

## Course description:

This course will teach you the importance of multimedia reporting and how to add audio and visual content to your stories. We will also discuss the importance of multimedia content in news organizations and ways to present it.

## Course objectives:

We want you to be well-rounded media professionals by the time you leave UF. The goal of this course is to prepare you to do more than write a story. We want you to use your media judgment to know when an audio clip, photo/photo gallery or video is needed to complement text.

## Projects/extra credit:

This course has four projects: audio, photography, video and mobile reporting. Each will have a rubric and will be graded based on those requirements. The instructions for the four projects will be sent out via our listserv email and will also be posted to Canvas. Reading the instructions and following them is how to get the grade you want. You will turn in your projects by uploading them to Canvas (no one should email projects in unless there is something wrong with Canvas). Each will be turned in with the text stories you are writing for Reporting and will be for a completion grade, meaning I will not be editing for content and style. Any point deductions will be explained in the Instructor Comments on Canvas; if you do not see these, let me know.

Projects can be submitted to, and published by, WUFT.org, the Alligator or other established media for up to 10 points of extra credit per assignment. This does not include a blog run by your friend. If you are in doubt about whether a media outlet counts, email me and ask.

To get the extra credit, email me a link to your published piece, DO NOT include it with the assignment submission.

## Class structure:

This is an online class, so class time will be at your leisure—which could be good or bad. It means you should set up an alarm on your phone calendar or make sure you schedule time to stay current with the materials. You will receive reminders on due dates in advance, and they are included in this syllabus.

**Instructor:** Ernest Rice

**Email:** [ernestrice@ufl.edu](mailto:ernestrice@ufl.edu)

**Twitter:** @ernestopix

**Office:** Weimer G038

**Office Hours:** M & T 9 a.m. to 10 :30 a.m.

**Need help?** Please feel free to email me, I have set aside time each morning during the week for dealing with this class and messages, but allow up to 48 hours on weekends for a response.

## Evaluation

**Three projects (20 each):** 60 points

**Final project:** 40 points

**Publication:** Up to +10 per project

## Missed assignments and late work:

Submissions for full credit can be made up to and including 11:59 p.m. on the due date. I understand you have other responsibilities and activities, so everyone gets an automatic three-day extension on each assignment (Canvas will still be open through those three days). The extension, though, comes with a three-point deduction for every late day, meaning you would lose nine points if you submit three days late. So please make every effort to complete projects on time. If you submit something before the deadline but alter it through a resubmission afterward, it will be counted as late; resubmissions before the deadline are fine. Absolutely no projects will be accepted after those three days, so I should not, for example, receive an email four days after with your project attached.

**Exceptions:** If a deadline extension is needed because of an illness, military service, etc., it may be awarded if official documents that have contact information for verification are provided. To be fair to all students, there are no exceptions without documentation. If at all possible, the instructor needs to be notified before the deadline is missed and why. It is also recommended that you contact the Division of Student Affairs when missing class because of an illness or other reason. The office provides courtesy emails to all of your instructors about your absence and can be reached at 352-392-1261.

## Grading scale:

A	94-100	B-	80-83	D+	67-69
A-	90-93	C+	77-79	D	64-66
B+	87-89	C	74-76	D-	60-63
B	84-86	C-	70-73	E	59 and below

\*scores of .5 or more will be rounded up

## Schedule:

### Week 1 - 2 (Jan. 6 – Jan. 16) - Introduction to Multimedia

We will go over the highlights of the class, the basics of multimedia reporting and why news organizations are moving quickly to be proficient in audio, photo and video production. To get ahead, you could begin brainstorming about which stories from Reporting you will use for the four projects.

### Weeks 3 - 5 (Jan. 20 – Jan. 30) - Audio

We will focus on audio recording with sources and natural sound to tell a story. These audio bites will be complimentary to your articles. We will learn how to edit sound, the practices of gathering good audio and how audio can tell a story.

**\*Project I due on Feb. 2, 11:59 p.m.**

### Weeks 6 - 8 (Feb. 2 – Feb 20) - Photography

You will use the rule of thirds, focal point, filling the frame and more. Photography is a powerful tool to tell a story. We will discuss how photojournalism is becoming increasingly valuable in journalism.

**\*Project II due on Feb. 23, 11:59 p.m.**

### **Weeks 9 - 11 (Feb. 23 – Spring Break – March 13) - Video storytelling**

We will continue to stretch our eyes for good storytelling with video. You will learn how to edit a video with interviews and B-roll and publish it to the Web.

*\*Project III due on March 16, 11:59 p.m. Spring Break Feb. 28 – Mar. 7*

### **Weeks 12 - 15 (Mach 16 – April 10) - Mobile journalism**

This section will incorporate all previous sections into your final project—taking a story and adding audio, photo and video to compliment it for online publication.

