

# MEJO 121: INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL STORYTELLING

Summer Session II | Monday – Friday | 9:45 - 11:15 AM | Carroll Hall, Room 132

## Instructor

### Sarah Riazati

Adjunct Professor, UNC-Chapel Hill

Phone: 678-5231-6968 | E-mail: sriazati@live.unc.edu

Office Hours: Usually available to meet after class, Always available by appointment

## Course Overview

Welcome to this introductory media technology skills class at the UNC School of Media and Journalism. Our simple goal is to introduce you to some of the tools and skills needed to engage in multimedia storytelling in online environments. We will demystify the technical aspects of producing a multimedia story package by engaging in basic hands-on video production, graphic design and web design exercises. However, what distinguishes this class from a skills-only course is its focus on **storytelling**. As we build new technical skills, we will emphasize how to craft a compelling narrative story using different media types. These are foundational skill sets needed for various professions in media and journalism.

## Course Goals

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 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 place our emphasis on the last six bullet dots under "Professional values and competencies" in the link above.

In particular, we focus on the last competency listed, regarding the application of tools and technologies.

- You will become familiar with the functions and limits of the equipment and software introduced in class.
- You will develop an understanding of how to evaluate technical quality and story flow.
- You will be able to plan and execute a short, clean, logically-flowing video product.
- You will be able to understand the tools needed to create a graphic story

You will be able to use a variety of strategies and tools to create a standards-based website and multimedia package.

## Required Supplies

*\*There is no required textbook for this class.*

### SDHC memory card

**Specs:** Minimum least 16GB, 32GB recommended. Should be Class 10 and say it can store HD video.

[Click here for a link to the recommended SDHC card from Amazon.](#)

### USB external hard drive / flash drive

**Specs:** Minimum 64GB flash drive, must be USB 3.0 for fastest file transfer speeds. Recommended to invest in a larger external hard drive to backup all files for this course and others.

[Click here for a link to a recommended flash drive \(64GB\).](#)

[Click here for a link to a recommended flash drive \(128GB\).](#)

[Click here for a link to a recommended external hard drive \(2TB\).](#)

## Headphones

Must have a standard mini jack (1/8"). Any wired (non-Bluetooth / wireless) headphones you might use with your phone will work.

## Domain name & hosting space.

You will need to purchase these products for the Web/Graphics part of this class for approximately \$20 for your first year. More details will be provided in class. *If you already have these products, you may reuse them for this class. Just let me know!*

## Small tripod with smartphone mount (optional)

For your video assignments, a camcorder kit with a tripod will be provided. You may also record videos with your smartphone, but you must purchase your own tripod. *More information will be provided in class.*

## Required Software & Digital Access

### Lynda.com

Follow the instructions here to access Lynda.com with your onyen. <http://software.sites.unc.edu/lynda/>

### Adobe Premiere & Adobe Illustrator

Follow the instructions here to create an Adobe ID and install these required software packages for free: <http://software.sites.unc.edu/software/adobe-creative-cloud/>

### YouTube or Vimeo account

You must use or create an account to publish your videos for this course. A YouTube account is included with any Gmail account, and there is no storage limit on YouTube accounts. A Vimeo account is free to create, but free accounts have restrictions on the total GB you can upload each week. Publishing your work on YouTube is easy and free, but Vimeo can have a more professional reputation.

## Computer Labs

You can download the required software to your own laptops for the projects required in this course. You may find that Adobe Premiere runs slowly on your laptop, depending on its hardware. As a student in this course, you have access to the MJ-School's computer labs, which have all necessary required software tools installed. Find details about accessing those computer labs here: <http://jomclabaccess.web.unc.edu/>

## Equipment Room

As a student in this course, you will check out an equipment of video production equipment from the MEJO equipment room. It is your responsibility to keep track of all appointments and equipment room rules, and to treat your borrowed equipment professionally and respectfully. Failure to do so may result in revoked equipment room privileges.

Matt Bachman / Equipment Room Manager

Carroll Hall, Room 239

(919) 962-0718 / mbachman@email.unc.edu

## Camera Kit & Mobile Phones

You will receive a camcorder, lavalier microphone (lav mic) and tripod from the equipment room to keep for the duration of the class. A manual for the camcorder is available on Sakai.

You may choose to use your mobile phone to record footage or b-roll for your video project. Make sure to stabilize your phone with a special-mount for your equipment room tripod, or purchase your own tripod. You must record all phone video in landscape orientation (hold the phone sideways).

## Attendance Policy

As this course is project-based and cumulative in its delivery of technical information, it is important to attend each scheduled course day to receive new information and to practice new skills.

You are allotted **one absence** without need to justify or explain your reasons for the missed class. Any additional absence past the allotted day(s) will result in a half-grade deduction (e.g., if you have two absences, your B drops to a B-), which continues for each additional day of absence.

If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to catch up on the material covered in class by sharing notes with a classmate, reviewing presentations online, and reaching out to the professor for clarification as needed.

## Submission Policy & Late Work

All assignments will be posted on Sakai. Check Sakai for all deadline information. Most assignments are due before the beginning of class (@ 9:15AM). Assignments must be submitted via Sakai, and will not be accepted via email.

Accepting late assignments is unfair to those students who have sacrificed to turn theirs in on time. An automatic 10% grade deduction will be applied to each assignment turned in after the class period it is due, provided the assignment is turned in on the same day it is due. An additional 10% grade deduction will be applied for each subsequent 24 hours that pass after the deadline. Assignments will not be accepted more than 48 hours after the deadline. You may not resubmit an assignment for an improved grade.

