**TV News Reporting & Producing (MEJO 421)**

[UNC Hussman School of Journalism and Media](http://hussman.unc.edu/)

Monday & Wednesday, 12:30p.m. to 1:45 p.m.

Remote/ CA 058

Spring 2021

**Professor Lindsay King**

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Office Hours: Mon – Fri, by appointment

Welcome to MEJO 421, one of the foundation courses in the broadcast and electronic journalism sequence of the Hussman School of Journalism and Media. The course teaches those interested in pursuing careers in broadcasting/electronic journalism the writing, reporting, packaging and producing skills required for what we broadly call *television news*. In addition, the course will reinforce the foundation of solid writing, reporting and field production taught in MEJO 252 and MEJO 121.

**Both MEJO 121 and MEJO 252 are prerequisites for MEJO 421. If you have not completed these prerequisites, you will not be allowed to take this course.**

**Objectives:** The student is expected to be able (1) to plan and execute video productions from concept to finished product; (2) to shoot clean and steady video with emphasis on composition, lighting and technique; (3) to understand the principles and practices of editing and other post-production skills; (4) to understand elements of producing both for the studio and the field; (5) to improve basic production skills necessary to achieve the above goals; (6) to employ proper grammar and writing skills with strict attention to accuracy, detail and industry standards; (7) to improve story development techniques and overall reporting skills.

**Required Text:**Wenger, Debora and Deborah Potter, [*Advancing the Story: Quality Journalism in a Digital World*,](https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/advancing-the-story/book259333) CQ College Press, Fourth Edition, 2011, ISBN: 978-1544-332451.

**Attendance Policy**: Classroom experiences are a vital part of the educational process, especially in a skills course such as MEJO 421. As in the real world of broadcast journalism, it is expected that the student journalist will report to work (i.e., the classroom) and be on time, just as one would expect in a professional newsroom. Classes will be live and recorded using zoom. Live classes will be posted at the end of class. It is the student’s responsibility to watch the recording and stay current if the student is unable to attend a live session.

**Zoom:** This class will use zoom. Students are required to use their UNC email address for zoom meetings. Live zoom sessions will have a password and only recognize UNC email addresses. Links to the live session will be emailed to students on the Sunday before classes. **Links can also be found in resources folder on Sakai labeled, Zoom Live Links.** Classes will be recorded and loaded to zoom shortly after class ends. The University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill owns the rights to zoom classes. Students are not allowed to use any excerpts or share passwords on the student’s social media pages. If a student has difficulty accessing a live class or watching a recording. It is the student’s responsibility to notify the professor immediately (or within 24 hours of video posting).

**Participation:**You are required to actively participate in class. Effective news organizations establish a climate where there is a healthy collision of ideas – where story assignments, approaches, writing, etc., are discussed openly and honestly. Tension and conflict can and should be present to some degree, but temper that tension and conflict with respect for your fellow students and colleagues. This class will follow a Rules of Engagement, created by students and the professor.

Traditionally, broadcast journalists delivered the news to a mass audience. Online and social media have created additional channels for the delivery of news. No matter what the media platform (television, online or social media), the reporter/producer of any story must be prepared to justify and defend that story at every level. Thin-skinned journalists don’t last long in the profession. If you’re serious about a career in journalism, remember that your job is about the work, not the person. A news story is a news story, not an extension of the individual reporter. So, accept criticism accordingly.

One of the major learning tools of MEJO 421 is the review of stories produced by students. One of the primary forms of participation in this class will be the discussion, even debate, surrounding your work. We will talk as a class and in groups, thinking through issues together and critiquing our own work and the work of others. If you are uncomfortable having your work reviewed in such a public fashion, the broadcast/electronic news business probably is not for you. Again, this process will be civil, constructive and courteous.

Discussions will also take place on Sakai Discussion boards and VoiceThread. It is the student’s responsibility to participate to the discussions. All participation exercises will be mentioned in class and due by the end of the week (Saturday at 11:55 p.m., unless otherwise noted on the syllabus).

**Late Work:**Assignments are on the dates noted in the course schedule. Work submitted after the due date will be accepted, but will be docked one letter grade for each 24-hour period that it is late.

