

# Medical and Science Video Storytelling

[School of Journalism and Mass Communication](#)

JOMC 561 (HBEH 561, HPM 551), Spring 2015

Monday, 2:20 p.m. – 5:05 p.m., Carroll Hall 340

Professor: <u><a href="#">Tom Linden, M.D.</a></u> 328 Carroll Hall 919-962-4078 e-mail: linden at unc dot edu	Office Hours: Wednesday, 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m., or by appointment or when office door is open
---	--

## Course Description and Goals

The purpose of this course is to teach the skills needed to produce medical television news reports for broadcast on [Carolina Week](#), the School of Journalism and Mass Communication's twice weekly television newscast. This class is a core course of the [Science and Medical Journalism Program](#). Also, please note that this syllabus is a dynamic document that may change at any time. Please consult this syllabus on a frequent basis for reading and reporting assignments and before you come to class.

As a participant in this course, you'll learn the following:

- How to conceive and research a science or medical news report for television broadcast.
- How to produce a science or medical video story.
- How to write a video script.
- Basic performance skills for both taped reports and in-studio lead-ins and debriefings.
- How to operate a video camera.
- How to do digital video editing.

## Reading

Required reading for the course is an introduction to broadcast journalism. Optional reading for those without a science reporting background is a primer for interpreting medical statistics. I also recommend that all students consult the *Associated Press Broadcast News Handbook* by Brad Kalbfeld that will serve as our style guide.

### Required Reading:

Wenger, Debora Halpern and Deborah Potter, *Advancing the Story: Broadcast Journalism in a Multimedia World*, Second Edition, CQ Press, 2011, ISBN: 9781608717149. (First and third

editions are also acceptable.)

### Optional Reading:

Cohn, Victor and Lewis Cope. *News & Numbers: A Guide to Reporting Statistical Claims and Controversies in Health and Other Fields*, Iowa State University Press (paperback), Second Edition, 2001, 211 pp., ISBN: 0813814243. **(recommended for students without a medical or public health background).**

## **Assignments**

The key to a successful medical television news report is good writing. Good writing requires an understanding of the material and the ability to communicate your ideas simply and clearly.

All scripts must be in my hands at the start of class on the respective due dates. Even with prior permission, submission of late scripts will result in a 10-point deduction per day. Not turning in a script will result in a zero grade. Misspelling of proper names will result in a 10-point deduction per misspelling. Misspelling of other words will result in a 2-point deduction for each word misspelled.

Once you learn the requisite scriptwriting skills, you'll work in production teams to prepare science or medical reports for [Carolina Week](#). Each science and medical video reporting team will be composed of two or three students who assume jobs at various times of producer, videographer/editor and reporter/scriptwriter. Students on each team will alternate between various producing, reporting and shooting/editing roles. Since you're supplying news reports for broadcast on Carolina Week, it's expected that you'll watch the program regularly. See the [Carolina Week web page](#) for program [show times](#) and cable channels on campus and in the Triangle. On the week before your report airs, it's expected that you'll participate in Carolina Week's assignment meeting (check with the CW assignment editor for meeting times). On the Wednesday that your report airs, it's expected that you'll be in the newsroom at least 15 minutes before the show airs at 5 p.m. and be in touch with the show's producer to make sure that you've delivered all necessary materials for your report (usually including video package, video tease and anchor intro and outro).

## **Exam**

There will be no midterm or final exam.

## **Grades**

Your grade will be based upon the following factors:

- Contributions to the production team based on your individual work as producer, videographer/editor and reporter/scriptwriter. (50%)

- Your presence as an integral member of the Carolina Week news team. It's expected that you'll attend the Wednesday live broadcasts of CW and become a familiar face to members of the CW team. (30%)
- Your ability to work with your JOMC 561 team members in a collegial and professional manner. Keep in mind that succeeding in the broadcast field requires a great deal of teamwork. (10%)
- Classroom participation. (10%)

To receive a passing grade, you can have no more than **one** unexcused absence. Failure to appear for a scheduled shoot or an in-studio report counts as an unexcused absence. **To help me evaluate your contributions to your team, please keep a weekly log of out-of-class time that you spend on your individual activities on the team (e.g., time spent researching stories, pre-interviewing, interviewing, scripting, shooting, editing, etc.)** At the end of the semester, I'll ask you to hand in a one-page summary of your activities in which you itemize hours spent in various aspects of the course. Please total the number of hours spent in out-of-class activities.

