

INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL STORYTELLING

UNC-Chapel Hill | Hussman School of Journalism and Media | MEJO 121.009 |

A day-by-day schedule with general topics, homework, and assignment due dates can be found at: <https://tinyurl.com/MEJO121WITHMADISON>

PLEASE BOOKMARK, AS YOU WILL NEED TO RELY HEAVILY ON THIS THROUGHOUT THE SEMESTER!

About

Welcome to this introductory media technology skills class at the UNC Hussman School of Journalism and Media. My simple goals are to introduce you to some of the tools and skills needed to engage in multimedia storytelling in online environments. I aim to demystify the technical aspects of audio-visual 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*. I 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.

Instructor

Madison Cavalchire
madcav@email.unc.edu

Meeting Time

Mondays and Wednesdays from 11:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. virtually via our classroom Zoom link (see below)...for now! This class is meant to be an in-person and/or remote class. If and when we return to in-person classes, I will send out more detailed information regarding our classroom, plan, etc. Recordings of my live sessions are always posted under the Warpwire section of Sakai following class as backup.

****A NOTE ABOUT MEETING*: Even if we do return to campus, you can always tune-in live virtually via our Zoom link instead of physically coming into the classroom. Even if you expect to mostly be in-person, it is totally okay if that changes mid-semester. You can flip back and forth at any time. If you aren't feeling well or suspect you may have been exposed to COVID-19, PLEASE just attend class virtually!***

Classroom Zoom Link: Professor C's Zoom Room

****A NOTE ABOUT ZOOM*: I'm not going to require you to turn on your video (I realize there may be WiFi limitations...or maybe you're just having a rough day), but it is my preference. I highly encourage you to turn on your video if you can. I want to see all of your beautiful faces!! Plus - it will help you focus better.***

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Final Exam

In lieu of a final exam, a final project will be due by the end of the exam period on Monday, May 10th. You will have until the end of the exam period (3:00 p.m.) to finish and turn-in the project. Of course, you can work on the project before the exam date and will have plenty of time to do so - just giving you the extra time if you end up needing it.

Office Hours/Appointments

Email me to set up an appointment. I am happy to chat via Zoom, phone, FaceTime, or in-person on-campus (if/when we return...with masks, while socially distanced of course ☺). If/when we return, I am on campus on Mondays and Wednesdays and am typically available directly following our class until 2:00 p.m. or after my second class at 3:15 p.m. until early evening. I don't have a specific office, but we will find a spot to meet if our classroom is being used. There are built-in lab/help days listed on our day-by-day syllabus where attendance is TOTALLY OPTIONAL (these serve as office hours too!).

Absences

My policy is simple. Everyone can have two “no questions asked” unexcused absences. That being said, I totally understand that due to the pandemic, unforeseen circumstances and/or hardships may keep you from attending the class live (this is where the recorded lectures will help you). If that is the case, please come talk to me. If you are sick, taking care of a family member, etc., you will be excused. Due to the pandemic, I am not necessarily counting attendance as a “grade” like I normally would (docking your final grade by a letter grade for every additional unexcused absence). But - as noted on this syllabus - **PARTICIPATION** does count as a grade. You can't participate if you're not there! You also don't want to miss an in-class assignment (I always note what days we will be having them on our day-by-day syllabus...if you have an excused absence that day...let me know and we can come up with an alternative plan). If you miss more than two classes without a valid excuse, it will impact your **participation** grade. If you have extenuating circumstances and will have excused absences for an extended period of time, there are alternative/remote ways to participate (Sakai forums...see section on In-Class Participation under the “Grading” portion of this syllabus).

Required Supplies

There are no textbooks for this class, but there are required purchases. Make sure you order required video supplies AHEAD of deadlines. Keep in mind shipping delays. Be aware that financial aid funds can be used for these items. If you believe you will have a challenge with these purchases, please contact Stephanie Willen Brown (swbrown@unc.edu), the director of the Hussman School's Park Library.

Your required supplies include:

Smartphone

For your video assignments, you will record with your smartphone. Please let me 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 (pictured at left) to be able to use the lavalier

microphone. I recommend purchasing one through [Apple's website](#) (I have had issues with ones purchased through Amazon).



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 required 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 AND 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). That one should come with a cell phone mount and adapter (I ordered and mine came with them). Once you order, check to make sure yours does too. I have read some reviews from customers who were missing the cell phone mount and adapter. If yours is missing, try searching for a "smartphone mount for tripod" on Amazon separately. Most models should work with the tripod (When in doubt, check all of your equipment as soon as it comes in!! You don't want to run into issues right before a due date!).



