

JOU 4930 – NETWORK TV PRODUCING SYLLABUS

Class meets Wednesdays – 5:10p-8:10p (Periods 10/11/E1)

Prof. Javier de Diego

C: 202-664-7449

E: javier.dediego@ufl.edu

Office Hours: Tuesdays – 5-7pm (Reach out for appointments)

Disclaimer:

This syllabus is intended to give the student guidance in what may be covered during the semester and will be followed as closely as possible. However, the professor reserves the right to modify, supplement and make changes as the course needs arise. Any changes will be communicated to students via email and in class.

Course Description:

Field producer. Line producer. Segment producer. Associate producer. Anchor producer. Supervising producer. Executive producer. All those titles include the same word, but none of them are exactly like any of the others in a network TV news environment. This course will help students understand and explore the intricacies of network-level production by diving into each of these roles – using real-life experiences in the control room and the field from the instructor’s nearly two decades at a major network. Students will learn what a “producer” really means at a network, including the wide range of techniques and practical skills needed to manage and create content across different platforms and scenarios. The course will cover newscast creation, breaking news situations, as well as long-form storytelling and interviews. Several network news veterans will join the class to help bring those scenarios to life, as the students conduct hands-on assignments allowing them to execute different forms of production in a collaborative environment.

Course Objectives:

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

1. Understand what a producer, in all its forms, does in a network news organization.
2. Produce a variety of formats, including live broadcasts, hard news segments, and field production.
3. Develop effective communication skills for working with a production team in a fast-paced, dynamic setting.

Course Structure:

This course will be a mix of lectures, practical demonstrations, in-class assignments and discussions, as well as guest speakers. Each student will be involved in individual and group assignments to reinforce the technical, creative, and logistical aspects of network-level producing.

Communication:

Official communication about course work is done via Canvas and Gatorlink (@ufl.edu) email. Please make sure to download the Canvas app and set notifications so you don't miss last-minute changes or memos. Also must check your UFL email daily. If you need to get in touch with me, do not hesitate. If it's not an urgent matter, email is the recommended means. If it is urgent, texting or calling is appropriate (see cell phone number above).

Textbooks & TV:

There is no assigned textbook for this course. It's recommended you buy Robert Wiener's book, *"Live from Baghdad,"* as we will be referencing it during the semester.

You will need access to live television during class – whether it's traditional cable or a streaming platform (ie. YouTubeTV, Hulu, etc) – as we will be watching a lot of network TV news and discussing it in real-time.

Attendance & In-Class Rules:

Attendance is part of your grade. Excused absences must be communicated and approved in advance or, in case of a last-minute emergency, must be accompanied by a note from a physician or other 3rd-party related to the absence. Every unexcused absence is one-point off your final grade.

During class, ***cameras must be on at all times***. I must be able to see your face! Use of cell phones during class is NOT permitted unless it's related to the exercise we're doing. If there are any technical issues, reach out to the UF HelpDesk immediately and let the professor know as soon as possible.

Course Schedule:

<u>Week</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Overview</u>
1	Course Overview, Syllabus, What is a "Producer"?	Network vs local, explaining the different roles, layout the semester ahead IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT
2	Line Producing	Break down of role, rundowns, writing, control room, differences with local news IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT
3	Line Producing Discussion & Exercise	Rundown assignments, presentation of mock shows, discussion of decisions and writing IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT
4	Segment Producing	Break down of role, researching, question formulation IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT

5	Segment Producing Discussion & Exercise	<p>Segment assignments, presentation of segments, discussion of decisions and question formation</p> <p>IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT</p>
6	Guest: Executive Producer	<p>Dive into real-life daily show creation and control room scenarios</p> <p>IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT</p>
7	Network-Level Breaking News	<p>Discussion of scenario and different producing roles, watch an example and discussion</p> <p>IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT</p>
8	Breaking News Discussion & Exercise	<p>Breaking news assignments, presentation of assignment, discussion on breaking news coverage</p> <p>IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT</p>
9	Field Producing Intro	<p>Break down the role, different forms it takes, responsibilities, team management, etc.</p> <p>IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT</p>
10	Field Producing: Breaking News	<p>Using real-life scenario to discuss field production roles, dealing with security, movements, chasing developments, reporting</p> <p>IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT</p>

- | | | |
|----|--|--|
| 11 | Guest: Correspondent | Dive into real-life breaking news situations

IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT |
| 12 | Field Producing:
Planned Shoots &
Longform Interviews | Discuss differences from breaking news, pool producing, focus on logistics, budgeting, planning

IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT |
| 13 | Field Producing
Discussion & Exercise | Field production assignment and presentation, discussion of production plans, discuss pitches, logistics, etc

IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT |
| 14 | Guest: Senior Field
Producer | Dive into real-life scenarios across the board in field production

IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT |
| 15 | Anchor Producing | Break down the role, logistics, talent management

IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT |
| 16 | Final Exam Review
and Final Projects | Discussion of final exam, final project due and discussion |

Assignments and Grading:

- **Class Participation & Attendance (15%):** Active participation in discussions, demonstrations, and exercises. Attendance is critical due to the hands-on nature of the course.
- **In-Class Assignments (50%):** In-class assignments throughout the semester which will be graded on: news judgement, creativity, accuracy and application of discussed skills.
- **Final Project (25%):** Creation of network-level half-hour roundtable news analysis show (i.e. McLaughlin Group) which will include all producing skills discussed during the semester.
- **Final Exam (10%):** Test that will be fully based on lectures and discussions.

Grading scale:

A = 90-100

B = 80-89

C = 70-79

D = 60-69

E = 59 or below

Grading Policies:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

Grade Changes:

You have **72 hours** from the time you receive a grade on an assignment in which to discuss your grade. After 72 hours, your grade will stand. This rule applies to all assignments. It does not apply to your final grade, however. I will **NOT** change your final grade unless I have made a mathematical error in scoring.

Course Evaluation:

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>.

Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

Honesty Policy & Use of AI:

Plagiarism and fabulism (ie, inventing journalism sources or details) are unacceptable. You may not turn in work that is not your own, including work generated by ChatGPT or any other AI programs. ***If you use AI platforms to check grammar and spelling (ie. Grammarly) for any writing assignment, you need to get prior approval from me.*** Additionally, it is a violation of UF policy to share without authorization any course materials I have produced for this class, including quizzes. This includes informal sharing through social networks or uploading such course materials to a variety of online services that purport to serve as academic assistance sites.

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 (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel.

Last But Not Least:

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 352-392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 911 for emergencies.