Visual Storytelling Syllabus

Instructor

Ms. Alex Avelino (Prof A)

Phone

352-294-8254

Email*
Preferred Method

aavelino@ufl.edu

Office Location

Veterinary Academic Building, V1-100L

Office Hours

Appointment Link

Course Times/Room

Tuesdays P 10-E1
WEIM 2052

Course Overview

Welcome to Visual Storytelling. This course is intended to give career-path communication students instruction in the use of digital cinematography, digital audio and video editing tools as well as the fundamentals of effective visual storytelling for broadcast and online.

Course Materials

There are equipment kits available for checkout from Steven Kippert in the equipment room, which include your camera, audio equipment, SD card and tripod.

You may use the computers in our classroom to edit your work during class and outside of class (when no other course is happening), but an external hard drive with 500G to 1 TB of space (LaCie Rugged All-Terrain is a good one) is a wise purchase. Backups are critical. You don't want to lose all of your hard work.

You will need Final Cut Pro or Premiere (available in on-campus labs).

Course Communities: We will use Canvas and Vimeo to create online communities for this course in which to share inspiring work and class information.

A DropBox or Google Drive folder is useful.

Student Learning Outcomes:

- assess, compare and contrast and rate the work of professionals and classmates through critique.
- apply journalism ethics of truth, accuracy and fairness to your work.
- demonstrate how to capture high quality a-roll and b-roll with good light, composition, sound and content.
- demonstrate how to capture and edit high-quality audio with ambient and natural sounds for multimedia narratives.
- build upon existing editing skills for stills, video and audio using appropriate software including Photoshop, Final Cut and/or Premiere.
- build upon existing shooting skills to capture professional quality still images and HD video using a professional camera to build narratives.
- learn and apply successful mobile multimedia reporting techniques for the field.
- illustrate how to produce a storyboard and pitch for your projects.
- discover the subject's voice and build the story arch and narrative.

Course Schedule (Subject to adjustments)

Week	In-Class	Out-of-Class
Week 1 Jan 10	Intro to class, gear, storytelling	
Week 2 Jan 17	Camera Technical Practice	-Shoot Video Assignment 1
Week 3 Jan 24	Edit & Pacing Edit Video Assignment 1	-Watch Premiere Pro LinkedIn Training -Edit Glass Blowing
Week 4 Jan 31	Beauty Shots	-Shoot and Edit Assignment 3
Week 5 Feb 7	Shot Sequencing	-Read/Watch Canvas Articles -Shoot and Edit Assignment 4
Week 6 Feb 14	Full Narrative Organization	-Watch Premiere Pro LinkedIn Training -Edit Madame Donut
Week 7 Feb 21	Interviewing & Pitching	-Partner: Shoot and Edit Assignment 6 Cut 1
Week 8 Feb 28	In-Class Editing	-Partner: Shoot and Edit Final Cut
Week 9 Mar 7	Pitch Individual Doc 1	-Shoot & Edit Assignment 7 Cut 1
Week 10 Mar 14	**No Class Spring Break!**	**No Class Spring Break!**
Week 11 Mar 21	In-Class Editing	-Shoot & Edit Assignment 7 Cut 2
Week 12 Mar 28	Pitch Individual Doc 2	-Shoot & Edit Assignment 7 Final Cut
Week 13 Apr 4	In-Class Editing	-Shoot & Edit Assignment 8 Cut 1
Week 14 Apr 11	In-Class Editing	-Shoot & Edit Assignment 8 Cut 2
Week 15 Apr 18	In-Class Editing	-Shoot & Edit Assignment 8 Final Cut
Week 16 Apr 25	Final Presentations	---------

Attendance:

Attendance is necessary for constructive in-class critiques and group evaluations. Excused absences include family emergencies, illness, jury duty, military service, and professional conferences where you are presenting a paper, speaking on a panel, or accepting an award. While you will not receive attendance credit for an "excused absence," I will consider excused absences when evaluating your professionalism grade. All work must be turned in on time unless other arrangements are made with me. Arriving late or leaving early is disruptive to creating a critical learning environment. Please be on time and remain until class is dismissed. Your participation in class not only benefits you, but everyone else in the class.
https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/

Be Respectful:

We will be using technology on many different platforms throughout the course for myriad reasons, however, turning off your cell phone and laptop during lectures or critiques enhances the learning environment for everyone. Please limit any unnecessary disruptions or distractions during lectures, critiques and labs.

