

# INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL STORYTELLING

MEJO 121 | UNC-Chapel Hill | Hussman School of Journalism and Media | Syllabus link: [go.unc.edu/mejo121](https://go.unc.edu/mejo121)

Live class link: [go.unc.edu/121maymester-class](https://go.unc.edu/121maymester-class) (password: MEJO121)

Archived and recorded classes: [go.unc.edu/121maymester-recordings](https://go.unc.edu/121maymester-recordings)

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Welcome to this introductory media technology skills class at the UNC 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, design 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 journalism and media.

For Maymester, let's look at these next 16 days as a time to create a video you are proud of, a design element that enhances a solid story and a basic website that will impress a potential employer. It is a lot to cover, but if we take it step-by-step ([see course calendar](#)), we can do this!

## Live meeting dates/times

Maymester runs from May 13 through May 28. This class will meet in **synchronous LIVE sessions** at this URL ([go.unc.edu/121maymester-class](https://go.unc.edu/121maymester-class), password: **MEJO121**) on at the following dates and times:

- Wednesday, May 13, 9-10:30 EST
- Thursday, May 14, 9-10:30 EST
- Friday, May 15, 9-10:30 EST
- Tuesday, May 19, 9-10:30 EST
- Thursday, May 21, 9-10:30 EST
- Tuesday, May 26, 9-10:30 EST
- Thursday, May 28, 9-10:30 EST
- Friday, May 29, 9-11:30 am EST (final exam time, project presentations)

## Instructor

Associate Professor Laura Ruel

[lrue@unc.edu](mailto:lrue@unc.edu)

919-448-8864

**Office Hours:** Mondays and Wednesdays, 9-10:30 am EST, and by appointment

**Zoom office:** [go.unc.edu/ruel-office-hours](https://go.unc.edu/ruel-office-hours)

## Required supplies

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

### Smartphone

For your video assignments, you will record with your smartphone. Please contact the instructor if you do not own a smartphone. **NOTE:** If you will be using an iPhone 7 or higher, you also need a 3.5 mm headphone jack adapter (usually included with your iPhone purchase) to be able to use the lavalier microphone.



### Headphones

Must have a standard mini jack (1/8"). Any **wired** (non-Bluetooth / not wireless) headphones you might use with your phone will work. [Here is a recommended option](#), although standard earbuds with a mini jack also will work.

### Wired lavalier microphone with headphone monitoring

A lavalier 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 approximately \$25. [Additional microphone option here](#).

### Tripod with smartphone mount

You will need to purchase a tripod and mount for your phone. Cost: About \$20. You may find an [example here](#) (pictured below).



### 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. You should not purchase this before Maymester starts. *If you already have these products, you may reuse them for this class. Please inform the instructor if this is the case.* **Also note that it is your responsibility to cancel this service once the course is complete.**

## Recommended Supplies

**FILMiCPro app (optional for Maymester):** The FILMiC Pro app 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/>

### SB 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 \(2TB\).](#)

## Required Digital Access

### LinkedIn Learning

Follow the instructions here to access LinkedIn Learning with your onyen. <https://software.sites.unc.edu/linkedin/>

### Adobe Premiere

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/>

### 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.

You can download some of 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, so take this into account when planning your projects.

## Course Goals and Accreditation Requirements

The School of Media and Journalism 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

You are required to attend all live class sessions (see course calendar) and view all recorded classes in the order outlined on the course calendar. Our time for Maymester is limited, so no absences will be allowed. As this course is project-based and cumulative in its delivery of technical information, it is important to attend each scheduled live class day to receive new information. If you foresee issues with this requirement, please contact the instructor immediately.

## Late Assignments

Completing assignments past the deadline will immediately put you behind in this fast-paced class. Accepting late assignments also is unfair to the students who have sacrificed to turn their work in on time. An automatic 10 percent deduction will be applied to any assignment turned in after the time it is due, provided the assignment is turned in on the same day it is due. An additional 10 percent deduction will be applied for each subsequent 24 hours that pass after the due date/time (i.e., 10 percent is taken off for each day).

## Independent Online Research

To teach you the necessary software tools to create your stories, this course will require learning 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.

## Project Resubmission

Although the final project will contain your previous video project, this project will not be re-evaluated in the final project grade. However, you may choose to respond to graded feedback on the video 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.

## Grading

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

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <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></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>C+</b> = 77-79%,</li><li>● <b>C</b> = 73-76%,</li><li>● <b>C-</b> = 70-72%,</li><li>● <b>D</b> = 60-69%,</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 professional and 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
- **F:** did not demonstrate effort or understanding of basics, incomplete

## Grading Criteria

<b>In-class participation</b> (see description below)	<b>5%</b>
<b>Video course work</b> (includes 2 exercises and a video project)	<b>45%</b>
<b>Web/Design course work</b> (includes 1 graphic exercise and a portfolio project)	<b>30%</b>
<b>Final project</b> (final web page design and story/package integration)	<b>20%</b>

**In-class participation** is your engagement and contribution within the scope of each live class period, including arriving to class on time, asking questions, offering insights during class discussions, sharing feedback with peers, and general engagement with the material during our live class sessions. 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** 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 & web 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 package delivered via text, design and video and housed on your portfolio website. The package must contain integrated elements (story text, video and any additional elements you may choose).

## 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 at on [UNC EOC webpage](#). 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.

