

RTV 4930: Reptile Report

Fall 2025

College of Journalism and Communications
University of Florida

Instructor: Geoff Thompson

Place: Weimer 3020 + INC Newsroom

*****LIVE CLASS MEETING: Monday 1145-1235, Wednesday 1145-140*****

E-Mail: gthompson@jou.ufl.edu

IG & Twitter: [@thompsonsport](https://www.instagram.com/thompsonsport)

Office Hours: Mondays 2-4

Office: Weimer Hall 3327

Phone: (352) 294-7740

Course Site: <https://ufl.instructure.com>

Course Text: None

Overview and Objectives

Students are to get more experience creating content in the form of micro-documentaries – pitching their own stories, then helping to shoot, edit and write their stories, complete with stand-ups where needed – to add to their reels.

We will present these stories in a television magazine format.

Students will work in groups to complete your stories. One person might be the lead on one story, and then students would switch. For example, Student A might be the reporter, student B helps with the camera, sound, b-roll, etc. And then on Student B's story, Student A helps with camera, sound, b-roll.

*****Reporters are responsible for their own editing*****

Course Learning Objectives

After successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

- 1) Develop storytelling skills, including visual storytelling
- 2) Learn what constitutes storytelling and apply those skills to students' own stories
- 3) Build skills with cameras and editing

4) Understand industry standards with equipment, skills, and concepts

College of Journalism and Communications Objectives

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications requires that by graduation all students should be able to:

- understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the US
- demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications;
- demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;
- understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- think critically, creatively and independently;
- conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
- write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
- apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work, and to understand the digital world.

Course Grades

Evaluation Components	% of Total Grade
On-time – are you coming to class/shows on time. You'd be amazed how important this is in the real world.	20%
Pitching and Meeting Deadlines – Like in the real world, you will be expected to generate some of your own story ideas. And then are you turning in your stories on-time?	20%
Performance/professionalism - Are you doing what you say you're going to do? Are you producing good work? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• You will need 3 stories this semester.• The package rubric is on Canvas• Adhere to dress code	20%

Midterm	10%
In-Class Assignments	10%
Final Project – Reel	20%
Total	100%

A Word about Professionalism

Dress Code:

- On camera, you must at least be business casual (at least a collared shirt/blouse, no shorts)
- Submit a picture from your shoot, ensuring that you are dressed properly.
- Improper dress on a shoot will be 50% off your assignment

Code of Conduct

- Must be professional at ALL TIMES on a shoot
- Complaints about behavior = failing grade
- 1st complaint – failing grade on assignment
- 2nd complaint – fail the class

Stories

Stories are due on Sunday by midnight (with the exception of the 2-min short). We will watch them as a group the following day in class and discuss. You will have an opportunity to make revisions. On the Wednesday after your stories are due, we will shoot the episode in the INC.

You will also need to build a graphic with your story name and your name as the producer. We will put that on the screen behind you as you introduce your story. This should be submitted at the same time as your story.

Examples:



Please look at the rubric on Canvas before you begin packages. We will also go over the package rubric in class.

Grading (grades are rounded up or down to the nearest whole number for grading purposes)

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%	F				

Course Outline (subject to change)

Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to class • Introduction to cameras • 2-min Short assigned
Week 2 (NO CLASS MONDAY)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audio/camera exercise • Story 1 Pitches
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shooting B-roll • 2-min short due
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Story 1 Due • Show 1
Week 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Story 2 Pitches • Visual Storytelling
Week 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other examples • Work on Story 2
Week 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Story 2 Due • Show 2
Week 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Story 3 Pitches
Week 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Story 3
Week 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Story 3 Due • Show 3
Week 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Story 4 Pitches

Week 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Story 4
Week 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Story 4 Due • Show 4
Week 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • THANKSGIVING
Week 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Show 4

Policies

Academic Policies:

- Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in the course are consistent with university policies. [See UF Academic Regulations and Policies for more information regarding the University Attendance Policies.](#)
- Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center. [See the "Get Started With the DRC" webpage on the Disability Resource Center site.](#) 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.
- Information on current UF grading policies for assigning grade points. This may be achieved by including [a link to the University grades and grading policies.](#)
- Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online. Students can complete evaluations in three ways:
 1. The email they receive from GatorEvals
 2. Their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals
 3. The central portal at <https://my-ufl.bluera.com>

Guidance on how to provide constructive feedback is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

- The University's Honesty Policy regarding cheating, plagiarism, etc.:

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 Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. [See the UF Conduct Code website for more information](#). If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

- **In-Class Recording:**

Students are allowed 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 education 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, and delivered by an instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course.

A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentation such as patient history, 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 guest 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.

Academic Resources:

- E-learning technical support: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at [352-392-4357](tel:352-392-4357) or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
- [Career Connections Center](#): Reitz Union Suite 1300, [352-392-1601](tel:352-392-1601). Career assistance and counseling services.
- [Library Support](#): Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources. Call [866-281-6309](tel:866-281-6309) or email ask@ufl.libanswers.com for more information.
- [Academic Resources](#): 1317 Turlington Hall, Call [352-392-2010](tel:352-392-2010), or to make a private appointment: [352-392-6420](tel:352-392-6420). Email contact: teaching-center@ufl.edu. General study skills and tutoring.
- [Writing Studio](#): Daytime (9:30am-3:30pm): 2215 Turlington Hall, [352-846-1138](tel:352-846-1138) | Evening (5:00pm-7:00pm): 1545 W University Avenue (Library West, Rm. 339). Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

- Academic Complaints: Office of the Ombuds; [Visit the Complaint Portal webpage for more information.](#)
- Enrollment Management Complaints (Registrar, Financial Aid, Admissions): [View the Student Complaint Procedure webpage for more information.](#)
- UF Student Success Initiative: Visit <https://studentsuccess.ufl.edu/> for resources that support your success as a UF student.

Campus Health and Wellness Resources:

- UF Whole Gator Resources: Visit <https://one.uf.edu/whole-gator/discover> for resources that are designed to help you thrive physically, mentally, and emotionally at UF.