

INTRODUCTION TO

DIGITAL STORYTELLING

UNC-Chapel Hill | Hussman School of Journalism and Media | Fall 2021 | MEJO 121-6

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.

CLASS INFORMATION

Tues – Thurs 9:30 –10:45 am

Classroom: CA 253

Office Hours: Thurs 2-3:00 pm by appointment

INSTRUCTOR

Naz B. Knudsen (She/Her)

email: nknudsen@email.unc.edu

Virtual Office: [Zoom Link](#)

REQUIRED SUPPLIES

There are no textbooks for this class, but there are required purchases. Be aware that financial aid funds can be used for these items. If you believe you will have a challenge with these purchases, you may be able to borrow some equipment from the Park Library. Please contact Stephanie Willen Brown the director of the Hussman School's Park Library parkadmin@listserv.unc.edu or text (919) 442-8077.

Your required supplies include:

Smartphone



For your video assignments, you will record with your smartphone. Please let the instructor know 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 and pictured at left) to be able to use the lavalier microphones.

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

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 \$30. You may find an [example here](#) (pictured below). If you have access to a regular camera tripod you can only purchase a phone mount. Here is an example for a [Phone Mount](#).



USB External Hard Drive / Flash Drive

Specs: Minimum 64GB flash drive, must be USB 3.0 for fastest file transfer speeds. It is *recommended that you invest in a larger external hard drive to back up all files for this course and others.* If you choose to work directly from your laptop, you will risk running into issues: the editing software may run slower. I strongly recommend working with your video files on an external drive.

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

Web Hosting & Domain Name

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 these items until directed. *NOTE: 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.**

Equipment Guides: For more information and tutorials related to the 121 class equipment, please see these tutorials on the Park Library website: <https://guides.lib.unc.edu/mejo-equipment-room/videos>

REQUIRED DIGITAL ACCESS

Adobe Premiere Pro

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

YouTube or Vimeo Account

You must use an account to publish your videos for this course. (You will submit the video assignments as a link not as a file.) 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.

RECOMMENDED SUPPLIES & ACCESS

FiLMic Pro App: We highly recommend the purchase of the FiLMic the app 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/products/filmic-pro/>

Note: Regardless of shooting videos with or without FiLMic Pro, students are expected to create high-quality videos; 1080p HD, good lighting and colors, and clear audio with adequate levels. Should a student choose not to use the FiLMic Pro app, it is their responsibility to achieve the expected standards using only their phone.

LinkedIn Learning

Use your onyen to access LinkedIn Learning: <https://software.sites.unc.edu/linkedin/>

ACCREDITATION

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 will address a number of the values and competencies, with special emphasis on the "Professional values and competencies" listed below.

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

COURSE GOALS

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.

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 research. Please invest some time researching your question online first. If you still can't find your answer, reach out to your instructor. In addition to asking your question, share what you learned during your research, a description of your problem, and any relevant screenshots.

COURSE LEARNING MATERIAL

All learning material (video presentations(links), presentation slides (PDFs), worksheets, assignment sheets, rubrics, additional readings) will be posted on the Sakai site. **Please check the following Sakai tools frequently:**

Overview/Course Schedule: An overview of each week's topics, tasks, assignments, and homework.

Resources: Each week will have a designated folder under resources. All material will be adding/duplicating links elsewhere on the site. If/when a link or file is broken elsewhere, please check the weekly folder. If you still have trouble accessing the content, email me.

Assignments: Each assignment or task that requires submission has a folder under Assignments section in Sakai. Here, you will find due dates, assignment sheets, and examples. You will submit assignments here and receive feedback in this section. Please read the assignment sheets and watch the provided examples carefully.

Announcements: I will send a weekly announcement with a checklist for the week. You should get these announcements in your school email, but you can always read them on Sakai too. If I need to communicate anything else during the week, I use the announcement tool.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING POLICIES

Receiving Feedback on Assignments:

Class workshops, lab times, and ungraded assignments, offer opportunities to receive feedback, learn hands-on, and improve your work. Beyond this, **I cannot offer detailed feedback** on your assignment before submission, as this defeats the purpose of grading and won't be fair to other students. Think of the class graded assignments as tests.

- I will answer technical or conceptual questions up to 24 hours before the deadline.
- No Pre-grading or Re-grading.

- Grades and feedback will be posted on Sakai in assignment submission folders and in the gradebook.

I highly encourage you to begin this course with an open mind. While the concepts and the technical nature of some of the topics may seem challenging at times, you will gain new relevant skills and enhance your problem-solving strategies. On this note, see the coursework as an opportunity to learn and grow as a media professional.

Late Assignments:

Accepting late assignments without any penalty is unfair to the students who have sacrificed to turn their work in on time.

