

# JOU4201: Creating for the Click

Spring 2026

College of Journalism and Communications

University of Florida

Instructor of record

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Experience location: Social Media Lab and INC

Shift day and time: To be arranged based on students' schedules

## Course Overview

This course is designed to provide **hands-on newsroom experience** in digital and social media journalism. Students will rotate through **YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook/Twitter** content creation teams, producing real-world content for **WUFT and Florida Storms**.

The course emphasizes **audience engagement, platform strategy, and public service journalism** — preparing students to create impactful content in a competitive digital environment.

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## Course Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will:

1. Develop strategies for creating social-first content tailored to YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook/Twitter.
2. Apply platform-specific best practices for Reels, Shorts, Stories, Carousels, Lives, and native video.
3. Use analytics to measure performance and refine storytelling approaches.
4. Communicate effectively during severe weather, balancing urgency with accuracy.

5. Gain professional-level experience publishing content for WUFT/Florida Storms audiences.
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## Course Structure

- Students will be responsible for creating content for the following platforms
    - YouTube
    - Instagram
    - Facebook/Twitter (via Social Newsdesk)
  - Each week, the team will:
    - Produce platform-specific content tied to newsroom priorities (sports, weather, community).
    - Apply lessons from the relevant **module** (Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, Severe Weather, etc.).
    - Analyze analytics and prepare short reflections on performance.
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## Assignments & Projects

- **Weekly Platform Performance (50%)**  
Hands-on creation of content during assigned platform week.
- **Mini Projects/Portfolio (20%)**  
Each rotation ends with a platform-specific project:
  - YouTube: Channel strategy + 3-video plan.
  - Instagram: 1-week content calendar.

- Facebook/Twitter: 1-week content plan + sample boosted post.
- **Analytical deep dives (20%)**

We will measure how we are doing in terms of growing the platforms as the semester goes along. By the end of the semester you should know what success looks like on each platform and how to measure the wins through data.

- **Industry Leader Profile (10%)**

Connect with an expert in Digital Content and pick their brain for what strategies are working, where is the future of social media headed and what skills do you need to enhance to be viable long term in the job market.

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## Assessment Rubric

Each project graded on 16 points (4 per category):

1. **Understanding of Concepts**
  2. **Creativity & Relevance**
  3. **Technical Execution**
  4. **Completion**
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## Weekly Schedule

- **Week 1:** Course intro, newsroom workflow, platform overview.
- **Weeks September:** Rotation 1 (YouTube / Instagram / Facebook-Twitter teams).
- **Weeks October:** Rotation 2 (teams swap).
- **Weeks Nov/Dec:** Rotation 3 (final swap).
- **Final project:** Put together a portfolio of your best work and we will do presentations so that we can talk through everyone's big wins for the semester.

1. **Technical Execution** – Is the format/platform optimized?
  2. **Completion** – Did the student complete all required elements?
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## Expectations

- Students are expected to produce content that may be published on **WUFT and Florida Storms platforms**.
- Collaboration and teamwork are essential — newsroom dynamics mirror professional settings.
- Deadlines matter. Timeliness is critical in digital and weather communication.

## Policies

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**Attendance Policy** Students shall work with their coverage team to work as many events as possible in order to get content produced. This is negotiable and will be different for each individual and coverage team depending on schedules for the teams/events and the individual students.

**Plagiarism and Citing Sources** The Action

1. If you include a passage that is word-for-word from another published or broadcast document (including from the internet) without attribution, that is plagiarism.
2. If you include a passage that is word-for-word from another published or broadcast document (including from the internet), with attribution that comprises the bulk of your writing, that is plagiarism.
3. If you cite a human source or sources from another published news organization or other publication (including from the internet), and that source or those sources comprise the bulk of the sources used in your own writing, that is, for all intents and purposes, plagiarism.
4. If you use another news organization's story to write a story that you did not cover, but are writing it as if you were there and did cover it, that is plagiarism.

