

INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL STORYTELLING

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

Welcome to this introductory media technology skills class at the UNC Hussman School of Journalism and Media. Our 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.

Classroom and meeting time

MEJO121 Tuesdays & Thursdays @ 2pm – 3:15pm in Carroll Hall Rm 268

If circumstances make it so our class must go remote, I will update you through Sakai with Zoom links and info.

Instructor

Adjunct Professor: John Roberts

johnrob@ad.unc.edu

Office Hours: Please reach out via email: johnrob@ad.unc.edu to arrange an appointment. Generally, I should be able to meet before or after class on Tuesdays and Thursdays. I will answer emails during the week within 24 hours, usually sooner.

Required Supplies

There are no textbooks required 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, please contact Stephanie Willen Brown (swbrown@unc.edu), the director of the Hussman School's Park Library.

Your required supplies include:

Smartphone WITH 3.5mm headphone jack (or adapter)

For your video assignments, you will record with your smartphone. Please let the instructor

know if you do not own a smartphone. You **MUST** purchase the official Apple adapter (if you're using an iPhone) for the mic to work. Third-party ones have been known to mess up and **not record audio**.



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 microphone. Link to official Apple adapter: <https://www.apple.com/shop/product/MMX62AM/A/lightning-to-35-mm-headphone-jack-adapter>

Camera App

While you are expected to use your own smartphone for

Pro Shot ([iOS link](#), [Android link](#)): This app costs \$6.99 and will be required for you to use for the video portion of class.

Headphones

Must have a standard mini jack ($\frac{1}{8}$ "'). 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* will work.

Wired lavalier microphone with headphone monitoring

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 \$14.

HEADPHONES WITH A MIC WILL NOT WORK WITH THE PHONE APP

Tripod with smartphone mount

You will need to purchase a tripod and mount for your phone. Cost: About \$20. [Here is an example](#) of one that would work for this course.



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. 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 and hardships

Students with true hardship are welcome to borrow an iPod or lav mic or tripod + smart phone mount from the Park Library. [Reach out to Park Library to get more information](#). 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 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.

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

I recommend you backing up a copy of all footage (having it in two places just in case you lose footage. I also recommend NOT deleting your footage until you have fully completed this course.

Required Digital Access

LinkedIn Learning

Follow the instructions here to access LinkedIn Learning with your Onyen.

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

Adobe Premiere

Follow the instructions here to create an Adobe ID and install the required software for free.

FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS on how to register for Adobe and be able to download this for free.

Do NOT wait till the last minute to do this. **Contact ITS with any issues.**

<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.

Note you can make your videos unlisted and not public – where you can share a link, but it isn't searchable or able to be seen publicly.

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 percent deduction will be applied to each assignment turned in after the time it is due, provided the assignment is turned in on the same day it is due. An additional 10% deduction will be applied for each subsequent 24 hours that pass after the due date/time (i.e., 10 percent is taken off for each day).

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 online research. Before asking your question 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 your instructor 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.

Grading

Work is graded according to the highest professional standards. Grades in percentages are:

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|----------------|----------------|
| • A = 93-100%, | • B+ = 87-89%, |
| • A- = 90-92%, | • B = 83-86%, |

- B- = 80-82%,
- C+ = 77-79%,
- 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
- A-: work is impressive in quality, 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-: 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

Grading Criteria

In-class participation (see description below)	10%
Video course work (includes assignments and video projects)	50%
Web/Design course work (includes assignments and portfolio project)	20%
Final project / Final exam (includes final web page design and story/package integration)	20%

In-class participation is your contribution within the scope of each class period and engagement with required readings/viewings through Sakai, including attendance, arriving to class on time, asking questions, offering insights during class discussions, sharing feedback with peers, focus on course subjects, and general engagement with the material. Additionally, class exercises are also included in this grade. The quality of your participation will be assigned a grade based on the guidelines above at the end of the course. You may check in with your instructor at any time during the course for individual feedback about the quality of your participation.

