

JOU 4201: NEWS CENTER PRACTICUM: ESPN GAINESVILLE FEATURES

FALL 2023

1 Credit

Prof. Ryan Hunt

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Office: Weimer Hall #3040D

Office Hours: Tues. & Thurs, 10am-12pm OR [by appointment](#)

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this 1-credit immersion experience with ESPN Gainesville, you will produce one high-quality feature that can be published/aired on a CJC platform. The feature can be written, audio, video or a multimedia experience, as per the student's choice,

GOALS

- To identify what makes for a high-quality feature
- To successfully pitch original feature ideas
- To report (in a variety of platforms) feature-type information
- To produce and revise a feature-style story
- To understand how visuals, multimedia elements complement the written word

MEETINGS

The class will not meet weekly at a scheduled time, but we will meet four times during the semester at times/dates mutually agreed upon by the class. You are encouraged to work on your stories in the INC throughout the semester.

Early semester:

Overview. Discuss what makes a good feature
Idea pitches and feature structure
Picking the right format for your idea

Formal story pitch proposal
Mid-semester:
Source review
First draft critiques

End semester:
Q&A for final drafts

GRADING

You will be graded on a 500-point scale:

A:	460–500	C:	360–384
A-:	450–459	C-:	350–359
B+:	435–449	D+:	335–349
B:	410–434	D:	310–324
B-:	400–409	D-:	300–311
C+:	385–399	E:	0–299

ASSIGNMENT BREAKDOWN

10 points:	Reply to meeting-time poll
40 points:	Attendance at group class times (10 points each)
50 points:	Ideas meeting (25) and originality, creativity of pitches (25)
25 points:	Formal story pitch memo
100 points:	First draft
100 points:	Revision
125 points:	Final
50 points:	Extra elements

See Canvas for deadline dates. Late assignments will be deducted 10 points for the first 24 hours after the deadline, 5 points for each 24-hour period after.

ASSIGNMENT

You will produce multiple drafts of one high-quality feature for ESPN Gainesville. All ideas must be approved by the instructor before pursuing. You can choose from any of the platforms:

Writing: Approx 1,500 to 2,000 words
Audio: Approx 4-5 minutes
Video: Approx 4-5 minutes
Multimedia: Written story under 800 words with audio and video elements

Grading rubrics will be handed out separately after you choose your platform and idea. Missing deadlines will also result in penalties.

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSIONS

All submissions are via email to ryanhunt@ufl.edu. Submissions in Canvas will not be accepted. Once your idea is approved, let Eric Esterline know of the idea so that he knows what stories are coming. After final draft, send final drafts through INC protocols via Eric Esterline.

ATTENDANCE AND LATE WORK

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies. Click [here](#) to read the university attendance policies.

CLASSROOM NEEDS

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center. Click here to get started with the Disability Resource Center. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

EVALUATIONS

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or [via this link](#). Summaries of course evaluation results are [available to students here](#).

INCLUSION, DIVERSITY, AND EQUITY STATEMENT

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

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY/HONOR CODE

Plagiarism is one of the biggest sins in journalism. Do your own work. Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. Violation of the honor code includes plagiarizing material from other sources, using artificial intelligence (such as ChatGPT), fabricating material or using any work done by another person for a class assignment. Even copying photos from the internet could lead to a copyright claim in the real world. See the Department of Journalism website, as well as UF guidelines, for specific outline of honor code violations. [UF Student Honor Code](#)

Any violations of this code will be reported to the Dean of Students. Failure to comply with this commitment will result in disciplinary action compliant with the UF Student Honor Code Procedures. If you have any degree of uncertainty, please ask.

THE INSTRUCTOR

Ryan Hunt is a Sports Journalism Lecturer at the University of Florida. A 1997 graduate of UF's College of Journalism and Communications, Ryan spent 25 years at *Sports Illustrated*, including the last four as its co-Editor-in-Chief. Ryan managed SI's editorial staff, leading a team of experienced reporters and editors and overseeing the digital strategy — from daily content planning to major-event coverage to franchise development.

At SI, Ryan started as an entry-level Associate Producer in Atlanta before climbing the ranks – Homepage Editor, News Director, Associate Managing Editor to Executive Editor – to become one of only 11 people to hold the top editorial title at the renowned magazine. Hunt won a Sports Emmy in 2017 for Outstanding Digital Innovation for his involvement on the SI/Life VR 'Capturing Everest' project, the first ever bottom-to-top climb of Mount Everest captured in virtual reality.

He grew up in the St. Petersburg area and was the sports editor of the *The Independent Florida Alligator* as a student at UF. Nearly 30 years ago, I was in the same position as you are today.