

JOU 4201 NEWS CENTER PRACTICUM Section TVAN Class #25788
TV ANCHORING (various roles) SPRING 2023 SYLLABUS
MARK LEEPS (mleeps@wuft.org 352-294-1504) hours: MWF 1-2p Rm 2324

TV NEWSCAST TALENT & TRAINEE ROLES:

- 5PM NEWS ANCHORS
- 5PM NEWS CO-ANCHORS
- 5PM SPORTS ANCHORS
- 5PM WEATHER ANCHORS
- 5PM ASSISTANT PRODUCERS

FACULTY INSTRUCTOR OF RECORD:

- **Mark Leeps** (office hours: M-F 1-2p, Weimer 2324)

STAFF FOR TVNEWS PRODUCTS including WUFT NEWS First at Five:

- **Mark Leeps** (News)
- **Kalisha Whitman** (News)
- **Denise Vickers** (INC Director)
- **Steve Russell** (Sports)
- **Eric Esterline** (Sports)
- **Jeff George** (Sports)
- **Megan Borowski** (Weather)
- **Justin Ballard** (Weather)
- **Ken Pemberton** (Production)

The Course

This course is a graded, immersive training experience as on-air talent (or as a trainee in a role that normally leads to future casting as anchor or producer).

The Basics

Prerequisite: selection by INC News Managers

Hours: varies as assigned

Calendar: posted in the newsroom (check Mark's office door for updates)

Expectations: reps are limited so we expect students to treat this like a pro job... attendance is mandatory, all aspects are important, on-air suspensions are possible, all roles are graded with an end-of-term assessment

COVID Changes & Precautions

Masking is no longer mandated or expected but may remain welcome, particularly in areas where distancing and limiting numbers is a challenge.

In the past, areas of concern included the classrooms, the newsroom, the tv set area, and the tv control room. UF guidance is subject to change, please look for updates online.

Inclusion & Diversity

CJC JOU Policy:

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.**

Statement from Instructors:

The craft of journalism strives to be objective. However, much of the gathering of information for reporting purposes could be from subjective sources that are historically built on a subset of privileged voices. Furthermore, we often find ourselves relying on information about historically important events that were mostly framed through the perspectives of a segment of our society. We acknowledge it is possible there may be both overt and covert biases in the course's material due to the lens and/or period of time in which it was written. Please contact me with feedback if you have any suggestions to improve the quality of the course materials.

The newsroom has many policies for dress and behavior, as does WUFT-TV, but in the classroom we support a diversity of thoughts, perspectives and experiences, and would like to honor 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 records, please let us know. -
- If something is said in class (by anyone) that makes you feel uncomfortable, please talk to us about it.
- 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 either Mark or Kalisha. We want to be a resource for you. Or you might prefer to talk to our INC Director Denise Vickers or her top assistant Ryan Vasquez.
- The PATH office also has an excellent staff of academic advisors, and active connections to the Dean of Students and the UMMatterWeCare program.
- Or if you prefer to speak with someone outside of the course, Joanna Hernandez, CJC Director of Inclusion and Diversity, is an excellent resource.

Main Duties by Role

5PM NEWS CO-ANCHOR/REPORTER

1. You will come in every week to report on your shift, which could be either 2p-6p or 12noon-6p or 10am-6p with variable credit
If it's your week to anchor you should attend the 2:30pm meeting whenever possible
2. You will rotate anchoring from the desk week to week
3. When you are not anchoring you should push to showcase your reporting contributions in a field live shot or monitor live shot or other live or looklive treatment
you will be trained on LiveU operations and should expect to rotate the duty of operating the live camera and LiveU unit along with the other members of your anchor team
4. When you are not anchoring you should push to showcase your reporting contributions in a field live shot or monitor live shot or other live or looklive treatment
5. Once a month you must schedule a talent review session with Mark or another News Manager (Mark has the form.)

