

# **Journalist Toolkit 2**

## **Spring Semester 2014**

### **Syllabus**



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Class Meetings: Monday, Periods 4 – 6 (10:40 am – 1:40 pm)  
Class Room: Weimer G037

#### **Introduction:**

Welcome to Journalist Toolkit 2. This course is a tools-focused course and is designed to complement the knowledge that you gained in Journalist Toolkit 1. The audio, photo, and data tools from the initial course will all be necessary for success in this course, which is focused primarily on video journalism.

Like all journalism disciplines today, video journalism is rapidly changing with the Internet. Traditional newspaper and television journalists must find new ways to remain relevant in the digital age. This course is designed primarily as a non-traditional video storytelling class. A significant portion of the course will be dedicated to new media and uploading completed classwork online. Video storytelling can be both interesting and challenging. The key is to choose news topics that interest you as well as topics that can be properly developed and executed.

#### **General requirements for enrollment in Toolkit 2:**

You must have completed Journalist Toolkit 1. You are expected to know the basics of audio journalism, photojournalism, and data journalism.

#### **Required Readings:**

There is no required textbook for this course. However, there may be a number of selected readings that will be provided to you by the instructor. You are expected to read all the selections by the next class.

#### **Other Materials\*:**

Video camera – Mandatory  
Tripods – Mandatory  
Microphones – Mandatory  
MacBook Pro with advanced video editing software (ex. Final Cut Pro, Adobe Premiere, Avid, etc.) – Mandatory  
Reporter's notebook for interview notes – Recommended

\*Cameras, tripods, and microphones can be signed out from the equipment room.

## **Student Objectives:**

By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

- Gather information through dynamic video interviews for short journalism stories.
- Examine, discuss, and critique different journalistic media, imagery and styles with peers.
- Effectively utilize video production tools (video equipment and editing software) for creating digital journalism features.
- Successfully edit video stories for online publication.
- Develop video storytelling techniques that properly illustrate ideas without a script or narration.
- Create news packages designed for broadcast television that incorporate stand-ups and voiceovers.
- Explain and understand different storytelling practices both inside and outside the realm of journalism.

## **Attendance:**

Because this class only meets once a week, attendance is mandatory. Please be in class on time. If you have an emergency, please contact me before class and provide documentation when you return. Excused absences include illness, having primary care duty for family members, professional conferences, military service, jury duty and university sanctioned trips.

Additionally, class participation is important and expected from all students. This is a graduate journalism course, so please share your thoughts throughout the semester. These classes are three hours long, so for your benefit, come prepared with questions about class topics.

## **Class Procedures:**

- Please keep your cell phones on silent and put away during class.
- Laptops are allowed in class, and will typically be needed. If you are using a laptop in class, please be alert and on task.
- Please check your UF email account several times a week for class updates.
- All assigned readings should be read before the next scheduled class.

## **Submitting Video Assignments:**

All video assignments must be submitted electronically through email before class, unless otherwise specified. Late work will not be accepted. All final assignments should be uploaded to Vimeo.com or YouTube.com and an email with a link to the final video should be sent to the instructor.

## **Grading:**

10% - Class participation and attendance

5% - Documentary analysis assignment

20% - First documentary project

20% - Second documentary project

20% - First news package

5% - Online article

20% - Second news package

**Assignment Overview:**

Documentary analysis assignment (5%) – You will watch a full-length documentary of your choice and analyze different elements of it as a film and its message. Choose a documentary with a topic that interests you and that you could see yourself exploring as a video journalist. Complete a four to five-page (double-spaced) analysis that 1) provides an overview of the film itself and the issue being discussed, 2) explains how the film got its message across and how effective it was to viewers, 3) discusses the shot selection, interviews, lighting, editing, etc. and how those elements benefited or hindered the documentary, and 4) provides suggestions for anything you would have done differently to maximize the film's message.

Documentary projects (40%) – You must complete two short documentaries in this class between 4 and 5 minutes long. For your documentary, find a story you think should be told and conduct video interviews with appropriate people on the subject. You must shoot appropriate b-roll and incorporate music that coincides with the story. These are non-narrated documentaries, and you should allow the interviews, pictures, and audio to drive the story. More information about the documentaries will be provided during the semester.

News packages (40%) – A news package is a self-contained news story that appears within a television news broadcast. Packages have a reporter's voice reading a script to the edited video, and the reporter appearing on screen somewhere in the news story (known as a stand-up). You will shoot, script, and edit two news packages between 3 and 3:30 minutes long. You must incorporate on-camera interviews with at least three original sources and have a stand-up that appears at the middle or end of your story. You also need to write a script that is factually accurate and engaging to viewers. More information about the news packages will be provided during the semester.

Online article (5%) – You will need to turn your first news package into an online news article. Take the information from your news script, and turn the voiceovers and sound bites into a well-written online story. Give the story a headline to capture the audience's attention. Include multiple photos with captions, and the video of your package must be embedded at the top of the article. You must also include links to related websites and videos as background information. Be conscious of the fact that broadcast writing is different than online writing in structure, language, and pacing. Follow the AP style rules and tailor your article to a specific audience.

**Grading Scale:**

A – 93 - 100	B- – 80 – 82	D+ – 67 - 69
A- – 90 – 92	C+ – 77 – 79	D – 63 - 66
B+ – 87 - 89	C – 73 – 76	D- – 60 - 62
B – 83 – 86	C- – 70 – 72	E – 59 and below

**Incompletes:**

This is a graduate course, so a course grade of incomplete will only be permitted for serious illness documented by a physician. A timetable for completing the course work must be set before the incomplete is given.

**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."

For more information about academic honesty, contact Student Judicial Affairs, P202 Peabody Hall, (352) 392-1261.

**Disability Requests:**

Students with Disabilities who may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to notify the instructor and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) so that reasonable accommodations may be implemented. DRC is located in room 001 in Reid Hall or you can contact them by phone at 352-392-8565.

**Class Schedule:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>
Jan. 6	<i>Introduction to course</i> <i>Introduction to camera and sound equipment</i>
Jan. 13	<i>Video interviewing techniques</i> <i>Types of questions, lighting, framing</i> <i>Generating story ideas</i>
Jan. 20	<b>Martin Luther King Jr. Day – No Class</b> Please begin conducting interviews and shooting footage
Jan. 27	<i>Video Journalism storytelling</i> <i>Building a scene</i> <i>Basic editing</i> <b>Documentary analysis assignment due</b>
Feb. 3	<i>Documentary screenings and discussion</i> <b>First documentary due</b>
Feb. 10	<i>Journalism documentary structure</i> <i>Sound design</i>
Feb. 17	<i>Integrating B-roll and music</i> <i>Use of video graphics</i>
Feb. 24	<i>Documentary screenings and discussion</i> <b>Second documentary due</b>
Mar. 3	<b>Spring Break – No Class</b>
Mar. 10	<i>Advanced editing</i> <i>Issues in post-production</i> <i>News story basics</i>
Mar. 17	<i>News Structure</i> <i>Basic script writing</i> <i>Leads</i>
Mar. 24	<i>Advanced script writing</i> <i>Stand-ups</i>
Mar. 31	<i>News package screenings and discussion</i> <i>Online news writing</i> <b>First news package due</b>
Apr. 7	<i>News values and ethics</i> <i>Final project discussion</i> <b>Online article due</b>
Apr. 14	<i>Final project work</i>
Apr. 21	<i>Course wrap-up</i> <b>Second news package due April 25 by 11:59 pm</b>

**Note: Schedule subject to be changed**