**JOMC 221.004**

**Audio-Video Information Gathering**

**Spring 2014**

Professor: Dr. Trevy A. McDonald

Office: 329 Carroll Hall

E-mail: [trevy@email.unc.edu](mailto:trevy@email.unc.edu)

Office Hours: MW 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., M 3:30-4:30., by appointment, or whenever my office door is open.

Graduate Assistant: Victoria Fosdal (fosdal@live.unc.edu)

Class Hours: MW 12:30 p.m.-1:45 p.m.

Classroom: Carroll Rm. 268

Everyone loves a great story. But what makes a story great? What makes a story compelling? What stories do you remember most and what made them memorable? What do all great stories have in common? What is the difference between “telling” the story and “showing” the story?

It is my hope that you will learn to use sound and video to produce stories that will help you land your dream internship or job. You will become skillful in gathering good audio that is clear, balanced, properly layered with appropriate sound and incorporates natural sound to help you “show” an audio only story. You will also learn to shoot video that is well focused, properly white balanced, properly framed, and properly lighted. You will also master editing skills so that you are able to match action with sound using a variety of shots that are appropriately paced with invisible cuts.

**Required Purchases for each student:**



Memory card for camera - SDHC card Speed Class 10 16GB or larger

(must be able to store HD video)

**Headphones. Ear buds are not the best for production. Please bring headphones to each class session.**

**Suggested Supplies (strongly suggested):**

External hard drive with 1 TB

**Suggested Supplemental Material:** Ron Whittaker (2006). *Television Production: A Free, Interactive Course in Studio and Field Production*. Available for free through Cybercollege.com (http://www.cybercollege.com/tvp\_ind.htm)

Images, audio/video examples, and many of the points and techniques featured in the PowerPoint slides were gleaned from a multitude of textbooks and online sources. I invite you to peruse these sources firsthand, as well as access the many free online resources available to you.

**Course Philosophy:**

This course introduces students to the tools and skills needed to engage in quality storytelling with audio and video in broadcast and multimedia environments. Emphasis is in mastering technical and aesthetic aspects of digital video. This course is ultimately intended to give students the technical ability to engage in citizen or one-man-band journalism, in which the journalist acts as reporter, videographer, and editor.

**Course Goals:**

* Audio
  + Knowledge of the functions and limitations of the audio equipment
  + Gathering primary audio in a variety of locations
  + Gathering natural sound (ambient sound)
  + Balancing audio levels (volume) in non-linear editing
  + Layering audio in non-linear editing
  + Matching audio with video
* Video
  + Knowledge of the functions and limitations of the camera equipment
  + Use of Rule-of-Thirds
  + Camera framing angles
  + Framing the typical television news interview
  + Use of shot variety
  + Proper focusing technique
  + Ability to create a rack-focus (focus-pull)
  + Adjusting camera exposure
  + Three-point lighting
  + White-balancing
  + Non-linear editing (for continuity, for time)
  + Use of different video transition effects
  + Use of color correction effects
* Critical Thinking
  + Planning and executing productions of various lengths and styles
  + Ability to critique others’ work according to the quality of pre-production, production, and post-production

**Professional Values and Competencies**

Individual professions in journalism and mass communication may require certain specialized values and competencies. Irrespective of their particular specialization, all graduates should be aware of certain core values and competencies and be able to:

* Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
* Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;
* Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness, and diversity;
* Think critically, creatively and independently; and
* Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

**Attendance Policy:**

You are allotted two days of personal time off— in other words, two absences. There is no need to report the reason for these two absences. You may not be absent on the day of an exam. Each absence thereafter results in a 5-point reduction to the total number of points accumulated for the final course grade. If you find you must be absent multiple times during the semester, you should consult with me about withdrawing from the course.

**Late Assignments:**

* Assignments turned in within 24 hours after the date and time the assignments are due will receive 50% off.
* Assignments turned in between 24 and 48 hours after the date and time the assignments are due will receive 75% off.
* Assignments turned in over 48 hours after the due date and time will receive no credit.