Recommended Reading and Resources

- Multimedia Storytelling for Digital Communicators in a Multiplatform World by Seth Gitner
- Storycraft: The Complete Guide to Narrative Nonfiction by Jack Hart
- LinkedIn Learning
- Keeping up with current multimedia projects throughout course is expected. We will discuss some sources for quality multimedia such as Mediastorm, Strawhat Visuals, L.A. Times, Washington Post, New York Times, NPPA POY, Best of Photojournalism and CPOY, and non-profits like Open Society Foundations and PhotoPhilanthropy.

Classroom Procedures:

The technology we will be using during the course is highly susceptible to damage from food and drinks. We will have breaks during class to provide you the opportunity to eat a snack. You may bring drinks to class, but please have a secure lid on the container or bottle. Do not set your drinks near laptops, computers or keyboards. Please dispose of all food and drink containers, wrappers, bags, etc… outside of the classroom and lab.

Take risks:

You are encouraged to take risks in this class. We learn the most from our mistakes. Don't just emulate what you have already seen. Innovate. Try something new and different. Fail and try again. You need to know and understand the basics first, but from there you can push through to new and exciting territories.

Deadlines:

Missing deadlines is unacceptable in the "real world" and will significantly lower your grade. All assignment due dates are listed on Canvas—late work is not accepted. I recommend you turn on all Canvas notifications for deadlines and comments. We need everyone to turn in their assignments on time to have constructive critiques, even if the assignment or project is not perfect. In the real world, it doesn't matter how good a story is if it is turned in after deadline and nobody gets to see it. We will stick firmly to these principals.

Grading:

Grading for this course will be at times, subjective. I will do my best to be fair and balanced. Each assignment will be judged through the lens of professional quality journalism as it pertains to accuracy, craftsmanship, effort and enterprise. Grading rubrics are "loose" to allow for growth and flexibility. Improvement over time, consistency and ability to utilize foundational skills are all considered.

You will have opportunities to carry your peer and instructor feedback forward to improve your grade throughout the course. Your effort and participation in the learning process are the most critical components to your grade. Your final grade will depend mainly on the quality of work you hand in with special emphasis on your improvement throughout the course.

Grading Rubric

• A – Work is on time, accurate and publishable, demonstrating an in-depth understanding of the elements of strong visual narrative storytelling. All deadlines and assignment expectations have been met or exceeded.

• B – Work is almost publishable with basic understanding of visual storytelling. All deadlines and assignment expectations have been met.

• C – Effort was made but the quality of the work is not publishable without significant improvements. All deadlines have been met.

• D – The craftsmanship and presentation of the work barely passes the minimum standards for a student in an advance level class due to a lack of effort or care in the final product. Work is not publishable. Deadlines and/or assignment expectations have not been met.

• F – Student failed to either produce the required work or put forth enough effort to meet the minimum standards of the course.

Grading Scale

The minimum score to pass this course is a C, or 72.5. Scores are rounded to the nearest whole point: 89.4 rounds down to 89 (B+) while 89.5 rounds up to 90 (A-).

A (100-94)	B (86-83)	C (76-73)	D (66-63)
A- (93-90)	B- (82-80)	C- (72-70)	D- (62-60)
B+ (89-87)	C+ (79-77)	D+ (69-67)	E (< 59)

Accuracy: Proofread all of your work for fact errors or misspellings BEFORE turning it in for a grade. Professional journalists are expected to provide accurate and truthful information. Getting the facts wrong can cost you your job in the industry. Start building good editing habits now.

