

The Rules

Rule 1. Find a place you trust and then try trusting it for a while.

Rule 2. General duties of a student: pull everything out of your teacher, pull everything out of your fellow students.

Rule 3. General duties of a teacher: pull everything out of your students.

Rule 4. Consider everything an experiment.

Rule 5. Be self-disciplined. This means finding someone wise or smart and choosing to follow them. To be disciplined is to follow in a good way. To be self-disciplined is to follow in a better way.

Rule 6. Nothing is a mistake. There is no win and no fail. There is only make.

Rule 7. **The only rule is work.**

If you work it will lead to something. It's the people who do all of the work all the time who eventually catch on to things.

Rule 8. Don't try to create and analyze at the same time. They're different processes.

Rule 9. Be happy whenever you can manage it. Enjoy yourself. It's lighter than you think.

Rule 10. "We're breaking all of the rules. Even our own rules. And how do we do that? By leaving plenty of room for X quantities." - John Cage.

Helpful hints: Always be around. Come or go to everything always. Go to classes. Read anything you can get your hands on. Look at movies carefully often. Save everything, it might come in handy later.

NARRATIVES

combining vision, sound and voice to connect and communicate

And of course, people are interested only in themselves. If a story is not about the hearer, he will not listen. And I here make a rule – a great and lasting story is about everyone or it will not last. The strange and foreign is not interesting – only the deeply personal and familiar.

JOHN STEINBECK, EAST OF EDEN

Course Description

This course is designed to expand the tools and skills needed to engage in quality storytelling with audio and video in modern media environments. Emphasis is in mastering technical and aesthetic aspects of storytelling. This course is also intended to give you insight into what you may expect when you enter the, ahem, “real world.” Attention to detail is key, as is timeliness, thoroughness, critical thinking, creative thought and active participation.

Because web viewers demand highly engaging material, with a fast start, sharp focus, tight narrative, and natural voices, students will focus on capturing stories with strong visuals, ambient audio, voices of people personally affected by issues. We will focus on the concept of subjects telling their stories in their own voices – without voice-over narration.

Students will also learn how to freelance projects to meet the growing demand for professional-quality video and develop grant proposals and address introductory business issues. We’ll be using HDSLR cameras to shoot HD video. If you do not have your own HDSLR, you can check out from the equipment room.

How can we innovatively use any camera to propel the viewer into the story? Through the skills learned in this course you will expand your visual vocabulary, learn and incorporate the core principles of audio and video storytelling, integrate your vision and style with multimedia tools and combine photography, sound and video to create compelling narratives.

→ Topics will include:

- ◆ Identify current and future trends in web video
- ◆ Report and research topic to strengthen the video capture, edit and presentation
- ◆ The interview process
- ◆ Business and grants
- ◆ Adobe Premiere Pro
- ◆ Sequencing and video editing techniques
- ◆ Produce tightly focused video pieces with compelling narratives arcs
- ◆ Finding the voice of the story and understanding structure
- ◆ And most importantly, finding the narrative!

J582.1 MW 11:15-1:00 CA60
 PROFESSOR: CHAD A STEVENS
 OFFICE: CA 79
 MOBILE: 740-818-8812
 chadstevens@unc.edu
[Overburden Documentary](#)

◆ OFFICE HOURS:
 Tuesday - 2:30-4:30

◆ Please try and meet with me during office hours, but if you cannot I will be happy to schedule an appointment.

◆ Required Readings:
[In the Blink of an Eye](#)
 by Walter Murch

Tutorials (on the server)

◆ This syllabus and course schedule is flexible.
 Be prepared for change.

◆ Your final grade will be determined out of a 1000 point scale:

Final Doc Project =450
 Proposal - 25
 Storyboard - 25
 Verite Scenes - 100
 Rough Cut - 100
 Final - 200
 Mid-Term Project =300
 Case Study = 150
 Exercises = 100

◆ ATTENDANCE IS VITAL TO SUCCESS IN THIS CLASS.

◆ Cell Phones: Please turn off your cell phones for class.
 BE RESPECTFUL.

◆ IMPORTANT DATES:
[MLK DAY](#) - 01/18
 SPRING BREAK - 03/12-20

Projects and Assignments

Like an artist learning to paint, we will use methods tried and tested over millennia: We will imitate and create.

Project 1 – Interpretations

An assignment to test your creativity, reveal your technical acuity and try new things. We will visually interpret a poem.