**Quizzes:** There will be two quizzes throughout the semester. The quizzes will be available on Sakai. Quizzes will be password protected and students have 18 hours to complete the quiz. If you miss a quiz, you have one week to make up the quiz and will receive partial credit. The day must be agreed on between the professor and the student. A new password will be issued for the quiz and you will have 18 hours to complete the quiz. The password will be emailed. (i.e. you miss a Wednesday quiz and request to make it up on Friday. You will get an email with the new password and will have from 6 a.m. Friday to 11:55 p.m. to complete the quiz.)

**Grading:** There are a number of components considered in the final grade for MEJO 421. As mentioned earlier, class participation is important. In addition, there will be five projects, this includes the final project.

The first project will be a voice over (VO); the second will be a voice over to sound on tape (VO/SOT) and a voice over to sound-on-tape voice over (vo/sotvo); and the final three projects will be full, reporter packages (PKGs), the last considered as the Final Project.

Each project will be judged on the following criteria:

1. Reporting, enterprise, depth and news value.
2. Diction, enunciation and other elements of delivery (packages only).
3. Steadiness, composition, aesthetic quality of video and use of natural sound.
4. Editing proficiency.
5. Quality of writing.

**Projects**: All assignments will be submitted via Sakai by the assigned time and date. This will be discussed in class.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Project 1 | VO | Script: 25 seconds / VO: 35 seconds | 1 Script submitted1 Video clip submitted |
| Project 2 | VO/SOTVO/SOTVO | Script: (40 seconds/ VO: 20 – 25 seconds, SOT: 10 – 15 seconds)\*\* for the sotvo, you will use the same sot (same time rules apply) you will add continued vo to the sot 20 – 30 seconds) | 2 scripts submitted3 videos submitted* *1 vo*
* *1 sot*
* *1 sotvo*
 |
| Project 3 | Reporter Pkg | Anchor Intro script: 10 – 15 secondsReporter Pkg: 1:30Anchor Tag script: 5 – 10 seconds | 2 scripts submitted (*Anchor intro/ Anchor tag)*1 video submitted |
| Project 4 | Reporter Pkg | Anchor Intro script: 10 – 15 secondsReporter Pkg: 1:30Anchor Tag script: 5 – 10 seconds | 2 scripts submitted (*Anchor intro/ Anchor tag)*1 video submitted |
| Project 5 | Final Pkg | Anchor Intro script: 10 – 15Reporter pkg: 1:45Anchor Tag (web driven): 10 – 15 secondsSocial Media Tease: Twitter, Instagram | 2 scripts submitted (*Anchor intro/ Anchor tag)*1 “Tweet”, typed out on a Word Document2 videos submitted, (PKG, and Web Tease) |

**Course elements and percentage of final grade**:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Class Participation | 5% | Project 4 | 20% |
| Project 1 | 10% | Project 5 (final project) | 25% |
| Project 2 | 15% | Quizzes (5% each) | 10% |
| Project 3 | 15% |  |  |

Your final grade will have a letter grade.  Here are the numerical equivalents:

**Final grades**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 95 - 100 A90 - 94 A- | 87 - 89 B+83 - 87 B80 - 82 B- | 77 - 79 C+73 - 76 C70 - 72 C- | 667 - 69 D+60 - 66 D | 59 and below F |

**You will not receive a passing grade in this course unless all assignments are completed**, even if you received a grade of zero (0) because of a very late submission. In addition, during the course of the semester students will check out University-owned equipment for use in this class. That equipment includes cameras, recorders, tripods, etc. No grade will be issued until this equipment is returned in proper condition and so noted by the school equipment manager.

**Equipment:**

Students needing equipment will be assigned gear for the semester.

Students can use their smartphone to record video for this class. Due to social distancing restrictions with COVID, Zoom will be used for interviews. (More will be discussed in class). If you interview someone in your household, you will need to use a microphone. You will also need to use a tripod for your smartphone for steady shots. Tripods can be checked out in the equipment room. If you are at home and do not have a tripod you can purchase on for about $12. Financial Aid can be used for these purchases. If you have questions, please reach out to your professor.