- **Each student receives one no-penalty late submission pass, up to 5 days late.**
- After that, an automatic 10% deduction will be applied to each assignment turned in after the due date, for each subsequent 24-hour period that passes after the due date/time.
- **No Assignment will be accepted after ONE week past the due date.** (This does not include University-excused absences and medical circumstances.)

GRADING SCALE

Work is graded according to the highest professional standards. Each major assignment has an assignment sheet/rubric. Grades in percentages are:

- A = 93—100
- A- = 90—92.9
- B+ = 87—89.9
- B = 83—86.9
- B- = 80—82.9
- C+ = 77—79.9
- C = 73—76.9
- C- = 70—72.9
- D = 63—69.9
- F = 62 and below

The definition of the final grades:

- A** Nearly perfect in execution, quality of work is exceptional and exceeds expectations.
- A-** Work is impressive in quality and exceeds expectations, 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

Note: I do not award or deduct points. Your work earns a grade by meeting the evaluation criteria. While graded Assignments are out of 100, they have different weights.

GRADE BREAKDOWN

	Engagement & Participation	5%
Video	A1: Video Montage, 10% A2: Radio Edit, 15% A3: Video Project, 25%	50%
Web Design	A4: Basic Coding, 5% A5: Portfolio Project, 20%	25%
	A6: Final Project	20%

Engagement & Participation: grade consists of attending classes **on time** and **prepared** to ask questions and contribute to discussions and activities. This requires careful review of the weekly homework (watching assigned videos, completing assigned readings, installing required software before class time so the class can progress together.) Additionally, completing ungraded coursework and course evaluations affect this grade.

Assignments: All course work build upon each other toward the major projects. While weekly homework and P/F assignment/s are designed to practice your skills, graded assignments require a mastery of the storytelling techniques and skills learned in class. To show excellence, you must go above and beyond the minimum requirements.

Final Project: While this course has no exams, the Final Project serves as such and is due on the scheduled Final Exam Day. The Final Project is an integrated multimedia story package delivered via text, graphics, design, and video.

ATTENDANCE

University Policy:

No right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any class meetings, except for these University Approved Absences:

1. Authorized University activities
2. Disability/religious observance/pregnancy, as required by law and approved by [Accessibility Resources and Service](#) and/or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](#) (EOC)
3. Significant health condition and/or personal/family emergency as approved by the [Office of the Dean of Students](#), [Gender Violence Service Coordinators](#), and/or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](#) (EOC).

Class Policy:

It is important to attend the class meetings to learn the weekly topics by asking questions, engaging in discussions, and participating in class activities. **You are allowed TWO Unexcused absences.** As always, communication is critical. Please communicate with me early about potential absences. Please be aware that you are bound by the [Honor Code](#) when making a request for a university approved absence.

(source: <http://catalog.unc.edu/policies-procedures/attendance-grading-examination/>)



HONOR CODE

Each student will conduct himself or herself 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 C. A. Tuggle, or you may speak with a representative of the Student Attorney Office or the Office of the Dean of Students.

SYLLABUS CHANGES

The professor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus, including project due dates and test dates. These changes will be announced as early as possible.

ARS

The University of North Carolina at 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 barriers to fully accessing University courses, programs and activities.

Accommodations are determined through the Office of Accessibility Resources and Service (ARS) for individuals with documented qualifying disabilities in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. See the ARS Website for contact information: <https://ars.unc.edu> or email ars@unc.edu. (source: <https://ars.unc.edu/faculty-staff/syllabus-statement>)

COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

CAPS is strongly committed to addressing the mental health needs of a diverse student body through timely access to consultation and connection to clinically appropriate services, whether for short or long-term needs. Go to their website: <https://caps.unc.edu/> or visit their facilities on the third floor of the Campus Health Services building for a walk-in evaluation to learn more.

TITLE IX

Any student who is impacted by discrimination, harassment, interpersonal (relationship) violence, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, or stalking is encouraged to seek resources on campus or in the community. Reports can be made online to the EOC at <https://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident/>. Please contact the University's Title IX Coordinator (Elizabeth Hall, interim – titleixcoordinator@unc.edu), Report and Response Coordinators in the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (reportandresponse@unc.edu), Counseling and Psychological Services (confidential), or the Gender Violence Services Coordinators (gvsc@unc.edu; confidential) to discuss your specific needs. Additional resources are available at safe.unc.edu.

POLICY ON NON-DISCRIMINATION

The University is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and to ensuring that educational and employment decisions are based on individuals' abilities and qualifications. Consistent with this principle and applicable laws, the University's [Policy Statement on Non-Discrimination](#) offers access to its educational programs and activities as well as employment terms and conditions without respect to race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, genetic information, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender

expression. Such a policy ensures that only relevant factors are considered and that equitable and consistent standards of conduct and performance are applied.