Project 2 – True Lies

Have you heard of the game Two Truths and a Lie? Each of you will interview a partner in class. They will tell you/us three “facts” about themselves: two being true and one being the best darn yarn they can spin. The objective of the assignment is to learn interview technical issues - focusing on light.

Project 3 – Case Study

Rarely do we take the time to deeply analyze story structure and editing of a film. This is our chance. You will be selecting one of four films and writing an analysis of the film and cutting a trailer of the film.

Midterm Project – Team Project Doc

Working in teams of 4, we will create a 1-3 minute engaging documentary in one week. This project will be interview driven, but try to avoid the profile. Find a gripping character. This project is about honing your hunting skills, connecting with a subject, working as a team, shooting in a deadline situation and editing a concise, thoughtful short story.

Final Project

Cinema vérité. Until now we’ve followed the formula: conduct an interview then shoot the b-roll to “illustrate” that interview. Well, for this assignment you have the ultimate challenge: to create a compelling short documentary (5-10 minutes) that is solely composed of cinema vérité footage. That means the story must unfold through the documentary footage. There is no formal interview to act as the skeleton of the story. This means you will be shooting a lot of footage (throughout the semester), thoroughly organizing your project and diving deeper into the editing process than you ever have before.

Naming Conventions for Assignments

Naming conventions for your archive: YEARMODA_lastname_assignment_001.mov

Naming conventions for Assignment Turn In: lastname_assignmentname.mov

Community

We will have two online community spaces. We will use Slack – used by many in the industry and by start-ups – to share inspiring work and class information. And all of my classes will post assignments to a Vimeo channel, [UNC Narratives](#). The login for UNC Narratives is:

username: chadstevens@unc.edu

password: uncpj

I will send invites - via your UNC email - to join Slack.

Film Festivals

For the first half of the semester, each week will have a Film Festival. This is how it works: Everyone must share an online web doc (less than 10 minutes) on Slack channel, #filmfestivals. Each person must view and then vote for their favorite. You must post your video by Friday at noon and votes must be cast by Sunday at midnight. In class, when time allows, we will discuss story structure etc.

Project Submission and Grade Determination

Your midterm and final projects must be posted on the [Vimeo channel](#) and all assignments must be placed in the server by the beginning of class on due dates. Points will be deducted for every minute the project is late. Be prepared for upload delays. This will be one time to not procrastinate.

Every project must be submitted with Title, Description and Keywords on Vimeo. And each student must write a self-evaluation for that project and turn this in with the video export on the server.

I will do my best to be fair and accurate, but to do this there must be some very specific guidelines and boundaries. Here they are:

- 1) Assignments are due at the minute class begins (on the server and Vimeo) on the due date!
- 2) Any assignment not turned in will receive zero points.
- 3) You must be present in class to receive credit (server-only Turn In does not count).
- 4) Class participation is critical to success in this course.

PhotoNights

PhotoNight is a monthly speaker series that is held usually on the last Tuesday of every month. Presentations are from 7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Attendance at PhotoNight is considered part of the class and is mandatory and will be recorded. Attendance will count according to the guidelines below.

Equipment and Supplies

This is a video storytelling class. So you will need a video camera. You will have access to Canon HD/SLR cameras from the checkout room, but there will be competition for these bodies from other courses. It would be ideal to have your own and to access the equipment check out for additional video and audio gear. Be prepared it will be *frustrating*. Plus, you'll need gear when you graduate, so maybe this is a good time to make that leap. If you plan to, I highly recommend the purchase of a Canon HD/SLR camera (5D Mark III, 5D Mark II, 7D) or if you're ready to make the leap the C100 or C300. You will be able to use this camera far beyond this semester, and it is the industry standard.

Tripod. YES, YOU MUST USE A TRIPOD. Tripods are available from checkout, but they are rough around the edges. Let me know if you may be interested in purchasing your own, and I can direct you.

Required to purchase on your own:

TWO Harddrives: at least 1TB, more if you can afford it. (one is to be a mirror of the original... **Backups are CRITICAL!!!**). 7200 rpm and **USB 3.0** or **Thunderbolt**. Headphones (earbuds are a no-go). These are the best for the cash: [Sony MDR-V6 Monitor Headphones](#).

If you want more knowledge on an actual longterm storage plan, we can talk about this in class or during office hours.

Critiques

Our goal: to discover what makes strong, innovative, communicative storytelling, to uncover the highs and lows, the good and the bad, and to prepare you to go out and make images and record sound and video that improve your storytelling ability. Critiques are essential to growth. Liken critiques to weight lifting. The act of lifting weights actually breaks muscles down. It hurts and it's not all that fun. But when the muscles heal they are stronger.

