

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
- ◆ Grants and proposal writing
- ◆ 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
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[Overburden Documentary](#)

◆ OFFICE HOURS:
Tuesday - 2:00-3:30

◆ 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: Lynda.com

◆ This syllabus and course schedule is flexible.

◆ 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

Grade scale:

A = 93-100% / A- = 90-92%
B+ = 87-89% / B = 83-86%
B- = 80-82% / C+ = 77-79%
C = 73-76% / C- = 70-72%
D+ = 67-69% / D = 60-66%
F = less than 60%

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

◆ IMPORTANT DATES:
[MLK DAY](#) - 01/16
SPRING BREAK - 03/11-19
LDOC - 4/28

Projects and Assignments

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.

Midterm Project – Op-Docs Pitch + Work Sample

The midterm project will be the first step of your final project and includes: an official New York Times Op-Docs pitch plus a work sample. Translation: This project will be the first version, a work sample, that you will submit to Op-Docs with your proposal. Yes, everyone is submitting. We’re playing for real.

Learn more here: [The New York Times Op-Docs](#) and [Pitch an Op-Doc](#)

Final Project – Completed Op-Docs project

Your final project is the completion of the Op-Docs project, whether or not your pitch is accepted by NYT. This project is CHARACTER-DRIVEN and VERITE-DRIVEN. We are moving beyond illustrating interviews. We tell present tense stories. Think scenes, not b-roll. Think moments, not interviews. Be prepared to spend an incredible amount of time to complete this project. For many of you, this is your last course in the program. Make the most of it.

Graduate Student Work

Graduate students will be required to complete additional assignments during the semester, these will include:

- 1) Each graduate student will present one short documentary (maximum length of 10 minutes) and deconstruct the structure, approach and style of the video.
- 2) Graduate students will act as advising editors on other student projects in the course.

Naming Conventions for Assignments

Naming conventions for your archive: YEARMODA_lastname_assignment_001.mov

Naming conventions for Assignment Turn In: lastname_assignmentname.mov

Project Submission and Grade Determination

Your midterm and final projects must be posted on the [Vimeo channel](#), [UNC Narratives](#) 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. I recommend uploading on campus. 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.

The login for UNC Narratives Vimeo channel is:

username: chadstevens@unc.edu

password: G0tarheels!

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

Camera and Lenses: This is a video storytelling class. So you will need a video camera. You will have access to Canon HDSLR 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 HDSLR camera (5D Mark III, 5D Mark II) or if you're interested in other brands, we can talk that through as well. Sony and Nikon also have good cameras. 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 (when you need 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:

DSLR Viewfinder: In times when you can't use a tripod, or when you've perfected handholding, you WILL DEFINITELY NEED a DSLR Optical Viewfinder. I recommend the [Zacuto Z-Finder](#). There are several models depending on your camera body and price range. I personally use the Zacuto Z-Finder Pro 3, which runs about \$170.

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

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 Media and Journalism'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:

- *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;
- *write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- *critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- *apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

Class	Topics
01 JAN 11 W	Review syllabus ASSIGN: Textbook/Interpretations/Tutorials/Op-Docs Ideas
02 JAN 16 M	MLK DAY
03 JAN 18 W	DUE: Op-Docs Ideas Topics: Shooting Sequences 4-8-12 / Ethics
04 JAN 23 M	PPro Bootcamp
05 JAN 25 W	DUE: Interpretations Topics: Interview Lighting ASSIGN: True Lies/Op-Docs V2
06 JAN 30 M	DUE: Op-Docs Ideas V2 Topics: Interview Process
07 FEB 01 W	DUE: True Lies ASSIGN: Case Study
08 FEB 06 M	Topics: Story versus Profile/3-Act Structure
09 FEB 08 W	DUE: Case Study paper Topics: Trailers/Sample Cuts - How and Why
10 FEB 13 M	DUE: Op-Docs Pitch (NYT format)
11 FEB 15 W	DUE for Grad Students: Trailer ASSIGN: Op-Docs Sample
12 FEB 20 M	Topics: More on interview-driven shorts + Op-Docs Sample
13 FEB 22 W	Topics: More on shooting sequences/editing sequences
14 FEB 27 M	DUE: Verite Scene #1
15 MAR 01 W	Topics: Color Correction and Audio Mxing / Work in Class
16 MAR 06 M	DUE: Op-Docs Sample
17 MAR 08 W	TBD
18 MAR 13 M	SPRING BREAK
19 MAR 15 W	SPRING BREAK
20 MAR 20 M	Topics: More on color
21 MAR 22 W	DUE: Final Project Storyboard
22 MAR 27 M	DUE: Verite Scene #2
23 MAR 29 W	Topics: Music
24 APR 03 M	DUE: Verite Scene #3
25 APR 05 W	Critique continued
26 APR 10 M	TBD
27 APR 12 W	DUE: Rough Cut of Final Project
28 APR 17 M	TBD
29 APR 19 W	Work in Class
30 APR 24 M	DUE: Final Project - feedback
31 APR 26 W (LDOC)	DUE: Final Project FINAL