If you are experiencing harassment or discrimination, you can seek assistance and file a report through the Report and Response Coordinators (see contact info at safe.unc.edu) or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](#), or online to the EOC at <https://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident/>.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

I strive to make this classroom an inclusive space for all students. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to improve; I appreciate any suggestions. More broadly, our school has adopted diversity and inclusion [mission and vision statements](#) with accompanying goals. These complement the University policy on [prohibiting harassment and discrimination](#). In summary, 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. The Dean of Students (Suite 1106, Student Academic Services Building, CB# 5100, 450 Ridge Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-5100 or [919] 966-4042) has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the University's nondiscrimination policies.

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

MASK USE

All enrolled students are required to wear a mask covering your mouth and nose at all times in our classroom. This requirement is to protect our educational community -- your classmates and me -- as we learn together. If you choose not to wear a mask, or wear it improperly, I will ask you to leave immediately, and I will submit a report to the [Office of Student Conduct](#). At that point you will be disenrolled from this course for the protection of our educational community. Students who have an authorized accommodation from Accessibility Resources and Service have an exception. For additional information, see <https://carolinatogether.unc.edu/university-guidelines-for-facemasks/>.

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COURSE SCHEDULE

A detailed course schedule will be available on the **Overview** section of Sakai. Please check the **Sakai Course Schedule multiple times a week.**

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE & WEEKLY TOPICS

1	Th. 08.19.21	Introduction & Syllabus Review
2	Tu. 08.24.21	Intro to Film Language & Composition Basics of Lighting for Video
	Th. 08.26.21	Premiere Pro Essentials 1
3	Tu. 08.31.21	Documentary Interviews: Setup (Composition, 3-point lighting, Audio) FilMic Pro Slides & Tutorials
	Th. 09.02.21	<u>Deadline: E1: Video/Final Project Idea, 11:55 pm</u> A-roll and B-roll FilMic Pro Slides & Tutorials
4	Tu. 09.07.21	<u>Deadline: A1: Video Montage, 11:55 pm</u> Shooting with Editing in Mind, Coverage & Sequencing
	Th. 09.09.21	Premiere Pro Essentials 2 Continuity Editing Exercise
5	Tu. 09.14.21	Nonfiction Narrative and the 3-Act Structure
	Th. 09.16.21	Story Lab: The 3-Act Structure and Documentaries
6	Tu. 09.21.21	<u>Deadline: A2: Radio Edit, 11:55 pm</u> Storytelling Beyond Words: - B-roll and Audio Storytelling - Color in Storytelling
	Th. 09.23.21	<u>Deadline: E2: B-roll Shot List, 11:55</u> Creating a Rough Cut + Creative B-roll Discussion Basics of Color Correction in Premiere Pro
7	Tu. 09.28.21	Enhance your Premiere Skills: Digital Zoom/Pan, Visual Effects & Stabilization Adjusting and Leveling the Audio

	Th. 09.30.21	Pace & Rhythm Final Thoughts on Editing
8	Tu. 10.05.21	<u>Deadline: Video Project, Rough Draft due by the start of class</u> Workshop: Small Groups, Receive Peer Feedback on your Rough Drafts
	Th. 10.07.21	Finishing stage: color correct, polish audio transitions, level audio
9	Tu. 10.12.21	Video Project workday Open Lab - Optional
	Th. 10.14.21	Video Project last-minute Q & A
10	Tu. 10.19.21	<u>Deadline: A3: Video Project, 11:55 pm</u> Introduction to the Web portion of the course Graphics and Infographics + DIY site: canva.com How Web Design Essentials + Does the Web Work?
	Th. 10.21.21	No Class - Fall Break
11	Tu. 10.26.21	Basic Coding: HTML
	Th. 10.28.21	Basic Coding: CSS
12	Tu. 11.02.21	<u>Deadline: A4: Basic Coding Assignment, 11:55 pm</u> Introduction to WordPress Installing & Getting Started in WordPress
	Th. 11.04.21	WordPress 1: The basics (Plugins, Pages, Blocks)
13	Tu. 11.09.21	WordPress 2: "Customize" menu and the Kale Theme available options.
	Th. 11.11.21	WordPress 3: Using Additional CSS in WordPress Review: Web design essentials
14	Tu. 11.16.21	<u>Deadline: E3: Graphics Rough Draft, Due by the start of the class</u> WordPress: Wrap up
	Th. 11.18.21	Portfolio project and Final Project Q & A session

15	Tu. 11.23.21	<u>Deadline: A5: Portfolio Project, 11:55 pm</u> Portfolio Project workday Open Lab - Optional
	Th. 11.25.21	No Class - Thanksgiving Nov 24-28
16	Tu. 11.30.21 LDC	Final Project Last-minute questions
Final Exam Day	Tuesday, Dec. 07 8:00 am	<u>Deadline: A6: Final Project, 8:00 am</u> Submit your final project (Digital Story page) on Sakai Present your Digital Story page to the class