

AUDIO JOURNALISM

School of Media and Journalism

MEJO-252.001, Spring 2017

Monday, Wednesday 11:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m., Carroll Hall 132

Professor: Tom Linden, M.D. 328 Carroll Hall 919-962-4078 e-mail: linden at unc dot edu	Office Hours: Wednesday, 3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m., or by appointment or when office door is
TA: Rossie Izlar e-mail: lynn.ross.izlar@gmail.com	Office Hours: TBA

MEJO-252 cannot be taken concurrently with any course in which the lab or group meeting conflicts with MEJO-252 time periods.

National Standards:

The standard expected of every student enrolled in the School's MEJO-252 sections is at the level of national excellence. By the time you complete MEJO-252 you will be a competent broadcast news writer.

The Discipline and The Course:

The study of broadcast and electronic journalism combines the skills of news writing, radio production, voicing and reporting, along with a firm grasp of current events. To succeed in the course, you'll need to achieve competence in all these areas. MEJO-252 is the first course in the [broadcast and electronic journalism \(BEJ\) specialization](#), the core of which consists of MEJO-252, MEJO-421 and MEJO-422, plus one more course from a menu of items on the BEJ worksheet.

Oral Communication Component:

No prerequisite exists for oral communication skills. Unlike many courses in the School of Media and Journalism, this course includes an oral communication component. You cannot receive a passing grade in this course if your oral communication skills are deficient. If you have any doubts about your ability to achieve competency in this area before starting the course, check now with the instructor.

Basic Objectives:

Basic objectives of MEJO-252 include the following:

- *To improve your broadcast and electronic reporting skills;*
- *To integrate your news writing skills with basic reporting practices into the production of professional, broadcast-quality news and feature reports.*

Equipment:

Voice Recorder & Cable/Microphone:

You will need to purchase a digital voice recorder. A list of recommended recorders will be posted in Sakai -> Resources -> Audio recorders for J-252.docx. Please consult the list *before* purchasing your recorder. You also will need to check out from the equipment room a broadcast-quality microphone and cable to connect to your digital recorder. The equipment room is located in Carroll 239 (2nd floor) and is open Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. and on Friday from 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. It's your responsibility to keep the microphone and cable in good working order. There is no rental fee, but you are responsible for loss or damage of equipment. If you believe that you are not getting good quality audio from your recorder/microphone unit, please let Dr. Linden and/or Rossie Izlar know **right away** so we can troubleshoot the problem. You must return the microphone and cable to the equipment room by the last day of class. **Failure to return the equipment on time will result in an incomplete grade and a possible lowering of your class grade when the incomplete is converted.**

Attendance/Punctuality:

As in the broadcast industry, punctuality and meeting deadlines are not just important, they are essential. For our purposes, being late is the same as being absent. If you are late for class, please do **not** come. You can count that as one of your two absences. **Three** unexcused absences will result in your not receiving a passing grade in the course. If you accumulate three unexcused absences, you can be dropped from the course at the instructor's discretion. I do understand that there are real emergencies (like the death of a family member or hospitalization). However, if you won't be in class, please notify me in **advance** of class by telephone or e-mail. I also expect that you'll stay for the entire class period. If you need to leave early, please let me know in advance. (A reminder: This class is designed to give you the fundamental skills that you'll need for a job in broadcasting. One of those skills is the ability to hit a deadline. Consider the start of this class as your first deadline.)

Inclement Weather:

In the event of inclement weather, please check your e-mail and/or the [UNC Web site](#) to see if class has been canceled.

Stories and Assignments:

Stories and assignments are due at the start of class. Late assignments will result in a 10-point drop in grade per day.

Submitted Assignments:

All assignments must be word-processed. Please be sure to **double space** your script which should be written in a sans serif font, either Arial or Geneva. On the back of each assignment, please write (longhand permissible) the name and phone number of each source whom you interview for your story. Failure to list your sources and their phone numbers on the back of your assignment will result in a 20-point deduction.

Your E-mail Address:

Every enrolled student in the School of Media and Journalism is required to have a *UNC* e-mail address. Always check your e-mail within 24 hours before class for any late changes to assignments.

Syllabus:

Please check your syllabus *before* each class. The schedule and/or assignments may change without your being notified by e-mail. All changes will be reflected in the online syllabus accessible via Sakai at:

<https://www.unc.edu/sakai/> and also at:

<http://www.unc.edu/~trl/syllabi/252.html>

In-class Computer and Electronic Device Use:

In class, computers and all electronic devices (including phones) are to remain off at all times unless you are asked by the instructor to turn them on.

