

# AUDIO VIDEO INFORMATION GATHERING

# 221.1

combining vision, sound and voice to connect and communicate

“Great stories happen to those who can tell them.” - Ira Glass

## COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to introduce you to the tools and skills needed to engage in quality storytelling with audio and video in broadcast and multimedia journalism environments. Emphasis is in mastering technical and aesthetic aspects of audio and video information gathering. As this course is also intended to give you insight into what you may expect as entry-level employees in “the real world,” attention to detail is key, as is timeliness, thoroughness and active participation in course activities.

How can we innovatively use the media at our hands to propel the viewer into the story? Through the skills learned in this course you will expand your visual vocabulary, learn the core principles of audio and video storytelling, and combine sound and video to create compelling audio and video stories.

Topics will include:

- Video: Camera and creating content
- Sequencing and video editing techniques
- Audio recording and editing techniques
- Sound essentials
- Essentials of Adobe Premiere Pro
- The Interview Process
- Finding the voice of the story
- And most importantly, defining an engaging story & finding the narrative

## REQUIRED EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES:

- Canon Vixia Kit (includes mic and tripod). This can be checked out with Matt Bachman in the Equipment Room on the second floor of Carroll. Due to limited quantities, students will have to pair up and share kits. Coordinating shooting schedules will be left up to the partners. Be considerate and plan ahead!
- Memory Card for video camera. An SDHC 16GB class 6 (or higher) will work. If you can find a deal, going up to a 32GB card will help you from running out of card space too quickly. [SanDisk](#) is a good reliable brand.
- External Hard Drive 500 GB or larger. Must be Thunderbolt or USB3. The drive must be Mac compatible so you can use the software in the classroom. If you plan on using a drive you already own, know that it will need to be formatted/reformatted for Mac OS. [Western Digital](#) is a great option on the less expensive end; [LaCie](#) drives are pricier but a good investment if it's in your budget.
- Headphones that are circumaural – which basically means the pads sit around the earlobe (earbuds are a no-go). I recommend the [Sony MDR7506](#), but if those are too expensive, try the [Sony MDRZX300](#) for half the price.

Bring your headphones to every class. Be prepared.

### MEJO 221.1

T/Th 8-9:15 am

Professor: Kelly Creedon

Mobile: 617-771-2844

Email: [kelly@kellycreedon.com](mailto:kelly@kellycreedon.com)

<http://www.kellycreedon.com>

• Office Hours:  
Tues/Thurs by appointment:  
I am more than happy to meet with you outside of class to address any concerns and provide additional support. Please see me after class and/or email me to set up an appointment.

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

• You will receive a point grade based on a 1000 - point scale for assignments and projects.

• ATTENDANCE IS VITAL TO SUCCESS IN THIS CLASS.

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

• Important Dates:  
Spring Break: March 11-19

• Equipment room:  
Location: CA 239  
Hours:  
Mon-Thurs 9-12, 1-3:30  
Fri: 12-3

## PROJECTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

### Project 1: Point A to Point B: Building Sequences (100 points)

Every great video story is built from scenes that are built from sequences. Together we will learn how to break down a scene into its smallest parts. Using your knowledge of the camera and of different filming techniques, you will create thoughtful sequences based on prompts given in class.

One of the challenges of visual journalism is having to illustrate complicated ideas – and being too literal can be boring. This assignment is great practice using your new video + editing skills, AND get creative. Challenge yourself to think outside the box.

### Project 2: Partner Interview: Making an Audio Story (200 points)

Every great character experiences challenge and change. Life! You will interview a classmate on one major moment of challenge in their life and how it changed them, then edit it into a piece that is between 1-3 minutes long. The final piece will be audio-only (so you can concentrate on just telling a good story).

A challenge in visual journalism is brevity. How do you tell a story that is not too long, but still makes an impact? This project will help you get to the core of storytelling – getting a good anecdote & reflection, then editing it succinctly. It will also help you to learn good interviewing techniques – getting what you need, but not taking three hours of interviewing to do so.

### Project 3: Artist / Activist Profile Piece (300 Points)

There are many passionate people in this world! Find one who is an artist or an activist, then create a short (2-3 min) documentary-style piece that sums up what they are all about. This project is about asking WHY a person does what they do, and capturing their essence – what this person, thinks, believes, sees, feels, and the storytelling details of their environment. You will need to pay attention to details that give away hints of personality.

You must practice, practice, practice, and learn to get the footage and interview material you need, while finding ways to add depth to an otherwise mundane assignment. Like a writer working on a feature, you will work to discover context clues that give a more complete picture of a person. Surprise the viewer, go beyond the surface, and look for universal themes.

### Class Assignments (300 points) and Participation (100 points)

There will be weekly in-class exercises and/or take-home assignments throughout the semester. At the end of the semester, your grades for each of these assignments will be averaged into an overall course assignments grade. Course assignments are likely to include (but are not limited to):

- Work-in-class days (on projects)
- Adobe Premiere CC exercises
- Scavenger hunt / Shooting visual variety
- Seeing light and composition
- File management
- Soundscapes exercise
- Content-provided audio editing
- Project transcriptions
- Video sequencing
- Editing motion
- Project ideas submission
- Planning a bigger project
- Discussion on mindful journalism and documentary storytelling

## GRADE DETERMINATION

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 (or on the server at the designated time) on the due date!
- 2) Any assignment not turned in will receive zero points.
- 3) Class participation is critical to success in this course. If you don't show up, you don't get the points.

