

Journalists' Toolkit 1

JOU 6344 | Fall 2013 | Section 1F02 | 1098 Weimer Hall
Tuesdays 2–5 p.m. (periods 7, 8 and 9)

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WEBSITE: <http://jtoolkit.wordpress.com/>

Course Description

This course prepares the student to work as a journalist in today's newsrooms where the online and digital platforms are at least as important as (and increasingly, more important than) the traditional print or broadcast platforms. It constitutes a two-semester sequence, with Toolkit 1 being a prerequisite for Toolkit 2. Both courses emphasize journalistic storytelling techniques along with technology and software. Basic competence with digital tools is an expected outcome for students who complete both courses.

The prerequisite is reporting experience. If you have completed our boot camp course, that is sufficient.

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Gather information and assets (sound and image) for use in online and other digital journalism.
- Edit and produce audio, photographs, and other digital assets for use in journalism storytelling.
- Conduct productive interviews for audio, video, and text formats.
- Identify and discuss best practices for producing digital journalism stories.
- Use appropriate digital tools for journalism reporting and production.
- Explain and critique current storytelling practices in journalism.

Required Books

Kern, J. (2008). *Sound Reporting: The NPR Guide to Audio Journalism and Production*. University of Chicago Press.

Kobré, K. (2008). *Photojournalism: The Professionals' Approach* (6th ed.). Burlington, MA: Focal Press.

Yau, N. (2011). *Visualize This: The FlowingData Guide to Design, Visualization, and Statistics*. Indianapolis: Wiley.

Equipment

All students are expected to have their own basic digital audio, photo and video equipment, as well as a MacBook Pro with necessary software installed.

Attendance and Attitude

Students are expected to show respect for one another and for the instructor. Attendance and arriving on time for class are necessary. *Lateness and absences will result in a lower final grade.* If you have been absent, you are responsible for finding out about any missed material by going to the instructor's office hours. These matters will not be handled via e-mail.

Mobile devices must be turned OFF during class. Do not check text messages, e-mail, Facebook, etc., during class, as your instructor considers this quite rude and therefore grounds for disciplinary action.

Give your full and undivided attention to anyone who is speaking in class, including your fellow students.

Students are not permitted to use a computer during class unless instructed to do so.

UF Attendance Policies

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

Course Deadlines and Makeup Work

Late assignments are not accepted. This means that an assignment submitted late is graded as a zero. Assignments are not accepted via e-mail unless requested by the instructor. If an illness or a personal emergency prevents you from completing an assignment on time, advance notice and written documentation are required. No work for "extra credit" is accepted.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty of any kind is not tolerated in this course. It will be reported to the Dean of this college, and to the Senior Associate Dean for Graduate Studies—and *it will result in a failing grade* for this course.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- Copying and pasting the words or images of others and presenting them as your own.
- Using any work done by another person and submitting it for a class assignment.
- Submitting work you did for another class.

UF Student Honor Code

> <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>

Students with Disabilities

Students requesting accommodations must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodations.

UF Disability Resource Center

> <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

Course Requirements

Please make sure to check the course website at least once a week. If you rely only on a printed copy, you may miss a change in the schedule. Detailed instructions appear only on the website.

> WEBSITE: <http://jtoolkit.wordpress.com/>

Audio

Audio assignments are graded on both the quality of the content and the quality of the sound. See the course website for details.

- Edited audio interview 1 (33.3%)
- Edited audio interview 2 (33.3%)
- Audio in the audio and photo story (33.3%)

Photojournalism

Photojournalism assignments are graded on both the quality of the content and the quality of the image. See the course website for details.

- Photo 1 (33.3%)
- Photo 2 (33.3%)
- Photos *and captions* in the audio and photo story (33.3%)

Data journalism

Data journalism assignments are graded on accuracy and professionalism. See the course website for details.

- Data 1 (50%)
- Data 2 (50%)

Blog posts

Various blog posts are assigned throughout the semester. Each one will be marked pass/fail (1/0). A passing mark requires that all instructions were followed and the post is written in a clear and interesting manner. All statements must be accurate, and all links must be functional. The headline must be both appealing to an audience and accurate.

Project

You have a lot of leeway for your project. The main point is for you to create something new (using the skills covered in this course) that you can be proud of, that you can show to professionals who might offer you a job. See the course website for details.

Class attendance and participation

Points will be subtracted if you miss more than one (1) class meeting, are chronically late, leave class early, or show inattention. Participation is expected; points will be subtracted if you do not contribute.