There will be a 15-minute grace period for all assignments to allow for slower uploads. However, please plan accordingly. No additional grace period will be given. All video and audio assignments will be uploaded to Vimeo. **Each student is responsible for making sure their assignments are exported at the proper video quality and are available on Vimeo on the day they are due.**

**Equipment Rental:**

This course follows the Equipment Policy provided to you in a separate document. Equipment is allocated for group or pair use in this course, as there is not enough equipment (cameras, mic cables, etc.) for individual rental. See this policy for return policies, consequences for late returns or lost/damaged equipment, and times for rental. You are allowed to check out equipment for a period of 72 hours.

**Grading:**

You are graded according to the highest professional standards. The breakdown in percentages is listed below.

F = 59% or below

D- = 60-62%

D= 63-66%

D+ = 67-69%

C- = 70-72%

C = 73-76%

C+ = 77-79%

B- = 80-82%

B = 83-86%

B+ = 87-89%

A- = 90-92%

A = 93-96%

A+ = 97-100%

Below is a series of descriptions for what each letter grade represents:

* D, D-, or F, needs to consider a different field
* D+, did not demonstrate understanding of the basics but tried
* C-, has glimpses of potential in a limited range
* C, acceptable work, follows instructions, understands basics, does the minimum to pass
* C+, good in one area of work, but consistent problems with another area
* B-, needs a bit more polish, pretty good handle on things, participates in class, does more than the minimum
* B, solid effort, would have no problem recommending this person
* B+, very good performance, consistently does more than required, a self-starter, would get an unqualified job recommendation
* A-, stands out, good attitude, work is impressive in quality, very few problems, works like career depends on it
* A, nearly perfect in execution, quality of work is exceptional
* A+, perfect

Unless otherwise noted (e.g., audio-only projects cannot be graded on video quality or video composition), projects will be scored on a combination of the following:

1. Picture quality . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

(within a shot: attention to focus, lighting, clarity)

2. Visual composition . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

(within a shot: attention to framing, foreground/background)

3. Audio quality . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

(within a clip: attention to volume, balance, clarity)

4. Audio composition . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

(across clips: layering, quality use of background sound/music)

5. Technical editing . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

(across shots: shot variety, pacing, “invisibility” of cuts, overall length)

6. Continuity editing . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

(across shots and clips: matching action/sound, story flow/plot holes)

**Honor Code:**

It is expected that each student in this class will conduct him/herself within the guidelines of the Honor System. All academic work should be done with the high level of honesty and integrity that this University demands.

It is considered an honor code violation to plagiarize work, which includes taking footage or sounds from other sources and not giving those sources credit. This also includes taking your own material from other courses or taking material from other students and using the work as an original creation for this course.

It is also considered an honor code violation to use class lecture or class demonstration time for personal use of cell phones, social media unrelated to the course assignments, etc. For example, checking a Facebook page while another student is presenting his/her work would be considered an honor code violation. However, you are free to use in-class lab time for any purpose.

**Class Requirements -**

*(% is how much the exercise weighs in the final course grade)*

**Audio Scavenger Hunt—10 points (1%):**

This in-class exercise sends you on a mission to collect different sounds from different types of locations using the built-in camera microphone, as well as the wired handheld microphone. The purpose of this exercise is to familiarize yourself with the sound quality and audio capturing limitations of the equipment. Evaluation is based on completion.

**Audio Interview with Natural Sound—100 points (10%):**

This exercise combines audio gathering skills with audio editing skills in a short news or documentary-style (your choice) production. It is a 1-minute audio story with an interview and ambient sound (at least 3 different pieces of natural sound). It is designed to get you thinking about how to bring a story to life without the use of visuals to create imagery. It is also designed to get you thinking about editing choices, in terms of choosing which portions of an interview make the most compelling, yet comprehensible story. You will choose an interview subject from the local food, local music, or local sports scene in Chapel Hill or Carrboro. Your task will be to gather good primary audio from this individual to create an edited interview piece of exactly 60 seconds in length. You will also gather theme-relevant natural sound to layer under the primary audio. **Your own voice should not be heard during this piece. You must record all audio yourself.** Evaluation is based on overall length, even audio levels, clarity of audio, blending of sound, layering, variety of natural sound, pacing, and adherence to the subject matter.

