

JOU4201 - Intro to INC Sports

College of Journalism and Communications
University of Florida

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Office Hours: By appointment

Office: Weimer Hall (INC)

Times:

ESIN 27860 | Period 3 | Mondays - 9:35 - 10:25 | TUR 2306

ESIN 18947 | Period 4 | Mondays - 10:40 - 11:30 | WEIM 1090

Course Description:

This 13-class course is designed to equip students with introductory fundamental skills and knowledge required to succeed in sports journalism. Students will learn the basics of story development, writing for broadcast, radio presentation and online formats while maintaining clarity, engagement, and audience relevance. Through a combination of lectures, discussions, and practical work on WRUF 98.1/ESPN Gainesville, students will develop their skills in research, writing, interviewing, and storytelling.

Course Objectives:

Upon completing this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate professional and ethical journalist etiquette in the Innovation News Center, in the field, and on social media.
- Identify and evaluate newsworthy sports stories and develop strategies for finding compelling narratives and characters.
- Write for broadcast, radio, and online formats while maintaining clarity, engagement, and audience relevance.
- Present and deliver content on-air with confidence and professionalism, focusing on tone, pacing, and effective communication.
- Critically review and practice skills through coursework and peer feedback.

Course Schedule:

The following is a detailed breakdown of the course schedule, including topics, activities, and assessments.

MODULE 1 - January 12 - February 9

Introduction to Sports Journalism

- **Topic:** The Fundamentals of Sports Journalism
- **Read:** Field Guide to Covering Sports - Chapter 1: From Sports Fan To Sports Reporter
- **Activity:** Class discussion on the basics of sports journalism, including the role of a sports journalist, types of sports journalism, and the importance of storytelling.
- **INC Shifts:** Work on training and getting air-cleared ASAP for Sportscenter Updates on ESPN Gainesville.

Ethics in Sports Journalism

- **Topic:** Ethics in Sports Journalism
- **Read:** Field Guide to Covering Sports - Primer A: Ethics - Sports Writers Can't Act Like Fans
- **Quiz:** Ethics in Journalism
- **INC Shifts:** If not already, work on getting air-cleared for Sportscenter Updates on ESPN Gainesville.

Writing for Broadcast - Part 1

- **Topic:** Fundamentals of Writing for Radio and Television
- **Read:** Field Guide to Covering Sports - Chapter 12: Writing for TV/Radio
- **Read:** Writing for Electronic Media - Chapter 14: Sports [HERE](#)
- **Quiz:** General All-Sports Knowledge
- **INC Shifts:** EVERY student should be air-cleared for Sportscenter Updates on ESPN Gainesville.

Writing for Broadcast - Part 2

- **Topic:** Practice Writing for Radio and Television
- **Read/Watch:** How to Improve Your Script Writing [HERE](#)
- **Read:** Tips for Writing for Broadcast [HERE](#)

- **Assessment:** You have the notes for three different sports stories. Write and submit three sample radio scripts, no more than 20-seconds in length (in Canvas).
- **Quiz:** General College Sports Knowledge

Module 2 - February 16 - March 23

Writing for Online

- **Topic:** Writing for Online Media w/Prof Shemar Woods
- **Read:** Field Guide to Covering Sports - Chapter 2: Writing Game Stories
- **Read:** Rick Reilly's Rules of Sports Writing [HERE](#)
- **Watch:** Tips for writing a good game story [HERE](#)
- **Quiz:** AP Style in Sports - Quiz 1

Audio Storytelling

- **Topic:** Intro to Audio Storytelling
- **Read:** Easier Read Than Done [HERE](#)
- **Read & Listen:** How Audio Stories Begin [HERE](#)
- **Watch:** Pro Audio and Lav tips [HERE](#)
- **Quiz:** North American Sports

Audio Editing

- **Topic:** Audio Editing for Radio
- **Read:** How to Decide What to Cut [HERE](#)
- **Read:** Editing Audio in Adobe PDF
- **Assessment:** Download the audio files of three Gators athletes (in Files section). Edit the audio into a clear, concise 15-20 second bites, cutting out long pauses, extraneous umms and uhhs, and submit the finished cut to Canvas/Google Drive. The audio should flow naturally and not sound overly edited.
- **Quiz:** General College Sports - Level 2

Interviewing and Interpersonal Skills - Part 1

- **Topic:** Interviewing Techniques and Interpersonal Skills

- **Read:** Field Guide to Covering Sports - Chapter 3: Getting The Most Out of An Interview
- **Watch:** The Art of Asking Questions [HERE](#)
- **Quiz:** Stadiums Only

Interviewing and Interpersonal Skills - Part 2

- **Topic:** How to set-up and conduct an interview
- **Read:** BBC Academy - Interviewing essentials [HERE](#).
- **Watch:** How to Interview Almost Anyone [HERE](#).
- **Quiz:** AP Style in Sports - Quiz 2 (Canvas)

MODULE 3 - March 30 - April 20

Research and Storytelling

- **Topic:** Research Techniques and Storytelling Principles
- **Read:** Field Guide to Covering Sports - Chapter 7: Using Advanced Statistical Metrics
- **Read:** How Sports Journalists Can Use Data & Statistics to Enhance Their Stories [HERE](#)
- **Guest Speaker:** Justin Page - Research Director, CBS Sports
- **Quiz:** General Sports Knowledge - Level 2

Final Assessment: Putting it all together - Find a 'local' sports story you want to tell. Set-up an interview with a maximum TWO people related to that story, record the interviews, write a 300-400 word story based on the interviews and research, and cut at *least* two interview actualities, and write a 15-20 second Reader that tells an angle of the story or a summary of the story. Remember your script length parameters - this is not a sportscast, this is a story that goes *INTO* a sportscast, so be aware of the time you're using (30-40s per cut & copy). The assignment is due in the final week of the semester.