Readings:

Students are responsible for being informed at all times about national and international news events. Be prepared for a current events quiz at any time.

You can succeed in the news profession only if you have an insatiable appetite for information and are informed about major current events.

Daily Newspaper Subscription:

The New York Times (Monday through Friday) is required reading. You can either subscribe to the print edition of the *New York Times* or read the newspaper online at www.nytimes.com. However, be advised that questions on quizzes will be taken from news stories on the front page of the print edition and from inside stories listed in the national and international news summaries on the front page of the print edition. To subscribe for print + digital or digital only at a reduced rate, please go to:

<http://www.nytimes.com/subscriptions/edu/lp3KU6Q.html>

You can request print delivery either at your off-campus home or on campus in a lock box at one of several locations, including outside Carroll Hall at the entrance facing Memorial Hall. If you want to get the paper delivered M-F in a campus lock box, enter the zip code of **27599** and be sure to choose the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill as your university. The site will request a credit card number if you want delivery. If you have problems ordering the *NYT*, call 1-888-NYT-COLL (1-888-698-2655). For more detailed instructions about how to arrange for off-campus delivery or to pick up your *NYT* in campus lock boxes, go to Sakai -> Resources -> *NYT* subscription instructions.

Be advised that current events quizzes may start as early as the fourth

class session so it would be wise to subscribe immediately if you want the print edition.

Please keep your daily issue of the *NYT* for one week as questions for pop quizzes will come from recent issues as far back as three days before the class session. There will be no questions from the *NYT* published on the day that a current events quiz is given.

Texts (all available on reserve in the Park Library on the second floor):

Bliss Jr., Edward and James L. Hoyt, *Writing News for Broadcast*, Third Edition, Columbia University Press, New York, ©1994, ISBN #0-231-07973.

Wenger, Debora Halpern and Deborah Potter, [Advancing the Story: Broadcast Journalism in a Multimedia World](#), Third Edition, CQ Press, 2011, ISBN #9781483351001. (Second edition is also acceptable.)

Supplementary Readings:

In addition to assigned readings, supplementary reading materials may be distributed in class.

Radio Newscasts:

Award-winning local and national radio newscasts are heard on [WUNC](#) (91.5 FM). The quality of your work in MEJO-252 is expected to be at the level of National Public Radio. You're also encouraged to listen to [This American Life](#), the radio documentary series that airs Saturday afternoons at 1:00 p.m. and is repeated the following Friday evening at 7:00 p.m. on WUNC-FM.

Also, you should listen to the School's award-winning student radio newscast, [Carolina Connection](#), broadcast Saturday mornings at 8:30 a.m. on WCHL 97.9 FM and streamed at carolinaconnection.org. In 2009, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015), [Carolina Connection](#) was named the nation's best student newscast by the Society of Professional Journalists. Throughout the semester you'll be able to pitch your best work to the Carolina Connection producers. Don't miss this opportunity to get your stories on a nationally-acclaimed student broadcast.

Missed Quizzes & Exams:

If you miss a current events quiz, the quiz portion of your final grade will be the average of all the other quizzes that you took. There are no makeup quizzes. Also, there will be no makeup textbook exam. If you miss the textbook exam, then the average of your current events quizzes will count for 35% (rather than 20%) of your final grade.

Grading Breakdown:

To receive a passing grade in the course, you must receive a passing grade in all of the following graded components:

1. Textbook exam.
2. Writing/reporting assignments.

3. Current events quizzes.
4. Oral communication competency (P/F).

You cannot receive a passing grade in the course unless you complete all assignments.

A test on the two text books and other assigned reading will count for 20% of your final grade. A major feature assignment at the end of the course will count for 25% of your final grade. Current events quizzes from the *New York Times* will count for 15% of your final grade. Reporting assignments will count for 30% of your final grade. Classroom participation will count for 10% of your final grade.

Your classroom participation grade will be based on the quality (not necessarily the quantity) of your discussion and will be based on the following criteria:

- 1) Did you attend class regularly and on time?
- 2) Whether it's clear that you've read and thought about the readings.

During the course of the semester, you'll prepare three audio stories and one final feature audio project. Each audio story's grade will be determined as follows (with 100 points possible for each assignment):

1) A maximum of 40 possible points for **reporting**. Key considerations in grading reporting include the following:

- a) Did you interview a variety of sources, each of whom was knowledgeable about the focus of your story?
- b) Did you consult primary sources that provided context and background for your story?
- c) Did you do original reporting?

2) A maximum of 40 possible points for **writing**. Consideration will be given to the following:

- a) Did you write clearly?
- b) Was your writing tight?
- c) Did you follow style rules enumerated by Bliss & Hoyt, Wenger & Potter, and your instructor?
- d) Does your story flow well?
- e) Did you stick to your six-word message (as discussed in class)?