The following will be the grading guidelines that I'll use in determining your final course grade:

A: nearly perfect in execution... quality and quantity of work is exceptional.

A-: stands out from crowd (in a good way!)... good attitude... work is impressive in terms of quantity and quality... very few problems all term... works as if your career depends on it.

B+: very good performance... would get an unqualified job recommendation... consistently does more than required... a self-starter.

B: solid effort... should become a solid pro... would have no problem recommending this person.

B-: with a bit more polish, this person should make it in the reporting business... has a pretty good handle on video production and reporting.

C+: good in one phase of job, but consistent problems in another phase or contributed in only one phase.

C: acceptable work... follows instructions... understands basics... good team player... but didn't perform/contribute across the board... potential is there, somewhere, please show it to us.

D: provides substandard work.

F: fails to meet deadlines and/or does not contribute significantly to team projects and/or has more than one unexcused absence from class.

For graduate students, you can translate an A or A- into an H; a B+ through C into a P; and a C- through D into an LP.

## How To Succeed in This Course

- Attend classes consistently.
- Complete readings before the appropriate classroom discussions and ask for explanations for any concepts that you don't understand.
- Participate actively in class.

- Complete all production/shooting/editing/writing responsibilities by your deadline(s).
- Work cooperatively with team members.
- Make sure that all facts in your stories are accurate and properly sourced.
- Ask Dr. Linden questions either during class or during office hours if you're unclear about any aspect of this course.

## Student Job Descriptions

Producer: The producer is the person ultimately responsible for coordinating all research related to the report and lining up all people featured in the report. In consultation with his/her team and Dr. Linden, the producer determines the focus of the report. The producer also needs to scout field locations and provide preliminary and final shoot schedules to team members. As producer, you'll succeed by completing responsibilities in a timely manner. Remember that throughout the entire field shoot, the "buck" stops with you.

Videographer/editor: The videographer/editor is responsible for shooting video used in the taped report. It's your job to make sure that you have the camera reserved in advance of your shoot date. You also need to make sure the camera is operational and that you have necessary tapes, batteries and lighting equipment. If any of your equipment fails, you should have a back-up plan to deal with that contingency. You're also responsible for editing the completed piece in consultation with the producer and reporter/scriptwriter.

Reporter/scriptwriter: The reporter/scriptwriter's first responsibility prior to the shoot is to provide the team with a working script by the required deadline. After the field shoots are completed, primary responsibility on the team shifts from the producer to the reporter/scriptwriter. As scriptwriter, you'll complete several drafts of the script that you'll vet first with members of your team and then with Dr. Linden. In team disputes about the content or style of the script, the scriptwriter has the final say. If a team member believes that there is a factual or content error which can't be reconciled by the scriptwriter, then that team member should contact Dr. Linden. The reporter should be in the newsroom on the day that his/her report airs on Carolina Week.

All team members: You should plan on being available to the CW news team the Wednesday afternoon that your piece airs. Make sure that your story is loaded by the deadline, that all graphic requests are turned in to the graphic artist well before the piece is edited and that the script is transferred to the CW web site immediately after the newscast. During the production process, team members will share in logging video, a laborious process but critical to the shaping of the script. (Logging must be completed by the designated deadlines as late logs will delay the scriptwriter in meeting his/her deadlines.) Also, it's expected that all team members will participate in video editing sessions.

Selection of teams: Dr. Linden will determine who will be on each team, but every effort will be made to have separate graduate and undergraduate teams, if possible. Graduate teams will be

held to a higher standard than undergraduate teams although all work is expected to conform to professional broadcast standards.

## Course Schedule

**On Wednesday, Jan. 7 at 1:25 p.m. all class members should attend the spring organizational meeting of Carolina Week in Carroll Hall 132 ("Carolina Week Newsroom"). At the meeting you'll get an overview of the operation of the newscast and meet the program's producers, anchors, reporters and technical staff, as well as the CW news director, Prof. Charlie Tuggle. The meeting should last about 30 minutes.**

**WEEK 1: JAN. 12 - Introduction to "Medical and Science Video Storytelling"**

- Learn the basic purpose of the course.
- Get acquainted with Carolina Week's story format.
- Review fundamentals of writing video news and feature reports.
- Learn how to construct a medical television news script.