On-Air Presentation - Part 1

- **Topic:** On-Air Presentation and Delivery
- **Watch:** How to be a Radio & TV Host [HERE](#)
- **Watch:** Three tips for training your voice [HERE](#)

- **Quiz:** College & Pro Sports Championships

On-Air Presentation - Part 2

- **Topic:** On-Air presentation and Delivery
- **Read:** Jaclyn DeAugustino [bio](#).
- **Guest Speaker:** Jaclyn DeAugustino
- **Activity:** Prepare 2-3 questions to ask in class.
- **Quiz:** AP Style in Sports - Quiz 3 (Canvas)

Social Media for Sports Journalists

- **Topic:** Social Media and How to Use It Properly
- **Read:** Field Guide to Covering Sports - Chapter 8: Social Media: Using Twitter as a reporting tool
- **Read:** Writing for Electronic Media - Chapter 11: Social Media [HERE](#)
- **Read:** Sports Journalist Best Practices on Social Media [HERE](#)
- **Guest Speaker:** Caitlin Gardner - Social Media strategist
- **Assessment:** Create your professional sports journalist profile on a platform of your choice.

Assessment:

- Class attendance, attitude and participation = 10%
- Quizzes (10 x 2% each) = 20%
- Writing For Broadcast = 15%
- Editing Audio for Broadcast = 10%
- Shifts & work in INC = 15%
- Final Assignment = 30%

Required Materials:

- Sports Journalism Syllabus
- Field Guide to Covering Sports by Joe Gisondi
- **Optional** - Always Get the Name of the Dog: A Guide to Media Interviewing by Nicole Kraft

Grading Scale:

- A = 90-100%
- B = 80-89%
- C = 70-79%
- D = 60-69%

F = below 60%

Policies

CLASS ATTENDANCE

Students are required to attend the weekly 1-hour class session. Attendance and punctuality are essential components of this experience.

Excused Absences:

Only university-approved absences will be excused. If a student misses class due to illness, a doctor's note must be provided for the absence to be excused.

Unexcused Absences and Lateness:

Each unexcused absence will result in a 2% deduction from the 25% attendance portion of the grade.

Each late arrival will result in a 1% deduction from that same 25%.

More than two unexcused absences (combined across class and shift) will result in dismissal from the experience and a failing grade.

SHIFT ATTENDANCE

Students are assigned one 3-hour shift per week in the Innovation News Center (INC) and are expected to attend each scheduled shift.

Excused Absences:

Only university-approved absences or documented illnesses (with a doctor's note) will be excused.

Make-Up Shifts:

A single unexcused shift absence may be made up during Reading Days at the end of the semester. If it is not made up, the student will lose the full 25% attendance portion of the grade.

Shift Coverage:

If an absence is due to a scheduling conflict, the student is responsible for either:

Finding another student to cover their shift, or
Arranging a make-up shift with the instructor in advance.

Note: Exam preparation or other class assignment conflicts do not qualify as excused absences.

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 credit to the source, that is a copyright violation, a form of plagiarism.

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 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**.

If 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, you should not engage with this outside entity or cooperate with them. Please refer them to a manager, director, or instructor.

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) 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 evaluations 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>

AI Submission of Intellectual Property

When submitting materials to AI tools, such as assignment instructions or other content, ensure you have the appropriate permissions for any copyrighted elements. Additionally, avoid sharing any information protected under FERPA, including personal data from educational records (provided via ChatGPT, 2024).

AI Policy for Student Work

In this class I want you to produce all your own work without generative AI's assistance. It is important for me to be able to ascertain what you know and can produce unaided content. The use of generative AI for your assignments in this class is a violation of the honor code as you are presenting content as your own that was not fully created by you. There are various AI detection tools available (built within Canvas and externally such as ZeroGPT), and many AI platforms follow very formulaic response patterns. If I am concerned that your work is not your own, I will try to verify the originality of your work and if evidence is found that your work is AI-generated I will submit your assignment as violating the honor code.

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 deliver 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.

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 someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu , 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the [Student Health Care Center website](#).

University Police Department: Visit [UF Police Department website](#) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the [UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website](#).

GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the [GatorWell website](#) or call 352-273- 4450.

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu .

[Career Connections Center](#): Reitz Union Suite 1300, 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 or email ask@ufl.libanswers.com for more information.

[Teaching Center](#): 1317 Turlington Hall, Call 352-392-2010, or to make a private appointment: 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 | 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.