

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.

MULTIMEDIA 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 so-called “real world.” Attention to detail is key, as is timeliness, thoroughness and active participation in course.

Because web viewers demand highly engaging material, with a fast start, sharp focus, short 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 for a growing number of websites. We'll be using HDSLR cameras (as much as possible and Sony HD tape cameras if necessary) to shoot HD video, staying ahead of the industry trend.

How can we innovatively use any of these cameras 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 multimedia 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 (FCP if requested)
- ♦ 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 11:00-1:50 CA60
 PROFESSOR: CHAD A STEVENS
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 chadstevens@unc.edu
<http://milesfrommaybe.com>

♦ OFFICE HOURS:
 Tuesday -3:30 - 5:00

♦ 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 (details to come)

♦ 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 =550
 Proposal - 50
 Storyboard - 100
 Verite Scenes - 100
 Rough Cut - 100
 Final - 200
 Mid-Term Project =200
 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 - 01/20
 DROP DATE - 01/22
 DROP WITH "W" - 03/12
 SPRING BREAK - 03/08-16

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 – POV

An assignment to gauge your creativity and launch you into the shooting video. This assignment is the Narratives equivalent of the f22 assignment I give in photography courses that some of you may have taken.

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 – Deadline Doc

Your job is to create a 1-3 minute engaging documentary in one week. This project will be interview driven, but try to avoid the profile. Find gripping a character. This project is about honing your hunting skills, connecting with a subject, 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 (3-5 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, 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. The facebook group, [Optic Verve](#), will be our main place 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

Privacy settings for our Facebook group: In order for me to invite you to the group we must first be Facebook friends. I ask that all of you send me a friend invite. I will then add you to the group. You can also block me from seeing your personal Facebook content, which I would recommend. To do this go to Account > Privacy Preferences. Select Custom in the left column and then click on Customize Settings, near the bottom of the window. Click the button next to each element you'd like to block me (or any professor/employer in the future) and select Customize. You can then type in any name in the "Hide this from" section of the window.

Film Festivals

For the first half of the semester, each week will have a Film Festival. This is how it works: by 5 pm on Friday you will post the URL of your submission for the film festival on the facebook group page, [Optic Verve](#), in the comments section of the Doc of the corresponding Film Festival. Your submission = an inspiring short doc video you find on the internet. Everyone must watch the videos and cast their vote for the strongest submission by midnight the following Sunday. Vote by clicking the [Like](#) button for the submission you feel is the strongest that week. Submissions should be no longer than 10 minutes.

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. Once you pay the \$50 equipment check out fee, you will be able to check out Canon 5D Mark IIs (their will be a waitlist. Be sure to sign up!) and traditional HD video cameras. Checking out gear is helpful, but realize it will be *frustrating*. It is not the School's responsibility to provide you with gear, only to give you access to *additional* gear. If you're going to do this for real, you'll need gear when you graduate!

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.

The traditional HD video cameras (Sony) require Sony mini-DV tapes. If there is anyway financially possible, I highly recommend the purchase of a Canon HD/SLR camera (5D Mark III, 5D Mark II, 7D, etc.). You will be able to use this camera far beyond this semester, and it is the industry standard.

Required to purchase on your own:

TWO Harddrives: at least 500 GB, but I recommend a 1 TB. (one is to be a mirror of the original... **Backups are CRITICAL!!!**). 7200 rpm and **Firewire 800**. The [LaCie Rugged All-Terrain](#) is a good one that meets the requirements. 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. If your semester average is 91% and you miss 3 classes, your final average would be 89%. Etcetera. Use your 2 wisely (save them for any unfortunate illnesses, not to watch Season 2 of Madmen). The only exception to this will be a serious medical condition.

How do you succeed in this class?

- ♦ Be on time ... be prepared to learn, participate and contribute
- ♦ Listen and respect what I and your fellow students say
- ♦ Manage your resources - your money and your time
- ♦ Be honest. Admit your errors. No excuses
- ♦ Be positive
- ♦ Bury your pride. Now is the time to learn, and most learning occurs in difficult times
- ♦ Help each other
- ♦ Take risks, push the boundaries

PROPOSED SCHEDULE

← subject to change, I'll keep you updated as we go →

Day 1 - January 08

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

Day 2 - January 13

Topics: Shooting Techniques and Sequences 4-8-12 / Ethics
HANDOUT: Shooting Video, FCP Basics and Quick Keys
ASSIGNMENT: POV

Day 3 - January 15

Topics: More Premiere Pro

Day 4 - January 20

MLK Day - No Class

Day 5 - January 22

DUE: POV
Topics: Capturing Video - HD/SLR
HANDOUT: Capturing with different systems

Day 6 - January 27

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

Day 7 - January 29

DUE: True Lies
Topics: Interview Lighting and solving technical challenges
ASSIGNMENT: Case Study

Day 8 - February 03

Topics: Story versus Profile and The 3-Act Structure
HANDOUT: ITVS Workshop
ASSIGNMENT: Case Study > Summary of Story Structure

Day 9 - February 05

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

Day 10 - February 10

Topics: More on the Trailer

Day 11 - February 12

DUE: Case Study > Trailer
Topics: The Final Project
ASSIGNMENT: The Final Project

Day 12 - February 17

Topics: More on shooting video and the Midterm Project - Storyboarding
ASSIGNMENT: Deadline Doc project

Day 13 - February 19

Topics: Editing > Working with Transcripts

Day 14 - February 24

DUE: Final Project Proposal
Topics: Shooting video, Sequencing

Day 15 - February 26

DUE: Deadline Doc Project
Topics: Editing > Working with Transcripts

Day 16 - March 03

Topics: More on Sequencing / Transitions / Proposal

Day 17 - March 05

TBD

Day 18 - March 10

No Class > Spring Break

Day 19 - March 12

No Class > Spring Break

Day 20 - March 17

DUE: Final Project Video Portrait

Day 21 - March 19

DUE: Storyboard

Day 22 - March 24

Topics: Advanced Editing Demo
DUE: Verite Scene #1

Day 23 - March 26

Topics: Timelapses and alternative methods

Day 24 - March 31

DUE: Verite Scene #2

Day 25 - April 02

Topics: Music and multimedia

Day 26 - April 07

DUE: Rough Cut of Final Project

Day 27 - April 09

TBD

Day 28 - April 14

Updated cut due for feedback

Day 29 - April 16

Work in class

Day 30 - April 21

DUE: Final Project > feedback

Day 31 - April 23

DUE: Final Project > final turn in