Assignment (for next class on Jan. 26):

- Read Wenger & Potter (Preface and Chapters 1 through 6).
- Read [RTNDA'S Guide to Health Coverage Under HIPAA](#).
- If you have no experience interpreting medical or scientific statistics, browse the Cohn and Cope book on reserve in the Park Library.
- Read "Medical Reporting for the Electronic Media" (chapter by Dr. Linden) in [Health Writer's Handbook](#) by Barbara Gastel, M.D. (in Resources folder of Sakai).
- Each student email 50-word story pitch to Dr. Linden by Sunday, Jan. 18. Include suggested B-roll and contact information about your three sources.
- Dr. Linden to email class members their team assignments by Monday, Jan. 19.
- Return Student Data Form to Dr. Linden if you haven't done so already.

**WEEK 2: JAN. 19 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (No Class)**

Assignment (for next class):

- Finish previous assignment from Week 1.
- Each team pitch one story idea via email to Dr. Linden by Friday, Jan. 23, 12 noon. Also bring hard copy of story pitch to class on Monday, Jan. 26.

**WEEK 3: JAN. 26 - Writing for Video/Preparing the Script/Fundamentals of Setting Up the Video Shoot**

- Review Wenger and Potter book.

- Learn script format.
- Discuss interview techniques.
- Tips on script writing and video field production.

Assignment (for next class):

- Watch [Lynda.com](http://Lynda.com) instructional video entitled "Premiere Pro CS6 Essential Training" with Abba Shapiro. You need to sign in to lynda.com with your onyen to gain free access. The video runs about eight hours and is very helpful if you don't have prior video editing experience. Focus on sections 1 through 11.
- Check out camera and tripod and shoot enough b-roll so you can put together a sequence of wide, medium and tight shots as per class discussion. Check out [this page](#) for examples of various types of camera shots.
- Read tutorial on video techniques from the [Knight Digital Media Center](#).
- [Watch video](#) on camera shooting tips.
- Attend CW newscast at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 28.

**WEEK 4: FEB. 2 - Fundamentals Of Shooting Video**

- Tutorial on using video cameras.
- Introduction to Adobe Premiere video editing application.
- Tips on putting together a package.

Assignment: (for next class):

- Watch [Lynda.com](http://Lynda.com) instructional video entitled "Video Journalism Shooting Techniques" with Jeff Sengstack.
- ALL teams -- shoot practice video. Interview one another and shoot indoor/outdoor video to get acquainted with the camera, tripod and lighting equipment. Each team should shoot two sequences incorporating wide, medium and tight shots for each sequence. Check your video to make sure it's properly lit and that the audio is clear. Bring your sequences to the next class on a flash drive.
- Attend CW newscast at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 4.

**WEEK 5: FEB. 9 - Fundamentals Of Video Editing**

- Continued tutorial on video shooting and editing.

Assignment:

- Team A attend assignment meeting of Carolina Week on Feb. 11 after newscast to pitch story for Feb. 18 newscast.
- All teams - shoot practice video and practice editing with Adobe Premiere.
- Team A - email script to Dr. Linden by 5 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 15. Scriptwriter of next week's

story meets with Dr. Linden in his office Monday, Feb. 16 at 10 a.m. to discuss script.

#### **WEEK 6: FEB. 16**

- In-class critique of script by Team A.
- Tips on voicing your track and delivering your standup from Professor Dave Cupp

#### Assignment:

- Team A's report airs on Feb. 18 Carolina Week.
- Team B attend assignment meeting of Carolina Week this week to pitch story for Feb. 25 newscast.
- Team B - email script to Dr. Linden by 5 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 22
- Scriptwriter of next week's story meets with Dr. Linden in his office Monday, Feb. 23 at 10 a.m. to discuss script.

#### **WEEK 7: FEB. 23**

- In-class critique of Team A package from Feb. 18.
- In-class critique of script by Team B.

#### Assignment:

- Team B's report airs on Feb. 25 Carolina Week.
- Team C attend assignment meeting of Carolina Week this week to pitch story for March 4 newscast.
- Team C - email script to Dr. Linden by 5 p.m. Sunday, March 1.
- Scriptwriter of next week's story meets with Dr. Linden in his office Monday, March 2 at 10 a.m. to discuss script.

#### **WEEK 8: MARCH 2**

- In-class critique of Team B package from Feb. 25.
- In-class critique of script by Team C.
- View "[The Age of Aids](#)," a Frontline special on PBS.