**Video Scavenger Hunt—10 points (1%):**

This in-class exercise is a collection of camera shots that vary in terms of their framing, camera angle, and movement. The exercise is designed to help you practice your video composition skills, in addition to practicing use of the camera and tripod. You will simply record each specified shot one by one, according to the list that will be provided in class, and then upload your footage (via memory card) for review. Evaluation is based on completion.

**Matching Action—70 points (7%):**

This exercise combines the idea of shot variety with continuity. It is designed to get you thinking about shot variety in relation to editing. This exercise gives you an opportunity to practice the art of ‘movement’ using a variety of shots, action follow-through, and use of compelling imagery to tell a story without the use of text or audio. Your task is to gather a multitude of shots of the same simple action. A simple action is a single act that has a beginning, a middle, and an end, such as picking up a pen (looking at pen—reaching for pen—grasping pen—lifting pen) or swinging a golf club (looking at ball—preparing for swing—swinging up/back—swinging down—hitting ball—following through). The action should take no more than 30 seconds to perform, as the final product must be exactly 30 seconds in length. When editing, you will need to choose the best and most appropriate shots that, when edited together, show the action seamlessly and in its entirety. (This means you will likely record the action multiple times with different camera angles and framing.) **You must shoot all of the video yourself. Only cuts should be used in editing this piece.** Evaluation will be based on overall length, picture quality and focus, visual composition, pacing, continuity across shots and continuity of action, avoidance of 180° rule and jump cut issues, overall shot variety, and adherence to the directions of this exercise.

**Interview with thematic b-roll, on tripod—100 points (10%):**

This exercise features an interview with one person, along with accompanying footage and natural sound of some demonstration of the theme of the interview. **Important - the footage cannot feature the person being interviewed (hands or feet of the individual are allowable).** Subject matter must be about local sports, local music, local art, or local food. This exercise is designed to get you thinking about how to bring an interview to life using images and sounds that support the subject matter. The exercise is also designed to get you thinking about editing choices, such as choosing portions of an interview that make a compelling, yet comprehensible story, and choosing the best audio to layer under the speaker so as not to interfere with the speaker’s voice. Most interviews of this nature feature the speaker first, then the b-roll (while the speaker is still heard), then the speaker again. Only cuts should be used in editing. The final product should be exactly 60 seconds in length.

**Interview with matched action b-roll, handheld—100 points (10%):**

This exercise is similar to the previous interview exercise, except that the b-roll footage must contain the speaker. This introduces the challenge of avoiding the look of jump cuts from the interview footage to the b-roll footage (and visa-versa), as well as ensuring continuity within the b-roll. Natural sound accompanying the b-roll should not contain the speaker’s voice, as this audio would fight with the primary audio of the speaker. As such, cuts and dissolves may be used in editing. **This exercise is also to be done handheld to allow you to practice having a steady hand.** Directions for subject matter and length (60 seconds) are the same for this exercise as for the previous interview. Evaluation will be based on overall length, picture quality and focus, visual composition, pacing, continuity, avoidance of 180° rule and jump cut issues, shot variety, clarity of audio, audio levels throughout, layering and balancing audio, and adherence to the directions of this exercise.

**Final Project—400 points (40%)**

**Video is worth 200 points and Audio is worth 200 points:**

This last production exercise is actually a two-in-one production, in which the same story will be told in an online video format, as well as an audio-only format. The video format will require that you use motion and incorporate graphics. Details about the final assignment will be posted under “Assignments” in Sakai.