How do you succeed in this class? Come to every class on time and stay until the end. Great journalists go early and stay late. Use your time wisely to learn, participate and contribute in class discussions, critiques, lectures and labs. Make your deadlines. Take risks. Help your classmates. Ask questions, often. Be ethical. Hold yourself to the highest degree of honesty, integrity and accuracy. Make no excuses. Correct your mistakes. Be humble and positive. Apply the knowledge and skills learned in this class to develop professional quality work. Leave your comfort zone and push the boundaries. Never stop looking, listening and learning.

If you follow these guiding principles, you will find success in this class by producing the assigned work, turning it in on time, improving upon it throughout the course, and creating a professional quality multimedia narrative with sound, stills and video that tells a compelling story through a character with an appropriate story arch. Your final project will be used to show prospective employers why you are part of the next generation of visual storytellers.

Honesty, Integrity and Ethics:

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 (http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. Student conflict and conflict resolutions guidelines can be found at http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

All students in this class are expected to adhere to the ethical guidelines and principles of journalism. Some useful resources can be found at http://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp and https://nppa.org/code_of_ethics. If you have an ethical dilemma, seek advice from the faculty.

Make sure that what you write, shoot, and edit is your own work. Plagiarism is cheating. Using someone's intellectual property without their permission or attribution is an egregious violation of journalism ethics and principals, one in which you will lose your job and possibly your career. If you incorporate music, sound, still images, video, or written words in your work that is not produced by you and you alone, you MUST receive permission to use the material and give appropriate credit. If you have questions or concerns about using a particular photograph, video clip or piece of music or sound, please come talk to me BEFORE using it in your story. Any attempt to pass off another person's work as your own will result in a failing grade and your violation will be reported to the Dean of Students office.

Diversity, Inclusion and Equity

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.

I would like to create a learning environment for my students that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives and experiences, and honors your identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, etc.) To help accomplish this:

- If you have a name and/or set of pronouns that differ from those that appear in your official UF records, please let me know!
- If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to come and talk with me. If you prefer to speak with someone outside of the course, please visit: https://www.jou.ufl.edu/diversity-and-inclusion/
- I (like many people) am still in the process of learning about diverse perspectives and identities. If something was said in class (by anyone) that made you feel uncomfortable, please talk to me about it.

Please contact me with any concerns regarding inclusion and equity, including accessibility of equipment and software.

COVID Considerations:

We plan to have face-to-face instructional sessions 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.

- 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](#).

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.

Useful Resources:

- **Division of Student Affairs** (352-392-1261) – Contact this office if you need to miss class due to an on-going medical problem or family emergency. The office will send a courtesy email to your instructors about your absence. http://www.ufsa.ufl.edu/
- **UF Counseling & Wellness Center** (352-392-1575) – The center provides scheduled and drop-in appointments with counselors to discuss a range of personal issues. http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/
- **Disability Resource Center** (352-392-1261) – Students requesting class accommodations must first register with the Disability Resource Center. You will receive documentation to give to each of your instructors. You must meet with your lab instructor and with me during office hours to discuss special arrangements. Please act immediately. http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/
- **Communication Coaching Center** (1088 Weimer Hall) –Student members of the Journalism and Communications Ambassadors staff the center. They can provide coaching on writing assignments, grammar and AP style issues. They also can assist you in applying for internships and finding sources for a story. http://www.ufjca.org/communications-coaching-center.html
- **Computers** – Call 352-392-HELP (4357) or email helpdesk@ufl.edu.
- **Knight Division** for Scholarships, Career Services and Multicultural Affairs (1060 Weimer) - Provides information on scholarships and internships and sets up the College Interviewing Day each semester. Dr. Katrice Graham is the director. http://www.jou.ufl.edu/knight/

Course Evaluations:

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at https://evaluations.ufl.edu. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks 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/results/.