#### Assignment:

- Team C's report airs March 4 on Carolina Week.
- Team A attend assignment meeting of Carolina Week this week to pitch story for March 18 newscast.
- Team A - email script to Dr. Linden by 5 p.m. Sunday, March 15.
- Scriptwriter of next week's story meets with Dr. Linden in his office Monday, March 16 at 10 a.m. to discuss script.

## **(SPRING BREAK: MARCH 7 - 15)**

### **WEEK 9: MARCH 16**

- In-class critique of Team C package from March 4.
- In-class critique of script by Team A.
- View "[The Age of Aids](#)," a Frontline special on PBS (cont).

#### Assignment:

- Team A's report airs on March 18 Carolina Week.
- Team B attend assignment meeting of Carolina Week this week to pitch story for March 25 newscast.
- Team B - email script to Dr. Linden by 5 p.m. Sunday, March 22.
- Scriptwriter of next week's story meets with Dr. Linden in his office Monday, March 23 at 10 a.m. to discuss script.

### **WEEK 10: MARCH 23**

- In-class critique of Team A package from previous week.
- In-class critique of script by Team B.

#### Assignment:

- Team B's report airs on March 25 Carolina Week.
- Team C attend assignment meeting of Carolina Week this week to pitch story for April 1 newscast.
- Team C - email script to Dr. Linden by 5 p.m. Sunday, March 29.
- Scriptwriter of next week's story meets with Dr. Linden in his office Monday, March 30 at 10 a.m. to discuss script.

### **WEEK 11: MARCH 30**

- In-class critique of Team B package from previous week.
- In-class critique of script by Team C.

#### Assignment:

- Team C's report airs on April 1 Carolina Week.
- Team A attend assignment meeting of Carolina Week this week to pitch story for April 8 newscast.
- Team A - email script to Dr. Linden by 5 p.m. Sunday, April 5.
- Scriptwriter of next week's story meets with Dr. Linden in his office Monday, April 6 at 10 a.m. to discuss script.

## **WEEK 12: APRIL 6**

- In-class critique of Team C package from previous week.
- In-class critique of script by Team A.

### Assignment:

- Team A's report airs on April 8 Carolina Week.
- Team B attend assignment meeting of Carolina Week this Wednesday following CW newscast to pitch story for April 15 newscast.
- Team B - email script to Dr. Linden by 5 p.m. Sunday, April 12.
- Scriptwriter of next week's story meets with Dr. Linden in his office Monday, April 13 at 10 a.m. to discuss script.

## **WEEK 13: APRIL 13**

- In-class critique of Team A package from previous week.
- In-class critique of script by Team B.

### Assignment:

- Team B's report airs on April 15 Carolina Week.
- Team C attend assignment meeting of Carolina Week this Wednesday following CW newscast to pitch story for April 22 newscast.
- Team C - email script to Dr. Linden by 5 p.m. Sunday, April 19.
- Scriptwriter of next week's story meet with Dr. Linden in his office April 20 at 10:00 a.m. to discuss script.
- Prepare log of various writing, shooting and editing tasks during the semester's class. Bring to final class on April 22.
- Complete online class evaluation.

## **WEEK 14: APRIL 20**

- In-class critique of Team B package from previous week.
- In-class critique of script by Team C.

### Assignment:

- Team C's report airs on April 22 Carolina Week.

## **AEJMC Values and Competencies**

If you successfully complete this course, you will be familiar with the following values and achieve the following competencies (in **bold face**) as established by the Assn. for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. Specifically, you will know how to:

- **Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press as well as understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;**
- **Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications, especially in the area of radio and television broadcast;**
- **Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications;**
- **Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;**
- **Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;**
- **Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;**
- **Think critically, creatively and independently;**
- **Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;**
- **Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;**
- **Critically evaluate your own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;**
- **Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;**
- **Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which you work.**

## **The Honor Code**

The Honor Code is in effect in this class and all others at the University. I am committed to treating Honor Code violations seriously and urge all students to become familiar with its terms set out at <http://instrument.unc.edu>. If you have questions, it's your responsibility to ask me about the Code's application. All exams, written work and other projects must be submitted with a statement that you have complied with the requirements of the Honor Code in all aspects of the

submitted work.

(In this course, fabricating a source, fabricating purported statements of fact and/or plagiarism will result in a reportable Honor Code violation.)

**--syllabus revised Jan. 4, 2015**