

Audio and Visual Storytelling Skills

MJCOM 9103

Fall 2015

NCB Room 295 Tuesdays 9:00 – 11:50 AM



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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will give students the basic skills and knowledge they need to tell stories using audio and video. The focus will be on producing radio and TV news stories for a local audience, but the skills will be just as important for people who choose to work in communications. Students will learn how to: generate and focus story ideas, write broadcast news, voice reports, as well as plan, shoot, structure and edit TV news stories.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

After completing this course, students will:

1. Have basic audio, shooting and video editing skills
2. Have been introduced to broadcast writing
3. Understand how to produce a video story (structure, voicing, interviewing)
4. Have produced a TV news report for a London audience

<u>ASSIGNMENT</u>	<u>EVALUATION</u>	<u>DEADLINE</u>
Radio story	15%	4 PM Monday Sept. 28 th or Oct. 5 th
Campus shoot	Part of professional mark	1 PM Monday October 19 th
Story analysis	15%	6 PM Tuesday October 27 th
TV story proposal	10%	See page 7
TV Story	30%	See page 7
Two story critiques	10%	See page 7
Professionalism	20%	

Due dates for your TV story idea, proposal, final story and production report depend on which round you are in. There will be three people on every team. Each team will have one reporter with a story due in each round. See pages 5 – 7 for more details.

RADIO STORY

All students must be ready to pitch their story idea in class on September 22nd.

The following students have their radio stories **due at 4 PM on Monday Sept. 28th**:
Rana, Karl, Nicolas, Jesse, Sarah, James, Marta, Richard, Rosemary, Stephanie, McKenzie, Colleen, Kaylee, Melissa, Johanna, Madisyn, Andrew, Robin.

The following students have their radio stories **due at 4 PM on Monday Oct. 6th**:
David, Chloe, Emma, Alexandra, Ross, Martha, Sophie, Jimmy, Andrew, Matthew, Emily, Alexie, Gregory C, Kaitlin, Jenna, Denise, Gregory H, Emily

CAMPUS SHOOT

This story will be done in groups. The assignment will be explained in class and will count toward your professionalism mark. It is due at **1 PM on Monday October 19th**.

STORY ANALYSIS

This assignment will be handed out in class on October 20th. Students will be given a pair of TV news stories to analyze. All students will write a critique comparing these stories (maximum 1,000 words) to be e-mailed to Jeremy **by 6 PM on Tuesday October 27th**.

STORY CRITIQUES

The round where you present a story you do not have to do a critique. The other two rounds you will be assigned to critique one of your classmates' stories. Each student will have to critique a total of two stories, one for each round. Further instructions for this assignment will be handed out during the semester.

PROFESSIONALISM

Here are some of the elements taken into consideration:

- your attitude and approach while learning and applying what you've learned;
- your ability to work well with others;
- your campus shoot story;
- your ability to provide shooting and editing support to your colleagues;
- leaving audio and video recording equipment ready to go for the next user;
- your punctuality for classes, labs and other scheduled events;
- and your contributions to class discussions;

GROUPS (For labs and campus shoots)

<u>GROUP 1</u> Rana Alexandra Sophie Matthew Gregory C Denise	<u>GROUP 2</u> Emma Martha Andrew Alexie Jenna Gregory H	<u>GROUP 3</u> Chloe Ross Jimmy Emily Kaitlin Emily
<u>GROUP 4</u> David Jesse Marta Stephanie Kaylee Madisyn	<u>GROUP 5</u> Nicolas Karl Rosemary Colleen Johanna Robin	<u>GROUP 6</u> Richard Sarah McKenzie Melissa Andre

