

RTV4500: Content Acquisition, Distribution, and Strategy

Spring 2026

Location: Online via Canvas

Instructor Information

Professor: Dr. David Ostroff

Assisted by: Ms. Liandra Sewell

Campus Office: 3058 Weimer Hall

Contact: Please email me through Canvas

Campus Phone: 392-0463

Virtual Office Hours via Zoom: Fridays 3:00-5:00 or by appointment

Course Description

This course looks at electronic media programming, emphasizing video platforms from traditional linear broadcast to broadband and web-distributed services. As you will see from the course schedule, we will examine programming from a number of different angles.

Most modules will be for two weeks. The first week should be **input**. Do the readings and view or listen to lectures and other video or audio content. The second week should be **output**. Complete and submit the assignment for that module.

Learning Objectives

- Analyze and identify various media industries and their structures.
- Compare and contrast media content development and production according to public interest and public consumption strategies.
- Conceptualize and create product development strategies.
- Implement basic competitive programming strategies utilized by media industry management professionals.
- Apply basic programming theory to the competitive electronic media marketplace.
- Analyze and critique the relationships between technology, policy, innovation, and competition within the media marketplace.
- Apply programming theory and competitive strategies to actual media industry scenarios.
- Assess the strengths and weaknesses of new and established content and its delivery platforms for specific demographic audiences.
- Critically assess the telecommunication industry, its structure, and management dynamics to problem-solve programming and related challenges effectively.

Required Readings

Most readings will come from the trade press and other media. This is a rapidly changing topic, so readings will be assigned at the beginning of each module. The articles listed below have been used in previous semesters and may be replaced by more recent publications.

Important: Several assignments will ask you to analyze programs and program schedules of various services and platforms. You do not need to subscribe to or watch these services. Your analysis for these assignments will be based on published program schedules readily and freely available on the Internet.

Succeeding in an Online Course

Taking a course online can be a lot of fun! Here are some tips that will help you get the most of this course while taking full advantage of the online format:

- Schedule “class times” for yourself. It is important to do the coursework on time each week. You will receive “0 points” for work that is turned in late!
- Read ALL of the material contained on this site. There is a lot of helpful information that can save you time and help you meet the objectives of the course.
- Print out the Course Schedule located in the Course Syllabus and check things off as you go.
Take full advantage of the online discussion boards. Ask for help or clarification of the material if you need it.
- Do not wait to ask questions! Waiting to ask a question might cause you to miss a due date.
- Do your work well before the due dates. Sometimes things happen. If your computer goes down when you are trying to submit an assignment, you'll need time to get to another machine.
- To be extra safe, back up your work to an external hard drive, thumb drive, or through a cloud service.

Online learning can present significant challenges, particularly if you are not a “self-starter” or do not possess good time management skills. The online classroom is available to you 24 hours per day. Unlike traditional instructional settings in which each student gets the same class, the online setting means that every student works when they want to work. In theory, this type of instruction should be more adaptable to a variety of schedules and learning styles. However, some students seem unwilling (we believe all are able) to create their own virtual classroom. This results in procrastination and low-quality performance. Everyone learns differently. We won't prescribe the “best way” to approach the course.

You should note that this course is self-paced; however, you are expected to adhere to the weekly due dates. And deadlines **DO CHANGE** because of holiday breaks, technical

difficulties, hurricanes, and other inclement weather, etc., so...**PAY ATTENTION TO ANNOUNCEMENTS** and email messages posted by your facilitator. Stating "I didn't know" is an **unacceptable** excuse for this self-directed course.

Individual attention to each student's particular needs and monitoring each student's progress is often difficult **unless you make me aware of a special problem**. If you are unclear about the material in lectures and/or readings, if you have other questions, or if you need assistance, please contact us as soon as possible.

Course Expectations

Complete readings and assignments on time, watch class lectures, participate in discussions, and complete the collaborative Final Project. In addition, please:

- Purchase the text.
- Read all assigned pages from the texts.
- View all lectures and videos in their entirety.
- Participate in all discussions.
- Study for and take the quizzes prior to the due date.
- Pay attention and adhere to ALL deadlines.

Course Disclaimer

This course will explore ideas and events that may be shocking, distressing or offensive to some students. Images and accounts of crime and victimization are the focus of lectures, videos, and the reading material (e.g., the required textbooks), and students will be asked to think critically about these issues in class activities and discussion posts.

Please read the content of the syllabus to ensure that you would like to remain enrolled in the course. While you will be responsible for completing the course assignments, if you ever wish to discuss your personal reactions to course material with the class or with me individually in a personal meeting or message, I welcome such discussions as an appropriate part of our classwork. If you find that the material trigger stress or personal pain, I am also happy to talk to you and refer you to appropriate resources on or off campus to help you. You can contact me through email (via Canvas).