*\*Project IV due on April 13, 11:59 p.m. No classes April 23 and 24*

## **Advice:**

As we all know, technology can crash when least expected and wanted, so anticipate this by continuously saving projects and giving yourself more than enough time to turn your projects in. The excuse “I could not turn in my project on time because it would not save/upload” will not be accepted. These emails typically come at the very last minute, which is a time when all work should already be completed. Also, read the instructions provided with each project to make sure you turn in everything. Please do email me with questions until after you read the directions.

## **Class policy:**

Please be respectful of others’ work, as we will be looking at former students’ projects to provide examples of what you should work toward. Emails should also be respectful, formal and professional, not, “Hey, can I talk to you about my grade?”

## **Resources:**

### **Use Your Smartphone**

Although a camera, an audio recording device and a video camera are perfectly fine, you can use a smartphone to do all three.

The best smartphone is an iPhone because it has more and better apps for journalists.

- **Audio:** A good app to capture audio is [Voice Record Pro](#) (\$3 for ad-free version).
- **Video:** A terrific video app is [Videolicious](#) because it lays in B-roll easily. A [Poynter demo](#) shows you how to use it. Follow [these tips](#) for using your iPhone as a video camera.

Android phones have fewer apps available.

- **Audio:** A popular app for capturing audio in person is [Tape-A-Talk Pro](#) (\$1.32). A free app to capture audio during a phone interview is [vRecorder](#).
- **Video:** About the only video app option you have is [AndroVid Pro](#) (\$2), which can edit and string together clips but cannot handle B-roll.

## **Stand-alone video editors for windows computers:**

If you use a windows computer I recommend [VideoPad](#), it is free and UF has some nice [tutorials](#) on it.

There is also a version of [VideoPad for a Mac](#) that has feature that iMovie does not have such as recording a lecture from your webcam.

## **Technology training:**

Technology in media evolves in the blink of an eye, and you'll have to keep up or get left behind. As such, this class shouldn't be viewed as one that teaches specific pieces of equipment or editing programs. You can use any program you want to achieve the desired media product. Most of you, though, will likely use Audacity or Garage Band for audio, iPhoto for photos, and iMovie for video. If you are unfamiliar with any or all of these programs, that is perfectly fine. Though I think you will find the programs extremely user friendly and that you can become a master by playing around and fine-tuning, you can take advantage of UF's [Lynda.com subscription](#) to start practicing. Some other resources include: Professor Mindy McAdams' [tutorial](#) on the five-shot approach to video; instructions about the [rule of thirds](#) in composing pictures and video; Kodak's [tips](#) on how to take better pictures; and Vimeo's training library to learn how to shoot better [video](#).

## **Fact errors:**

Factual accuracy is the cornerstone of reporting. These should not become issues when the only text you are dealing with is names and titles in videos and two-sentence captions for photos. And you have weeks to get it correct, so if you do make a fact error, your grade will be greatly impacted. I find most often that fact errors come from someone trying to sneak something by me, such as the extreme case of changing the name of a relative to hide that they are related. If you knowingly lie to me about anything on a project, you will be caught and promptly receive a 0, which leads into the next item.

## **Academic integrity:**

UF students live by an honor code that prohibits academic dishonesty such as (but not limited to) cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, engaging in unauthorized collaboration, reusing a paper from another class, writing a similar paper for two classes, and having someone else write your paper <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code>.

If you use someone else's words, image(s), artwork or video, permission must be obtained in writing (i.e. email) from an author/publisher and submitted to the professor along with your project. You must abide by the university's honor code as well as the Department of Journalism's policy on academic honesty found at <http://www.jou.ufl.edu/academic/jou/honesty/>.

## **Students with disabilities:**

Students requesting accommodations must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The office will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when making a request for accommodations. I am

more than happy to work with anyone needing such accommodations, but please do not wait until the last minute to request accommodations, see me as soon as possible.

## **Grading policies:**

All information related to grading can be found in UF's undergraduate catalog:  
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

## **Help with Coping:**

The UF Counseling and Wellness Center is a free resource for all UF students who need help managing stress or coping with life or classes. The center is located at 3190 Radio Road and is open for appointments and emergency walk-ins from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday - Friday. To receive after-hours assistance or make an appointment, call 352-392-1575 <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc>.

## **UF Police:**

The UF Police can be reached at 352-392-1111 or, in an emergency, by dialing 911.

## **Student Nighttime Auxiliary Patrol (SNAP):**

If you are on campus at night and need an escort to your car or on-campus residence, SNAP is a free service that operates 7 days a week, 6:30 p.m. – 3:00 a.m. during the fall and spring semesters and 8:30 p.m. – 3:00 a.m. during the summer semesters.  
[www.snap.ufl.edu](http://www.snap.ufl.edu) or 352-392-SNAP (7627)

## **Evaluations:**

Students can provide feedback on the instructor and the course itself at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.