SCHEDULE

Date	In Class	Outside of Class
September 8 th	Course introduction	Audio Lab
September 15 th	Audio Storytelling Basics	Prepare radio story proposal
September 22 nd Radio story pitch due in class	Broadcast Writing	Write and record a radio news story with at least one clip
September 29 th Radio stories due 4 PM Monday Sept. 28th	Video Storytelling: Focus and Structure	Camera Lab
October 6 th Radio stories due 4 PM Monday October 5th	Interviewing and Standups	AVID Editing Lab
October 13 th	Shooting 101	Campus shoot
October 20 th Campus shoot due 1 PM Monday Oct. 19th	Video Storytelling	Story Analysis exercise
October 27 th Story analysis due 6 PM Tuesday Oct. 27th	NO CLASS	Round 1 Reporters prepare TV story proposal
November 3 rd Round 1 Reporter TV story proposals due Oct 30 at 3 PM	Video Storytelling: Writing to Pictures Discuss proposals	
November 10 th Round 2 Reporter stories Proposal due 2 PM Nov. 9th	Video Storytelling Discuss proposals	
November 17 th Round 1 Reporter stories due 3:30 PM Nov. 16th	TV story critiques	Round 1 reporter production reports due at 5 PM Nov. 23rd Round 2+3 reporter critiques due 5 PM Nov. 23rd
November 24 th Round 2 Reporter stories due 3:30 PM Nov. 23rd Round 3 Reporter proposals due 2 PM Nov 23	TV story critiques Discuss proposals	Round 2 reporter production reports due at 5 PM Nov. 30th Round 3 reporter produce TV stories Round 1+3 reporter critiques due 5 PM Nov 30
December 1 st	Live Reporting	
December 8 th Round 3 Reporter story due 3:30 PM Dec. 7th	Review and wrap	Round 3 reporter production reports due at 5 PM Dec. 11th Round 1+2 reporter critiques due 5 PM Dec. 11

TEAMS FOR TV NEWS STORY ASSIGNMENT

You will have a maximum of 5 hours to shoot and 2.5 hours to edit each story.

ROLE	ROUND 1 Nov 16	ROUND 2 Nov 23	ROUND 3 Dec 7
REPORTER	David	Emma	Chloe
CAMERA	Chloe	David	Emma
ASSISTANT	Emma	Chloe	David
REPORTER	Alexandra	Martha	Ross
CAMERA	Ross	Alexandra	Martha
ASSISTANT	Martha	Ross	Alexandra
REPORTER	Sophie	Andrew	Jimmy
CAMERA	Jimmy	Sophie	Andrew
ASSISTANT	Andrew	Jimmy	Sophie
REPORTER	Matthew	Alexie	Emily Jenniskens
CAMERA	Emily	Matthew	Alexie
ASSISTANT	Alexie	Emily	Matthew
REPORTER	Gregory C	Jenna	Kaitlin
CAMERA	Kaitlin	Gregory	Jenna
ASSISTANT	Jenna	Kaitlin	Gregory
REPORTER	Denise	Emily Jones	Gregory H
CAMERA	Gregory	Denise	Emily
ASSISTANT	Emily	Gregory	Denise
REPORTER	Rana	Nicolas	Karl
CAMERA	Karl	Rana	Nicolas
ASSISTANT	Nicolas	Karl	Rana
REPORTER	Jesse	James	Sarah
CAMERA	Sarah	Jesse	James
ASSISTANT	James	Sarah	Jesse
REPORTER	Marta	Rosemary	Richard
CAMERA	Richard	Marta	Rosemary
ASSISTANT	Rosemary	Richard	Marta
REPORTER	Stephanie	Colleen	McKenzie
CAMERA	McKenzie	Stephanie	Colleen
ASSISTANT	Colleen	McKenzie	Stephanie
REPORTER	Kaylee	Johanna	Melissa
CAMERA	Melissa	Kaylee	Johanna
ASSISTANT	Johanna	Melissa	Kaylee
REPORTER	Madisyn	Robin	Andre
CAMERA	Andrew	Madisyn	Robin
ASSISTANT	Robin	Andrew	Madisyn

TV NEWS STORIES

Stories will be 90 - 120 seconds in length. They must include footage shot on location, interview clips from at least two people and a reporter standup. You will have up to five hours to shoot the story on location, and three hours to edit and package the story. You must submit a hard copy of a script in iNews format. The script must include a Focus Statement at the top, and an on camera intro for the announcer to read. All production cues, including supers and SOTs, should be noted on the left-hand column. All clips used in the story, including the standup, must be fully transcribed in the script.

STORY IDEAS

Email Jeremy a 1 – 3 sentence summary of your story idea by **3 PM on October 30th, November 6th or November 20th**.

STORY PROPOSALS

Stories will be based on story proposals, to be emailed out to the class **by 2 PM on November 2nd, November 9th or November 23rd** depending on when you are your team's reporter. Proposals will be discussed in class.

