

# INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL STORYTELLING

UNC-Chapel Hill | Hussman School of Journalism and Media | Spring 2020 | MEJO 121 | Section 12

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Welcome to this introductory media technology skills class at the Hussman School of Journalism and Media. Our simple goals are to introduce you to some of the tools and skills needed to engage in multimedia storytelling in online environments. We aim to demystify the technical aspects of audiovisual information packaging by engaging in basic hands-on video and web exercises.

However, what distinguishes this class from a skills-only course is its focus on storytelling. We ultimately intend to provide familiarity with the tools and an understanding of how to develop a narrative story with all these tools. These are the skill sets needed for various professions in media and journalism.

## **CLASSROOM AND MEETING TIME**

Tuesday - Thursday 2:00-3:15 pm | Carroll Hall, Room 268

## **INSTRUCTOR**

Nazanin Knudsen

email: [nknudsen@email.unc.edu](mailto:nknudsen@email.unc.edu)

Office Hours: Tuesday - Thursday 12 -12:30 pm by appointment and via email.

## **REQUIRED SUPPLIES**

There are no textbooks for this course. However, video recording software, a domain name and server space are among the required purchases. These supplies include:

### **FiLMiCPro app**

We require the purchase of the FiLMiC Pro app. FiLMiC Pro that provides the features of professional video cameras for iPhone and Android. The cost of this app is \$14.99.

More information here: <https://www.filmicpro.com/>

### **Domain name & hosting space**

You will need to purchase these products for the Web portion of this class for approximately \$20-\$30 for your first year. More details will be provided in class. If you already have these products, you may reuse them for this class but must deliver the web assignments similar to other students. Please inform instructor if this is the case.

### **USB external hard drive / flash drive**

You must use an external drive for your video projects. Any external drive that meets the required specs is acceptable.

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 / not wireless) headphones you might use with your phone will work.

**Smartphone**

For your video assignments, you will record with your smartphone. Students who do not own a smartphone will be able to check out an iPod from the [Hussman equipment room](#) to record.

**Wired lavalier microphone with headphone monitoring**

Lavalier or stick microphones will be needed for the best audio quality. You will need to purchase a lavalier microphone with headphone monitoring (pictured below). Here is the link to an option on Amazon:

[Lavalier microphone](#). The cost for this one is \$24.99

NOTE: in some cases, to use these devices with an iPhone, an adapter is required. You may purchase the Lightning to 3.5mm Headphone Adapter from the UNC Bookstore or on [Amazon](#).

**Smartphone mount**

Tripods will be available for checkout from the [Hussman equipment room](#). However, you will need to purchase a mount for your phone. You may find an [example here](#) (pictured below).



**Tripod**

You must use a tripod for your video projects. You may choose to purchase a simple tripod, or use your own, or check out a tripod from the [Hussman equipment room](#). A smartphone mount will be required if you choose to use the tripods from the equipment room(see above).

**REQUIRED DIGITAL ACCESS**

**LinkedIn Learning | Lynda.com**

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

**Adobe Premiere Pro**

Follow the instructions here to create an Adobe ID and install the required software for free:

<http://software.sites.unc.edu/software/adobe-creative-cloud/>

**Vimeo or YouTube 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.

## EQUIPMENT ROOM

As a student in this course, you can check out equipment related to this course from the [Hussman equipment room](#) located in the Park Library. 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.

## COURSE GOALS

The Hussman School of Journalism and Media 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.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

According to the [university's attendance policy](#) "No right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any class meetings, except for these University Approved Absences." Under this policy, students may seek an official excuse for absence(s) from the [University Approved Absence Office](#) (UAAO).

Similar to having personal time off (PTO) at work, you are allotted **TWO unexcused absences**. Any additional missed classes beyond the allotted two sessions will result in a **1/3 letter grade deduction from your final grade per absence**. (e.g., a B becomes a B- if you have three unexcused absences, one in addition to your two allotted absences.)

- You cannot use your allotted absences on the day of a presentation, quizzes, or the final exam.
- If you miss more than half of a class period (arriving late or leaving early) that day will count as half an absence.

To record attendance, I use a sign-in sheet for each class that will be available at the front of the class at the beginning of each session. **It is your responsibility to sign-in each session**. Attendance records will be updated on Sakai weekly.

