

Monday: 12:30 p.m. -1:00 p.m. on [Zoom](#)

Wednesday: 9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Curtis Media Center 101 (Studio)

Instructor:

Laura Brache

lcbrache@live.unc.edu

Office Hours: By appointment only

[Book a slot](#)

Course Description:

Welcome to MEJO 522 and 523, aka Carolina Week! This course is probably unlike any other you've taken before. It is entirely hands-on. Under the direction of the newsroom managers, students will write, shoot, edit and produce a LIVE weekly newscast. Students will fill all normal newsroom positions, including Executive Producer, Technical Director, Floor Director, Graphics Producer, Digital Producers, Reporters, Anchors and Prompter Tech. We will incorporate all standard broadcast news elements, like weather segments, a sports block, live shots and the exact timing of the shows.

Both MEJO 221 and MEJO 421 are prerequisites for enrollment in this course. *If you have not, you will not be allowed to take it and/or dropped from the roster.*

Course Goals:

The purpose of this course is to prepare you for a career in broadcast and electronic journalism. This business is not for the faint of heart – it is time-consuming, challenging and fast-paced. But it can also be very rewarding because of the role you play in providing accurate and timely information your community can use to make informed decisions. For that reason, you will be held to the same journalistic and ethical standards as an employee in any other industry newsroom. You will learn what it takes to run a successful live news production as much from behind the scenes as in front of the camera. Because this is still a class, there is a grade. You will have to work hard and be willing to learn all aspects of the trade to earn a high grade.

Newsroom Workflow:

- **Monday Editorial Meetings:** The class will participate in a weekly editorial meeting (Monday at 12:30 p.m. on Zoom). These meetings are held daily in newsrooms, sometimes several times a day. It's where news staff decide what stories to cover and why we should cover them. Each student is expected to pitch at least one feasible and newsworthy story idea at each meeting, so come prepared.
- **Monday Night Deadlines:** Properly formatted scripts are due via email every Monday evening by 6 p.m. I will reply to your email with the edited script and CC the producer. These scripts will also serve as the basis for your web story for our website.

- **Tuesday Night Deadlines:** All show content is due for instructor approval every Tuesday evening by 6 p.m. in the corresponding folder for the week in Teams. I will provide a list of edits needed and expect your content to be finalized by 9 p.m.
- **Wednesday Show Days:** Be in the studio by 9 a.m. We will start the day with a quick planning meeting to go over roles, review the rundown and ensure all content is uploaded to the server. If you do not have a newscast production role for the day, you will be a digital producer for the day and be in charge of helping post web stories to our site and share them on our social media channels. At 10 a.m., we will do a run-through (non-broadcasted test run of the newscast). We go live at 11:30 a.m. sharp, unless otherwise noted. After the newscast we will debrief and brainstorm ideas for the following week's newscast.

Required Reading Material:

- Gary Kirk's [Broadcasting Standard Operating Procedure](#).
- [WRAL](#), [ABG11](#), [CBS17](#), [Spectrum News](#) and [The News & Observer Apps](#) - Please download the apps on your mobile device or laptop and subscribe to news alerts to stay in the know and inspire your pitches.
- [The Daily Tar Heel](#) - Please make it a habit to read the DTH daily online and register for news alerts via e-mail [here](#). You may elect to receive news alerts via text; however, that is not required. Check the boxes for the Chapel Hill News, Daily News and Breaking News.
- [The News & Observer](#) and [The Herald Sun](#) **email newsletters**: Both newspapers have easy to consume summaries of the top news stories in our area. I recommend subscribing to the N&O's Today at a Glance (daily) and The Orange Report (weekly) newsletters. For the HS, I recommend the Morning Newsletter.

If you haven't already, purchase a [subscription](#) to access the AP Stylebook via your computer, tablet, or mobile device.

I encourage you to read local and national news via sources daily and several times a day. Be on the lookout for national stories that you could localize.