Exercises are assigned to familiarize you with skills needed to complete the projects and are graded on completion and execution quality. Engagement with the exercises will prepare you to achieve better work on your projects.

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. *Your story and video may not feature an employer of yours.*

The **final exam / 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). You will submit this and then present to the class during the final exam period. *Your story and video may not feature an employer of yours.*

Project Resubmission

Although the final project will contain your previous video project, this project will not be re-evaluated in the final project grade. However, you may choose to respond to graded feedback on the video project and re-submit the updated version along with the rest of your final project, along with a detailed log of your edits, an updated reflection on the project, and your response to previous feedback. If you meet these requirements, I will re-grade your project and I will update the score of that project to be a weighted average of your new (and hopefully improved) score with the previously assigned score.

Attendance Policy

You are required to attend all class sessions. As this course is project-based and cumulative in its delivery of technical information, it is important to attend each scheduled class to receive new information. If you foresee issues with this requirement, please contact the instructor immediately.

Honor Code

It is expected that each student in this class will conduct him/herself 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.

For this class, all video footage must be your own unless otherwise cited and/or approved by professor. It is an honor code violation to take footage from another source and attempt to make it appear as though you filmed it yourself.

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, or an illness. Please feel able to contact the course instructor 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 at <http://www.unc.edu/ugradbulletin/>. 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 the run-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.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE & WEEKLY TOPICS

(This schedule and outline might change or be adjusted)

1	Tu. 1/10/23	Introduction & Syllabus Review Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Download ProShot app and Adobe Premiere.- Purchase required equipment for class.- Review and complete readings in Sakai
	Th. 1/12/23	Intro to Film Language, Techniques & Composition Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Become familiar with ProShot app for your mobile device- Review and complete readings in Sakai

2	Tu. 1/17/23	<p>Basics of Lighting and Shot Composition for Video</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to use and get used to ProShot app for your mobile device. We will review next class. - Work on Final Project Idea exercise. - Review and complete readings in Sakai
	Th. 1/19/23	<p>Documentary Interviews: Setup (composition, lighting, audio)</p> <p>ProShot app Q & A and In-Class exercise</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make sure Adobe Premiere is up and running and review tutorials. - Review and complete readings in Sakai <p>Deadline: E1: Final Project Idea, 11:55 pm</p>
3	Tu. 1/24/23	<p>Editing 101: Footage Categories, Editing While Shooting, Cut/Transition Techniques</p> <p>Discuss Final Project ideas</p> <hr/> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review and complete readings in Sakai
	Th. 1/26/23	<p>Editing / Premiere Pro Essentials 1</p> <p>Discuss Montage Assignment</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work on Montage assignment - Review and complete readings in Sakai
4	Tu. 1/31/23	<p>Editing / Premiere Pro Essentials 2</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review and complete readings in Sakai
	Th. 2/2/23	<p>B-roll and Audio Storytelling</p>

		<p>Class Review: Montage assignment</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work on A Little About assignment. - Review and complete readings in Sakai <p>Deadline: A1: Montage Assignment, 11:55 pm</p>
5	Tu. 2/7/23	<p>Nonfiction Narrative and the 3-Act Structure</p> <p>Check-in's on Final Project ideas</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Write interview plan for final video project interviews - Review and complete readings in Sakai
	Th. 2/9/23	<p><i>Guest Speaker:</i> The 3-Act Structure and Documentary Production</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work on Radio Edit assignment - Film interview for final video project - Review and complete readings in Sakai <p>Deadline: A2: A Little About..., 11:55pm</p>
6	Tu. 2/14/23	<p><u>Well-Being Day: NO CLASSES</u></p> <p>You should be filming your final video project interviews this week.</p>
	Th. 2/16/23	<p>Premiere Pro Polishing: Audio, Color, Transitions, Pace & Rhythm</p> <p>Class Review: A Little About assignment</p> <p>You should be filming your final video project interviews this week.</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work on Radio Edit assignment - Film interview for final video project - Review and complete readings in Sakai