As this course is project-based and cumulative in its delivery of technical information, it is imperative to attend each scheduled class to receive new information and to practice new skills. Students who choose to miss class are responsible for understanding the topics taught that day and for attending the next session prepared to move forward with the course material. If you seek my help after an absent day, your questions must demonstrate that you have reviewed ALL of the provided material.

## LATE ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments are due at the beginning of each class on Sakai unless stated otherwise. A 5% deduction will be applied for each subsequent 24 hours that passes after the due date/time (i.e., 5 percent is taken off for each day). No assignment is accepted after one week past the due date.

**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 demo 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:

A: 93 – 100%	C+: 77 – 79%
A-: 90 – 92%	C: 73 – 76%
B+: 87 – 89%	C: 70 – 72%
B: 83 – 86%	D+: 65 – 69%
B-: 80 – 82%	D: 60 – 64%
	F: 0-59%

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-** As glimpses of potential in a limited range
- D** Did not demonstrate an understanding of the basics but tried
- F** Did not demonstrate effort or understanding of basics, incomplete

**GRADING RUBRIC**

Engagement (Preparation + Participation)	25 points	5%
Quizzes	50points	10%
Video course work (Projects + exercises)	250points	50%
Web/Design course work Projects + exercises)	100 points	20%
Final project (a multimedia story that includes final web page design and story/package integration)	75 points	15%

**Engagement** consists of you attending classes on time and being prepared to participate in the class discussions and activities productively. Doing the daily homework (including the assigned readings, watching the videos, installing software PRIOR to class) is imperative to maintain the course schedule and the entire class' learning process. Thus, your homework and class preparation are part of your engagement grade. In-class contributions are equally important; I expect you to offer your opinion respectfully, share constructive feedback with your peers, and ask questions that demonstrate your interest about the topic being discussed. (Asking questions that are solely related to the assignment rubric or ones focused on grading shows you care more about the grade and less about the topic.)

You will receive a letter grade for your engagement once during the midterm and once at the end of the course. Your total engagement grade is the culmination of these two assessments. You may also check in with me at any time during the course for individual feedback about the quality of your preparation and participation.

**Quizzes** are multiple choice questions designed to encourage you to review and master fundamentals of video storytelling, design, and web design. You may study for these quizzes using your own notes and the presentation PDF files available in the Resources folder on Sakai.

**The Video & Web Exercises** are lower stakes assignments designed to familiarize you with skills needed to complete the projects and are graded on completion and execution quality. Some exercises have points, and some have a pass/fail grade. In general, the quality of your work should be C+ or above to receive a pass in an exercise. Failing a P/F exercise results in 10% of grade reduction for the following points-based assignment.

**The Video & Web Projects** are higher stakes assignments designed for you to demonstrate a mastery of the skills and storytelling techniques learned in class. To show mastery of the work you must go above and beyond the minimum requirements for these projects.

**The Final Project** is a multimedia story. This project is an integrated package delivered via text, graphics, design and video, and it is housed on its own page in your portfolio website.

**HONOR CODE**

The Honor Code (<https://catalog.unc.edu/policies-procedures/honor-code/>) forms a bond of trust among students, faculty, and administrators. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill operates under a system of self-governance, as students are responsible for governing themselves. As such, our University is transformed into a powerful community of inquiry and learning. The Honor Code embodies the ideals of academic honesty, integrity, and responsible citizenship, and governs the performance of all academic work a student conducts at the University. Acceptance of an offer of admission to Carolina presupposes a commitment to the principles embodied in our century-old tradition of honor and integrity.

## 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.

## DIVERSITY

The University's policy on Prohibiting Harassment and Discrimination is outlined on the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office's webpage (<https://eoc.unc.edu/our-policies/ppdhrm/>). 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 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 Resources & Services site at <https://ars.unc.edu/>.

## ACCREDITATION:

The Hussman School of Journalism and Media'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://hussman.unc.edu/accreditation>. 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.

Please note that the following is a tentative schedule.

Weekly topics and assignment deadlines will be updated in the **Overview** section of the course on **Sakai**.

## TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE: TOPICS & ASSIGNMENTS

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### Week One – Introduction

#### **Th. 01.09.20**

Introduction & Syllabus Review  
Introduction to Digital Storytelling

### Week Two – Shooting Videos & FilMiCPro

#### **Tu. 01.14.20**

Language of Film & Composition  
Workshop: Intro to phone filmmaking, FilMiCPro basics

**Th. 01.16.20**

Workshop: Shooting with FilMiCPro  
Park Library and equipment review & check out procedure

Week Three – Basic Interview Techniques**Tu. 01.21.20**

Workshop: 3-point lighting  
How does lighting impact the perception of the content?  
Recording clear audio

**Th. 01.23.20**

Deadline: A1-1, Shooting Videos for A1

Workshop: Basics of editing in Premiere Pro 1  
Final Video Project Overview & Introduce Radio Edit Exercise ([Screen RE Example](#))

Week Four – Basic Editing Techniques**Tu. 01.28.20**

Quiz 1  
Workshop: Basics of editing in Premiere Pro 2

**Th. 01.30.20**

Deadline: A1, Basic Shooting and Editing

Screen A1 videos and offer feedback on composition and shot sizes

Week Five – Shooting for Editing & Continuity Editing**Tu. 02.04.20**

Deadline: A2, Final Project Proposal

Maintaining Continuity of Time and Space: 180-degree rule, screen direction, avoiding jump cuts

**Th. 02.06.20**

Shooting and Editing Workshop: Origami Team Exercise  
Shooting with editing in mind, Sequences & Coverage

Week Six – Narrative Structure in Nonfiction stories**Tu. 02.11.20**

Present & Discuss: 3-Act and Documentaries

**Th. 02.13.20**

Deadline: A3, Radio Edit

Watch videos & offer feedback  
Discuss: What went well? Technical Challenges? What is your message?

Week Seven – Storytelling Beyond Words**Tu. 02.18.20**

Discuss: Visual Storytelling & Creative B-roll – Ideas for B-roll and sound effects

**Th. 02.20.20**

Deadline: A4, AV Script

Editing better stories how to implement [Walter Murch Rule of 6](#)

Discuss: Pace & Rhythm in Editing

Music resources + Choosing the right music

Week Eight – Color & Storytelling

**Tu. 02.25.20**

Color correction and color grading

Workshop: Essentials of Color Correction in Premiere Pro

\*\*Must have Final Video Premiere project to work & color correct in class\*\*

**Th. 02.27.20**

Deadline: Final Video Project, Rough Cut

Review Rough Cuts and offer feedback.

Editing Lab: Final Video Project

Week Nine – Editing is Re-editing

**Tu. 03.03.20**

Quiz 2

Review Rough Cuts and offer feedback - Continued

Editing Lab: Final Video Project

**Th. 03.05.20**

Editing Lab: Final Video Project

Advanced Editing Techniques – Optional

*Spring Break Week - Tu. 03.10.20 & Th. 03.12.20*

Week Ten– Final Cut

**Tu. 03.17.20**

Editing Lab: Final Video Project

Premiere Pro Q & A

**Th. 03.19.20**

Deadline: Final Video Project - Final Cut

Screen Final Video Projects

Week Eleven – Storytelling in Design

**Tu. 03.24.20**

Discuss: Basics of a Good Design

Web Design Essentials

Discuss Graphics and Infographics + DIY site options

**Th. 03.26.20**

Introduction to HTML

Introduce HTML and CSS Exercise

Week Twelve – How the Web Works**Tu. 03.31.20**

More on HTML and CSS  
CSS class exercise

**Th. 04.02.20**

**Deadline: HTML & CSS Exercise Submit By 11:55 Tonight**

Publishing on Godaddy.com  
Introduction to Wordpress  
Introduce Portfolio project & Final Project

Week Thirteen – Intro to Wordpress**Tu. 04.07.20**

More on Wordpress  
Lab time: work on your portfolio website in Wordpress

**Th. 04.09.20**

More on Wordpress: Plugins and Widgets  
Lab time: work on your portfolio website in Wordpress

Week Fourteen – Digital Portfolio**Tu. 04.14.20**

Quiz 3  
Additional CSS changes in Wordpress

**Th. 04.16.20**

Lab time: work on your portfolio page in Wordpress  
Discuss: Final Digital Story page, Strategies for multimedia story presentation

Week Fifteen – Putting it All Together**Tu. 04.21.20**

**Deadline: Portfolio Project** – portfolio website must be done minus your final project (Digital Story page)  
Lab time: Final Project

**Th. 04.23.20**

Prepare for Final  
Wrap up loose ends, Q & A

**FINAL EXAM DAY****Thursday 04.30.20 - 12:00-3:00 pm**

**Deadline: Final Project (Digital Story page)**  
Submit your final project (Digital Story page) on Sakai by 12:00 pm  
Final Project Presentations