

## INTRODUCTION TO

## DIGITAL STORYTELLING

UNC-Chapel Hill | Hussman School of Journalism and Media | Fall I 2023 | MEJO 121-007

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

M-W 05:15–06:30 pm | Room: CA 0268 | Class Zoom link: TBA | Meeting ID: TBA | Passcode: TBA

## INSTRUCTOR

**Syafiqah Omar** (She/Her) | [syafiqah@unc.edu](mailto:syafiqah@unc.edu) |**Virtual Office Hours** M-W 09:00am-12:00 pm by appointment

## 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](mailto: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.

**Headphone Adapter**

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 headphone to monitor the audio and also to use while editing during lab times. We recommend using a wired, standard mini jack (1/8") headphones. [Here is an option](#). The 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 less than \$25.

### Tripod with smartphone mount

You will need to purchase a tripod and mount for your phone. Cost: About \$30. Here are a couple of examples: [60 inch Tripod with Phone Mount](#) (with pan/tilt handle), [64 inch Tripod and Selfie Stick with Phone Mount](#) (no handle) IF you have access to a regular camera tripod you can purchase a [Phone Mount](#) only.



### 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/equipment-room/instruction-manuals>

## 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/> - This process may take a few days; you may need to contact IT and since the campus IT is busy at the beginning of the semester, I strongly encourage you to get access to the software during the first week of classes.

### 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

### 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.

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

IF your laptop has USB-C port and no USB port, you will need an **adaptor** to use a USB external drive. Here is an option: [USB C to USB Adapter](#)

**Movie Pro App:** We recommend using a camera app such as Movie Pro or FilMic Pro. These apps provide the features of professional video cameras for iPhone and Android.

**Note:** Use of a filming application is optional. However, students are expected to create high-quality videos; 1080p HD, good lighting and colors, and clear audio.

### 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.

## 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).

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/>)

### 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.**

## ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING POLICIES

### Receiving Feedback:

Class workshops, lab times, and ungraded assignments offer opportunities to receive feedback and improve your work. **Think of the class graded assignments as tests; they cannot be pre-graded.**

- I will answer technical or conceptual questions up to 12 hours before the deadline.
- Grades and feedback will be posted on Canvas 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.

### 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 one week late.**

- After that, a 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 three weeks past the due date.** (This does not include University-excused absences and medical circumstances.)

## 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 impossible to cover every detail of a tool through in-class demos. Projects will require learning new things independently, outside of direct instruction. This is especially important about coding and WordPress. Searching and finding specific codes and troubleshooting are part of the learning experience. **Please review the presentation documents,**

**recorded class videos, and invest some time researching your question online before asking for help.** In addition to asking your question, share what you learned during your research, a description of your problem, and any relevant screenshots. On the other hand, after spending a couple of hours on a technical problem, please take a break and ask for my help before investing more time on the issue.

## 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.**

## GRADING CRITERIA

	Engagement & Participation	5%
Video	A1: Music Video A2: Radio Edit A3: Video Project	50%
Web Design	A4: Basic Coding A5: Portfolio Project	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 by following the instructions carefully and on time. Additionally, completing ungraded coursework and course evaluations affect this grade.

**The primary method of instruction is in-person** unless the circumstances change. You will benefit the most when you come to class and engage with your peers. Many sessions are designed for hands-on exercises, collaborative learning, and feedback sessions. The students on Zoom won't be able to participate. **Zoom is reserved and acceptable only for legitimate reasons. Attending Zoom without notice or explanation will affect your Engagement & Participation grade.**

Asynchronous instruction material (Zoom recordings of lectures and presentations) will be available on Cnavas, Panopto.

**Assignments:** All course work build upon each other toward the major projects. Weekly homework and ungraded assignments (Exercises) are designed for practicing your skills and receiving feedback. **The graded assignments require a mastery of the storytelling techniques and skills learned in class. Even though, I offer detailed instructions, creating excellent work requires more than checking the requirement boxes.** To achieve excellence, you must be engaged; **your work must exceed expectations and go above and beyond the requirements.**

**Final Project:** This course does not have a final exam. Instead, 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.

## 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 Associate Dean Julie Dixon-Green, or you may speak with a representative of the Student Attorney Office or the Office of the Dean of Students.

## 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](mailto: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](mailto:titleixcoordinator@unc.edu)), Report and Response Coordinators in the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office ([reportandresponse@unc.edu](mailto:reportandresponse@unc.edu)), Counseling and Psychological Services (confidential), or the Gender Violence Services Coordinators ([gvsc@unc.edu](mailto: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](#) 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](#), 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

## ACCESSING COURSE MATERIAL

All learning material will be posted on the Canvas site. **Please check the following Canvas 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 learning material, except Zoom recordings and Assignment sheets, will be added in resources first.

**Panopto:** All class recordings will be posted on Canvas > Panopto. Hands-on group activities and lab sessions won't be recorded.

**Assignments:** Each assignment or exercise has a folder under the Assignments section in Canvas where you will find due dates, assignment sheets, and examples. You will submit assignments and receive feedback in this section. Please read all the attached documents and review the 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 Canvas too. If I need to communicate anything else during the week, I use the announcement tool.

## 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.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

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

## TENTATIVE SCHEDULE & WEEKLY TOPICS

1	M. 08.21	Introduction & Syllabus Review
	W. 08.23	Finding the Story & Theme Picking your Platform
2	M. 08.28	Film Language and Composition
	W. 08.30	Shooting with Editing in Mind
	F. 09.01	<u>Deadline: E1: Semester Story (Final Project Idea), 11:55 pm</u>
3	M. 09.04	Labour Day Holiday
	W. 09.06	B-roll Coverage Shooting and editing a b-roll sequence
4	M. 09.11	Workshop: Filmic Pro
	W. 09.13	Premiere Pro Essentials
	F. 09.15	<u>Deadline: A1: Music Video. 11:55 pm</u>
5	M. 09.18	Interview Techniques Setup (Composition, 3-point lighting, Audio) + Interview tips



	<b>W. 09.20</b>	A-roll Nonfiction Narrative and the 3-Act Structure
<b>6</b>	<b>M. 09.25</b>	Well-Being Day
	<b>W. 09.27</b>	Audio Storytelling
<b>7</b>	<b>M. 10.02</b>	Story Lab: Crafting your interview into a story with a solid narrative arc Visual Storytelling and Creative B-roll Discussion Next Steps after Radio Edit (Cut): Shooting B-roll, Editing B-roll, drafting a Rough Cut
	<b>W. 10.04</b>	Finishing stage: color correct, polish audio transitions, level audio Basic Color Correction in Premiere Pro
	<b>F. 10.06</b>	<u>Deadline: A2: Radio Edit, 11:55 pm</u>
<b>8</b>	<b>M. 10.09</b>	Video Project Workday
	<b>W. 10.11</b>	Pace & Rhythm Using Music
<b>9</b>	<b>M. 10.16</b>	<u>Deadline: E2: Video Project, Rough Draft due at the start of the class</u> Workshop: Small Groups, Peer Feedback on Rough Drafts Video Project Editing Lab
	<b>W. 10.18</b>	Video Project Editing Lab
<b>10</b>	<b>M. 10.23</b>	Introduction to the Web portion of the course Video Project Editing Lab
	<b>W. 10.25</b>	<u>Deadline: A3: Video Project, 11:55 pm</u> Graphics and Infographics + DIY Graphic Design sites Video Projects Screening
<b>11</b>	<b>M. 10.30</b>	Basics of good design
	<b>W. 11.01</b>	Parts of an online package
<b>12</b>	<b>M. 11.06</b>	Basic Coding: HTML & CSS
	<b>W. 11.08</b>	WordPress 1: The basics (Plugins, Pages, Blocks) WordPress 2: "Customize" menu + Additional CSS

	<b>F. 11.10</b>	<u>Deadline: A4: Basic Coding Assignment, 11:55 pm</u>
<b>13</b>	<b>M. 11.13</b>	WordPress Wrap Up Web Design Essentials
	<b>W. 11.15</b>	Well-Being Day
<b>14</b>	<b>M. 11.20</b>	<u>Deadline: E3: Graphics Rough Draft, Due at the start of the class</u>  Design Feedback Session Portfolio project and Final Project Q & A
	<b>W. 11.22</b>	<u>Thanksgiving Recess Holiday</u>
<b>15</b>	<b>M. 11.27</b>	Portfolio project Lab time
	<b>W. 11.29</b>	Portfolio project Lab time
<b>16</b>	<b>M. 12.04</b>	<u>Deadline: A5: Portfolio Project, 11:55 pm</u> Portfolio Project workday
	<b>W. 12.06</b> <b>LDC</b>	Final Project last-minute questions
<b>Final Exam Day</b>	<b>DEC 11</b> <b>Monday</b> <b>4:00 pm</b>	<u>Deadline: A6: Final Project</u> Final Project presentation