One reminder about critiques in class. I want involvement from everyone and the critiques need to be constructive. You can be tough without tearing each other apart. Find the balance, and, when in doubt take the higher road. When receiving a critique of your work, you need to maintain a similar balance. There is fine line between defending your position and making excuses. Don't be so connected to your work that you lose sight of how it could be better.

Honor Code

Students will operate within the requirements of the honor code. All work must be your own, must be done specifically for this class, and should be done with the high level of honesty and integrity that this University demands.

Attendance

Here's the deal folks, the field of journalism is going to require more of your mind, body and spirit than you can even fathom at this point. The rewards are great, but the demands are high. It is critical that you attend every class. You **CANNOT** miss a class in order to shoot an assignment. You must be in class to present your work for critique. Turning in an assignment on the server alone does not count as a turn-in. Part of your completion of the assignment is the critique. You will be allowed 2 un-excused absences; after that 2 percentage points will be deducted from your **FINAL GRADE**. Use your 2 wisely. The only exception to this will be a serious medical condition.

ACEJMC

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication's accrediting body outlines a number of values you should be aware of and competencies you should be able to demonstrate by the time you graduate from our program. Learn more here:

<http://www2.ku.edu/~acejmc/PROGRAM/PRINCIPLES.SHTML#vals&comps>

No single course could possibly give you all of these values and competencies; but collectively, our classes are designed to build your abilities in each of these areas. In this class, we will address a number of the values and competencies, with special emphasis on points 5-10 and 12, under "Professional values and competencies" in the link above.

Day 1 - January 11

Syllabus: Deadlines, Assignments, Projects and discussion
ASSIGNMENT: Get textbook and read: *In the Blink of an Eye*
ASSIGNMENT: Interpretations

Day 2 - January 13

Topics: Shooting Techniques and Sequences 4-8-12 / Ethics
HANDOUT: Shooting Video, Premiere Basics and Quick Keys
ASSIGNMENT: Premiere Tutorials (on server)

Day 3 - January 18

MLK Day - No Class

Day 4 - January 20

DUE: Interpretations
DUE: Watch Premiere Tutorials before class (on server)
HANDOUT: Capturing with different systems
ASSIGNMENT: Final Project Idea Pitches

Day 5 - January 25

Topics: The Interview
HANDOUT: The Interview
ASSIGNMENT: True Lies

Day 6 - January 27

DUE: Final Project Idea Pitches
Topics: Interview Lighting and solving technical challenges
ASSIGNMENT: Final Project Proposal

Day 7 - February 01

DUE: True Lies
ASSIGNMENT: Case Study > Summary of Story Structure

Day 8 - February 03

Topics: Story versus Profile and The 3-Act Structure
HANDOUT: ITVS Workshop

Day 9 - February 08

DUE: Case Study > Summary of Story Structure
Topics: Trailers: how and why?
ASSIGNMENT: Case Study > Trailer

Day 10 - February 10

DUE: Final Project Proposal

Day 11 - February 15

DUE: Case Study > Trailer
Topics: More on shooting video and Midterm Project
ASSIGNMENT: Deadline Doc project

Day 12 - February 17

DUE: Verite Scene #1
Topics: Editing > Working with Transcripts

Day 13 - February 22

Topics: More on the Final Project
ASSIGNMENT: The Final Project

Day 14 - February 24

Topics: Shooting video, Sequencing

Day 15 - February 29

DUE: Deadline Doc Project
Topics: Color Correction and Audio Mixing

Day 16 - March 02

DUE: Final Project Proposal - rewrites

Day 17 - March 07

Guest Speaker

Day 18 - March 09

Topics: More on Sequencing / Transitions / Proposal

Day 19 - March 14

No Class > Spring Break

Day 20 - March 16

No Class > Spring Break

Day 21 - March 21

DUE: Final Project Storyboard

Day 22 - March 23

DUE: Verite Scene #2
Topics: Advanced Editing Demo

Day 23 - March 28

Topics: Music and multimedia

Day 24 - March 30

DUE: Verite Scene #3

Day 25 - April 04

TBD

Day 26 - April 06

TBD

Day 27 - April 11

DUE: Rough Cut of Final Project

Day 28 - April 13

TBD

Day 29 - April 18

Work in class

Day 30 - April 20

DUE: Final Project > feedback

Day 31 - April 25

DUE: Final Project > final turn in

Day 32 - April 27

TBD