We will occasionally have industry guests to watch and critique the newscast, but also for networking opportunities (*I'm looking at you, Seniors!*)

Required Technology:

Hardware:

You will need to have or purchase the following equipment for this class:

- **SD Card (or two):** Students are required to purchase an SD card, 32GB or larger, to record video on the [cameras](#).
- **Portable external hard drive:** I encourage you to invest in an external hard drive, 500GB or larger, if you don't have one already. Be aware that the school computers are wiped every night and your laptops/MacBooks don't have the best processing power for large projects. Therefore, make sure your projects are backed up elsewhere.
- **Smartphone with video recording capability:** Students are allowed to shoot video from their smartphones for this class, as long as it records in 1080p HD and 60fps. You will need to use a tripod smartphone for steady shots and a lavalier mic for clean audio on your smartphone. A very limited number of wired lavalier mics and smartphone tripods are available in the Park Library. I suggest you

purchase your own:

- [Microphone for iPhone](#) at Amazon.com
- [Microphone for Android & iPhone](#) at Amazon.com

- **Headphones:** Earbuds or any standard headphones (non-bluetooth) will work for this class. Higher quality headphones will help you know more clearly whether the sound you're hearing is coming from your immediate environment or your recording.

Software:

- **Adobe Creative Cloud:** You'll need to download the latest version of Premiere Pro from Adobe Creative Cloud, licensed to UNC students. You can download Audition and other Adobe software by using your UNC email address and onyen and by going to the following site: <https://software.sites.unc.edu/adobe/>
- **Zoom:** If you haven't already, download Zoom for Monday virtual meetings. If you're unable to secure an in-person interview due to COVID-19 restrictions, you may use Zoom from your laptop or desktop computer. You'll need to record your interview in speaker only mode so that you can edit individual soundbites accordingly.

Support:

Gary Kirk is the UNC Hussman Broadcast & New Media Manager. Message him via Teams for any tech questions and concerns.

Checking Out Equipment:

You will be responsible for checking out video equipment from the Park Library. Please visit Connect2 to make arrangements for your equipment here:

- <https://equipmentroom.mj.unc.edu/>

Before you can check out equipment, you'll be asked to complete a quiz to ensure you understand the rules.

- For access to a collection of instruction manuals for the video equipment, please visit this site: <https://guides.lib.unc.edu/equipment-room/instruction-manuals>

**** NEVER LEAVE EQUIPMENT UNATTENDED! ** ALWAYS ASSUME ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN TO YOUR EQUIPMENT WHEN IT'S NOT WITH YOU. IT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY! DO NOT LEAVE EQUIPMENT IN YOUR CAR. IT SHOULD BE IN YOUR CAR ONLY TO GET TO AND FROM WHERE YOU'RE GOING FOR THAT ASSIGNMENT.****

Professional Accountability:

This course is designed to prepare you for real-world scenarios and potential careers in broadcast journalism. You are required to conduct yourself in a professional manner including actively participating in class and engaging in respectful, informed, critical discussions. 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.

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, 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 this 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.

In order to succeed:

- Meet deadlines and make contingency plans for potential challenges;
- Organize your coursework and manage your time wisely;
- Attend virtual and in-person sessions on time and remain until the end of class;
- Take initiative;
- Become a news fanatic;
- Be open to positive and critical feedback;
- Conduct yourself with professionalism and insatiable curiosity.

Attendance and Participation:

Approach this class as you would a job in the news business. We can't tolerate you being late or absent. Each unexcused absence will result in a deduction of one grade mark. For example, if your grade is a B and you miss a show, you'll get a B- for the course, and so forth. The same deduction applies for failing to submit assignments without a University approved excused absence and permission of the instructor. In other words, failing to submit a video story in a given week is equivalent to missing class.

Life happens. I am human, too. But please communicate potential absences as early as possible and plan accordingly. Be aware that you are bound by the [Honor Code](#) when requesting a University-approved absence.

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

Because this course is a hands-on learning experience, your in-person attendance is mandatory. However, **all** Wednesday sessions will be synchronously streamed via Zoom starting at 11 a.m. (pre-show chat, live newscast, and post-show chat) and recordings will be posted on Sakai within 48 hours. Please note, that only attending a Wednesday in-person class via Zoom *without notice or explanation* will adversely affect your participation grade. Joining a Wednesday lesson over Zoom is not a replacement for attending in person. Should you choose to not attend an in-person lesson, the instructors cannot guarantee to engage with you or encourage your participation during discussions.

Please note that you are strongly encouraged to have your camera on during Zoom sessions.

Recording Zoom Sessions:

Each recorded Zoom session for this class is owned by the University and is under copyright protection. Please do not record excerpts of statements from your Zoom class and share them on social media or any externally-facing platforms. If you have problems accessing Zoom, please notify your instructor.