3) A maximum of 20 possible points for **production quality** will evaluate the following:

- a) Is your story of broadcast quality?

A numerical grade scale will be used on all papers and tests. Here are the letter equivalents:

FINAL GRADES

98 - 100 A+

94 - 97 A

91 - 93	A-
88 - 90	B+
84 - 87	B
81 - 83	B-
78 - 80	C+
74 - 77	C
71 - 73	C-
68 - 70	D+
64 - 67	D
61 - 63	D-
60 and below	F

Late Assignments:

Late assignments (defined as assignments not turned in at the beginning of class on the date due) will be assessed a penalty of 10 points per day until the assignment is turned in. An assignment that's not turned in within a week of its deadline will result in a zero grade for that assignment.

Notifying Sources:

Every source whom you contact must be told at the outset of your conversation that she/he is being interviewed for a story that may be used on the air. You must have the source's permission to be quoted and/or recorded in an interview. It's the law, along with being an Honor Code violation if you do not follow this procedure. Also, as noted above, on the back page of each assignment, please write the name and phone number of each source whom you interview for any assignment. Failure to include source names and phone numbers will result in a 20-point deduction for that particular assignment.

Additional Considerations:

Stories receiving the highest grades display intellectual depth, originality, creativity, news value, and flawless writing and production.

All work must be *original* and solely for this class. No assignment may be submitted for credit that was prepared as part of another class assignment.

Even though you're writing for the ear in audio and broadcast journalism, your words will find their way into text on the web. So, proper spelling is essential to maintain your credibility as a competent journalism. Misspelling of each word in a script will result in a two-point deduction. Misspelling of a proper name or a factual error

will result in a 10-point deduction. Each style error (defined by the texts and by the instructor) will result in a two-point deduction.

Under no circumstances should a journalist fabricate a source, quote or sound bite. Do not ask a source to stage a sound bite or have that source read a bite from prepared text. A trained broadcast journalist will be able to easily spot a canned sound bite. Be aware that staging is a form of fabrication and is an Honor Code Violation. Also, do not use sound effects. Besides fabrication, the other major journalistic ethical violation is plagiarism, the act of passing off another's words or ideas as your own. If you fabricate a quote or source, stage a sound bite or plagiarize another writer or source, you will fail the course and will be referred for an Honor Code violation. For journalists, engaging in plagiarism or fabrication is usually a career-ending move.

Story Assignments:

The instructor in the course serves as news director/executive producer with final determination over the acceptability and quality of any story.

Weekly Schedule:

The following schedule will change during the semester. Please check the online syllabus **before** each class as changes in the syllabus won't be accompanied by e-mail notification.

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Week #1 – Course expectations & ethics of broadcast journalism

Jan. 11: Introduction to the course

Assignment for next class:

- Listen to NPR WUNC 91.5.
- Subscribe to the *New York Times*.
- Read the syllabus.
- Read the Society of Professional Journalists' Code of Ethics: http://www.spj.org/ethics_code.asp.
- Read Ch. 1 (Libel), pp. 3-10 from "The First Amendment Handbook" available at <http://www.rcfp.org/first-amendment-handbook>. Also read Ch. 2 (Invasion of Privacy), pp. 11-18. Click "View the PDF" button to download the entire handbook for free.

Week #2 – Media law and ethics of broadcast journalism

Jan. 16: Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday (no class)

Assignment for next class:

- Read Ch. 3 (Surreptitious Recording), pp. 19-22 from "The First Amendment Handbook" available at <http://www.rcfp.org/first-amendment-handbook>.

- Read Ch. 4 (Confidential Sources and Information), pp. 23-34.
- Read Ch. 5 (Prior Restraints), pp. 35-46.

Jan. 18: Media law and ethics of broadcast journalism

* Review ethics and media law readings.

Assignment for next class:

- Reynolds, Andrews, "[North Carolina is no longer classified as a democracy](#)," The News & Observer, Dec. 22, 2016.

Week #3 – Media law and ethics/Covering race issues

Jan. 23: Media law and ethics of broadcast journalism (cont.)

* Review ethics readings and critique radio case studies from RTNDF, time permitting.

Assignment for next class:

- Staples, Brent, "[When Democracy Died in Wilmington, N.C.](#)" New York Times, Jan. 8, 2006.
- Read Ch. 5 from the final report of the [1898 Wilmington Race Riot Commission](#).

Jan. 25: Tips on buying your voice recorder (guest speaker: Dylan Field, UNC School of MJ A-V Specialist) & covering race issues

* Review assigned articles.