5PM SPORTS ANCHOR/PRODUCER/REPORTER

1. Co-producer for sports segment in 5pm show every week
shifts run 10a-6p minimum, all-day welcome; extra work to arrange
2. Anchor for sports segment in 5pm show every 2nd or 3rd week
anchor must attend the 2:30 pm meeting
3. Report as assigned each week
you will be expected to cover games, often for your own show, **requires weekly effort including nights/wknds**

5PM WEATHER ANCHOR/PRODUCER/REPORTER

1. All duties assigned by weather department

5PM NEWSCAST ASSISTANT PRODUCER

TV NEWS – OTHER TRAINING ROLES

1. AP's will shadow & assist 5pm newscast producer every week
as available, one day per week (often will sub as producer before end of term)
2. Other roles TBA/TBD
as available, normally one day per week in the INC

Sanctions: Grading Deductions & On-Air Suspensions

Because this is an immersive experience on real stations, we expect you to treat course participation like a real job, and **any unprofessional behavior could result in a suspension**...from gear, from on-air work, from any INC work (at the discretion of the newsmanagers), and these normally start at 1 week and double or triple in length if imposed a second or third time in a given term. In the end, you will also lose an overall grade level for each suspension. Over the years, the most common mistakes leading to suspensions have been: violation of the loading zone policy, violation of the gear policy, violation of the INC dress code, unexcused absence from a shift or leaving shifts early without permission, failing to perform reporting work in addition to anchoring, other policy violations which interfere with professional workplace operations, criminal accusations which reflect poorly on any business associated with that person.

UF Honor Code

UF students are bound by "The Orange Book" which explains the code of conduct for all students. It is online at <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/> You should be familiar with all aspects: the pledge to do your own work with nothing unauthorized given or received, the system UF uses for handling academic misconduct, and your responsibility as a student to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct.

Accommodations

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.

Reporters typically handle 20-30 pounds of gear in all sorts of weather conditions; students with physical limitations or ongoing medical conditions should seek accommodation from the instructor as needed.

Campus Resources

Please be aware of UF's Health & Wellness resources for students:

U Matter, We Care: if you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352-392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student

Counseling & Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>
352-392-1575

First Responders: University Police Department 352-392-1111 or 911 for emergencies <http://www.police.ufl.edu/> & SARS (Sexual Assault Recovery Services) at the Student Health Care Center 352-392-1161

Cost Considerations

There may be an equipment fee for this course, as most roles add wear and tear on station/INC equipment, and some roles impact field gear.

Feedback & Evaluations

Like most individual work or independent study, this is not a Canvas course. Please contact me in person or by email (mleeps@wuft.org) for any questions you have. Students may be expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of the instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals.

CJC/DMP/INC Policies

It is your responsibility to learn and comply with all INC policies posted online at wuft.org/newsroom.

There are specific rules in the Dress Code but the bottom line is **you will not be treated as a professional if you do not look business-like**. You may be sent home to change...and/or given a suspension.

The G020 Loading Zone Student Policy emphasizes that any access to the Weimer Service Drive is only for stopping to load/unload heavy/bulky gear and stops are limited to 10 minutes. **Follow instructions closely, you are personally responsible for any tickets you get.**

The CJC/DMP/INC Equipment Policy emphasizes that **gear checkout is for official course or INC business only**.

Our Computer Policy emphasizes that **all the computers in the INC are for official station business (including select courses) only**. Many are reserved for people in specific roles at certain times of day.

We **embrace the RTDNA Code of Ethics** and the similar SPJ Code of Ethics, and you should read/follow the NPR ethics guidance as well. All are available online.

The **food & drink policy for the INC is that no eating or drinking is allowed outside the break room**, nothing except for bottled water...but be careful not to spill onto computers or gear.

If you are becoming so sick as to miss a shift, let us know the night before by email; please tell me in advance if you need a sub for travel or other reasons...we often have a pool of air-cleared approved substitutes.

Grading Policies

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

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

and <http://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Grading Scale

The grading scale for all students in this section of RTV4930 is as follows:

A	95-100
A-	92-94
B+	89-91
B	86-88
B-	83-85
C+	80-82
C	77-79
C-	74-76
D+	71-73
D	60-70
D-	50-59
E	0-49

Grading Components by Role

5PM NEWS ANCHOR/REPORTER

5PM NEWS CO-ANCHOR/REPORTER

40% - anchoring performance

This component is an end-of-term overall assessment of your writing, performing, and “employee” achievement (arriving on time, meeting deadlines, following rules, working with others, showing leadership).