## Independent Online Research

To teach you the necessary software tools to create your stories, this course will combine in-class demonstrations with online tutorials and videos. As beginners, it is inevitable that questions and technical problems will arise as you work with these tools. It is also not possible to cover every detail of a tool through in-class demos or assigned videos. The assignments will require you to learn how to learn new things independently, outside of direct instruction. While your instructor is always available to answer your questions and clarify any topic, this course will challenge you to troubleshoot your technical problems and figure out answers to your questions through independent online research. Before asking your question a technical or software-related question like “how do I...” or “... isn’t working”, it is expected that you will research your question online. Invest some time looking at manuals, forums and documentation sites to see if someone else has addressed your question or problem before. If you have conducted independent research online and still can’t find your answer, reach out to your instructor through email, in class, or during office hours. In addition to asking your question, share what you learned during your research, a description of your problem, and any relevant screenshots.

## Grading

Work is graded according to the highest professional standards. Grades in percentages are:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>A</b> = 93-100%,</li><li>● <b>A-</b> = 90-92%,</li><li>● <b>B+</b> = 87-89%,</li><li>● <b>B</b> = 83-86%,</li><li>● <b>B-</b> = 80-82%,</li><li>● <b>C+</b> = 77-79%,</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>C</b> = 73-76%,</li><li>● <b>C-</b> = 70-72%,</li><li>● <b>D+</b> = 67-69%,</li><li>● <b>D</b> = 60-66%,</li><li>● <b>F</b> = 59% or below</li></ul> |
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Below is a guideline for how grades are described within this course:

- **A**, nearly perfect in execution, quality of work is exceptional

- **A-**, work is impressive in quality, very few problems in any area
- **B+**, very good performance, did more than required, might struggle in one area only
- **B**, solid effort, met all requirements, solid application of skill
- **B-**, needs a bit more polish, pretty good handle on things overall
- **C+**, good in one area of work, but consistent problems with another area
- **C**, followed instructions, seems to understand basics but did the minimum to pass
- **C-**, has glimpses of potential in a limited range
- **D+**, did not demonstrate understanding of the basics but tried
- **D or F**, did not demonstrate effort or understanding of basics, incomplete

## Grading Criteria

<b>In-class participation</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Exercises &amp; quizzes</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Video project</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Graphic project</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Final project</b>	<b>20%</b>

**In-class participation** is your contribution within the scope of each class period, including arriving to class on time, asking questions, offering insights during class discussions, sharing feedback with peers, and general engagement with the daily material. The quality of your participation will be assigned a letter grade based on the guidelines above at the end of the course. You may check in with your instructor at any time during the course for individual feedback about the quality of your participation.

**Exercises and quizzes** are assigned to familiarize you with skills needed to complete the projects and are graded on completion and execution quality. Engagement with the exercises and quizzes will prepare you to achieve better work on your projects.

**The video & graphic projects** are assigned for you to demonstrate a mastery of the skills and storytelling techniques learned in class and with the exercises.

The **final project** is an integrated multimedia package delivered via your portfolio website. The multimedia package must contain integrated story elements (introductory text, video, graphic and/or any additional elements you may choose). Your final project site will also include a written essay assignment about emerging technology and storytelling based on a special class presentation.

## Project Resubmission

While the final project will contain two previous projects (video + graphic), these two projects will not be re-evaluated in the final project grade. You may choose to respond to graded feedback on either project, and re-submit the updated version along with the rest of your final project, along with a detailed log of your edits, an updated reflection on the project, and your response to previous feedback. If you meet these requirements, I will re-grade your project, and I will update the score of that project to be an average of your new (hopefully-improved) score with the previously assigned score.

## Honor Code

It is expected that each student in this class will conduct him/herself within the guidelines of the Honor System (<http://honor.unc.edu>). All academic work should be done with the high level of honesty and integrity that this

University demands. If you have any questions about your responsibility or your instructor's responsibility as a faculty member under the Honor Code, please feel able to see the course instructor, speak with the senior associate dean of undergraduate studies in this school, and/or speak with a representative of the Student Attorney Office or the Office of the Dean of Students.

## Seeking Help

If you need individual assistance, it is 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. Please feel able to contact the course instructor as soon as you perceive any warning signs of things that might adversely affect your class performance or final grade.

## Diversity

The University's policy on Prohibiting Harassment and Discrimination is outlined in the 2011-2012 Undergraduate Bulletin at <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.

In this course, you are encouraged to represent diverse populations, diverse viewpoints, and diversity of perspective in your own work. You are also asked to be sensitive to the various backgrounds, perspectives, origins, and situations represented by the students in the course, the students, faculty, and staff at this university, and the residents of this state.

## Special Needs

The University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill facilitates the implementation of reasonable accommodations, including resources and services, for students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, a temporary disability or pregnancy complications resulting in difficulties with accessing learning opportunities.

All accommodations are coordinated through the Accessibility Resources and Service (ARS) Office. In the first instance please visit their website at <http://accessibility.unc.edu>, call the office at 919-962-8300, or email [accessibility@unc.edu](mailto:accessibility@unc.edu). A student is welcome to initiate the registration process at any time. However, the process can take time. ARS is particularly busy in the run-up to Finals and during Finals. Students submitting Self-ID forms at that time are unlikely to have accommodations set until the following semester. Please contact ARS as early in the semester as possible.

## Course Schedule

A link to the course calendar will be published to Sakai and distributed on the first day of class.

**Final Exam - Monday July 30 - 8:00 - 11:00 AM.**