

Multimedia Reporting

JOU 3346L • Spring 2026

Lecture

Ethan Magoc

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Lecture for all students on Mondays from 12:50 to 1:40 p.m. in FLG 280.

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Office hours: Friday, 8 to 10 a.m. and by appointment at tinyurl.com/magocetimes

Lab Sections

Dania Alexandrino

Spanish-Language News Manager, Innovation News Center and WUFT News

Lab: Mondays 1:55 to 3:50 p.m. in Weimer 3028 | Class #23322

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Office hours: Monday 8 to 10:30 a.m. and by appointment

Ted Bridis

Michael and Linda Connelly Senior Lecturer in Investigative Reporting

Lab: Mondays: 5:10 to 7:05 p.m. in Florida Gym 275 | Class #17647

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Office hours: Tuesday 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and by appointment

Meredith Bauer-Mitchell

CJC Adjunct Instructor

Lab: Mondays 5:10 to 7:05 p.m. in Matherly 151 and hybrid | Class #12629

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Office hours: Thursday 3 to 5 p.m. and by appointment

Emily Hinds

CJC Adjunct Instructor

Lab: Wednesdays: 9:35 to 11:30 a.m. in Weimer 1090 | Class #12631

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Office hours: Tuesday 1 to 3 p.m. and by appointment

Course summary

This three-credit intermediate journalism course marries traditional local news reporting with the multimedia skills required of storytellers. For this class, multimedia means using more than one kind of storytelling tool for each assignment: text, images, audio, video, data, etc. You will learn to identify, pitch and produce a local or regional news story for an online audience. Primary outcomes are field assignments suitable for a public media station's digital news website.

Given the community-based story opportunities across north central Florida and beyond, this course will help prepare you for not only advanced journalism courses in the UF College of Journalism and Communications, but also an internship and/or a job before/after graduation. This is true if you want a career in a newsroom or if you're more interested in law school, nonprofit advocacy, government communications, book publishing, sales, influencing, etc.

Course objectives

Students in this course will learn to:

1. Achieve greater clarity, consistency, accuracy and authority in news writing.
2. Identify and pitch a local news story on various topics of public interest.
3. Find news in the community using official and unofficial sources.
4. Gather facts and information via interviews, documents or online repositories.
5. Determine which storytelling tool best suits a story and maximize the opportunity.
6. Develop a “hire me” mindset that builds a portfolio of quality story outcomes.

Grading

Assignments (1,000 total points available)

Attendance/mental discipline (100 points)

- Attending each Monday lecture and assigned lab session is required. Lectures offer big-picture lessons, and labs serve as a space for individual feedback and collaboration with colleagues to shape story pitches. Note the compounding penalty described below; it applies each time you miss a lab or lecture session.
- A discussion board post introducing yourself is worth five points in Canvas.

Canvas quizzes (120 points) and AP style & mastery quiz (50 points)

- Expect 12 quizzes on the assigned readings, lecture and supplemental material offered in each module – as well as your AP style proficiency.
- A 50-minute, finals-style quiz tests grammar, spelling, punctuation and AP style. You get up to three tries to answer 50 questions. Highest score counts.

Field assignments (500 points – 100 for each field assignment)

- Each student will produce up to six assignments demonstrating their proficiency with the concepts taught in the course. All students must submit stories for the first and sixth field assignment deadlines and at least three of the four others. A student who files six acceptable field assignments will have their lowest grade dropped, at the lab instructor's discretion.
- By the end of the semester, your field assignment portfolio must include a mix of enterprise and daily deadline stories, an alternate story form, a story from one of our nearby news deserts and a mix of multimedia. Details about the field assignment portfolio are available in Canvas. Missing any of the above components can result in up to a 50-point deduction.
- You are urged to do a range of stories, ideally involving government, education, public safety, health, environment, business, the arts, technology, etc.
- Lab instructors judge each field assignment as a newsroom editor focused on accuracy, craftsmanship, effort, enterprise and abiding of course directives.
- You will have two opportunities to revise these field assignment components that prove to be subpar: headlines, story structure, sourcing and images.

