 percent)**

- Each student shall demonstrate a capacity to build a journalistic brand through the type of information he or she shares using social media and how he or she interacts with the public.
- Each student shall conduct a social media audit reflecting one’s readiness for potential employers.

### **Missing or Late Work**

- Assignments, mandates, quizzes, etc., not completed or submitted on time and as instructed shall be penalized significantly. Again, in the real world, you don’t do your work – and on time – you risk losing your job (see page 4). In this class, you shall be rewarded with a grade of zero.

## Course Schedule

Changes based on emerging necessities or opportunities will be relayed to the class as soon as possible.

### WEEK ONE: May 12

- Introduction to course and goals
- Defining news and multimedia
- Case study of community journalism
- Looking at examples of previous work
- Discussion with Ethan Magoc at WUFT

**Quizzes:** Harrower Reading; Harrower (Digital Journalism) – both expiring at 11:59 p.m. May 14.

**Read and add discussion questions to “Community Journalism” in Perusall by next class.**

### WEEK TWO: May 19

- Community news reporting
- Multimedia bootcamp (photo, audio, video, data viz)

**Quizzes:** Bayles, Part I; AP Style: Capitalization; AP Style: Gender – all expiring 11:59 p.m. May 21

### WEEK THREE: May 26

- Government reporting
- Source development and diversity
- Identifying, pitching and producing local news
- Data-driven visuals
- Workshopping pods

**Quizzes:** AP Style: Race-Related Coverage; AP Style: Addresses, Dates, Numbers and Time – both expiring at 11:59 p.m. May 28

**FIRST FIELD ASSIGNMENT due by 6 p.m. Friday, May 28**

**Read and add discussion questions to “Photojournalist’s Field Guide” in Perusall by next class.**

### WEEK FOUR: June 2

- Covering education and schools
- Focus on photojournalism basics

**Quiz:** AP Style: Hyphens – expiring 11:59 p.m. June 4

**WEEK FIVE: June 9**

- Covering public health and safety- stories including people with badges;
- Adding hyperlink and other interactives to stories
- Interpreting data (more visualization)
- Workshopping

**Quizzes:** Adornato, Ch. 3, Social Media Brand; AP Style: Geography and Weather; AP Style: Customs and Holidays – all expiring 11:59 p.m., June 11.

**SECOND FIELD ASSIGNMENT due by 6 p.m., Friday, June 11**

**WEEK SIX: June 16**

- Covering business and economic development
- How motion, emotion, character, shock and awe, etc., relate to multimedia storytelling

**Quizzes:** Government, politics and meetings; AP Style: Spelling – both expiring 11:59 p.m. June 18

*(Optional)* Final revisions on first and second assignments due Friday, June 18, at 6 p.m.

*Read and add discussion questions to “Mojo: The Mobile Journalism Handbook” in Perusall by next class meeting.*

**WEEK SEVEN: June 23**

- **No class- Summer Break**

**WEEK EIGHT: June 30**

- Mobile and social journalism
- Covering crime, disasters and accidents
- Each student is urged to schedule a meeting with the instructor while tending to class assignments.
- Workshopping

**Quizzes:** Covering Accidents and Disasters; Math for Journalists – expiring July 2 at 11:59 p.m.

**THIRD FIELD ASSIGNMENT due by 6 p.m., Friday, July 2**

**WEEK NINE: July 7**

- Audio Storytelling

*Quiz:* Covering Education – expiring July 9 at 11:59 p.m.

**WEEK 10: July 14**

- Video Work
- Workshopping

*Quiz:* Covering Crime; Covering Courts- expiring July 16 at 11:59 p.m.

**FOURTH FIELD ASSIGNMENT due by 6 p.m., Friday, July 16**

**WEEK 11: July 21**

- Obituaries
- Immersive Storytelling
- Sourcing Memos

*Quiz:* AP Style: A to Z- expiring July 23 at 11:59 p.m.

**WEEK 12: July 28**

- Writing columns, criticism and Op-Eds
- What if not journalism as a career? A discussion of options related to our course outcomes.

No Quiz

**(Optional)** Final revisions on third and fourth field assignments due by July 30 at 6 p.m.

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**FINAL: August 3- AP style and grammar quiz online**

**Social and sharing and source development memos due by 11:59 p.m., Tuesday, August 3.**

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