**Video Critique—10 points (1%):**

This final exercise is meant to give you a chance to combine all that you’ve learned throughout the semester and apply your critical eye and knowledge to evaluating someone else’s work. As you have been evaluated this semester, you will get to evaluate a short video based on picture quality, visual composition, audio quality, audio composition, technical editing, and continuity editing, as well as any other dimensions you identify. The written critique should be 350-500 words in length written in the form of an essay. Evaluation is based on completion.

**Exam—200 points (20%)**

The written portion of the exam will be based on the assigned readings and class lectures and discussions. This portion of the exam is worth 100 points. There will also be a lab exam, which requires students to demonstrate their proficiency with the equipment and editing software. This portion of the exam is also worth 100 points.

**Grading Worksheet**

**Assignment Grade Value My Grade**

Audio Scavenger Hunt 10 points or 1% \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Audio Interview with Natural Sound 100 points or 10% \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Video Scavenger Hunt 10 points or 1% \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Matching Action 70 points or 7% \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Interview w. thematic B-roll/tripod 100 points or 10% \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Interview w. matched action/handheld 100 points or 10% \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Final Project—Video 200 points or 20% \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Final Project—Audio 200 points or 20% \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Video Critique 10 points or 1% \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Exam 200 points or 20%

Breakdown of Final Grades

A = 950-1,000 A- = 900-949 B+ = 870-899

B = 830-869 B- = 800-829 C+ = 770-799

C = 730-769 C- = 700-729 D+ = 670-699

D = 630-669 D-= 600-629 F = 599 and below

**General Course Outline**

1. Introduction to Digital Storytelling
2. Audio Composition
3. *In class* - Audio Scavenger Hunt
   1. Introduction to camera operation
   2. External microphone usage
4. In class Editing Exercise
   1. Introduction to editing software
   2. Importing files from computer for editing
5. *Assigned* - Audio Interview with Natural Sound\*
   1. Transferring files from camera to computer
   2. Uploading files for class review
6. Video Composition
7. *In class* - Video Scavenger Hunt
   1. Review of camera basics
   2. Additional camera techniques
8. *Assigned* - Matching Action\*
9. Lighting techniques
10. *Assigned* - Interview with thematic b-roll (tripod)\*
11. *Assigned* - Interview with matched action b-roll (handheld)\*
12. *Assigned* - Final multiplatform project\*
13. *Assigned* - Video critique

* At least one in-class lab day will be provided.

