

RTV 4684 SECTION 73A0 CLASS # 12764

# ADVANCED TV NEWS PRODUCING

SUMMER 2023 SYLLABUS MARK LEEPS ([mleeps@wuft.org](mailto:mleeps@wuft.org), 352-294-1504)

## Basics

**Prerequisite: C or better in RTV3632 Electronic News Producing & Management**

Other prep: You should also have already taken JOU3101 Print/Digital Reporting. It helps to have shadowed a producer or taken an AP shift in the INC, and it helps to have taken RTV4301 (TV1 reporting).

**Newsroom Shift (TV): One full day per week pre-arranged (9:30am until 6:00pm)**

This is a lab-based course, no lectures or projects or quizzes, but there may be group training sessions TBA.

Normally all-day shifts producing 5pm live daily tv newscast, other possible requirements for radio or other tv producing.

Instructor's office hours: MON/WED 1-2p, Weimer 2324 or 1013

## Texts

There is no required text, though buying an **AP Stylebook** will help you in this experience and in this field...help you now and in any pro producing jobs.

## Course

5pm tv newscast producers normally work one day per week, 9:30am-6:00pm, with extra time spent checking pitches or planning or filing post-show reports.

After the academic prep of completing RTV3632 (Producing) and serving as an AP for the 5pm show, this is the 3crhr course for immersive training as a line producer. If you lack that AP experience your newsroom role in this course may be more limited until we can bring you up to speed. For additional terms of line producing, this course is normally repeated only once, then any further work as 5pm tv newscast producer is usually done as a 1crhr RTV4930. Radio/Digital can also offer RTV4684...those assignments vary.

## Background

The pro stations make UF an extraordinary place to gain practical experience, compared to many other J-schools. Many places create campus news for a campus audience (perhaps a weekly on a totally academic calendar), with a student/campus target audience, "broadcast" only on campus cable.

Your producing work will routinely be broadcast live to a 13+ county area.

## Objective

The objective of regularly producing live tv newscasts is to grow your reliable and marketable skills as a tv newscast producer, and to generate samples for your resume reel. Every day is different content-wise, different story formats and show segments vary in their degree of difficulty to execute, and experience is key to learning how to handle the newscast and how to grow your editorial judgment.

## Goals

Develop and demonstrate the following professional skills:

1. Ability to **scour “the world”** for news to consider for your show and your audience (networks, social media, local competitors, pro partners, feeds, press releases, neighborhood news & local events, etc.)...developing news judgment about what to include in your show for your audience and why.
2. Ability to **match various treatments and formats to stories** for editorial and production reasons...and creativity to sometimes adopt unusual treatments or experiment with novel ones
3. Ability to develop and manage a rundown on a pro newsroom computer system like ENPS (a pro platform used by many commercial stations) in terms of planning how the half-hour of television should look and sound minute by minute. **Make sure everything is correctly formatted.**
4. Ability to work on daily-deadline managing all contributors (reporters and editors) and talent (anchors and reporters fronting their material live) to make sure everyone is prepared and in place to attempt to execute your gameplan. During crunchtime and showtime, **you’re the leader.**
5. Ability to serve frontline in the control room where you **manage the show second-to-second, including all timing issues and “navigating”** to avoid trouble and to recover from it when it happens anyway. (This involves real-time communicating with the director and talent, real-time decision-making, executing “backup plans” or generating new ones on the fly, showing leadership to deliver the best you can for your audience given how your show rolls out in real life.)
6. Ability to **analyze how to improve production-wise and how to pass-the-ball editorially.** During critique, don’t focus on anchor talent performance, go over their readiness and focus and communication and understanding...pay attention to the details we need to correct to keep everyone (cast and crew) on the same page next time. Editorially, send a note to the producers and newsmanagers about how far we advanced certain stories and if there’s more they might consider next.

### Unexpected Opportunities

Our planned shows on days of classes are all that is required, however you may find extraordinary opportunities by volunteering for other shows or specials the INC may attempt during the term.

### Calendar Notes and Weekly Progression

- UF Summer 2023 classes begin 05/15
- UF Summer 2023 Holidays:
  - 05/29 Memorial Day
  - 06/19 Juneteenth
  - 06/26-06/30 Break Week
  - 07/04 Independence Day
- UF Summer 2023 classes end 08/11
- Our first priority for Summer A 2023 is to stand up a flex show (on CH6 and/or digital) and we may not progress to the **live half-hour “First at Five” show on CH5 until late Summer B or Fall. We’re targeting Thursdays at 4pm.**
- If we have enough students we will also try to stand up a flex show on Wednesdays at 4pm.