Assignment for next class:

- Read Bliss & Hoyt, pp. 1 - 97.

Week #4 – Writing for Broadcast News (cont.)

Jan. 30: Writing for Broadcast News

* Review Bliss & Hoyt, pp. 1 - 97.

Assignment for next class:

- Read Bliss & Hoyt, pp. 98 - 153.
- Read "[Liberation of Buchenwald](#)" by Harry J. Herder Jr

Feb. 1: Writing for Broadcast News (cont.) - Alasdair Wilkins, discussion leader

* Listen to Edward R. Murrow's CBS News radio report, "[Visit to West Somerset](#)" in "A Reporter Remembers the War Years" (VHS-bio, .M87, 1990,

Vol. 1).

* Edward R. Murrow reports from Buchenwald <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d3SCSouI8WE>>.

* Review Bliss & Hoyt, pp. 98 - 153.

Assignment for next class:

- Read Wenger & Potter text, *Advancing the Story*, Preface, Chapters 1, 2, 3.

Week #5 - Capturing and Editing Sound

Feb. 6: Writing for Broadcast News (cont.)

* Review *Advancing the Story*, Preface, Chapters 1, 2, 3.

Assignment for next class:

- Read Wenger & Potter text, *Advancing the Story*, Chapters 4, 5.
- Read "[Loosening Lips: The Art of the Interview](#)" by Eric Nalder.
- Read "[How to Interview Almost Anyone](#)" by Deborah Potter.
- Read "[What's So Great About Terry Gross](#)," by Ira Glass, This American Life Blog, Oct. 23, 2015.

Feb. 8: How to Get Great Sound (Guest speaker: Dylan Field, UNC School of MJ A-V Specialist)

* Learn how to operate your digital recorder and microphone.

* Review reading on interviewing and *Advancing the Story*, Chapters 4, 5.

Assignment for next class:

- Review Dylan Field's Adobe Audition Cheat Sheet in Resources folder of Sakai.

Week #6 - How to write a radio script

Feb. 13: Tour of Audition & Audacity (Guest speaker: Dylan Field, UNC School of MJ A-V Specialist)

* Continue discussion of interviewing techniques.

Assignment for next class:

- Review Bliss & Hoyt and Wenger & Potter.
- Radio field assignment #1 due Wednesday, Feb. 22. Assignment in Assignments folder in Sakai.

Feb. 15: Voicing tips

Assignment for next class:

- Work on field assignment #1 due Wednesday, Feb. 22.

Week #7 - Trauma in journalism

Feb. 20: How to write a radio script (use of natural sound & sound bites)

*Listen to NPR report about "[On the School Bus with Miss Fannion](#)" by Noah Adams, NPR.

Assignment:

- Finish field assignment #1 due Wednesday, Feb. 22.
- Download and read the [pdf file](#) of "Tragedies & Journalists."
- Read Jad Melki, "[Why Journalists Need to Learn About Trauma](#)," Nieman Reports, Winter 2009 online.

Feb. 22: Trauma in Journalism

* **Radio field assignment #1 due today.**

* Discuss "Tragedies & Journalists"

Assignment for next class:

- Begin work on assignment #2 due Monday, March 6.

Week #8 - Reporting

Feb. 27: Class critique of Assignment #1

Assignment for next class:

- Review Bliss & Hoyt and Wenger & Potter texts.

March 1: Review of Bliss & Hoyt and Wenger & Potter texts.

Assignment for next class:

- Finish radio field assignment #2 due Monday, March 6.
- Study for midterm exam on Wednesday, March 8.

Week #9 - Reporting (cont.)

March 6: Test covering Bliss & Hoyt text, Wenger & Potter text (Chapters 1 through 5), Web readings and current events from the *New York Times*.

* **Radio field assignment #2 due today.**

Assignment for next class:

- Study for midterm exam Wednesday, March 8.

March 8: Midterm exam covering Bliss & Hoyt text, Wenger & Potter text (Chapters 1 through 5), Web readings and current events from the *New York Times*.

Spring break - March 10 - 19

Week #10 – Reporting (cont.)

March 20: Class critique of Assignment #2

Assignment for next class:

- Listen to [Life's a Bike: The Tour de Bronx](#).
- Start work on assignment #4 due Wednesday, April 6.
- Prepare three proposals due Monday, April 4, for final project

March 22: Class critique of Assignment #2 (cont.) and use of nat sound
* Discuss nat sound elements in [Life's a Bike: The Tour de Bronx](#).

Assignment for next class:

- Work on assignment #3 ([Martha Graham Dance Company](#)) due Wednesday, March 29.