Multimedia (200 points)

- You will produce at least four multimedia reporting components — an audio wrap, a video package, a data visualization and a social-first video — to accompany four of the six field assignments and not as standalone elements. Details for each, including rubrics and instructional materials, are available in Canvas.

Source development memo (25 points)

- The sourcing memo shall demonstrate a reflection of your growth in sourcing skills and offering future reporters the contacts that you found useful.

Final grade calculations: 930-1,000, A; 929-900, A-; 899-870, B+; 869-830, B; 829-800, B-; 799-770, C+; 769-730, C; 729-700, C-; 699-670, D+; 669-630, D; 629-600 D-; 599 and below, E.

An A indicates superior performance; B, highly competent, above-average work; C, average; D, below average; E, unsatisfactory. Use and manage your time efficiently. You will be rewarded for results, not just effort. Steady improvement will earn additional equity.

Required texts

- “Inside Reporting... (3rd Ed.),” Tim Harrower © 2013.
- “Field Guide to Covering Local News...” Bayles © 2012.
- AP Stylebook via apstylebook.com/smathers-libraries-at-the-university-of-florida
- Other open-access resources available via Canvas links.

Attendance, attention and academic integrity

Per the UF attendance policy, an absence is unexcused unless you provide the instructor notice in advance and documentation after the fact. Regardless of why you miss class, you must let the lecture or lab instructor know beforehand for the absence to be excused. This is a deadline profession oriented around being present. Late arrivals and early departures are noted. Missing more than 30 minutes of a class session counts as an absence. Chronic tardiness will also result in a point deduction. If you miss class, get notes from a classmate. In this and every course you take, please never ask the instructor if you “missed anything important.”

Multiple unexcused absences will double in penalty: Five points deducted for your first absence, 10 points for your second, 20 for your third, etc.

Laptops and mobile devices are not permitted in lecture. This course represents an excellent chance to learn to take better notes with pen and paper — a task required of reporters on deadline. Separately, your instructors have found that students in previous semesters have excelled the most in this course when they take notes without their laptop — providing them an additional opportunity to focus on course material and not the distractions our devices offer. Giving the lecture period your undivided attention will help to better prepare you to take on the quizzes, field assignments and multimedia that this course requires.

iClicker

This course uses iClicker's geolocation feature to collect attendance in lecture. This means that you must be physically present in class to avoid incurring an unexcused absence penalty. You must grant the iClicker app permission to share your location the first time you use the feature, and you can then choose to turn this permission off until your next class session. If you have connection issues during class, write your name and UFID on a piece of paper and hand the paper to a TA at the end of the class period. We will not accept any submissions outside of the class period or via email. Find more information in [iClicker's student privacy policy](#).

Academic integrity

Academic dishonesty is not tolerated in this course. That includes – but is not limited to – using any work done by another person and submitting it for a class assignment; repurposing work for/from another class; copying and pasting text published by another person/organization without sufficient attribution; illicit fabrication/use of artificial intelligence without instructor permission and guidance; using images someone else produced without explicit permission from the creator. Attribution is not the same as permission. Most images found online are not free to use. [Find more information in the UF Student Honor Code](#).

AP style need-to-know

Given the AP style-related quizzes this term and your need for written clarity, consistency, accuracy and authority in field assignments, you must know (in no particular order): capitalization, numerals, dates, decades, years, Roman and Arabic numerals, percentages, a.m., p.m., times, ages, boy, girl, infant, youth, hyphens, directions and regions, highway designations, composition titles, magazine names, newspaper names, titles, military titles, courtesy titles, legislative titles, religious titles, academic, abbreviations and acronyms, second reference, social media, state names, abbreviation of state names with cities, dateline cities, distances, percents, dimensions, foot, cents, dollars, millions, fractions and addresses.

WUFT News

This course is aligned with WUFT News. It is not a campus station; the college's professional news outlet serves over a dozen counties across north central Florida. So for this class, think and act like a professional journalist. You should identify yourself to sources as a reporter working toward publication of a story for WUFT News. Treat this course like a job or internship. If you do, you will get better clips, a better grade, and you will better prepare yourself for a job. JOU 3346L will also prepare you for working in a professional workplace by navigating office politics, communicating your ideas, garnering attention and interacting with management.

