

RTV 3303 Electronic News Media One Spring 2015

Instructor: Andrew Selepak, Ph.D.
Section: 4994
Room: 2050 Weimer Hall
Periods: 4 & 5 on Tuesdays (10:40 – 12:35)
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RTV 3303 is designed to offer instruction and training in news gathering, writing, interviewing and reporting. Special emphasis is placed on improving writing skills, basic news production, and actual multimedia reporting assignments. Students receive practical experience in the WUFT newsroom.

Objectives and goals of the course include:

- (1) writing news stories acceptable for on-air and station website use under deadline pressure
- (2) ability to record audio via phone or in-person, and edit audio
- (3) ability to write “sound stories”
- (4) an understanding of the variety of sources used
- (5) an opportunity, and an expectation that work produced in the class and the newsroom can and will be used on the air and web
- (6) opportunity to voice your work, live or recorded, on the air
- (7) a better understanding of news and current events
- (8) an understanding of websites for research, as well as to produce content for station website
- (9) and finally, “develop a nose for news”

Course Eligibility: You must be in the College of Journalism and Communication----you must have had a “C” grade in RTV 2100 and RTV 3007, and passed the News Placement Exam. If you haven’t met this requirement, please come forward ASAP.

Required Equipment: you will be able to check out digital audio recorders for projects, and the newsroom has recorders for you to use as well (See guidelines for checking out equipment).

Required Equipment:

- Digital recorder (will be provided)
- SD card (will be provided)
- 4-6 AA batteries

Recommended Equipment

- A cell phone that can record audio, access and use social media, and take photos

Required materials:

- WUFT News Handbook (Available on WUFT website)

Class demeanor expected: students will be expected to participate in class discussions, turn off all cell phones BEFORE class starts or be prepared to surrender cell phone to instructor if it goes off in class, and treat your instructor and classmates with respect. Be on time for class---- story pitches are presented at start of class and are allotted a certain amount of time. If you miss them, or are late, you will be penalized.

Course Evaluation. Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online 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>

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, 392-1261.**

Disability Awareness.

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.

University counseling services and mental health services: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>
352-392-1575

Grading Components

Story Pitches	15%
Project One	10%
Project Two	10%
Project Three	15%
Project Four	20%
Newsroom	25%
Website	5%

Grading Scale:	A	(93-100)*
	A-	(90-92)
	B+	(87-89)
	B	(83-86)
	B-	(80-82)
	C+	(77-79)
	C	(73-76)
	C-	(70-72)
	D+	(67-69)
	D	(63-66)
	D-	(60-62)
	E	(below 61)

*** NOTE: A grade of an A or A- means the story is “airworthy,” anything less means changes are needed before the story is suitable to air.**

Newsroom Work: Training sessions will be held during the SECOND week of the semester at WUFT-FM in the INC. The sessions will be held at 6pm. Attendance is mandatory! You are required to work six hours per week during the semester at the station, which is where your newsroom grade is derived. In lieu of a final exam, lab shifts extend through the end of finals week. **Mark this down!** This should not be a surprise at the end of the semester.

Newsroom shifts must be covered----check news director with questions---- if you can't work, you will need to get someone to work for you.

In the event of a holiday, when you would otherwise be scheduled to work, you must make up your shift work. This is also true if you are sick and can show documentation of your illness. In both cases your shift work will be made up either with you presenting an original story idea to one of the news directors at the station, or you will be notified of a story to cover on a day when you would not otherwise be scheduled to work. These additional shifts may be at night or on the weekends.

Story Pitches: Each week, in a team of four, you will present what the group believes are the most important local, state, national and international stories for the week. These are not just stories you are interested in, but that the WUFT audience would be interested in. Your group will have :45 to pitch each of the four stories and who you would interview to cover these stories. Think of this as a morning meeting pitch. Each group member will present one of the stories.

You will be graded based on the stories you select, the justification, and who you would interview for each story. Your group's pitches will then be judged against the pitches from the other groups. There are only so many stories that will run during the news day, and this will be good practice pitching your stories to be selected to air. It is possible groups will present the same stories which is why you will want to explain who you would interview.

Class Projects details to come

Project One:

Wrap with two sound bites, 1:30 in length

A photo

Project Four:

Event Story 1:30-2:00 in length

A photo

Project Three (investigative):

Wrap with minimum of three sound bites, 2:00-2:30 in length

Web story and a photo

Project Four (feature):

Wrap with 4 sound bites, 3:00-4:00 in length

Web story and a photo

You will need to pitch a story idea at least one week before your project is due. You can email me your pitches ahead of time.

Participation:

Participation requires attending class. Absences prevent you from participating in class discussions and gaining a full understanding of the material. Not being in class means you will not have full knowledge of how to be successful in the Newsroom and as a reporter.

Website:

Your goal should be to have your work seen by as many people as possible to improve your brand and to begin to establish yourself as a professional and experienced reporter. This means getting your stories air, and for the stories to be published on the WUFT website, and having a means to present this work to potential employers. The goal is for you to create your own personal website where you can showcase your work this semester. We will review websites in class at the end of the semester, but you should begin setting up your website by week FIVE.

You must be prepared to create a personal website to showcase your work.

The most user friendly options to create your own website are Weebly, WIX, and Webs.

A finished website will include any stories you did for the WUFT site, radio stories done for WUFT-FM, a professional Twitter, a LinkedIn account, a Google + account, a bio which is a summary of your resume on the home page, your resume, and photos of you working.

You can go beyond the minimum requirement, but it should be something that will benefit you as you continue your career in media.

Resources:
Start reading this site and going through the information on it: http://journalistsresource.org/
- Journalist's Resource: Research on today's news topics

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week #1	1/6	Intro to class, basic info about course Writing for Broadcast, Building on the Lead, Wrap Script, Intros & Closes Sign up for Newsroom training
Week #2	1/13	Story Flow, What is News, Math & Accuracy <i>Newsroom training begins</i>
Week #3	1/20	Writing with audio (Nat sound), audio terms, Interviews Truth, & Covering Speeches Shifts start Assign Project One
Week #4	1/27	Getting story ideas, Local Angles/brainstorming, Covering Accidents, Covering Disasters, & Pitches <u>Project One Story Pitches Due</u>
Week #5	2/3	<u>Project One due</u> <u>Provide website URLs</u>
Week #6	2/10	Website content, Colors, Online News, Using Quotes, & Taking Photos Assign project Two
Week #7	2/17	Web Research & Google <u>Project Two Story Pitches due</u>
Week #8	2/24	<u>Project Two due</u> Assign project Three
Week #9	3/3	SPRING BREAK

Week #10	3/10	Emergency coverage, Weather, & Covering Fire Stories
Week #11	3/17	Courts, Libel, Crime Stories, & the Legal System <u>Project Three Story Pitches due</u>
Week #12	3/24	Elections, Politics, & Covering meetings
Week #13	3/31	<u>Project Three Due</u> <i>Assign Project Four</i>
Week #14	4/7	Talking to Families of the Deceased, & Talking to People with Disabilities
Week #15	4/14	Ethics & Opinions <u>Project Four Story Pitches Due</u>
Week #16	4/21	<u>Project Four Due</u>

Newsroom Lab shifts run through 5/1, in lieu of final exam.

Recommendations:

1. Get a three-ring notebook
2. Don't wait – just do
3. The more you do and learn, the more prepared you will be for anything that comes along