Equipment and Access Requirements

This is an asynchronous online course. The class is divided into multiple different modules. Please see the course schedule located on the last page of the syllabus for further details on module start and stop dates. You will need reliable access to standard computer equipment and the internet (e.g., Microsoft Word and PowerPoint, email, and YouTube). No specialized software is required. Grades will be maintained on the [Canvas site](#)
[links to an external site](#), and the assignment requirements will be posted on this site, along with updates and announcements. **You should check Canvas every day for important class notifications.**

Course Policies

Academic policies and resources can be found at:

<https://go.ufl.edu/syllabuspolicies>.

Plagiarism and Cheating

University policies regarding plagiarism and cheating will be strictly enforced on all assignments. You are expected to abide by the university's honor code and academic honesty guidelines. Students who violate these rules will receive a grade of "e" and be referred to student judicial affairs.

(N)Etiquette

All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions, and chats. Failure to follow netiquette may result in a grade reduction. Students should be sure that they understand the [UF Netiquette Guide for Online Courses](#)[Links to an external site..](#)

Late Work and Make-Up Work

No late work is permitted, as assignment due dates are posted well in advance. You will have ample time to complete each module. Module start and stop dates and times are posted in the course schedule located at the bottom of the syllabus, along with assignment due dates. Do not wait until the last minute to start or submit assignments or quizzes, as technical glitches or errors can occur. If you are experiencing technical issues **BEFORE** an assignment deadline, then reach out to the UF help desk (at 352-392-4357 or via [e-mail](#)) and email me the help desk ticket number along with the assignment **BEFORE** the deadline. Any issues brought to my attention **AFTER** the deadline has passed will still be given a "0."

No make-up assignments will be given except in cases of an excused absence as defined by [UF's attendance policy](#)[Links to an external site.](#) Or a documented emergency.

Notification of an excused absence should be made **BEFORE** the assignment's deadline and not days later. For an emergency, instructor notification should be made within 72 hours post-emergency event and not weeks later. I reserve the right to require make-up assignments in lieu of late submission, even if an emergency has occurred. Make-up assignments, no matter the excuse, are given immediately (within 72 hours) following the excused absence. Students should be prepared to document the reasons for their absence. Students whose absences are not excused will not normally be allowed to make up assignments.

Extra Credit

There are no extra credit assignments. Focus your attention and efforts on the published assignments.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at [GatorEvalsLinks to an external site.](#). Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under [GatorEvalsLinks to an external site.](#). Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at [GatorEvalsLinks to an external site..](#)

Grading

Grading Totals and Scheme

The grade you receive in the course is the one you earn by putting in the proper effort on class activities and studying effectively for quizzes. All grades are posted on Canvas throughout the semester. **You have up until one week after an assignment grade is posted to bring an error or a question to my attention.** I will not discuss grade errors after one week has passed. It is your responsibility to review your grades regularly. I do not round grades and strictly adhere is the grading system listed below.

Assignment Percentages

Assignment	Points	% Of Grade
Assignments for Modules 1-7 (@10 pts ea.)	70	65
Assignment for Module 8 (@30 pts)	30	20
Orientation and Module 3 Discussions (2@10 pts each)	20	15
Total	100	100

Grading Scale

Percentage	Letter Grade
93 – 100	A
90 – 92.9	A-
87 – 89.9	B+
82 – 86.9	B
80 – 81.9	B-
77 – 79.9	C+
68 – 76.9	C
64 – 67.9	C-
60 – 63.9	D+
53 – 59.9	D

Grading Scale

Percentage	Letter Grade
50.1 – 52.9	D-
50 and below	E

Please also see [UF Grades and Grading Policies](#)
[Links to an external site.](#)

Course Schedule

Tentative Course Schedule

Each Module lasts for 2 weeks. The first week will be devoted to viewing lectures and other content. The second week will be devoted to completing a learning assignment

	Module	Module	Learning Materials	Assessments
0	Lecture: Course Orientation Reading: Syllabus	Orientation Quiz Introductions Discussion Television Discussion		
1	The Television Content Eco-System	Lecture: The Content Eco-System Readings: Assigned readings from trade publications and other sources (see the module page for the list of readings)		Assignment: What is Television? New Technology, New Terminology