Check out this website to learn about rules and procedures for checking out equipment, how to manage bookings, how to connect to Connect2 off campus, equipment manuals and equipment video tutorials: <https://guides.lib.unc.edu/mejo-equipment-room/videos>. To book equipment, go to <https://equipmentroom.mj.unc.edu/>.

Students are expected to use equipment responsibly and report any issues that they have immediately to the equipment manager. Students must return equipment on time. Checkout times will be discussed in class and monitored by the equipment manager in the Park Library. Failure to return equipment on time may result in suspension of lending privileges. Failure to use equipment responsibly may result in lending privileges being revoked. Failure to return equipment in proper order will result in an “incomplete” grade for the class. The School may take whatever actions it deems necessary for the return of equipment and payment for any damages or loss.

When you check out or reserve gear, take a moment to look it over to see if anything is wrong and report it immediately. If anything happens to the equipment while it’s checked out in your name, **YOU** will be responsible for the cost of repairs. Be aware that these cameras cost thousands of dollars. Return every piece of equipment in the same condition it was in when you took it out. Be careful. Never walk more than two feet away from a camera even if it’s on tripod.

**\*\*NEVER LEAVE EQUIPMENT UNATTENDED!\*\* BE AS PARANOID AS YOU HAVE TO BE. IT’S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY! DO *NOT* LEAVE EQUIPMENT IN YOUR CAR. IT SHOULD BE IN YOUR CAR ONLY LONG ENOUGH TO GET TO AND FROM WHERE YOU’RE GOING FOR THAT STORY/ASSIGNMENT.**

Students will be required to purchase SD cards class 6 or 10, and they must be 128 MB or larger.

**Syllabus**: **The syllabus will change**. Just as events alter the day’s activities in a newsroom, events will change our plans. If schedules and/or assignments change, the instructor will make every effort to contact students via e-mail and GroupMe. (To be a student in this class you must have a UNC email address.) Every effort will be made to revise the syllabus posted on Sakai. You are encouraged to check the online syllabus frequently and to review the assignment section, as well. In addition, changes to the syllabus and changes in due dates for projects, exams, quizzes, etc., may be announced in class.