### Key Points In The Normal 5pm Producing Day

- Before your shift: awareness of the coming news of the day, reporter pitches, requests for live shots
- 10:00am morning editorial meeting & reporter assignments
- Morning NBC-FL conference call
- 12:00-12:30pm window, rundown review with news managers
- 2:30pm show production meeting—explaining the draft show to anchors, director, considering changes suggest by news managers & production
- 3:00pm all local reporters should be back in copyediting or doing video editing by now
- 3:00pm anchors begin practicing as available
- 4:00pm all videos should be ready for playback (if not, you may need to soon switch to a backup plan for the lead or have an alternative for other risky components)
- 4:00pm flex show starts
- 4:15pm live show ends
- 4:20pm gather at set for show critique (producer & director lead off)

## **Grading**

- **20% - attendance**

Attendance is mandatory and 20% of your overall grade. If you're very sick, stay away, let us know and bring in a doctor's note afterward. If you're able to, call the others to see if someone can take your place and if you can return the favor later. 200 points total; every unexcused absence will be a 20-point reduction. We will schedule 4 workshops during this term with mandatory attendance and any missed workshop will also be a 20-point deduction.

- **80% - producing**

You're graded on the skills you prove over the course of the term as a line producer. It is a holistic, all-inclusive grading month by month, 200/mo. Try to get better each show and learn from all the post-show critiques, the workshops, and show review meetings with the INC Director. In the real world you're only as good as your last show (how it looked to the real world, which is rarely as good as you planned)...and the most important thing is the next show.

## **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 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

## **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.

## **Recording Lectures**

A new law allows FL students to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

## **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 the Instructor:**

The craft of journalism strives to be objective. However, in practice, much of the gathering of information tends to come from subjective sources and a subset of voices that may not be representative of society as a whole. The re-telling may also be influenced by the source, editorial slants, and social sensibilities more related to the current times (the era/decade/year in which it was produced). 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 prefer a name and/or set of pronouns that differ from those that appear in your official records, please let me know early on. •
- If something is said in class (by anyone) that makes you feel uncomfortable, please talk to me about it confidentially afterward.
- If you feel like your performance in the course is being impacted by your experiences outside of classtime, please don't hesitate to come and talk to me or another INC news manager. 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 U Matter We Care program.
- Another option for someone totally outside of the newsroom is Joanna Hernandez, the CJC Director of Inclusion and Diversity.

## **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/](http://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.

## **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](mailto: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 are no extra fees for this course and no required textbook. You will complete almost all work on special equipment and computers provided by the INC and WUFT-TV. It is a working environment and those “work rules” are listed further below.

## **Feedback & Evaluations**

All our work will be accomplished outside of Canvas, there will only be a minimal shell. Please contact me in person or by email ([mleeps@wuft.org](mailto:mleeps@wuft.org)) for any question you have throughout the course. Students are 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.**

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**. Anyone who violates the dress code will be notified at the time of the violation and advised to comply in the future or sent home to change, if necessary, in the judgment of the newsroom staffer. Students who appear on tv or the web will get feedback about clothing, makeup and performance...in order to keep our work products on-par with industry standards.

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**. The college/stations hold the rights to all work-product and published/broadcast material generated, and it may not be redistributed or repurposed in any form without permission of college/station officials. Don't post anything we generate to YouTube or other non-wuft websites without checking.

The 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. Make sure you work in an area appropriate to your role/course, that you log-in as instructed and save & log-out everytime you walk away.

We embrace the **RTDNA Code of Ethics** and the similar SPJ Code of Ethics, but we also have our own Ethics Policies you should study and follow.



## Other Notes

- **Never leave your newsroom shift without prior approval** from a News Manager.
- All work is done for potential broadcast on WUFT-TV, WUFT-FM and publishing on WUFT.ORG and related in-house platforms but you should **make no promises** to the public about if or when certain stories will air.
- We **never** give copies of our taped material (raw, edited, or airchecks) to anyone, but can take requests from the public to post a particular story on our web site.
- 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 and save it to your portable hard drive.
- In addition to INC News Managers, 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. You may also get feedback from special guests.
- We have outside partnerships ongoing with NBC NewsChannel Florida, CNN, and sometimes others. **Don't assume material we generate can be shared or posted anywhere; always check with Mark first**.
- **Your swipe access to the INC that comes with registration in this class will expire after the end of the term.**