

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.

ADVANCED VIDEO STORYTELLING

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 the basics of proposal writing and pitching projects. 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
- ◆ Representation of communities and ethics in documentary storytelling

J582.1 MW 12:00-1:45 CA60
 PROFESSOR: CHAD A STEVENS
 OFFICE: CA 211
chadstevens@unc.edu
[Overburden Documentary](#)
[Farmsteaders Documentary](#)

◆ OFFICE HOURS:
 M - 10:00-10:30
 W - 9:30-11:00

◆ 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: Lynda.com

◆ This syllabus and course schedule is flexible.

◆ Your final grade will be determined out of a 1000 point scale:

Final Doc Project =500
 Proposal - 50
 Storyboard - 50
 Verite Scenes - 100
 Rough Cut - 100
 Final - 200
 Mid-Term Project =200
 True Lies = 150
 Interpretations = 150

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](#) - 01/21
 SPRING BREAK - 03/09-17
 LDOC - 4/26

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.

Midterm Project – A person. This project can be interview-driven.

And event is not a story. A place is not a story. A person is not a story (that’s a profile).

A story is a person on a journey. Do your best to find a character who is doing something in the present tense (not past tense) that is interesting, that is worth telling others about. Some qualities you should look for: Find someone we can learn from, someone who may inspire us, someone who can reflect on her experience. If you are interested and excited and engaged by this person, then your audience will be too. If you’re bored, they will be bored. Let’s not do boring. A great example of a project like this would be *Slomo*. If you don’t know it, google it.

Final Project – An issue. This project is verite-driven.

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 Students (Optional for undergrads): *Op-Docs Pitch + Work Sample*

For the final project you will submit 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. We’re playing for real.

Learn more here: [The New York Times Op-Docs](#) and [Pitch an Op-Doc](#) Your final project is the first cut of your Op-Docs work sample. Don’t look at the project you turn in to me as a work in progress, look at it as a final cut, ready for publication. And that is what you can submit to Op-Docs.

Additional 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) 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 HD/SLR 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 HD/SLR camera (5D Mark III or Sony cameras, for example) or if you're interested in other brands, we can talk that through as well. Sony and Nikon also have good cameras.

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 LCD loupe. I recommend the [Zacuto](#). 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. This would be smart to buy used. Be sure it fits your camera.

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.

Inclusive and Accepting Space

First of all, everyone is welcome here. Bigotry and sexism are not welcome here. We may have difficult discussions in this class, and as that happens I want everyone to be mindful of the power of words and how they can impact others. Simply, be thoughtful of others and be aware of your own privilege.

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

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 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 Department of Disability Services website at <http://disabilityservices.unc.edu/>

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 09 W	Review syllabus ASSIGN: Textbook/Interpretations/Tutorials/Project Ideas
02 JAN 14 M	Story + PPro Bootcamp
03 JAN 16 W	Topics: Shooting Sequences 4-8-12 / Ethics
04 JAN 21 M	MLK DAY
05 JAN 23 W	DUE: Interpretations Topics: Interview Lighting ASSIGN: True Lies
06 JAN 28 M	DUE: Final Project deas Topics: Interview Process
07 JAN 30 W	DUE: True Lies
08 FEB 04 M	DUE:Final Project Pitch Day
09 FEB 06 W	Topics: Story versus Profile/3-Act Structure
10 FEB 11 M	Topics: Trailers/Sample Cuts - How and Why
11 FEB 13 W	DUE: Final Project Story Proposal / ASSIGN: Midterm Project
12 FEB 18 M	Topics: More on interview-driven shorts + Midterm Project
13 FEB 20 W	Topics: Transcripts to Script / More on shooting sequences/editing sequences
14 FEB 25 M	DUE: Verite Scene #1
15 FEB 27 W	Topics: Color Correction and Audio Mixing / Work in Class
16 MAR 04 M	DUE: Midterm Project
17 MAR 06 W	TBD
18 MAR 11 M	SPRING BREAK
19 MAR 13 W	SPRING BREAK
20 MAR 18 M	Topics: More on color
21 MAR 20 W	DUE: Final Project Storyboard
22 MAR 25 M	DUE: Verite Scene #2
23 MAR 27 W	Topics: Music
24 APR 01 M	DUE: Verite Scene #3
25 APR 03 W	Critique continued
26 APR 08 M	TBD
27 APR 10 W	TBD
28 APR 15 M	DUE: Rough Cut of Final Project
29 APR 17 W	Work in Class
30 APR 22 M	DUE: Final Project - feedback
31 APR 24 W	DUE: Fine Cut
32 Final Exam	DUE: Final Turn In and Review