SCREENINGS & EVALUATIONS

Screenings of completed news stories are held as scheduled in the TV Studio. All students take part in reviewing and evaluating the stories.

CREW RESPONSIBILITIES

The Reporter

Is going to be marked on this story. He or she researches, plans, organizes and produces this story. Is the person in charge on remotes, directing crew and taking responsibility for scheduling, arranging location(s), getting required permissions, releases etc.

Conducts interviews, creates paper edit, writes the intro to and script for the story
Is responsible for booking equipment and hands in the script.

The Cameraperson

Picks up and returns equipment. Checks equipment to ensure it is in good working order.

Report equipment problems to Erin and Paul by email. If you don't do this, the next crew will run into the same problems you just had and it will count against your professionalism mark. The cameraperson is also the Avid editor. The reporter is responsible for the final edit, and directs the editing. The cameraperson does the actual, physical editing.

The Assistant

Responsible for helping out on the shoot and during the editing session. Attendance during the edit is not mandatory.

DUE DATES FOR REPORTERS

TV Story Proposal

ROUND	1	Due at 2 PM November 2 nd
ROUND	2	Due at 2 PM November 9 th
ROUND	3	Due at 2 PM November 23 rd

TV Story

ROUND	1	Due at 3:30 PM November 16 th
ROUND	2	Due at 3:30 PM November 23 rd
ROUND	3	Due at 3:30 PM December 7 th

Production report

ROUND	1	Due at 5 PM November 23 rd
ROUND	2	Due at 5 PM November 30 th
ROUND	3	Due at 5 PM December 11 th

PRODUCTION REPORTS

Each Reporter must submit a production report for his or her story. The reports are due at **1 PM on November 23rd, 30th or December 11th** depending on which round your story is in. Students should email a confidential production report to Jeremy, Erin and Paul. The report should include a summary of who helped you to produce your story and how they contributed. Also, make note of anything you learned during the process that you think your fellow students would benefit from knowing.

ONE-ON-ONE CONSULTATIONS

If you find you are having difficulties in this course, Jeremy is available at certain times for one-on-one advice or assistance. You can drop by his office in NCB 204 or arrange an appointment by phone, e-mail or in person. If you want extra help with shooting or editing Erin and Paul are available to help. Appointments can be arranged by phone, e-mail or in person.

MARKING

When your work is marked, journalistic excellence is ranked first, although production values count.

A range – If you do A range work, it means your stories are exceptional and publishable. They contain the following elements: original story selection; thorough research and reporting; compelling interview clips; imaginative story structure; lively, well-written script and intro; creative and well-edited visuals and sound.

B range – A story in this grade range shows solid professionalism: solid story selection; thorough research and reporting; relevant interview clips; clear writing; logical story structure; the necessary range of visuals and sound, proficiently edited.

C range – Generally, this grade range is given to stories that need more work, and contain a combination of some of the following: weak story choice; lack of journalistic judgment; inadequate research; confusing story structure; weak writing; poor production quality.

DEADLINES

In journalism, deadlines are real. TV assignments filed after the deadline will be marked as zero, unless an extension has been granted beforehand. Extensions may be granted with or without penalty at the instructor's discretion. Assignments containing very serious editorial errors may be marked zero, overriding stated marking criteria.

DUPLICATION

Duplication of assignments between courses is an offence. If students are in any doubt about what constitutes a duplication in the circumstances, they should consult with Jeremy Copeland before proceeding.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC OFFENSES

Scholastic offences are taken seriously. Students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf

SUPPORT SERVICES

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

SUGGESTED READINGS**Broadcast writing**

Writing News for Broadcast, Edward Bliss, Jr. & James L. Hoyt

Writing Broadcast News: Shorter, Sharper, Stronger. Mervin Block

Video and multimedia storytelling

Aim for the Heart: Write, Shoot, Report and Produce for TV and Multimedia. Al Tompkins

Advancing the Story: Broadcast Journalism in a Multimedia World. Deborah Halpern Wenger and Deborah Potter

Photography

Photographically Speaking: A Deeper Look at Creating Stronger Images. David duChemin

Simple Scene Sensational Shot: Artistic Photography in any Environment. Simon Bond

The Photographer's Eye: Composition and Design for Better Digital Photos. Michael D.A. Freeman

Editing

The Eye is Quicker: Film Editing: Making a Good Film Better. Richard Pepperman

XDCAM Quick Check List

Iris:

- Check that the IRIS switch on the lens is set to the manual position.
- When recording an interview zoom in on your subject's face then press and hold down the button marked IRIS (in front of the zoom control) for about 2 seconds. This will give enough time for the camera to set the exposure. This step needs to be repeated for every shot.
- When you do not have time to manually set the exposure then move the Auto/Manual switch to the **AUTO** position

White Balance:

Check the position of the ND filter switch. It is normally in the off position for shooting inside or on cloudy days. On a bright day you may have to put the ND filter to 1 or 2. There will be a prompt on the viewfinder screen as to which position.

Have the interviewee hold up a white piece of paper and zoom into it.

Press the **IRIS** button

Now press the **WHT BAL** button (front of camera under lens) within a couple seconds a message saying **Auto White OK** should appear in the camera's viewfinder. Remove the white piece of paper and press the **IRIS** button **again** to set the proper exposure for your subject. This step needs to be repeated for each change of location - inside/outside.

Gain:

The **gain** switch is normally set to the "L" position. Increasing it will enable you to shoot without lights in a low light condition but will result in a grainier looking picture

Audio:

There are two separate channels to record audio onto.

Our normal record set up is to have a handheld or a lavalier microphone plugged into **CH-1** input (just above the zoom control) and to manually set the audio levels for optimum sound quality.

The camera's built in microphone is normally set to record on **CH-2** and the audio select switch for that channel is set to auto.

Audio switches - looking at left side of camera:

AUDIO SELECT switch: in AUTO the camera controls levels - in MANUAL you control levels.

AUDIO IN switch: **INT** records the sound from the built in camera microphone, **EXT** records sound from a microphone plugged into the connector located above the zoom control.

While watching the audio level meter in the viewfinder, turn the audio level control so that the meter bounces 2/3 the way to the right but **does not touch** the red dot.

Headphones:

Headphone jack is located at the right rear of the camera handle and the headphone volume level is set with the monitor volume + /- buttons, located on top front of the handle. Both channels are fed to the headphones.

Summary of normal switch positions:

Left side of camera

Lens cap switch = open

Iris = manual

ND Filter = as required

Gain = L position

WHT Balance = A position

Audio switches:

Audio Level = CH-1 to Manual and CH-2 to Auto

Audio In = CH-1 to EXT and CH-2 to INT

Front of viewfinder

Zebra = used as an exposure meter when setting the iris
 Display = shows camera info in the viewfinder

HELP:

- If the zoom control does not work, check to see if the slide switch under the lens is set to the **SERVO** position (it sometimes gets bumped out of position being put into the case or on your shoulder).
- Low audio levels on the LAV microphone. - replace the microphone's AA battery, the long silver housing unscrews.
- If there is no sound in the headphones, check that **MONITOR VOL** level (front of handle) is turned up
- No picture – camera **on** and lens Cap switch in the **open** position
- Viewfinder is too dark or light and you know the iris is set right. Put the **CAM/BARS** switch to the bars position and, adjust the bright and contrast controls on the front of the viewfinder to give even gradation of the bars in the viewfinder.
- If you see the WRITE PROTECT indicator in the viewfinder, check that the WP tab is not in the protect position on the media card (this will prevent the camera from going into record). If it is to the left, slide it to the right.

The Display button on the front of the viewfinder can be turned on or off to give you additional information

If colour bars appear in the viewfinder press the Bars/cam button (side of camera)

Shutter:

The shutter control, in combination with an internal setting, can be used to eliminate flicker when shooting older TVs or computer monitors. See Jeremy or Erin.

If the shutter indicator is on in the viewfinder, slide the shutter switch to the off position. The switch is on the front of the camera under the lens.

The diagram below show the switch positions to record audio onto CH-1 from an external microphone and the audio from the camera microphone onto CH-2. The box surrounds controls for CH-1



Adjust audio level for CH-1 with the top audio level knob. The corresponding CH 1 switches are set to manual and EXT positions. Remember to use a headset.