WUFT publishing considerations include: relevancy or urgency (is it front-page news?); the quality of sourcing; depth of interviewing; attribution; the power of quotes; flow (is it logical?); adherence to AP style, grammar, spelling and punctuation; and gumption and ingenuity.

Slack and Airtable

JOU 3446L students shall communicate with their lab instructors/editors and/or teaching assistants primarily via Slack. Students will pitch story ideas via wuft.org/pitch no later than the deadline set by your lab instructor. Pitches submitted through this form automatically populate into Slack and WUFT's assignment management tool, Airtable. Feedback for your story idea, progress and submission will come from your lab instructor, teaching assistant and/or a WUFT editor via Slack. Failure to understand this process could result in grade penalties, unpublished work and/or needless frustration.

Submitting for publication

All text stories and associated story assets considered ready for publishing shall be submitted to the instructor, who will then process it according to WUFT's editing process. Students shall not move stories to a WUFT editor for publishing unless expressly directed to do so by the instructor. Your submission should include all elements described in field assignment and multimedia rubrics available in Canvas.

Remember: All field assignments are submitted twice: first in Slack, then via Canvas. Your submission to Canvas is for your grade. Failure to submit to that platform by the deadline will result in a letter grade reduction.

Deadlines

Late assignments will be penalized unless an emergency is documented. A field assignment submitted late and without advance permission will result in at least a letter grade deduction. This is particularly true if it's a daily deadline assignment. If illness prevents you from completing an assignment on time, advance notice and written documentation are required. If advance notice is not possible because of an emergency, written documentation will be mandated ASAP. Generally speaking, we will function as if working in a professional workplace. In the real world, when you don't show up for work (on time) or don't do your work (on time), you risk losing your job. In other words, students who miss class or deadlines will suffer consequences.

Factual errors

Factual errors are embarrassing and intolerable. They range from an inaccurate street address or time element to a misspelled name. Misquotes also qualify, as does just plain sloppiness.

If a student corrects a fact error before the instructor finishes editing, there shall not be a penalty. If an editor finds one or more fact errors, up to 25 points could be deducted. If a source or reader reveals a fact error, up to 50 points could be lost. A series of egregious fact errors in a single submission can result in an overall score of zero. Grievous sins such as source fabrication, plagiarism or neglecting to inform a source that they could appear in a published story will amount to even harsher penalties at the instructors' discretion.

Conflict of interest

Students in this course shall not be used as sources for your field assignments. The same applies to relatives, roommates, friends (from campus or back home), sorority sisters, fraternity brothers, or members of any other co-curricular or extracurricular organizations to which you belong. Interviewing UF faculty, staff, or employees may be allowed provided they and the student do not have a prior relationship – and only with prior approval from the instructor.

Sources must be interviewed either in person or on the phone. Email interviews are discouraged and permitted only with the instructor's permission in advance of the particular interview. Sometimes a source will want you to let him read a story before it is submitted or published. Do not do so. It may be appropriate – sometimes, depending on the story, even ideal – to call the source back to confirm facts or context, or even to read the person's direct or indirect quotes to him or her. Be wary of allowing someone else to determine or undermine your reporting or story approach for nefarious reasons.

Artificial intelligence

Students are prohibited from using AI tools to generate, write or substantially edit field assignments. Stories must be your original work. Using AI to generate content is considered plagiarism and subject to the university's academic integrity policies. Students may use AI tools for research, to find sources or to verify facts and data. Reporters may use AI to find story ideas or sources but must confirm the accuracy of names, places, organizations and events before pitching the story. If in doubt about any use of AI for coursework, please consult your instructor. For more information, [review WUFT's editorial policy on its use of artificial intelligence](#).

Course schedule

This schedule represents our day-one plan and objectives. Plans may change based on breaking news or learning opportunities. Such changes shall be communicated via Canvas or lecture. A list of weekly assignments is also available in each Canvas module.