**Tentative Course Schedule (subject to change):***.*

**All reading assignments must be complete prior to class**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Wk 1 | Day 1  Jan 8 | Overview and Introduction to Storytelling  Business (equipment room, equipment assignments)  Create Vimeo Account  Choose partner with whom you will share equipment  Creating folders/setting scratch disks |
| Wk 2 | Day 2  Jan 13 | Audio Composition  The basketball story |
|  | Day 3  Jan 15 | *Audio Scavenger Hunt assigned*  Introduction to camera operation  External microphone usage  Gathering Audio  **Audio—Television Sound**  **(http://www.cybercollege.com/tvp037.htm)**  **Audio—Microphones I**  **(http://www.cybercollege.com/tvp038.htm)**  **Audio—Microphones II**  **(**[**http://www.cybercollege.com/tvp039.htm**](http://www.cybercollege.com/tvp039.htm)**)** |
| Wk 3  Wk 4 | Jan 20  Day 4  Jan 22  Day 5  Jan 27 | **DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING HOLIDAY—NO CLASS**  *Audio Scavenger Hunt due at end of class*  Understanding Premiere Pro Part 1  Understanding Premiere Pro Part 2  Audio Editing  *Assign Audio Walkthrough* |
|  | Day 6  Jan 29 | Listen to Audio Walk-through projects  Audio Packages  Review of editing software  Transferring files from camera to computer for editing  *Assigned* - *Audio Interview with Natural Sound* |
| Wk 5 | Day 7  Feb 3 | In-class lab time  Work on Audio Interview with Natural Sound |
|  | Day 8  Feb 5 | In-class lab time  **Audio Interview with Natural Sound is due** |
| Wk 6 | Day 9  Feb 10 | Video Composition  **Suggested reading supplements:**  **Composition and Graphics—Composition–Setting**  **the Scene (http://www.cybercollege.com/tvp022.htm)**  **Composition and Graphics—Elements of Composition I, II, & III**  **(http://www.cybercollege.com/tvp023.htm)**  **(http://www.cybercollege.com/tvp024.htm)**  **(http://www.cybercollege.com/tvp025.htm)** |
|  | Day 10  Feb 12 | *In-class* - Video Scavenger Hunt  Basic Camera Shots and Movements  Review of camera operation  Additional camera techniques and operation |
| Wk 7 | Day 11  Feb 17 | Review Video Scavenger Hunt |
|  | Day 12  Feb 19 | *Assign Matching Action*  Applying Transitions  Shooting to edit, continuity  **Video Editing—Continuity Editing**  **(http://www.cybercollege.com/tvp050.htm)**  **Video Editing—Solving Continuity Problems**  **(http://www.cybercollege.com/tvp052.htm)**  **Video Editing—Technical Continuity**  **(http://www.cybercollege.com/tvp053.htm)** |
| Wk 8 | Day 13  Feb 24 | In-class lab time (Work on Matching Action) |
| Wk 9 | Day 14  Feb 26  Day 15  Mar 3 | In-class lab time  Matching Action is Due |
| Wk 10  Wk 11 | Day 16  Mar 5  Day 17  Mar 17 | Lighting and Exposure  **Read:**  **Camera Operation and Control—Lenses—The Basics**  **(http://www.cybercollege.com/tvp010.htm)**  **Video Quality, Color—Principles of TV Color**  **(http://www.cybercollege.com/tvp015.htm)**  **Lighting for Video—Hard and Soft Light**  **(http://www.cybercollege.com/tvp027.htm)**  **Lighting for Video—Color Temperature**  **(http://www.cybercollege.com/tvp028.htm)**  **SPRING BREAK—NO CLASS MARCH 10 & 12**  Lighting Techniques  Lighting a news interview indoors and outdoors  *Assigned* - Interview with thematic b-roll (tripod)  Audio for Video  Watch examples and critique  Review for Exam  **Read:**  **Lighting for Video—The Key Light**  **(http://www.cybercollege.com/tvp031.htm)**  **Lighting for Video—Fill, Back, and Background Lights**  **(http://www.cybercollege.com/tvp032.htm)**  **Lighting for Video—Special Lighting Situations**  **(http://www.cybercollege.com/tvp034.htm)** |
|  | Day 18  Mar 19 | **WRITTEN EXAM** |
| Wk 12 | Day 19  Mar 24 | In-class lab time  Work on Interview with thematic b-roll (tripod) |
|  | Day 20  Mar 26 | In-class lab time  Work on Interview with thematic b-roll (tripod) |
| Wk 13 | Day 21  Mar 31 | *Interview with thematic b-roll due at beginning of class*  *Assigned* - Interview with matched action b-roll (handheld)  Watch examples and critique  Handheld techniques and practice |
|  | Day 22  Apr 2 | In-class lab time  Work on Interview with matched action b-roll (handheld) |
| Wk 14 | Day 23  Apr 7 | In-class lab time  Work on Interview with matched action b-roll (handheld) |
|  | Day 24  Apr 9 | *Interview with matched action b-roll due at beginning of class*  *Assigned* - Final Project |
| Wk 15 | Day 25  Apr 14 | **LAB EXAM** |
| Wk 16 | Day 26  Apr 16  Day 27  Apr 21  Apr 23 | In-class lab time  Work on Final Project  Video Critique (Written 350-500 words)  Grade and comment on a video as if you were a video judge  Video is located at [www.vimeo.com/22994945](http://www.vimeo.com/22994945)  In-class lab time  Work on Final Project  Final Project is Due |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |