

JOU 4201: News Center Practicum (*née Editing*)

Lecture: Tuesdays E1-E2 in Weimer 2300

Summer 2015 (all sections)

Instructors:

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Teaching Assistants:

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Erica Newport - ericanewport@ufl.edu - Enterprise Stories

Course Description

This is a newsroom experience course that produces and edits journalism in the Innovation News Center (Weimer 2300). The course separated into three separate modules.

Daily Reporting Module: In the daily reporting module you will attend the daily story budget meeting (9:30 a.m.) and write daily assigned or breaking news stories to be completed by the end of your shift. You will frequently be expected to go out on assignment along with our TV and radio students who will also be producing content for our 5 p.m. newscast and our NPR affiliate 89.1, WUFT-FM.

Edit Module: In the editing module you will be primarily editing incoming stories, copy, audio and video for publication on wuft.org/news from online, TV and radio reporters. You will also assist in aggregating web stories from our wire services including CNN, AP, News Service Florida, Public Radio Exchange, Florida Public Radio, etc... as well as breaking news.

Web/Social Media Module: In the web producing and social media module you will be responsible for pushing out editorial content from WUFT News' radio, TV and web onto social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter, Yik Yak (Swamp Juice) and Instagram, as well as a daily email newsletter of aggregated news and information for our regional audience. In addition to pushing our content, you will also monitor other social media channels germane to our audience to alert the newsroom of developing stories. You will also assist in publishing content on the website from our various wire services.

The Innovation News Center:

The INC is a professional newsroom for WUFT and WRUF stations and websites. These are not just campus stations. They are professional news outlets serving adults in north central Florida. So for this class, think and act like a professional journalist. In other words, treat this like a job. If you do, you will get better clips, you will better prepare yourself for a job and you'll get a better grade. It also prepares you for working in a professional workplace: office politics, communicating your ideas, garnering attention and interacting with management, etc. So even if a journalism industry job is not your destination, you'll gain valuable work experience.

Because this is a real newsroom, your workday will vary. One minute you could be editing a story for WUFT.org, and the next you could be running out the door to chase breaking news. One minute you could be turning in a story, and the next you could be explaining it on live TV.

Course Outcomes

By the end of the semester, students will:

- **Produce at least three assigned/breaking/pitched daily news** stories publishable for a general adult audience on WUFT.org.
- **Produce at least three longer, non-daily, enterprise stories** (not assigned, but pitched) publishable for a general adult audience on wuft.org.
- **Function effectively as a copy editor in a live newsroom** (tighten flabby writing, check facts, question assertions, find omissions, ensure fairness and write compelling headlines).
- **Function effectively as a web and social media producer** in a live newsroom (push out content on various social media platforms, monitor local, regional and state social media for breaking and developing stories, engage the audience through social media and email newsletters and assist with editing on stories or writing breaking news when necessary).

Course Intranet

Most details about how to function in the INC – from finding stories to writing headlines – are on the [WUFT News intranet](#)

(<http://www.wuft.org/newsroom>). (The username is *newsroom* and the password is *newsroom*.)

Required Equipment

All you need is a smartphone with recommended apps (see the WUFT News intranet for details) or a point-and-shoot camera and an audio recorder.

Required Textbooks

Harrower, T (2009). *Inside Reporting*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Strunk, William, and E. B. White. *The elements of style*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1999. ISBN 978-0205309023

Class Rotation

Team A:

Social Media and Web Production : Weeks 1-4 (May 12-June 5).

Editing: Weeks 5-8 (June 8 - July 10)

Daily Reporting: Weeks 9-12 (July 13-August 7)

Team B:

Daily Reporting : Weeks 1-4 (May 12-June 5).

Social Media and Web Production : Weeks 5-8 (June 8 - July 10)

Editing: Weeks 9-12 (July 13-August 7)

Team C:

Editing: Weeks 1-4 (May 12-June 5).

Daily Reporting : Weeks 5-8 (June 8 - July 10)

Social Media and Web Production : Weeks 9-12 (July 13-August 7)

Lecture Schedule

Date	What We Are Covering?	Where?
May 12	Course Intro	Weimer 2300
May 19	Stories, Reporting, Sources	Weimer 2300
May 26	Pitching, Storytelling	Weimer 2300
June 2	Radio/Sound	INC
June 16	Engagement Campaign	Weimer 2300
June 23	Break	Break
June 30	Workshop (Social)	Weimer 2300
July 7	Ethics	Weimer 2300
July 14	Photos/Multimedia	INC
July 21	Navigating Work Environments	Weimer 2300
July 28	Extending the Newsroom Experience	Weimer 2300
August 4	Course Wrap	Weimer 2300

Assignments and Grading

- Daily assigned stories (see section above for details)20%
- Non-daily, enterprise stories (see section above for details).....30%
- Web and social media producer (see section above for details)....20%
- Copy Editing (see section above for details)..... 20%
- Lecture & Newsroom Intranet Quizzes10%

**Extra Credit (Hustle Points) will be given to students showing exemplary work ethic, dedication, teamwork, integrity and resourcefulness throughout any of the modules. Team leaders and course instructors will be keeping track of extra-credit moments. Advice to all is to get involved, get to know your team leaders and newsroom managers (Yes, this is subjective; so is life).*

Periodically, upon the start of lecture, there will be unannounced quizzes on topics covered during lecture, the syllabus or the best practices of the INC operations that are highlighted or covered on the [INC Intranet](#). You may not make up a quiz if you are absent or tardy. The remaining quizzes will be completed on Canvas during the first few weeks of class, as outlined on Canvas.

Grades will be posted on the course website on Canvas.

Grading Scale

Percent		Percent		Percent		Percent	
		B+	89-87%	C+	79-77%	D+	69-67%
A	100-93%	B	86-83%	C	76-73%	D	66-63%
A-	93-90%	B-	82-80%	C-	72-70%	D-	62-60%

The minimum score to pass this course is a C, or 72.5. Scores are rounded to the nearest whole point: 89.4 rounds down to 89 (B+) while 89.5 rounds up to 90 (A-). More details on the university's grading policy can be found in the undergraduate catalog online.

Attendance

Course requirements for class attendance, make-up exams, assignments and other work are consistent with UF policy. A make-up for the numeracy exam can be accommodated if and only if (a) the

absence is covered by UF policy, (b) you call me at least 30 minutes before class begins, and (c) you promptly provide written documentation for the absence.

INC attendance is mandatory. See the Web Producer section for more detail.

CAUTION: This is a professional course. The rules probably are different than those of other courses. You must not only do the work, but you must demonstrate that you can do the work acceptably within a limited time. Missed deadlines result in automatic failure of the assignment/project. Stories with conflicts of interest of the reporter shall also result in automatic failure. Grades on stories can be lowered (e.g. to zero) as the result of students misrepresenting themselves or otherwise being unprofessional while working on story assignments. Do NOT tell sources you are working for the Alligator or any other publication. Students often find sources are more willing to talk if the students are dressed appropriately.

Sources: One of the best ways to ensure your stories are fair accurate and complete is to gather information from a variety of sources. In selecting potential sources for your stories, keep in mind that we live in a diverse, multicultural world. You should make every effort to have your stories reflect that. Talk to a variety of people from different backgrounds, educational levels, etc. to get a complete story.

Students enrolled in this course should not be used as sources in your stories unless they are involved directly in the story. Friends, roommates, relatives, sorority sisters, fraternity brothers, etc. usually pose a conflict-of-interest threat when used as sources.

Do your own reporting and writing. Plagiarism—including using material from news releases and information gathered from the Internet without attribution—will result in serious and harsh consequences. Should that be discovered, you will fail the course and be recommended for expulsion from the University. You can find the college's official ethical standards at <http://www.jou.ufl.edu/academic/>

jou/honesty/demic/jou/honesty/. If you have even the smallest doubt or are confused about this or anything else in the course, PLEASE ASK.

Lectures and materials in this class are the property of the University/faculty member. Lectures may not be taped without permission from the lecturer and may not be used for any commercial purpose. Students found in violation may be subject to discipline under the University's Student Conduct Code.

The **University of Florida Honor Code** was voted on and passed by the Student Body in the Fall 1995 semester. The Honor Code reads as follows:

Preamble: In adopting this Honor Code, the students of the University of Florida recognize that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students who enroll at the University commit to holding themselves and their peers to the high standard of honor required by the Honor Code. Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the Honor Code is bound by honor to take corrective action. A student-run Honor Court and faculty support are crucial to the success of the Honor Code. The quality of a University of Florida education is dependent upon the community acceptance and enforcement of the Honor Code.

The Honor Code: We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity. 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." (*In this course, everything you complete has an implied acceptance of the honor code.*)

For more information about academic honesty, contact Student Judicial Affairs, P202 Peabody Hall, 392-1261.

Students requesting classroom accommodation must register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean will provide documentation to the

student who must provide documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using material without attribution. The solution is attribution, not paraphrasing. Attribute sources (“according to a press release”) and ideas (“reported last week in the Chiefland Citizen”). When in doubt, attribute. Plagiarism can result in a failing grade for the course.

Fabrication

Fabrication is making up stuff, such as quoting sources you didn’t interview or inventing sources. Any fabrication will result in a failing grade for the course.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Non-daily enterprise stories:

You will find (that’s what enterprise means; we don’t give you assignments), report and write three stories to be published on WUFT.org

To score points for this course, each story must:

- Be published on WUFT.org.
- Cannot involve *just* the UF campus or student life (we have a much different audience than the *Alligator*). However, we do encourage you to pursue campus related stories with depth and context such as this one on the Innovation Academy: http://www.alligator.org/news/campus/article_dd433a68-e19c-11e4-968a-1fb368be83d3.html

* A story that fails to meet both of those criteria is worth zero points.

Publishable Non-daily Enterprise Stories

News, features, profiles, arts and entertainment, sports (non-game stories) and investigations work for WUFT News as long as they are:

1. **Local.** This means distinctly local people doing distinctly local things in north central Florida. For example, a story about what people think about a new TV show is not local while a story about a local person who appeared on the show would be.

2. **Timely but not breaking.** Thus, a story about places to see live theater in Gainesville is not timely while a story about a new remodeling project at the Hippodrome would be. Breaking news, such as a fire at Best Buy, is handled within the INC's breaking news desk and daily reporters.

3. **Aimed at adults.** Your audience is a middle-aged adult, not students. See the WUFT News intranet for information about our audience.

4. **Interesting.** Produce stories likely to generate online clicks or social media links. Write about the city council if it considers whether to allow liquor sales on Sunday. Ignore it if it considers routine changes in the liquor-license policy. In other words, skip boring stuff.

5. **Original.** Stories must be **exclusive** to WUFT News and original to this class. You cannot update a story you submitted for a previous class. If you follow up on a story from another news organization, take a different approach while explicitly crediting the original report. If you turn in a story that you wrote for another class or publication, you will receive a failing grade.

6. **Multimedia.** Each story must be accompanied by:

- A photograph, whether taken by you or supplied by a source.
- A broadcast-quality audio or video clip of 30 to 60 seconds.

Story Approval For Non-daily Enterprise Stories

As soon as possible, consult with teaching assistant Erica Newport about your story idea by sending an email to erica@wuftnews.com that answers these five questions:

1. What is the main idea of the story?
2. Where did you get the idea for the story?
3. Why would people in north central Florida care?
4. Whom, specifically, will you interview?
5. What picture and audio or video do you plan to get?

Use the feedback you will get from Ms. Newport to shape your story or pursue another. She will be working primarily during announced and set office hours, so make sure you allow enough time for her to read and respond. This is NOT a 24/7 service. Often it is often easier to pitch your story or troubleshoot barriers via a verbal conversation rather than e-mail. You may also find that you are pitching similar stories as other reporters in the course, and depending on the strength of the pitch and how it is communicated, there may be instances where you see a similar story to what you pitch that have different outcomes in the publishing process.

You may also speak with any of the team leaders about your story ideas or questions you may have, however, Ms. Newport will be the primary point of contact for the three non-daily, enterprise stories.

Story Length

A story is about 500 to 750 well-chosen words. The word count is less important than is the quality of the story. In other words, a tightly written story of 500 words will receive a better grade than a 750-word story padded with fluff and redundant writing.

Deadline

Submit your story as a Word document to submit@wuftnews.com. Each story is due *no later* than the exact time your section starts: 8:30 a.m., sharp. If the story arrives a minute late, it's late – and **a late**

story counts as a zero. No extensions are granted except in extenuating circumstances such as documented family emergencies. If the story needs to hold beyond the deadline in order to include crucial and pertinent information, the course instructors (Gary Green and Matt Sheehan) will make a decision based upon relevant information at hand. In most cases we will choose to publish and update the story when new information becomes available.

You may also submit a timely story *prior* to your deadline. The deadline serves as the last possible time to submit a story. We recommend working ahead of schedule so you do not fall into the trap of missing deadlines because a story or source falls through.

Reporter Questions

During the editing process of your story, if the editors have questions about your story that need answered or addressed for it to be published, you will have five business days to answer all of the questions or it will be spiked without credit.

Be Professional

When you are pursuing a story for WUFT News, adopt the persona of a professional journalist.

- Be early for interviews or appointments. Do your research **BEFORE** your interviews so that you are knowledgeable about your subject and topic.
- Dress appropriate to the story, which is usually business casual attire.
- Identify yourself as a reporter for WUFT News.
- Represent WUFT News to the outside world as a professional journalist would.

Sources

Each publishable non-daily, enterprise story for this class must have **at least three named sources**. You'll find important standards for sources on the WUFT News intranet. You do not need to limit a story to three, and often in reporting you'd want to have six or seven potential voices in your planning to make sure you have the best quotes or backup if a source falls through. At the top of your story, list a telephone number for each source quoted in your story so Web producers can fact-check quotations.

. **Multimedia Standards**

The WUFT News intranet:

- Details the criteria for good photos and for audio or video files.
- Offers advice and links for tips on how to take better photos and capture audio/video.
- Suggests good apps for Android and Apple smartphones.
At the top of your story, include:
- A photo caption that identifies the people in the picture and names the photographer. If you did not take the photo, you must have permission from the original photographer to use his/her photo. Google Image searching or taking photos from other media outlets is not permitted (and will be considered plagiarism).
- The name of the person speaking in your audio file or video file.

- You can use the INC sound booths to record audio from a telephone interview. Instructions are on the WUFT News intranet.

Story Grading

As noted above, a story must be published on WUFT News in order to score any points. Published stories will be graded according to the following 100-point rubric:

Category	Criteria	Points
Subject	<p>Interesting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appeals to a significant share of the audience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharable: Likely to be spread through social media or email Timely: Fresh, with a timely news peg Scope: Covers who, what, when, where, why and how Sourcing: Full range of views; affected people interviewed 	50
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Length: Roughly 500 to 750 well-chosen words Lead: 25 words max; either summarizes story or hooks reader Concise: Gets right to the point; doesn't waste words Readable: Smooth flow; active verbs; short sentences; descriptive Clarity: Precise language without jargon or euphemisms 	30
Photo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Photo: Fits story; visually interesting; well composed Caption: All people named 	10

Category	Criteria	Points
Audio/ Video	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall: A single person germane to the story edited to :30 to :60 • Sound: Broadcast-quality (if not, 0 points) • Video: Camera does not move; speaker composed and lit properly 	10

Deductions

- Fact error, such as a misspelled name -50
- Source contact information missing -10
- AP Style errors that impede readability -10
- Fewer than three named sources -100
- Sources have a personal connection to you -100

Daily Reporting/Assigned Stories

For four of your shifts, one module, you will be attending our daily news meeting at 9:30 a.m. in the INC conference room. From there you will be assigned to cover a daily story either by yourself or alongside other radio and/or TV reporters.

These stories are to be reported, written and submitted by the end of your shift. Sometimes they will be breaking news. Other times you might be rewriting a press release or reporting in the field. You will be encouraged to bring story ideas to pitch in the meeting, however, you may be assigned a different story than your pitch.

This module and daily reporting experience is designed to increase your knowledge of local news, improve your efficiency in writing and reporting with daily deadlines, give you the opportunity to work with other reporters from radio and TV to better cross-train everyone working in the INC, and

lastly, to assist in getting more of stories that air on radio and TV onto the web within the same news cycle.

Not all of these stories will have three sources. We will still strive to tell both sides the story whenever possible. We will balance our reporting, publish early and often, and update as new news becomes available. These stories may accompany a TV pack from the 5 p.m. newscast or radio feature stories.

These daily quick-turn stories could also serve as a precursor to a longer-form, non-daily enterprise story that gets more into the **HOW and WHY**, rather than the **who, what, when and where**.

Daily Reporting Rubric

Published stories will be graded according to the following 100-point rubric:

Category	Explanation	Points
Daily news meeting	Attend daily news meeting on time, dressed appropriately and prepared to go out into the field and report (there will be times you may report from the newsroom, however). Have knowledge of the daily news in and around North Central Florida to discuss and pitch for possible stories to pursue.	20
Deadline	Report, write, submit and publish a story for web within the shift.	30
Teamwork	Work collaboratively with other news managers, reporters and producers from other platforms to produce web content on synergistic stories.	20
Sourcing/Accuracy	Write stories for web using credible sources from both sides of the story showing fairness and accuracy.	30

Plagiarism is using material without attribution. The solution is attribution, not paraphrasing. Attribute sources (“according to a press

release”) and ideas (“reported last week in the Chiefland Citizen”). When in doubt, attribute. Plagiarism can result in a failing grade for the course.

Fabrication is making up stuff, such as quoting sources you didn’t interview or inventing sources. Any fabrication will result in a failing grade for the course.

Seize the Day

This course enables you to create meaningful clips and expand your skill set into radio and TV. Creating great stories can advance your career. So give it your best.

Editing/Social Media and Web Producing Modules

You will work a total of 12 shifts in the INC. Four of those will be daily reporting, four will be editing and four will be web and social media producing.

Instruction

Video tutorials for how to do your job as a Web producer and editor are on the WUFT News intranet. View them on your own as soon as possible. Your grade presumes you’ve seen these tutorials.

Attendance

Because the INC is a working newsroom, attendance is mandatory. If you are going to miss an INC shift for any reason – illness, family emergency, military obligation, etc. – you must find a classmate to work your shift for you. (The best plan is to trade shifts so you return the favor.)

All students in this course must list contact information in a database kept on the WUFT News intranet so that you can find people to work for you. If you cannot find a classmate to work for you – or if that classmate fails to show up on your behalf – you will lose one-seventh

of your grade for the Web producer portion of the course. (Note: You still have to work six shifts yourself.)

Work Ethic

When you are in the INC, you are working a job. That means you are expected to:

- Arrive early before your shift begins ready to work.
- Follow the INC business casual dress code on the WUFT News intranet.
- Work efficiently. Get stuff done; don't dawdle.
- Focus on the job. Put away the cellphone and ignore Facebook.
- Be self-reliant. Use the WUFT News intranet to learn how to do your job.
- Display a positive attitude. Smile and be kind. Don't be a jerk.
- Show initiative. Help others, volunteer to chase a story and collaborate.

Editing Grading

At the end of each INC shift, you will upload a self-assessment that will be used along with observation to grade each shift. The 100-point grading rubric is:

Category	Explanation	Points
Editing	Make the story better by checking facts and verifying sources. Find holes and improve clarity while retaining the author's voice. Help rather than hack.	70
Work Ethic	Arrive on time. Business casual dress. Work efficiently. Give full attention to the job. Be self-reliant. Display positive attitude. Show Initiative	20

Category	Explanation	Points
Headlines	Write social media friendly, NPR-style headlines that are no more than 10 words that emphasize how and why . Captions complement headline and lede.	10

You will need to upload an electronic self-assessment to each INC shift “assignment” in Canvas. You may find the electronic form in the “Files” tab of the course Canvas site.

Note: *Stories that are advanced in the editing process without a proper headline, excerpt, tags, category or featured image will be considered incomplete and result in a 50 point reduction on your shift assessment.*

Social Media/Web Producing Grading

At the end of each INC shift, you will upload a self-assessment that will be used along with observation to grade each shift. The 100-point grading rubric is:

Category	Explanation	Points
Social Media, email newsletter and content aggregation from wire services	Disseminate original and aggregated content from our various wire services and member stations on WUFT News social media channels including Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Yik Yak, Mailchimp daily email newsletter and website. Monitor local, regional and state social media channels for breaking and developing stories.	70
Work Ethic	Arrive on time. Business casual dress. Work efficiently. Give full attention to the job. Be self-reliant. Display positive attitude. Show Initiative	30

You will need to upload an electronic self-assessment to each INC shift “assignment” in Canvas. You may find the electronic form in the “Files” tab of the course Canvas site.