## TURNING IN ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments (both Projects and Class Assignments) are always due before class starts.

If a Project is turned in late – even by a few minutes – it will be dropped a letter grade (-10pts). Every day that it is late after that, it will drop another letter grade.

If a Class Assignment is turned in late, it will be given only half credit at the most. It will not be accepted the next day.

## WORK DAYS

This is flexible depending on our overall class needs, but expect the class before each big project is due to be an in-class work day. You must bring something to work on in class or I will automatically take 5 points off your project grade. You are not allowed to use the work day to shoot.

To turn in a completed, polished, high-quality project, it will require many hours of work time OUTSIDE OF CLASS. Video editing is hard, and it takes time. Be prepared to make time in your schedule before projects are due to create your best work.

## CRITIQUES

Your participation grade will be heavily influenced by your participation in class discussions, critique sessions and your overall respectfulness of others in the classroom. 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 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. Be engaged, be thoughtful, and be constructive in your feedback. 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. Be a humble learner.

## 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 a project assignment on the server does not count as a turn-in. Part of your completion of the project 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 Breaking Bad). The only exception to this will be a serious medical condition.

Be respectful of my time and your classmates' time. Coming in late is distracting to everyone else. If you make a habit of coming in late, I will count you as absent.

Above all, communicate with me. I am here to help you learn and succeed, and if something challenging is going on, talk to me.

## PHOTONIGHTS

PhotoNight is a monthly speaker series hosted by the Visual Communication department 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 recommended with potential extra credit given. More details on this to come.

## UNIQUE WORK AND THE UNIVERSITY HONOR CODE

All work must be created in this class - no double dipping if you are in another video class.

I expect that each student will conduct himself or herself within the guidelines of the University honor system (<http://honor.unc.edu>). All academic work should be done with the high levels of honesty and integrity that this University demands. You are expected to produce your own work in this class. Using a set-up sound bite is a violation of the honor code. If you have any questions about your responsibility or your instructor's responsibility as a faculty member under the Honor Code, please see the course instructor or Senior Associate Dean Charlie Tuggle, or you may speak with a representative of the Student Attorney Office or the Office of the Dean of Students.

## 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
- Be bold

## 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 2011-2012 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 NEEDS:

If you have any disability or other special situation that might make it difficult to meet the requirements described above, please discuss it with me as soon as possible. If you have not done so already, you should also contact the Department of Accessibility Resources & Service (AR&S) at 919-962-8300 or [accessibility@unc.edu](mailto:accessibility@unc.edu).

## ACCREDITATION:

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 about them 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 the last six bullet dots under "Professional values and competencies" in the link above.

PROPOSED SCHEDULE → Subject to change. I'll keep you updated as we go.

Class	Topics
01 20170112 R	Syllabus + Introductions / Assignment: Gear + Supplies / Lynda Tutorials: Ch. 1
02 20170117 T	Intro to Premiere Pro CC / Lynda Tutorials: Ch. 2
03 20170119 R	Premiere Pro CC review + Practice
04 20170124 T	Camera Day: The Vixia / Assignment: Scavenger Hunt / Lynda Tutorials: Ch 3
05 20170126 R	Set up hard drives + media management / Editing
06 20170131 T	Exporting / Composition
07 20170202 R	Light
08 20170207 T	Shooting Sequences / Assignment: Project 1 -- Building Sequences (shot by 2/20 / Due on server 2/28)
09 20170209 R	Editing Sequences
10 20170214 T	Intro to Audio Storytelling
11 20170216 R	Audio recording + Interviewing / Assignment: Project 2 -- Classmate Interview (Due 10/27)
12 20170221 T	TBD
13 20170223 R	TBD
14 20170228 T	DUE: Project 1 (on server and class critique)
15 20170302 R	Project 1 critique, continued
16 20170307 T	DUE: Transcripts for Project 2 / Intro Final Project
17 20170309 R	TBD
18 20170314 T	NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK
19 20170316 R	NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK
20 20170321 T	DUE: Project 2 Classmate Interview on server + class critique / Final project ideas
21 20170323 R	Project 2 critique, continued
22 20170328 T	Final project proposals due / Story vs. Profile
23 20170330 R	TBD
24 20170404 T	Story structure and your final project
25 20170406 R	Premiere review: Working larger projects
26 20170411 T	Music
27 20170413 R	Premiere: Color + Text
28 20170418 T	Exporting + Sharing work on the web
29 20170420 R	Final project rough cut review
30 20170425 T	Work in class on Final Project
31 20170427 R LDOC	TBD
32 20170502 T	FINAL EXAM MEETING -- Tuesday 05/02 at 8 AM

“The human species thinks in metaphors and learns through stories.”

- Mary Catherine Bateson”