The virtual classes will be recorded and uploaded to Sakai within 48 hours. It is your responsibility to prepare for class and review all materials in preparation for discussions and assignments. **We will use the same Zoom link for the entire semester.** The meeting is password protected and will require you to login with your UNC email. Please be patient, respectful, and professional during our Zoom conversations.

Late Assignments:

There'd better not be any. Pay close attention to deadlines and details. Like in a real newsroom, assignments submitted after the deadline will be cut from the rundown and will be treated as an unexcused absence. Late work because of equipment malfunctions, job interviews, internships, extra-curricular activities, social functions, pre-arranged vacations, travel delays, etc. are *not excused*. It is your responsibility to manage your time wisely and complete your assignments by the deadline.

Extraordinary circumstances will be taken into consideration, and if a late submission is allowed, the instructor will deduct points from the final score of the assignment. The point deduction is at the discretion of the instructor. If you are experiencing technical problems, a personal or academic hardship, please bring that to your instructor's attention sooner rather than later so that we can work together on the best way to support your academic success.

Seek Support Sooner Rather than Later:

If you need individual assistance, it's your responsibility to meet with the instructor during office hours or to set up an appointment for another time. If you are serious about improving 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.

Accessibility Statement:

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with documented disabilities. Documentation for accommodation must be presented no later than one week prior to the requested accommodation. To receive accommodations, students must go through the Counseling Center/Disability Services office. [Disability Services](#) is located at 208 Carroll Hall and can be reached at 919-760-8427 or by [email](#). For additional information, go to their website.

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 Department of Disability Services website (<https://ars.unc.edu>).

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.

UNC Attendance Policy:

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

2. Authorized University activities
3. Disability/religious observance/pregnancy, as required by law and approved by [Accessibility Resources and Service](#) and/or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](#) (EOC)
4. 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).

COVID-19

If you test positive for the virus and you are asymptomatic, you are welcome to attend class virtually. However, if your COVID-19 symptoms will impede your ability to attend our virtual class, please notify your instructor as soon as possible. As with any illness, it will be your responsibility to make up missed assignments within the time allotted by your instructors. To keep pace with missed lectures, please view the recorded Zoom sessions that will be made available in Sakai.

Mask Use:

This course is hybrid; however, when we meet in person in the Curtis Media Center, we'll follow the University's guidance on masks use. As of January 2023, mask use is optional on campus. Should that guidance change, all enrolled students are required to wear a mask always covering your mouth and nose in our classroom. This requirement is to protect our educational community -- your classmates and instructor -- as we learn together. If you choose not to wear a mask, or wear it improperly, you will be asked to leave immediately, and a report will be filed to the [Office of Student Conduct](#). At that point, you will be removed 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/>.

Honor Code:

I expect that each student will conduct themselves 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.

ACEJMC Values and Competencies:

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) requires that, irrespective of their specialization, all graduates should be aware of certain core values and competencies.

The values and competencies associated with this course include being able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race ethnicity, sexual orientations and, as appropriate,
- other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications;
- 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 tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions.

Diversity:

The Hussman School of Journalism and Media follows the University's policy on Prohibiting Harassment and Discrimination as outlined on the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office's webpage (<https://eoc.unc.edu/>).

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.

The University's policy on Prohibiting Harassment and Discrimination is outlined in the 2021-2022 Undergraduate Bulletin (www.unc.edu/ugradbulletin).

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.

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.

UNC 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/>.

Inclement Weather and Campus Emergencies:

The college urges that all students sign up for Alert Carolina (<https://alertcarolina.unc.edu/>).

In the event of inclement weather, you will be alerted when the college closes. College closure does not mean your class will not have online sessions, readings, or assignments.

ASSIGNMENTS

Content	Max. Points Possible
Readers	5
FSGs	10
VOs	15
VO/SOTs	20
Live Shots	15
NAT PKGs	15
PKGs	40

Roles	Max. Points Possible
Basic crew positions	5
GFX, AU, TD, Anchor	10
EP, Director	15
AP	5
Live Assist	5
Digital Producer	10

Grading:

Your grade will be determined by the number of points you amass by the end of the semester. Those points are based on objective and subjective criteria, as will whether you're hired and subsequently retained by a news or sports operation after you graduate. We'll assess both the quality and quantity of your work. You don't want to make the same mistake twice, such as not lighting interviews, editing with jump cuts, turning in blue video, or worst of all, missing your deadline. In addition, a big factor will be the extra effort you expend outside of class preparing shows we can all be proud of. There's always something to be done. Ask. Look. Ask again. Be productive. Merely filling space and breathing air during class time each week won't get you very far. If you're enrolled in the class, you're expected to turn video content each week, with a minimum of four TV packages for the entire semester. Additionally, you're required to be involved with the production of the program on show days.

