

RTV 3945: Fundamentals of Live Sports Video Board Production

Fall 2025

College of Journalism and Communications

University of Florida

Instructor of Record

Dennis Black, Assistant Athletics Director, Creative Video

Email: dennisb@gators.ufl.edu

Office Hours: Tuesdays (11:00 a.m.–Noon), Wednesdays (11:00 a.m.–Noon)

Experience Locations: Gator Vision Studios at Weimer Hall, Ben Hill Griffin Stadium, Exactech Arena, and other UF Athletics venues

Shift Day/Time: Assigned around home-event schedules and student availability (evenings/weekends likely)

Immersion Overview

This immersion provides hands-on training in producing a live sports **video board show** (in-venue show) for collegiate athletic events. Students will rotate through core roles—**show producer, director, technical director (TD), graphics operator, replay operator, camera operator**—and learn how those roles collaborate to deliver an engaging fan experience under real-time conditions.

Through pre-event planning, venue rehearsals, and live-event shifts, students will practice fundamentals of **live sports production**, including rundowns, timing, intercom communication, safety, and contingency operations.

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify and explain responsibilities for all primary positions on an in-venue production team.
 - Read and contribute to a **run-of-show/rundown** and call basic cues on intercom.
 - Operate entry-level video board systems and peripherals (switcher basics, graphics, playback, replay clipping/playlists) at an introductory level.
 - Execute safe setup/strike practices (cable management, trip hazards, RF basics, weather procedures).
 - Collaborate effectively and perform under time pressure during **live** conditions.
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Evaluation & Assessment

The course follows the immersion template with two primary graded components.

Evaluation Component	Points	% of Grade
Event/Shift Attendance (10 assigned events)	5 pts each = 50 pts	50%
Production Role Performance (10 events)	5 pts each = 50 pts	50%
Total	100 pts	100%

Event/Shift Attendance (50 pts)

Students are scheduled by UAA and Daktronics reps based on knowledge of duties needed for each event. Arrive on time, complete pre-show setup, participate through strike, and follow venue protocols. Excused absences require a university-approved reason and, when applicable, documentation (e.g., doctor's note). Unexcused absences may result in removal from the course and a failing grade.

Production Role Performance (50 pts)

At each event, students are evaluated on preparation, teamwork, communication, and execution in their assigned role. Rotations ensure broad exposure. Supervisors/instructor provide debrief feedback after each event.

Performance rubric (per event, 5 pts):

- **Preparation (1 pt):** On-time; pre-reads rundown; completes position checklist.
- **Technique (1.5 pts):** Demonstrates entry-level competence on assigned gear/software.
- **Communication (1 pt):** Clear, concise intercom etiquette; responsive to cues.
- **Teamwork (0.5 pt):** Professionalism; assists peers; maintains focus.
- **Safety/Procedure (1 pt):** Follows venue/safety protocols; manages cables/gear responsibly.

Pass/Fail Gate: Students must complete the **Venue & Safety Orientation** before their first live event (non-graded but required to continue).

Grading Scale (UF Standard)

93.5–100 = A; 89.5–93.4 = A–; 86.5–89.4 = B+; 82.5–86.4 = B; 79.5–82.4 = B–; 76.5–79.4 = C+; 72.5–76.4 = C; 69.5–72.4 = C–; 66.5–69.4 = D+; 62.5–66.4 = D; 59.5–62.4 = D–; 0–59.4 = E

Course Structure & Weekly Plan (15 Weeks)

Note: Live event timing dictates production opportunities. Weeks below combine **classroom/lab** (planning, workshops) with **event-based** shifts. Specific dates/times for events will be announced via the shared calendar.

Week 1 — Orientation & Safety

- Course overview; roles in an in-venue show vs. television broadcast.
- Facility tour: control room, camera positions, RF zones, stage areas.
- **Safety:** cable management, trip hazards, ladders, weather/lightning, hearing protection.
- Deliverables: sign safety acknowledgment; join comms/ops channels; access to calendars.

Week 2 — Anatomy of a Show

- What's in a **run-of-show**: hits, prompts, reads, wipes, looks, sponsor obligations.
- Pre-show checklist walkthrough (room power-up, sources, tally, confidence monitors).

Week 3 — Cameras & Shot Fundamentals

- Camera types: hard, handheld, PTZ; lenses & framing for in-venue boards.
- White balance, exposure, camera shading overview (with engineer demo if available).
- Camera plots and safe pathways; sideline etiquette.