Module 0: Orientation | Jan. 12 to 18

- We will introduce the course objectives, expectations and frequently asked questions about how to achieve both; explore storytelling through various media; and highlight past student successes while encouraging you to share your goals and background.
- Listen:
 - [“Often undervalued, student journalists play a vital role in our communities”](#) from Connecticut Public Radio, May 16, 2025.

Module 1: Intermediate news reporting | Jan. 19 to 25

- **No lecture or lab meetings this week due to UF holiday. Students are encouraged to schedule one-on-one meetings with their instructor or TA to begin reporting.**
- You will see best practices for pitching story ideas, covering beats, meetings and speeches, nationalizing local stories, reporting breaking news on deadline, producing advances and emphasizing the importance of serving the public over those in power.
- Readings
 - “Inside Reporting” by Tim Harrower:
 - Chapter 4, “Reporting Basics,” pages 67-89
 - Chapter 5, “Covering the News,” pages 93-113
 - Chapter 7, “The Seven Deadly Sins,” pages 150-151
 - Chapter 7, “Journalism Ethics,” pages 152-153
 - Chapter 8, “Digital Journalism,” pages 157-181

Module 2: AP style and intermediate news writing | Jan. 26 to Feb. 1

- You will review how abiding The Associated Press Stylebook will help you write with greater clarity, consistency, accuracy and authority. We will also focus on news writing, deepening your skills with a focus on transitions, quotes and pacing.
- Readings
 - “Inside Reporting” by Tim Harrower:
 - Chapter 4, “Reporting Basics,” pages 88-89
 - “Field Guide to Covering Local News”
 - Chapter 1, “Beat reporting...,” pages 9-21
 - Chapter 2, “Interviewing,” pages 22-31
 - Chapter 3, “Working With Editors,” pages 32-40
 - Chapter 4, “Filing in the Digital Age,” pages 41-50
- **First field assignment due by Friday, Jan. 30 at 6 p.m.**

Module 3: News deserts and alternate story forms | Feb. 2 to 8

- We will examine alternate journalistic story forms — such as explainers, Q&As, and listicles — equipping you with the skills to craft compelling, non-traditional narratives that meet professional standards and attract an audience. You will also learn about news deserts and why it’s crucial to give them emphasis in your reporting.
- Readings
 - Excerpts from [“The State of Local News 2024: Expanding Deserts, Shifts in Ownership, and Expanded Digital Coverage”](#) - via Northwestern University.
 - All pages: [“Even in ‘news deserts’ people still get news”](#) - via University of Texas.
 - “Inside Reporting” by Tim Harrower:
 - Chapter 6, “Beyond Breaking News,” pages 117-125 and 130-133

Module 4: Photojournalism | Feb. 9 to 15

- We will cover photojournalism fundamentals, including action, emotion, and surprise, dynamic environmental portraits, strong captions and courtesy photo usage.
- Readings
 - "Photojournalism" by Kenneth Kobré (PDF available in Canvas)
 - Chapter 1, "Assignment," pages 3-25
 - Chapter 2, "News," pages 26-47
- **Second field assignment due by Friday, Feb. 13, at 6 p.m.**

Module 5: Audio storytelling | Feb. 16 to 22

- You are introduced to audio journalism, with a focus on conversational writing, high-quality recording and producing an NPR-style audio wrap or a longer feature.
- Readings
 - "Inside Reporting" by Tim Harrower:
 - Chapter 9, "Broadcast Journalism," pages 181-191

Module 6: Video storytelling | Feb. 23 to March 1

- We explore video journalism, emphasizing key storytelling elements like character, motion, and emotion, the importance of professional production standards and the distinctions between videos created for different platforms.
- Readings
 - Canvas resources for video storytelling and editing
- **Third field assignment due by Friday, Feb. 27, at 6 p.m.**

Module 7: Data visualization | March 2 to 8

- We cover data journalism and short-form storytelling, teaching you to present information in clear, engaging formats using tools like Datawrapper and TimelineJS, and to decide when an infographic is the most effective way to communicate data.
- Readings
 - "Inside Reporting" by Tim Harrower
 - Chapter 4, "Reporting Basics," pages 86-87
- **Optional: Revisions on field assignments 1 to 3 are due by March 6 at 6 p.m.**

