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

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

Monday & Wednesday, 3:30p.m. to 4:45 p.m.

Remote/ CA 2

Fall 2021

**Professor Sheyenne Rodriguez**

**sheyenne@email.unc.edu**

Office Hours: Mon – Fri, by appointment

Welcome to MEJO 421, one of the foundation courses in the broadcast and electronic journalism concentration 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:***Broadcast News Handbook: Writing, Reporting, and Producing in a Converging Media World*, 5th Edition, published by McGraw-Hill. \*No need to purchase. Instructor will provide the book through e-mail.

**Attendance Policy**:

1. **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](https://ars.unc.edu/) and/or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](https://eoc.unc.edu/what-we-do/accommodations/) (EOC)
3. Significant health condition and/or personal/family emergency as approved by the [Office of the Dean of Students](https://odos.unc.edu/), [Gender Violence Service Coordinators,](https://womenscenter.unc.edu/resources/gender-violence-services/) and/or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](https://eoc.unc.edu/what-we-do/accommodations/) (EOC).
4. **Class 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 primarily be remote, with several in person classes. 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. Please communicate with me early about potential absences. Please be aware that you are bound by the [Honor Code](http://catalog.unc.edu/policies-procedures/honor-code/) when making a request for a University approved absence.

*(source:*[*http://catalog.unc.edu/policies-procedures/attendance-grading-examination/*](http://catalog.unc.edu/policies-procedures/attendance-grading-examination/)*)*

**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. 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.

**Late Work:**You are responsible for turning in all projects on the dates they’re due. However, I will accept regular projects after their due dates, assessing 10 late points for the first day, and two points per day after that. There’s no latitude on the final project.

**Grading:** During the term, there will be weekly quizzes, two (2) exams and six (6) projects.

The first two projects will be voice-overs (VOs), projects three and four will be voice over to sound on tape (VO/SOTs), & the final two projects will be full reporter packages (PKGS). Each package must include at least two (2) sources and a standup. 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 one and two will be :30 pieces, three and four should be :45 to :50 in length, and projects five and six should run between 1:30 and 1:45 in length (video time). Either 3 or 4 must be a VO/SOT/VO.

**Projects**: All assignments will be submitted via email and various delivery methods, i.e. mp4, dropbox, etc.

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

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Weekly Quizzes  | 10% | Project 4 | 10% |
| Project 1 | 5% | Project 5  | 15% |
| Project 2 | 5% | Project 6 (final project) | 25% |
| Project 3 | 10% | Midterm and Final Exams | 20% |

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

**Final grades**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 95 - 100 A90 - 94 A- | 87 - 9 B+83 - 87 B80 - 82 B- | 77 - 79 C+73 - 76 C70 - 72 C- | 667 - 69 D+60 - 66 D | 59 and below F |

**Equipment:**

You will be responsible for checking out equipment from the Park Library. Please see the staff there to make arrangements.

Students can use their smartphone to record video for this class. You will need to use a tripod for your smartphone for steady shots. Tripods can be checked out in the equipment room.

**\*\*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 are required to purchase an SD card, 128 MB or larger and are also encouraged to purchase a separate hard drive, if you don’t have one already. Be aware that the school computers are wiped every night. Therefore, make sure your projects are backed up elsewhere.

**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. Changes to the syllabus and changes in due dates for projects, exams, quizzes, etc., may be announced in class.

**Tentative Schedule**

August 18 Review syllabus. Field equipment overview. Discuss course objectives. For next class, read Chapter 1 and Appendix A in the text, write one-page essay, write personal profile.

August 23 Discuss broadcast story forms. Show examples. Review assigned readings. For next meeting, read Chapters 2-4 in text.

August 25 Assign teams, Review assigned readings. Discuss production aspects of TV news. Top 10 tips for effective visual storytelling. Write practice VOs.

August 30 Grammar quiz 1. News quiz 1. Review practice VOs. Assign blue VO1. For next meeting, read Chapters 5 and 7 in text.

September 1 Review quizzes. Review assigned readings. Blue VO1 due. For next meeting, read Chapters 8 & 9 in the text.

September 6 NO CLASS. LABOR DAY.

September 8 Grammar quiz 2. News quiz 2. Review assigned readings. Review and revise Blue VO1. Assign white VO1. Start on crossword.

September 13 Review quizzes. White VO1 due. View local newscast. Catch up on review of reading assignments. Show package examples.

September 15 Grammar quiz 3. News quiz 3. Review and revise white VO1. Assign blue VO2.

September 20 Review quizzes. Blue VO2 due. Lighting demos.

September 22 Grammar quiz 4. News quiz 4. Review and revise blue VO2. Assign white VO2.

September 27 Review quizzes. White VO2 due. Reading to prompter.

September 29 Grammar quiz 5. News quiz 5. Examples of great packages. Watch prompter exercise. Review and revise White VO2. Assign blue VO/SOT1.

October 4 Review quizzes. Blue VO/SOT 1 due.

October 6 Grammar quiz 6. News quiz 6. Review and revise blue VO/SOT1. Assign white VO/SOT1.

October 11 Review quizzes. White VO/SOT1 due. Review for midterm.

October 13 Mid-term exam. Revise white VO/SOT1. Assign blue VO/SOT2.

October 18 Review midterm exam. Blue VO/SOT 2 due.

October 20 News quiz 7. Review quizzes. Review and revise blue VO/SOT2. Assign white VO/SOT2. For next meeting, read second half of Chapter 11 and Chapter 12.

October 25 Review assigned readings. More about producing.

October 27 Grammar quiz 8. Word precision quiz 8. News quiz 8. White VO/SOT2 due. Review and revise white VO/SOT2. Assign blue PKG1. Live reporting exercise.

November 1 Review assigned readings. Blue PKG1 due. Review live reporting. Ethics exercises.

November 3 Grammar quiz 9. News quiz 9. Review and revise blue PKG1. Assign white PKG1.

November 8 Review assigned reading. Reading to prompter. White PKG1 due.

November 10 Grammar quiz 10. News quiz 10. Review quizzes. Review and revise white PKG1. Assign blue PKG2. Review prompter exercise. More about ethics.

November 15 View non-traditional packages. Blue PKG2 due.

November 17 Grammar Quiz 11. News quiz 11. Review and revise blue PKG2. Assign white PKG2. Live reporting part 2.

November 22 Grammar quiz 12. News quiz 12. Review live reporting, part 2. White package 2 due.

November 24 NO CLASS. THANKSGIVING BREAK.

November 29 Review quizzes. Review and revise white PKG2.

December 1 Review for final, course evaluations.

December 6 Final exam scheduled at 8 a.m.

**Honor Code**

I expect that each student will conduct himself or herself within the guidelines of the University honor system ([http://honor.unc.edu](https://outlook.unc.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=_PwXhu5wkEKfdEIVTpil9KJAr6RORM8IBwmgW7JyZPUuO4or7Dri_9D4gXEkBO0Z0IIreRKEjIQ.&URL=http%3a%2f%2fhonor.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](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](https://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](https://unc.policystat.com/policy/4467906/latest/) 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](https://safe.unc.edu/)) or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](http://eoc.unc.edu/), 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](http://hussman.unc.edu/diversity-and-inclusion) with accompanying goals. These complement the University policy on [prohibiting harrassment and discrimination](https://eoc.unc.edu/our-policies/ppdhrm/).  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.

**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](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UNCChapelHill&layout_id=23).  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/>

**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**