Week 4 — Switching & Technical Directing (TD) Basics

- Switcher overview: program/preview, M/Es, keyers, DSK, wipes, macros.
- Signal flow: sources, routers, replay/graphics integration, return feeds.

Week 5 — Graphics 101

- Scorebug/clock; headshots; player L3s; crowd prompts; sponsor slates.
- Data sources and accuracy checks; proofing workflows.

Week 6 — Replay 101

- Replay fundamentals: in/out points, melt reels, playlists, iso strategy.
- Live storytelling from replay: cadence with director/PA; safety of RF shots.

Week 7 — Audio & Show Calling

- In-venue audio: music, SFX, PA coordination, nat sound capture.
- Timing & calling: cadence, counting, clearing mics, talkback discipline.

Week 8 — Midterm Table-Top & Venue Rehearsal (Graded)

- Dry run: students rotate **director/TD/replay/graphics/camera** in a simulated game.
- Evaluate: timing, communication, accuracy, sponsor fulfillment.
- Debrief with notes for improvement before live events ramp up.

Week 9 — Advanced Cameras & ENG Elements

- Building opens & hype elements; gathering b-roll efficiently on event day.
- Wireless pitfalls, RF coordination basics, intermod avoidance (intro level).

Week 10 — Multi-Sport Adaptation

- Differences across **football, basketball, volleyball, soccer, baseball/softball**.
- Sport-specific cadences; unique sponsor elements; venue constraints.

Week 11 — Crowd Engagement & Presentation

- Moments that matter: intros, timeouts, half-time, promotions, kiss cam, recognition.
- Coordination with marketing/game operations; sponsor reads & legal compliance.

Week 12 — Contingency & Risk Management

- When things break: power, graphics data, switcher bank, camera failure, weather.
- Backup content & failover paths; emergency action plan (EAP) with Athletics.

Week 13 — Show Build for Capstone Events

- Assign lead roles for the capstone event(s); finalize assets and sponsor checks.
- Lock run-of-show; QC passes; comms chart; camera plot; gear sign-out.

Week 14 — Capstone Live Event(s): Execution

- Students lead their assigned positions for a full event; faculty/supervisors assess.
- Immediate post-mortem notes captured for improvement.

Week 15 — Postmortem, Portfolio & Reflection

- Formal debrief: what worked, what didn't; timeline review against rundown.
 - Portfolio prep: collect clips (when permitted), annotated rundown, self-eval.
 - Final readiness discussion: next-steps pathway to larger roles.
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Communication & Scheduling

- Communication will be to Dennis Black or Casey McIntosh if your schedules changes and you are unable to attend shift.
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Equipment, Attire & Conduct

- **Attire:** neutral, closed-toe shoes; venue-appropriate clothing; no non-UF team branding.
 - **Gear:** treat equipment with care; report issues immediately.
 - **On-Field/Bench Areas:** follow staff instructions; maintain professional conduct.
 - **Hydration/Breaks:** coordinate with director if you need a break. Never leave post without letting someone know.
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Academic Integrity & Professional Standards

Plagiarism, fabrication, misrepresentation of participation, or unauthorized reuse of media/assets violates UF policy and professional ethics. All suspected violations will be referred per CJC and UF procedures.

Use of Generative AI

Students **may not** use AI tools to generate show scripts, graphics, video, or audio elements **unless explicitly approved** by the instructor. AI may be used for brainstorming checklists or run-of-show ideas, but all facts, names, and sponsor requirements must be verified. When in doubt, ask the instructor.

Attendance Policy (Immersion)

Students are expected to work assigned events and complete the full shift (setup through strike). Missed shifts without an excused, documented reason can result in dismissal from the experience and a failing grade.

Sponsored Content Policy

No student may engage in outside-paid placement or native advertising within in-venue productions. Any approach from external entities must be referred to a manager/instructor. Violations may result in removal from the course and additional sanctions.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc). Provide the accommodation letter to the instructor as early as possible to coordinate support.

Course Evaluations

Students provide feedback at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu> during the evaluation window. Results are available at the same site.

Course Grading (UF Policy)

Students are graded in accordance with UF policies:
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

U Matter, We Care

Your well-being matters. Contact umatter@ufl.edu for support; after-hours crisis counselor: 352-392-1575. In emergencies, call 9-1-1.