Week #11 – Feature stories

March 27: Basics of feature stories

*Listen to NPR report about [Mastodons in Manhattan](#), [A T. Rex Treks To Washington For A Shot At Fame](#).

Assignment for next class:

- Finish assignment #3 due Wednesday, March 29.

March 29: Class critique of assignment #3

* **Radio field assignment #3 due today.**
* Discuss final project proposal process

Assignment for next class:

- Prepare three final project proposals due Monday, April 3.

Week #12 – Feature stories (cont.)

April 3: Basics of feature stories (cont.)

***Three proposals for final project due today.**

*Watch "On The Road with Charles Kuralt" reports: Gandy Dancers (1973), Black Diamond Railcar (1983), Bicycle Man (1983).

*[Listen](#) to "Cameraman Went On The Road With Charles Kuralt," Weekend Edition with interview of Izzy Bleckman by Scott Simon.

Assignment for next class:

- Watch postscript to "[Bicycle Man](#)."

April 5: Basics of feature stories (cont.)

***Assignment #4 due today.**

Assignment for next class:

- Work on final project due Monday, April 17.

Week #13 – Introduction to radio documentary and television reporting

April 10: Radio documentary

*Profile of "environmental logger" video

*Listen to NPR reports: [Witness to an Execution](#) and [My Lobotomy](#).

Assignment for next class:

- Read Wenger & Potter, Chapter 6.
- Final class project due Monday, April 17.

April 12: How to put together a television script

*Providing context - a case study from [NewsLab](#).

Assignment for next class:

- Finish final class project due Monday, April 17.

Week #14 – Final project presentations

April 17: Presentation of final class projects

***Final class project due at beginning of class.**

April 19: Presentation of final class projects (cont.)

Week #15 – Final project presentations (cont.)

April 24: Presentation of final class projects (cont.)

April 26: Presentation of final class projects (cont.) & class wrap-up

Submitting Stories

Remember the following points when preparing stories:

- * The lead is critical.
- * Make sure the anchor intro contains sufficient content and is free of style errors (including passive voice).
- * Writing: Correct spelling, grammar, structure, leads, avoidance of passive voice, etc.
- * Writing flow: Mastering the art of a good sounding story. Does the story flow well? Does it read well? Read your story aloud as you write your copy and before you submit it to the instructor. By hearing your story, you'll catch mistakes and improve the flow.
- * Audio quality: Are the cuts clear and of professional quality?
- * Production: Does the natural sound fit well into the story? Are the natural sound transitions smooth?
- * Delivery: Does your voice quality meet professional standards?
- * News Value: Is the story significant?
- * On-air quality: Is the story ready for airing?

All copy must be double-spaced and printed in 12-point, sans serif font. Names and contact information for sources should be printed in longhand on the back of the story.

Helpful Hints

Take advantage of every scholarship and award opportunity afforded to you in the School (and announced weekly in the School's [online newsletter](#)). You won't succeed without taking the initiative. Winning awards and/or scholarships will enhance your credentials.

Good oral communication skills and good writing skills are the *sine qua non* of the industry. You can rarely get past an interview, no matter what job you are applying for, unless you possess strong oral and written communication skills. Unlike print journalism, where writing alone can sometimes support your credentials, broadcast journalism demand strong oral communication skills.

News is global. While not a requirement for this course, proficiency in a foreign language will enhance your credentials when competing with other graduates for jobs in the industry (in most areas of the country, knowledge of Spanish is very important). Outside course concentrations and proficiency in a foreign language are recommended for any student seriously interested in a long-term career in broadcast journalism.

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 Association 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 in The Instrument of Student Judicial Governance at <http://instrument.unc.edu>. If you have questions, it is 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.

(As stated earlier in this syllabus, fabricating a source, fabricating purported statements of fact, misrepresentation of data or other information, and/or plagiarism will result in a reportable Honor Code violation.

Seeking Help

If you need individual assistance, it's your responsibility to meet with the instructor. If you are serious about wanting to improve your performance in the course, the time to seek help is as soon as you are aware of the problem – whether the problem is difficulty with course material, a disability, or an illness.

Diversity

The University's policy on Prohibiting Harassment and Discrimination is outlined in the 2015-2016 Undergraduate Bulletin <http://www.unc.edu/ugradbulletin/>. UNC is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and does not discriminate in offering access to its educational programs and activities on the basis of age, gender, race, color, national origin, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Special Accommodations

If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in this course, please let the instructor know as soon as possible. If you need information about disabilities visit the Accessibility Services website at <https://accessibility.unc.edu/>

--syllabus revised January 9, 2017

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