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Module	Module	Learning Materials	Assessments
2	The Purposes of Programming	<p>Lecture: The Purpose of Programming</p> <p>Readings: Assigned readings from trade publications and other sources (see the module page for the list of readings)</p>	<p>Assignment: Audience and Advertising</p>
3	Scheduling Strategies	<p>Lecture: Program Scheduling Strategies</p> <p>Readings: Assigned readings from trade publications and other sources (see the module page for the list of readings)</p>	<p>Assignment: Schedule Analysis and Program Schedule</p> <p>Discussion: To Binge or Not to Binge</p> <p>Mid-Course Survey</p>
4	Content Acquisition	<p>Lecture: Program Acquisition</p> <p>Readings: Assigned readings from trade publications and other sources (see the module page for the list of readings)</p>	<p>Assignment: The Future of Programming</p>
5	Syndicated Programming	<p>Lecture: Syndicated Programming</p>	<p>Assignment: Syndicated Content on Streaming Services</p>

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Module	Module	Learning Materials	Assessments
		Readings: Assigned readings from trade publications and other sources (see the module page for the list of readings)	
6	International Program Production and Distribution	Lecture: International and Global Readings: Assigned readings from trade publications and other sources (see the module page for the list of readings)	Assignment: Comparing Program Schedules
7	Radio and Audio	Lecture: Radio and Audio Readings: Assigned readings from trade publications and other sources (see the module page for the list of readings)	Assignment: Comparing Radio Formats
8	The Future	Readings: Assigned readings from trade publications and other sources (see the module page for the list of readings)	End-of-Course Survey Assignment: The Future of the Programming Eco-System

University Policies

Plagiarism

Academic dishonesty is strictly prohibited. Dishonesty includes **cheating** and **plagiarism**. Cheating encompasses acts such as, but are not limited to, collaborating with other students on class assignments when not directed or collaborating with others, or using unauthorized materials during a quiz.

Plagiarism involves acts such as, but not limited to, failing to cite sources properly in written work, using phrases taken from original sources without proper quotations and citations, submitting all or part of papers that have been submitted to another class either in the past or during this current semester, and attempting to pass off someone else's ideas as your own. **Plagiarism can occur in the absence of intent**; it is your responsibility to ensure that you do not copy words or ideas from anyone, either purposefully or inadvertently. Cheating or plagiarism will result in penalties. It might be a zero on the assignment, an E in the class, or other disciplinary action. I may also elect to report academic dishonesty to the Dean of Students Office.

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](#)[Links to an external site.](#) 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. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult me.

Disability Access

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the [Disability Resource Center](#)[Links to an external site.](#) (352-392-8565) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students are required to meet with the instructor to discuss the appropriate accommodations required for the class. Just simply emailing the instructor your accommodation letter with no further discussion will not suffice. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester, as accommodations are not retroactive. Additionally, if you were to experience an event during the semester that may require class accommodations, please reach out to the Disability Resource Center as soon as possible and provide me the documentation immediately following your visit so that you are not delayed in receiving class accommodations, as accommodations cannot be made retroactively.

Privacy and Accessibility Policies

For information about the privacy policies of the tools used in this course, see the links below:

Instructure (Canvas)

- [Privacy Policy](#)
- [Accessibility](#)

Zoom

- [Privacy Policy \(Links to an external site.\)](#)
- [Accessibility \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

YouTube (Google)

- [Privacy Policy \(Links to an external site.\)](#)
- [Accessibility \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

Microsoft

- [Privacy Policy \(Links to an external site.\)](#)
- [Accessibility \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

Adobe

- [Privacy Policy \(Links to an external site.\)](#)
- [Accessibility](#)

UF Apps (SPSS Statistics)

- [Privacy Policy](#)
- [Accessibility](#)

Getting Help

Technical Difficulties

For help with technical issues or difficulties with Canvas, please contact the UF Computing Help Desk at:

- <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu>
- 352-392-HELP (4357)
- Walk-in: HUB 132

Any requests for make-ups (assignments, exams, etc.) due to technical issues should be accompanied by the ticket number received from the UF Computing Help Desk when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date

of the problem. You should email your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

Health and Wellness

- **U Matter, We Care:** If you or someone you know is in distress, please email umatter@ufl.edu, call 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter We Care to refer or report a concern, and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- **Counseling and Wellness Center:** Visit the UF Counseling & Wellness Center website or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services and 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 UF Student Health Care Center website.
- **University Police Department:** Visit the 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 in Gainesville, call 352-733-0111, or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the UF Health Shands Emergency Room/Trauma Center website.

Syllabus Disclaimer

By taking this course, you agree to read the syllabus carefully and abide by its terms. I, too, will adhere to the rules and procedures. I do, however, reserve the right to adjust as needed. Every class is unique, and new challenges often arise; therefore, flexibility might be required. Should there be an alteration that affects grading or course planning, I will announce the change and provide an amended syllabus to you.