Module 8: Breaking news | March 9 to 15

- We will explore the best ways to prepare yourself to cover day-turn stories by prewriting in advance, plus a discussion of the most common avenues for staying on top of breaking news leads and producing market-leading coverage.
- **Fourth field assignment due by Friday, March 13, at 6 p.m.**

Spring break: March 16 to March 22

Module 9: Government and politics | March 23 to 29

- You will learn to recognize key players from officials to activists, plus how to identify impactful civic stories, report on public agencies and draw the connection between municipal, county and state agency functions and taxpayers' daily lives.
- Readings
 - "Inside Reporting" by Tim Harrower
 - Chapter 5, "Covering the News," pages 106-111
 - "Field Guide to Covering Local News"
 - Chapter 8, "Government," pages 161-197

Module 10: Education and schools | March 30 to April 5

- We will show how local school reporting can engage wide audiences and connect to national conversations about our shared past and future.
- Readings

- "Field Guide to Covering Local News"
 - Chapter 9, "Education," pages 198-232
- **Fifth field assignment due by Friday, April 3, at 6 p.m.**

Module 11: Public safety and criminal justice | April 6 to 12

- We teach you to spot law enforcement trends, tell victim-centered stories, offer safety insights and find compelling cases in both criminal and civil courts.
- Readings
 - "Inside Reporting" by Tim Harrower
 - Chapter 5, "Covering the News," pages 98-105
 - "Field Guide to Covering Local News"
 - Chapter 5, "Cops and Crime," pages 53-86
 - Chapter 6, "Fire and Emergencies," pages 87-118
 - Chapter 7, "Courts," pages 119-160

Module 12: Business and economic development | April 13 to 19

- We will discuss how to spot job market trends, report on the real-world impact of economic shifts and find businesses and advocacy groups worth covering — beyond just free promotion — while sourcing experts to help inform the public.
- Readings
 - ["Beat Basics" by The Donald W. Reynolds National Center for Business Journalism](#)
 - Chapter 6: "Covering Business," pages 23-26
- Listen: One episode from the past week of ["Marketplace" from American Public Media](#)
- **Sixth field assignment due by Friday, April 17, at 6 p.m.**

Module 13: Sharing your good works | April 20 to 22

- We address the reality that many journalism graduates pursue careers beyond newsrooms, explore diverse paths where journalism skills thrive and highlight alumni who found success and fulfillment outside traditional reporting.
- Readings
 - "Mobile and Social Media Journalism: A Practical Guide" (Adornato © 2017):
 - Chapter 3, pages 47-67 (PDF available in Canvas.)
- **AP Style and GSP Mastery Quiz due by 6 p.m. on April 22**
- **Source development memo due by 6 p.m. on April 22**
- **Optional: Revisions on field assignments 4 to 6 are due by 6 p.m. on April 22**

Technical support

Call 352-392-HELP (4357) for help resolving computer-related and other technical issues related to accessing or using Canvas, connectivity (wireless, VPN), email or software configuration, and browser and GatorLink authentication issues. A security reminder: Don't share your UF password with anyone.

UF Computing Help Desk: <https://helpdesk.ufl.edu> • Walk-In Support: HUB 132

Counseling center

Personal or health issues such as depression, anxiety, stress, career uncertainty and or relationships can interfere with your ability to function as a student. UF's Counseling and Wellness Center (CWC) offers support for students in need. CWC is located at 3190 Radio Road and open each weekday from 8 to 5. UF Counseling and Wellness Center:

<https://counseling.ufl.edu/>

Students with disabilities

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with disabilities who have registered with the UF Dean of Students Office. This office will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide it to the instructor when requesting accommodations.

UF Disability Resource Center: <https://disability.ufl.edu>

Course evaluations

Your instructor will exit the classroom for a portion of our final class together to allow you time to provide honest feedback on the course, its instruction and how to improve it in future semesters. Feedback can be offered at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu>.