For the Spring, you're expected to earn a **minimum of 360 points for a C**. You must have accumulated 120 points by show number four and 240 by show number 8. Failure to meet any one of these benchmarks will result in a grade mark reduction from your final grade. (For example, from B+ to B. If you miss all three, that would take you from a hypothetical B+ to a C+.)

Also, remember that absences (for any reason other than those listed) will affect your grade. Pieces (or portions thereof) we cut strictly because of time constraints will still count toward your total. Pieces (or portions thereof) we cut because of quality/deadline issues will not. So, if you do a VO/SOT and the SOT is dark to the point that we cut it, that counts as a VO only. If the only reason we drop the SOT is time, you'll get credit for having shot a VO/SOT.

You'll be able to track your points by regularly filling out the class spreadsheet (to be provided). When grading, we'll first look at your total points; then at the column that shows us if you missed any weeks turning in video content; then at the column that shows how often we dropped pieces of yours; then at the column that shows if you produced fewer than three packages or missed one or more of the benchmarks. The quantitative score is affected, either positively or negatively, by the qualitative score.

All content created for shows must also be turned in as an article for our news site and must include an image, a video and a web story with a headline, teaser and body text. This article will be part of your total grade. Points will be deducted from the total for any content that does not include a web story.

Grading Scale:

Grade	Scale
A	94-100%
A-	91-93%
B+	88-90%
B	84-87%
B-	81-83%
C+	78-80%
C	74-77%
C-	71-73%
D+	68-70%
D	61-67%
F	60 and below

Grading rubric:

A grades - Superior Work: Superior video editing and writing that is well organized and compelling with complete facts, thoughtful analysis and opinion (when applicable), and correct grammar and style. Additionally, writing that is clear, concise, easy to read, adheres to broadcast and/or AP style, and follows the proper format. No misspelled words or typos. Good attitude and works like career depends on it.

B grades - Above-Average Work: Clean video editing and writing that is well organized with complete facts, thoughtful analysis and opinion (when applicable), and only minor grammatical and stylistic corrections. This work also is clear, concise, and follows the proper format—no misspelled words or typos. With a bit more polish, this person should make it in the business. Would have no problem recommending this person.

C grades - Average Work: Video editing with some issues. Writing meets minimum requirements of complete and correct facts and thoughtful analysis and opinion (when applicable) but requires editing to correct organization, grammar, and style. Some minor problems in format and additional work may be needed to heighten the impact of the piece. Good in one aspect of job, but consistent problems in other aspects or contributed in only one aspect.

D grades - Below-Average Work: Significant video issues and writing contains incomplete information, numerous style, and grammatical errors, and is poorly organized. Needs to consider a different field.

F grade - Unacceptable Work: Video editing is not for broadcast, and writing is poorly organized and contains style and grammatical errors, factual mistakes, and misspelled proper nouns. Didn't even do the bare minimum.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Focus
Week 1 Mon: Jan 9 <i>Zoom</i>	Info session
Wed: Jan 11 <i>STUDIO</i>	Info session (cont.) Anchor auditions in Studio
Week 2 Mon: Jan 16 <i>Zoom</i>	Editorial meeting
Wed: Jan 18 <i>STUDIO</i>	Control room/Studio training and Practice shows
Week 3 Mon: Jan 23 <i>Zoom</i>	Editorial meeting
Wed: Jan 25 <i>Studio</i>	FIRST SHOW
Week 4 - 9 Jan 30 - Mar 8	Rinse & Repeat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No editorial meeting Jan 16 (MLK DAY) • No editorial meeting Feb 13 (WELL-BEING DAY) • Midterm due Mar 8
Week 10 Mar 13 - 17	NO MEETING/SHOW (SPRING BREAK)
Weeks 11 - 15 Mar 20 - Apr 19	Rinse & Repeat
Week 16 Mon: Apr 24	Editorial meeting
Wed: Apr 26	LAST SHOW
MONDAY MAY 1, 12 PM	FINAL EXAM