7	Tu. 2/21/23	<p>Premiere Pro: General Q&A on Editing, Editing in Class, Ask Questions About Projects</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Start filming your broll for your final video project - Review and complete readings in Sakai
	Th. 2/23/23	<p>Planning for Production</p> <p>Discuss Final Projects</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Start filming your broll for your final video project - Review and complete readings in Sakai <p>Deadline: A3: Radio Edit, Due Friday 2/24/23 11:55pm</p>
8	Tu. 2/28/23	<p>All Elements Learned: Storytelling Discussion</p> <p>How to use video in other mediums to tell a greater story</p> <p>Review Radio Edit In-Class</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete filming broll for your final video project - Review and complete readings in Sakai
	Th. 3/2/23	<p>Final Video Thoughts, Q&A</p> <p>How to use video in other mediums to tell a greater story</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete filming broll for your final video project - Work on rough draft of final video - Review and complete readings in Sakai <p>Deadline Sunday 3/5/23: E2: Final Video ROUGH DRAFT, 11:55pm</p>

9	Tu. 3/7/23	<p>Final Video Draft Reviews</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work on Final Video - Review and complete readings in Sakai
	Th. 3/9/23	<p>Final Video Draft Reviews</p> <p>In-Class Work on Final Videos</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finalize edits for Final Video Project - Review and complete readings in Sakai <p>Deadline: A4 Final Video Due Friday 3/10/22 at 11:55pm</p>
10	Tu. 3/14/23	SPRING BREAK: NO CLASSES
	Th. 3/16/23	SPRING BREAK: NO CLASSES
11	Tu. 3/21/23	<p>Intro to Web Design</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sign up for DIY graphic services (i.e.: Canva) - Register Godaddy web domain. - Begin working on Graphic Design exercise - Review and complete readings in Sakai
	Th. 3/23/23	<p>Web Graphic Design and Infographics / Templates and Canva</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work on the layout of your final portfolio / project - Review and complete readings in Sakai
12	Tu. 3/28/23	<p>Discuss Graphic Design exercise and Final Project</p> <p>Being Intentional with Design & Function: Design For Your Content</p> <p>Discuss Your Website In-Class</p>

		Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work on the layout of your final portfolio / project - Review and complete readings in Sakai Deadline: E3 Graphic Design due at 11:55pm
	Th. 3/30/23	Coding Intro / HTML & CSS Basics Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work on Basic Coding assignment - Review and complete readings in Sakai
13	Tu. 4/4/23	HTML & CSS Coding and In-Class Exercise Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Begin working on your WordPress portfolio site - Work on graphic design for Portfolio Graphic exercise - Review and complete readings in Sakai Deadline: A5 Basic Coding Assignment due, 11:55pm
	Th. 4/6/23	<u>Well-Being Day: NO CLASSES</u>
14	Tu. 4/11/23	Intro to CMS and WordPress Installing and Navigating WordPress: In-Class Exercise Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue working on WordPress portfolio site - Work on graphic design for Portfolio Graphic exercise - Review and complete readings in Sakai
	Th. 4/13/23	WordPress & Customization 1 Assignment:

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work on your portfolio project - Review and complete readings in Sakai
15	Tu. 4/18/23	WordPress & Customization 2 Discuss portfolio project, review Portfolio Graphics exercise in-class Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work on your portfolio project - Review and complete readings in Sakai Deadline: A6 Portfolio Project due, 11:55pm
	Th. 4/20/23	WordPress & Website Wrap Up / Final Exam Q&A Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work on portfolio project
16	Tu. 4/25/23	Website Workshop: Work on Website In-Class / Review In-Class Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work on Final Project
	Th. 4/27/23	Final Project Workday In-Class, Q&A LDOC Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work on Final Project
<u>Final Exam</u>	Tu. 5/2/23 12 pm	Final Exam will meet in our classroom at 12pm on Tuesday May, 2nd.