

RTV 4930 Sports Radio Reporting **Spring 2014**

Instructor: Matthew Cretul
Advisors: Steve Russell & Andrew Selepak, PhD
Room: Weimer Hall 3024
Periods: 10 & 11 on Tuesdays (5:10pm – 7:05pm)
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RTV 4930 is designed to offer instruction and training in sports information and gathering, as well as writing, interviewing and reporting. Special emphasis is placed on improving sports writing skills, basic sports production, radio reporting assignments, and sports content for the Internet. In addition, students receive practical experience in the ESPN 850 WRUF studios.

Objectives and goals of the course include:

- (1) Writing sports stories and features acceptable for on-air use, ability to record audio via phone or in-person, and edit audio
- (2) Ability to write “sound stories” for air and web
- (3) An understanding of the variety of sports sources used as a reporter
- (4) An opportunity, and an expectation that work produced for the class and ESPN 850 can and will be used on air and web
- (5) Opportunity to voice your work, live or recorded, on- the-air
- (6) A better understanding of Gator, local, high school, national and international sports
- (7) An understanding of websites for research, as well as to produce content for AM 850 website
- (8) And to develop the ability to find sports stories

Course Eligibility: You must have received a grade of “C” or better in either RTV 2100 or MMC 2100. You must have also been approved by the Sports Department at ESPN 850 and the instructor. If you have not met these requirements, please come forward ASAP.

Required Equipment: Gathering sound (player interviews, media days, teleconferences, etc.) is vital, and you will use many different means to collect sound. Before you will be able to check out digital audio recorders for projects, you will be shown how to operate one, both with and without a stick mic, as well as other means of collection. The newsroom has recorders for you to use for your projects and the Telecom Department has recorders you can check-out (See guidelines for checking out equipment). Your instructor also has a flipcam you can use.

Class demeanor: students will be expected to participate in class discussions, turn off all cell phones BEFORE class starts and treat your instructor and classmates with respect. Be on time for class. If you miss in class quizzes, or are late, you will be penalized. Sports reporting is a deadline based industry, you need to be able to be there on-time, every time. 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**.

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

Grading Components

Weekly Sports Knowledge Quizzes 10%
Project One 10%
Project Two 10%
Project Three 15%
Project Four 20%
Station Work 35%

Grading Scale: A (93-100)

A- (91-92)
B+ (88-90)
B (83-87)
B- (81-82)
C+ (78-80)
C (73-77)
C- (71-72)
D+ (68-70)
D (63-67)
D- (61-62)
E (below 61)

Sports Knowledge Quizzes:

Each week at the beginning of class you will have 10-question sports knowledge quiz about Gators, national, or international sports. You will be informed prior to the quiz what topic the quizzes will cover. Working in sports requires that you have a well-rounded understanding of all things sports and these quizzes serve as a means to ensure you are paying attention to the sports world beyond just the sports you enjoy watching, but all sports.

Station Work:

You are required to work six hours per week during the semester at the station, which is how your station work grade is derived (35%). Your work at the station will include sports updates, web stories, board op work, covering events such as press conferences, and covering sporting games. Shifts may include evening or weekend hours which means you may be asked to work during times outside of your regular shifts. These evening and weekend shifts should be seen as recognition of your good work and not as a burden as they mean you are being asked to specifically cover an event because you have done a good job at the station. The Sports Director (Steve Russell) will assign your shifts which may also change based on need. Training sessions will be held during the second and third weeks of the semester at ESPN 850, even if you have already worked at ESPN 850 or WUFT. The sessions will be held at 6:45 pm. Attendance is mandatory! In lieu of a final exam, you will be working at the station through the end of finals week. **Mark this down!** This should not be a surprise at the end of the semester.

Your station shifts must be covered----check with Sports Director (Steve Russell) with questions---- if you can't work, you will need to get someone to work for you.

There is a dress code for working at the station. You must be prepared at all times to be sent out to a press conference or other events as necessary. Shorts are acceptable, but closed toed shoes and collared shirt are required. Neutral colors are a must, no orange or blue (Gator gear). NO athletic wear, hats, sleeveless shirts, or flip-flops are allowed. **Look like you're going to work, not the gym, and look like a reporter, not a fan.**

Class Projects/details to come:

Project One: Feature story on a student athlete

Project Two: Feature story on a UF athletics coach or coaching staff

Project Three: Advance of a specific athletic team at UF
(Story will focus on expectations for upcoming season or postseason of a UF athletic team. No stories on football or men's basketball teams.)

Project Four: Professional sports team or player story
(Feature story of a professional sports team.)

All four projects will be expected to be of quality work. After given revisions by the instructor, or ESPN 850 staff, you will be expected to post stories to ESPN 850 website. In addition, part of your grade for each assignment will involve pitching story ideas to the instructor one week before an assignment is due to ensure your topic is acceptable and a story that can be accomplished.

On the day projects are due, we will review your work in class so you can get feedback from your classmates.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week #1 –January 7: Intro to class, go over syllabus and Working in Sports

Week #2 – January 14: Station training begins, Writing for the Web

Week #3 – January 21: Sports Reporting Tips & Using Quotes, Station training continues & Shifts start *Hand out Project One*

Week #4 – January 28: Difference between sports and news & Types of Sports Stories **Project One pitches due**

Week #5 – February 4: **Project ONE due**

Week #6 – February 11: Tips on Interviewing athletes and coaches, and finding sources, *Hand out Project Two*

Week #7 – February 18: Press conferences/teleconference & Social Media, **Project Two pitches due**

Week #8 – February 25: **Project TWO due**

Week #9 – March 4: **SPRING BREAK – MAKE SURE TO HYDRATE**

Week #10 – March 11: Sports and culture, *Hand out Project Three*

Week #11 – March 18 – Sports talk vs. sports reporting and The Live Broadcast, **Project Three pitches due**

Week #12 – March 25:**Project THREE due**

Week #13 – April 1: ESPN assessment and Working a Beat, *Hand out Project Four*

Week #14 – April 8: Using media guides, **Project Four pitches due**

Week #15 – April 15: Ethics in sports reporting

Week #16 – April 22: **Project FOUR due**

Newsroom Lab shifts run through 5/3, in lieu of final exam.

*****NOTE: schedule subject to changed based on guest availabilities and other factors. *****