40% - reporting contributions

You will have reporter/anchor assignments every week, which may include work on other platforms. Your grade is an end-of-term overall assessment of whether you did all that was asked and how well you did it.

20% - performance critiques with a tv news manager

Once a month you must schedule a review session with Mark or another news manager (Mark has the forms). Turn these in to Mark; late/missed reviews reduce the grade and could lead to on-air suspensions.

5PM SPORTS ANCHOR/PRODUCER/REPORTER

30% - 5pm anchor work

Your anchor work takes close to a full day due to the producing, writing, editing & other chores. We have a formal performance feedback system but you will also get feedback at the critique session immediately after each show. We hope to see improvement in your skill level; this is an overall end-of-term assessment.

30% - 5pm producer & co-producer work

Your final draft of producing the segment should be complete in time for you to present it at the 2:30pm show meeting. You are required to consult with Steve Russell each morning on story selection and producing treatments for that story given the elements we can gather or invent.

10% - performance critiques with the Sports Director

You should regularly ask Steve Russell do a tape review of your most recent anchoring day...before you next go on-air. It's all on you to make it happen, but you don't want to miss the opportunity for specialty feedback beyond the after-show critiques. Late/missed reviews reduce the grade and could lead to on-air suspensions.

30% - reporting This end-of-term assessment will look at how well you performed in covering local sports, including aspects of being a self-starter and volunteering to meet team needs.

5PM WEATHER ANCHOR/PRODUCER/REPORTER

30% - producing work

Observe, analyze, and project forecast data for entry into the systems used to create a presentation. You will get regular feedback, but the grading is an overall end-of-term assessment.

50% - presenting work

Tell the daily weather story in a well-produced and accurate presentation, delivered in a professional and engaging manner. You will get regular coaching, but the grading is an overall end-of-term assessment.

20% - reporting

You may be asked to report on a weather story—perhaps an evergreen piece like a “Weather Why”, or coverage of a weather event somewhere in the market or the state. A good story makes the technical forecast come to life for viewers in practical, easy-to-understand ways...and reinforces your credibility and identity as a weather expert/personality.

5PM NEWS ASSISTANT PRODUCER or OTHER TRAINING ROLE

100% - AP work (or other)

You should be shadowing and learning the ropes as a producer but also helping out in whatever way possible. This is an end-of-term assessment of your work.

TV Newsroom Basics

- All reporting work is done for potential broadcast on WUFT-TV (or perhaps WRUF-TV or an online outlet), but you should **make no promises** to the public about if or when certain stories will air.
- We **never** give copies of our video material (raw, edited, or airchecks) to anyone, but can take requests from the public to post a particular story on our web site. **Be careful about posting any clips to YouTube** or otherwise providing free redistribution of copyright material.
- All the camcorder packages we have are expensive. The cheapest costs about \$4000, the newer pro kits cost about \$8,000. **Treat all gear with care, you are responsible—for any reason other than normal professional handling wear & tear—if it is not returned in similar condition as when you checked it out.** You are required to sign a gear liability acknowledgement at the start of the semester and to sign a daily checkout form for the specific gear you're taking every time you use college gear.
- **All our equipment is for newsroom business only.** That includes all computers and their accessories. Treat everything with care, and do not abuse the privilege of using them. Do not ever download any software onto the station's computers.
- To help secure our gear and help keep our workplace secure, **do not let strangers into the newsroom and do not prop the doors open after normal business hours.** Report any unusual activity to managers and report any suspicious activity to managers or police.
- **Keep backups.** The material on all of our workstations gets routinely deleted at the end of each term...and failures could happen at any time. Protect your best work material by regularly saving it to a portable hard drive and/or cloud storage.
- In addition to INC NewsManagers, other station staffers may provide feedback at any time. All **criticism from the pro staff is meant to be professional, not personal**...learn to accept it and learn from it.
- We have outside partnerships ongoing with NBC NewsChannel Florida and sometimes others. **Don't assume material we generate can be shared or posted anywhere; always check with Mark first.**

Important notes about wrapping up the course

- Editing computers may have their memory cleaned weekly, so make sure you are saving as you go and before the end of Finals Week make sure you have a digital copy of *everything* dear to you (don't depend on being able to find anything later in the machines, or in local network storage).
- Your swipe access to the INC that comes with registration in this class will expire at the end of the term.