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 later in the semester. You **SHOULD NOT** purchase these items until directed. **Also note that it is your responsibility to cancel the auto-renewal once the course is complete if you don't want to be charged a lot of money next year.** [HERE is a video explaining how.](#) **NOTE: If you decide to cancel the auto-renewal, you will LOSE your site next year. If you'd like to keep and maintain your site, DO NOT DO THIS! Just know you will be charged (GoDaddy customer service should be able to tell you how much...remember...we used a discount code...so the price will be much higher next year).** I will remind you about this at the end of the semester.

Equipment guides

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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>

Recommended/Optional Supplies

USB 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, especially if you plan on continuing classes in the Hussman School.

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

FiLMiC Pro app

An application that provides the features of professional video cameras for iPhone and Android. The cost of this app is \$14.99. I will go over the pros and cons of the app in class (No need to purchase right away, wait until we go over it in class. This app will be **OPTIONAL**).

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

****A NOTE ABOUT FILMIC PRO*: Regardless of shooting videos with or without FiLMiC Pro, students are expected to create high-quality videos; high definition, 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 camera.***

Required Digital Access

LinkedIn Learning

Follow the instructions here to access LinkedIn Learning with your onyen (more details on day-by-day syllabus under homework for the first week):

<https://software.sites.unc.edu/linkedin/>

Adobe Premiere

Follow the instructions here to create an Adobe ID and install the required software for free (more details on day-by-day syllabus under homework for the first week):

<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. The choice is yours. I have no preference.

Course Goals and 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.

Late Assignments

Accepting late assignments is unfair to the students who have sacrificed to turn their work in on time. An automatic 10-point deduction will be applied to each assignment turned in after the exact time it is due, provided the assignment is turned in on the same day it is due. An additional 10 points will be applied for each subsequent 24 hours that pass after the due date/time. It is up to you to ensure you submitted a **working** file. Always double-check to make sure your project submitted and that it is the correct file. Incorrect files are also subject to point deduction. NOTE - be sure you've read the assignment sheet/rubric - did you include everything you needed before turning it in?

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 I am 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 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 me 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. You should also check out my [MEJO 121 Troubleshooting Google Doc](#) to see if someone else has already answered your question. If you solve a problem, please contribute to the Google doc. Unfortunately, some technical issues are out of our

control. Your computer (storage/age/processor) and cell phone could be the source of the problem. After attempting to troubleshoot yourself, with a classmate, and/or with me, it may be time to make an appointment with UNC ITS. We have our own IT service at Hussman. They may be better when it comes to MEJO 121 specific issues. Try them first (note, they aren't available 24/7).

Technical Support Contact Info:

ITS Website

Phone #: (919) 962-0527

Journalism School IT Service (usually not available as often)

Grading

Work is graded according to the highest professional standards. Each major assignment has an assignment sheet/rubric. Make sure you're checking those out before you turn in an assignment! Grades in percentages are below:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A = 93-100% ● A- = 90-92% ● B+ = 87-89% ● B = 83-86% ● B- = 80-82% ● C+ = 77-79% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● C = 73-76% ● C- = 70-72% ● D+ = 67-69% ● D = 60-66% ● F = 59% or below |
|---|--|

Below is a guideline for how grades are described within this course:

- A: nearly perfect in execution, quality of work is exceptional, student goes "above and beyond" in terms of unique additional work/creativity (I will explain more about what "above and beyond" means in class 😊)
- A-: work is impressive in quality, very few problems in any area, student goes "above and beyond" in terms of unique additional work/creativity
- 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 an understanding of the basics, but tried
- F: did not demonstrate effort or understanding of basics, incomplete

Grade Breakdown

In-Class Participation (See description below)	5%
Video Course Work (Includes Music Video, Interview, and Final Video projects)	50%

Web/Design Course Work (Includes About Me web page and WordPress portfolio site (Web Assignment 1 and Web Assignment 2))	25%
Final Project (Includes final web page design and story/package integration)	20%

In-Class Participation is your contribution within the scope of each class period, including arriving to in-person or online class meetings on time, asking questions, offering insights during class discussions, sharing feedback with peers, and general engagement with the material (you can write in the chat box on Zoom too!). Sakai forums can also count as participation for those with extenuating circumstances who have excused absences for an extended period of time. You may pose a question, write about your own experiences, or respond/comment on a classmate’s post. You should note - *consistency* counts - talking a bunch of times in one class isn’t “A” participation. At the end of the semester I will give you a 0-10 score for participation. Five of the points come from literal participation, while the other five points will come from five in-class participation assignments we will have throughout the semester. Either you do these and get the credit or you don’t. There is no “making them up” unless you have an excused absence for that day. You may check-in with me at any time during the course for feedback about the quality of your participation.

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). This project is in lieu of a final exam.

Honor Code

It is expected that each student in this class will conduct themselves 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 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, an illness, or an unforeseen hardship. Please contact me 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 in the 2011-2012 Undergraduate Bulletin. 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. A student is welcome to initiate the registration process at any time. However, the process can take time. ARS is particularly busy in time leading 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.