**Tentative Schedule**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Focus** | **Discussion / Participation** | **Assignment** |
| Week 1Wed: Jan. 20th | **LIVE CLASS**Review syllabus, discuss course objectives, discuss story form, watch newscast, setup inception |  | Week 1 Check-in due 11:55 p.m., SaturdayRead Chapters 1 & 2, Advancing the Story: Quality Journalism in a Digital World. (For next class) |
| Week 2Mon: Jan. 25th\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Wed: Jan 27th | **LIVE CLASS**Review Assigned Reading, Assign Project 1, Review equipment needs\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**LIVE CLASS**Best Practices for 421Organizing, storage, working remotely | Identifying what is a news story, identifying vo for project 1\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Special Guest: Gary Kirk, UNC Broadcast Engineer | Week 2 Participation Check-in & Discussion Forum due 11:55 p.m., SaturdayRead Ch. 3 for Week 3\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Bring any questions you may have about remote learning/ editing/ projects |
| Week 3Mon: Feb 1st\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Wed: Feb 3rd | **LIVE CLASS**Review Story Ideas for Project 1, Review VO and Scripting, Inception Review, Review Chapter 3 readings, assign in class vo\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Workshop, work on VO assignment, Review recorded lecture on scripting in Inception | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | VO assignment (and script) due in Sakai by 11:55 p.m., Saturday Feb 5thRead Ch. 6 for week 4 |
| Week 4Mon: Feb 8th\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_WED: Feb 10th | **LIVE CLASS**Review vo assignment, discuss framing, sequencing and production aspects of television news.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Recorded class / link posted under week 4 folder |  | Project 1 due 11:55 p.m., Saturday, Feb 12thWeek 4 participation deliverables due 11:55 p.m., SaturdayRead Chapter 8 for Week 4 |
| Week 5Mon: Feb 15th\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Wed: Feb 17th\*\*\* live class | Wellness Day, No Class\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**LIVE CLASS**Discuss / Critique Project 1, Assign Project 2, review Ch. 8 | Wellness Day, No Class\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | Wellness Day, No Class\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Week 5 participation deliverables due 11:55 p.m., Saturday |
| Week 6Mon: Feb 22nd\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_WED: Feb 24th | **LIVE CLASS**Review story pitches for project 2, Review Examples, writing into sound, writing out of sound., assign in class vo/sotvo\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**Recorded Lecture** covering Chapter 8 readings, additional lecture on telling a story, workshop on vo/sotvo |  | Week 6 vo/sotvo exercise due Saturday at 11:55 p.m.Read Chapter 10 for week 7 |
| Week 7Mon: March 1st\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Wed: March 3rd | LIVE CLASSReview Chapter 10 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Workshop on Project 2, Recorded Lecture | LIVE CLASS\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | Project 2 due 11:55 p.m., SaturdayWeek 7 deliverables due 11:55 p.m., Saturday |
| Week 8Mon: March 8th\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Wed: March 10th | **LIVE CLASS**Discuss / Critique project 2, Introduce Project 3, Standup examples, Package examples\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Recorded Lecture |  | Week 8 deliverables due 11:55 p.m., SaturdayRead Chapter 12 & 13 for week 9 |
| Week 9Mon: March 15th\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Wed: March 17th | Live ClassProject 3 Pitches, Developing your story, voice, marking scripts, producing, Review Quiz 1\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Recorded Class, Quiz 1 due by 11:55 p.m.  |  | Week 9 participation deliverables due 11:55 p.m., SaturdayQuiz 1 (in Sakai) due by 11:55 p.m., Wednesday March 17th |
| Week 10Mon:March 22nd\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_WedMarch 24th | LIVE CLASSGuest Speaker\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_WORKSHOP DAYWork on Project 3 | LIVE CLASSGuest Speaker\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Work on Project 3 | LIVE CLASSGuest Speaker\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Week 10 participation deliverables check in due 11:55 p.m., SaturdayProject 3 due 11:55 p.m., Saturday |
| Week 11MonMarch 29thWed: March 31 | **Live Class**Discuss/ Critique Project 3, Assign Project 4, Submit story ideas for project 4**Recorded Lecture**Live shot and stand up review |  | Week 11 participation deliverables due at 11:55 p.m., SaturdayRead chapters 9 & 11 for week 12 |
| Week 12Mon April 5thWedApril 7th | **LIVE CLASS**Project 4 Story Pitches, Review Chapters 9 & 11**Recorded Class** |  | Week 12 participation deliverables due at 11:55 p.m., Saturday |
| Week 13MonApril 12thWedApril 14th | LIVE CLASS: Live shot practice week / Work on Project 4Recorded Lecture, Workshop Day |  | Week 13 participation deliverables due at 11:55 p.m., SaturdayProject 4 due by 11:55 p.m., Saturday |
| Week 14MonApril 19thWedApril 21st | Discuss/ Critique Project 4, Review Project 5, Newscast CritiqueWorkshop Class |  | Week 14 participation deliverables due by 11:55 p.m., Saturday |
| Week 15MonApril 26thWedApril 28th | Project 5 pitches, Review Project 5 |  | Week 15 deliverables due by 11:55 p.m., Saturday |
| Week 16MonMay 3rd | Quiz 2 |  | Quiz 2 due in Sakai by 11:55 p.m. |

**Final project due Noon, Monday, May 10th, Room 058/Remote ATTENDANCE REQUIRED.**

**The Honor Code**

I expect that each student will conduct herself or himself 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. 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. Please note the Honor Code is in effect during all off-campus, class-based activities like the field shoots and the edit sessions at UNC-TV.

**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**

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 based on 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 Accessibility Services website at <https://ars.unc.edu/>

**Professional Values and Competencies**

Among the many skills students will learn in this course, it's expected that they

will be able to fulfill the following values and competencies as enumerated

by the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication:

• 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;

• Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;

• 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 basic numerical and statistical concepts;

• Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

**Revised 07/23/2020**