SU	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	SA
10	11	12	13   <b>FDOC</b> * <b>LIVE CLASS TODAY</b> 9-10:30 am EST <b>TOPICS:</b> •Introduction to course •Equipment overview (link to recording) <b>ASSIGN</b> Music Video <b>ASSIGNMENTS</b> •Download <a href="#">Adobe Premiere 2020</a> •Create a free account on <a href="#">Vimeo</a> and/or <a href="#">YouTube</a> . •Log in to <a href="#">LinkedIn Learning</a> & access tutorials. • <b>Complete</b> Assessment survey and Student survey • <b>Practice:</b> shooting w/tripod and lav mic • <b>Work on:</b> Music video	14 * <b>LIVE CLASS TODAY</b> 9-10:30 am EST <b>TOPICS</b> Digital packages Rules of shooting, (link to recording) <b>ASSIGN</b> Truth, Lies & Haiku (A-roll, part 1) <b>ASSIGNMENTS</b> • <b>Watch:</b> <a href="#">Premiere Tips</a> • <b>Read:</b> <a href="#">Free Up Space on iPhone</a> • <b>Read:</b> <a href="#">Filmmaking 101: Camera Shot Types</a> • <b>Watch:</b> <a href="#">How to Shoot with Interior Natural Light</a> • <b>Practice:</b> shooting A-roll • <b>Complete:</b> Music video	15 * <b>LIVE CLASS TODAY</b> 9-10:30 am EST <b>DEADLINE</b> Music video (9am EST) <b>TOPICS</b> •Shooting sequences •Finding the Story (link to recording) <b>ASSIGNMENTS:</b> • <b>Review:</b> classmate music video (form) • <b>Watch:</b> <a href="#">Filmmaking 101: Camera Shot Types</a> <b>Watch:</b> <a href="#">Profile videos</a> • <b>Practice:</b> shooting A-roll <b>Complete:</b> Truth, Lies & Haiku (add B-roll, part 2) <b>Complete:</b> story idea form	16
17	18 <b>DEADLINE</b> •Truth, Lies & Haiku (9am EST) <b>DEADLINE:</b> •Story idea (9am EST) <b>RECORDED LESSON</b> • <a href="#">interview workshop</a> (link to recording) <b>ASSIGN</b> •Radio cut exercise (watch recording) <b>ASSIGNMENTS</b> • <b>Review:</b> Truth, Lies Haiku exercise (feedback form) • <b>Work on:</b> <a href="#">Radio cut</a> (story idea feedback in Sakai by Noon today) <b>Read:</b> audio and editing • <b>Read through:</b> Video Project	19 * <b>LIVE CLASS TODAY</b> 9-10:30 am EST <b>TOPICS:</b> •Crafting a script •Editing the interview •Discuss: Video Project (link to recording) <b>Practice:</b> shooting B-roll <b>Complete:</b> Radio cut exercise • <b>Read:</b> Pacing your video <b>Complete:</b> Radio cut	20 <b>DEADLINE</b> <a href="#">Radio cut</a> (9am EST) <b>RECORDED LESSON</b> •Creative B-roll •Shooting B-roll and compiling your video project (link to recording) <b>ASSIGNMENTS</b> • <b>Review:</b> Radio cut exercise (feedback form) <b>Watch:</b> <a href="#">These tutorials as needed</a> <b>Practice:</b> shooting B-roll <b>Work on:</b> Final video story	21 * <b>LIVE CLASS TODAY</b> 9-10:30 am EST <b>TOPICS</b> •Choosing music •Drop-in time for video reviews (link to recording) <b>Work on:</b> Final video story	22 <b>DEADLINE</b> • <a href="#">Final video story</a> (9am EST) <b>RECORDED LESSON</b> • DIY graphics • <a href="#">How the Web Works</a> (link to recording) <b>ASSIGN</b> •Graphic story (watch recording) •Domain name and Wordpress installation (watch recording) <b>ASSIGNMENTS:</b> • <b>Review:</b> Final video story (feedback form) • <b>Purchase:</b> Domain name and server space <b>Read:</b> Design Basics <b>Complete:</b> Graphic story	23

					<b>Complete:</b> Wordpress installation at your domain	
24	25 <i>Memorial Day Holiday</i>	26 <b>* LIVE CLASS TODAY</b> <b>9-10:30 am EST</b>  <b>DEADLINE</b> Graphic Story (9am EST) Wordpress Installation (9am EST)  <b>TOPICS</b> • Creating a portfolio • <b>Assign:</b> Portfolio and Final Project page (link to recording)  <b>ASSIGNMENTS</b> • <b>Review:</b> Graphic Story (feedback form) • <b>Read:</b> <a href="#">Using Google fonts</a> <b>Work on:</b> Portfolio	27 <b>ASSIGNMENTS</b> • <b>Work on:</b> Portfolio and Final Project page	28   <b>LDOC</b> <b>***OPTIONAL***</b> <b>* LIVE CLASS TODAY</b> <b>10-11:30 am EST</b> <b>**OPTIONAL**</b>  <b>TOPICS</b> Drop in for questions, class lab time  <b>ASSIGNMENTS</b> • <b>Complete::</b> Portfolio and Final Project page • <b>Read:</b> Portfolio (questions to answer when you present)	29 <b>Final project deadline and presentations</b> <b>9-11:30 am EST</b>	30

**Videos of all live and archived classes:**  
[go.unc.edu/121maymester-recordings](https://go.unc.edu/121maymester-recordings)