5. If you create characters who do not exist and use them as sources for your story, that is a fabrication, which is academic and journalistic dishonesty.
6. If you produce a story -- including text, photos or video -- for one class (or internship), then use the same story in another class without both instructors' approval, that is double-dipping, which is academic dishonesty.
7. If you produce an assignment for one class that is corrected, edited or graded, then hand in that assignment to another class, that is considered academic dishonesty.
8. If you hand in a story with your name on it that someone else wrote, that is academic and journalistic dishonesty.
9. If you hand in a story with your name on it for which someone else did the research or interviewing, that is academic and journalistic dishonesty.
10. If you hand in a story with your name on it for which someone else did the editing or rewriting, that is academic and journalistic dishonesty.
11. If you use a photograph, image or song without permission and/or without credit to the source, that is a copyright violation, which is a form of plagiarism.

<https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/>

## **The Consequences**

All acts of suspected plagiarism or academic dishonesty will be reported to the INC Director and /or journalism chair, and the Dean of the CJC, and may be referred to the Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution Center.

An act of plagiarism or academic dishonesty may result in failure on the assignment, failure of the class, as well as other possible sanctions outlined in the Faculty Senate Policy on Academic Misconduct.

Academic Integrity 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 Honor Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. For more information visit the Honor Code web page at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/> or contact Student Judicial Affairs, P202 Peabody Hall, 392-1261.

Sponsored Content Marketers and publishers are using innovative methods to create, format, and deliver digital advertising. One form is "native advertising," or "sponsored content" which is content that bears a similarity to the news, feature articles, product reviews, entertainment, and other material that surrounds it online. Sometimes different outside entities will offer reporters, broadcasters and authors monetary compensation for including this sponsored content or native advertising in their reporting.

ESPN Gainesville and the University of Florida College of Journalism and Communications and the Department of Media Properties are NOT in this business.

Suppose you, as a student, are ever approached via email, text, phone call, direct message, etc. by an outside entity about linking to or providing information to our audience in a manner that is described above or something similar. In that case, you should not engage with this outside entity or cooperate with them. Please refer them to a manager, director, or instructor when/if this happens.

If any willful violation of this policy occurs with any content a student is producing for the University of Florida College of Journalism and Communications and the Department of Media Properties, you WILL be removed from the immersion experience, course, or, program, you will fail the experience and/or course and other consequences could result. Students with Disabilities 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 that must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this process as early as possible in the semester.

Course Evaluations Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on a minimum of 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last three weeks of the semester, but announcements will be made giving specific times when they are open. Summary results of these evaluations are available to students at the evaluation website URL above.

Course Grading Students will be graded in accordance with UF policies for assigning grade points as articulated in the link that follows.

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

## **Respect for each other**

It is my intent that students from backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the different places we come from and bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit.

It is imperative that there be an atmosphere of trust and safety in the classroom. I will attempt to foster an environment in which each class member is able to hear and respect the other. It is critical that each class member show respect for all worldviews expressed in class. Please let

me know if something said or done in the classroom, by either myself or other students, is particularly troubling or causes discomfort or offense.

While our intention may not be to cause discomfort or offense, the impact of what happens throughout the course is not to be ignored and is something that I consider to be very important and deserving of attention. If and when this occurs, there are several ways to alleviate some of the discomforts or hurt you may experience:

1. Discuss the situation privately with me. I am always open to listening to students' experiences and want to work with students to find acceptable ways to process and address the issue.
2. Discuss the situation with the class. Chances are there is at least one other student in the class who had a similar response to the material. Discussion enhances the ability of all class participants to have a fuller understanding of context and impact of course material and class discussions.
3. Notify me of the issue through another source such as your academic advisor, a trusted faculty member, or a peer. If for any reason you do not feel comfortable discussing the issue directly with me, I encourage you to seek out another, more comfortable avenue to address the issue.

## **U Matter, We Care**

Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.