

## **RTV 3303 Electronic News Media One FALL 2014**

Instructor: Andrew Selepak, Ph.D.  
Section: 4487  
Room: 2056 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%

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

**Newsroom Work:** Training sessions will be held during the third and fourth weeks of the semester at WUFT 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. 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

## **Class Projects details to come**

### Project One:

Wrap with two sound bites, 1:30 in length

A photo

### Project Two (investigative):

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

Web story and a photo

### Project Three (feature):

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

Web story and a photo

### Project Four:

Wrap with 4 sound bites, 4:00-5:00 in length

Web story with a photo slideshow

**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 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, an ABOUT 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	8/25	Intro to class, basic info about course Writing for Broadcast, Building on the Lead, Wrap Script, Intros & Closes <b>Sign up for Newsroom training</b>
Week #2	9/2	Story Flow, What is News, Math & Accuracy Newsroom training begins <i>For next week: Handbook 1.9, 1.10, 1.11</i>
Week #3	9/9	Writing with audio (Nat sound), audio terms, Interviews Truth, & Covering Speeches Shifts start <i>For next week: Handbook 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 (Read after training session)</i>
Week #4	9/16	Getting story ideas, Local Angles/brainstorming, Covering Accidents, Covering Disasters, & Pitches Assign Project One <i>For next week: Handbook 1.12, 1.13, 1.14, 1.15, 2.1-2.6</i>
Week #5	9/23	Website content, Colors, Online News, Using Quotes, & Taking Photos <b><u>Provide website URLs</u></b> Project One Story Pitches Due
Week #6	9/30	<b><u>Project One due</u></b>
Week #7	10/7	Web Research & Google <b>Assign project Two</b>
Week #8	10/14	Emergency coverage, Weather, & Covering Fire Stories Project Two Story Pitches due
Week #9	10/21	Courts, Libel, Crime Stories, & the Legal System
Week #10	10/28	<b><u>Project Two due</u></b> <b>Assign project Three</b>
Week #11	11/4	Careers and the Industry

Week #12	11/11	Elections, Politics, & Covering meetings Project Three Story Pitches due
Week #13	11/18	<b><u>Project Three Due</u></b> Assign Project Four
Week #14	11/25	Talking to Families of the Deceased, & Talking to People with Disabilities
Week #15	12/2	Ethics & Opinions Project Four Pitches Due
Week #16	12/9	<b><u>Project Four Due</u></b>

Newsroom Lab shifts run through 12/19, 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