Grades and Grading Policies

Audio	20 points
Photojournalism	20 points
Data journalism	10 points
Blog posts	20 points
Project	20 points
Class attendance and participation	10 points
TOTAL	100 points

92–100 points	A	72–77 points	C
90–91 points	A–	70–71 points	C–
88–89 points	B+	68–69 points	D+
82–87 points	B	62–67 points	D
80–81 points	B–	60–61 points	D–
78–79 points	C+	59 points or fewer	E

UF Policies about Student Grades

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

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>

Evaluations are typically open during the final weeks of the semester. Students will be given specific dates when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students:

<https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>

Course Schedule and Required Readings

Please note that many important details are on the website— <http://jtoolkit.wordpress.com/> —and do not appear herein.

Week 1 | Aug. 27

Introduction to the course, first assignments.

BRING AUDIO RECORDER and HEADPHONES to class! We will be using them.

Also bring your MACBOOK. You will need to use it too.

Week 2 | Sept. 3

READ Kern, Chapter 18, “Beyond Radio” (plus optional readings on the online syllabus)

DUE Blog posts 1 and 2

DUE Edited audio interview 1

Week 3 | Sept. 10

READ Kern, Chapters 1, 2, and pp. 211–223 in Chapter 12 (plus optional readings on the online syllabus)

DUE Blog posts 3, 4 and 5

DUE Pitch (document) for interview 2

Week 4 | Sept. 17

READ Kern, Chapter 13 (read this **before** you edit audio interview 2)

DUE Blog posts 6, 7 and 8

DUE Edited audio interview 2

Week 5 | Sept. 24

Photojournalism: People

BRING your CAMERA and USB cable (or card reader) to class! You will be using them.

Camera BATTERIES must be fully charged, or bring extras. MEMORY CARD must have 2 GB free.

Bring your MacBook also.

READ Kobre, p. vi and Chapter 1 (including all photo captions and all boxed text)

READ Kobre, Chapter 15

DUE Blog posts 9, 10 and 11

Week 6 | Oct. 1

Photojournalism: Editing

BRING your MacBook to class with Photoshop loaded, activated, and ready to go

READ Kobre, Chapter 7 (including all photo captions and all boxed text)

DUE Blog posts 12, 13 and 14

DUE Photo 1

Week 7 | Oct. 8

Photojournalism: Stories

READ Kobre, Chapter 11 (including all photo captions and all boxed text)

DUE Blog posts 15 and 16

Week 8 | Oct. 16

Data journalism: Introduction

BRING your MacBook to class

READ Yau, Introduction and Chapters 1 and 2

DUE Blog post 17

DUE Photo 2 (simple photo story)

Week 9 | Oct. 22

Data journalism: Scraping

BRING your MacBook to class with Excel loaded, activated, and ready to go

READ Yau, Chapter 3

DUE Blog posts 18 and 19

Week 10 | Oct. 29

Data journalism: Fusion Tables

BRING your MacBook to class; if you do not have a Google (Gmail) account, create one

READ Yau, Chapter 8 (maps)

DUE Blog post 20

DUE Data 1

Week 11 | Nov. 5

Audio and photo story

READ Kern, Chapter 5

READ Kobre, Chapter 10 (including all photo captions and all boxed text)

DUE Project pitch (document)

DUE Blog post 21

DUE Data 2

Week 12 | Nov. 12

Audio and photo story

READ Kern, Chapter 6

READ Kobre, Chapter 12 (including all photo captions and all boxed text)

DUE Blog posts 22 and 23

Week 13 | Nov. 19

On-the-spot video interviews (vox pop)

BRING your CAMERA and USB cable or card reader to class! We will be using them.

Bring your MacBook too.

Camera BATTERIES must be fully charged, or bring extras. MEMORY CARD must have 2 GB free.

READ Kobre, Chapter 13 (including all photo captions and all boxed text).

DUE Blog post 24

DUE Audio and photo story

Week 14 | Nov. 26

Project work

Week 15 | Dec. 3

Project work

Finals week deadline: Dec. 10

DUE Project

UF Dates (Fall 2013)

Classes begin Aug. 21

Drop/Add Aug. 21–27

Classes end Dec. 4

Final exams Dec. 7–13

Sept. 2 Labor Day

Nov. 8–9 Homecoming

Nov. 11 Veterans Day

Nov. 27–30 Thanksgiving