

# MULTIMEDIA JOURNALISM FALL 2018

## Syllabus

**COM 450 (TT 10:30 a.m. - 12:10 p.m.)**

**Multimedia Journalism**

**Fall 2018**

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Office hours: 12:30 - 2 p.m. Tuesdays and 9 - 10:30 a.m. Wednesdays or, preferably, **by appointment**

### DESCRIPTION

Students gather and present news and information in a converged media environment that combines text, graphics, photojournalism, audio and video. Students work as individuals and in teams to write, report and produce online multimedia products. Capstone course in the journalism major.

### GOAL

Sharpen the skills of critical thinking, reporting, writing and multimedia production under deadline.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, students will be able to

- plan multimedia projects, conduct audience analysis, select resources, gather information, and create content in appropriate forms (text, audio, graphics, animation, video, interactivity).
- write clearly and effectively using appropriate content styles.
- employ the tools of technology to produce multimedia projects.
- determine appropriate manners of technical dissemination with consideration of file size, speed of delivery, linking and search-engine optimization to maximize effects.
- use computer-assisted reporting to gather data, apply numerical concepts and present information.
- engage in ethical ways of reasoning and apply professional standards, such as truth, accuracy, fairness and attention to the diversity of domestic and global audiences.

### ACCESSORIES

This class meets in a computer lab, but you may wish to bring a thumb drive to save any files you create.

Take notes during each of your interviews, and keep those notes in case there are questions regarding the accuracy of your quotes or information. Some students find it helpful to purchase separate notebooks for each of their assignments.

You might also consider purchasing a voice recorder or voice recorder app for your interviews.

You will make heavy use of equipment from the School of Communications' **Gear Room**. However, the Gear Room does not supply memory cards for cameras, so you will need to have your own. A 16 GB SDHC, Class 6 or better flash memory card with a compatible compact card reader is recommended.

For video editing, a 1TB external hard drive is recommended.

To upload your content to your website, you will need an FTP program. **Cyberduck** is free and available on both Macs and PCs.

Writing projects should adhere to AP Style. If you don't already have one, an AP Stylebook will be a good investment.

## **WRITING ASSIGNMENTS**

Students will complete three major, publishable multimedia assignments: One assignment will be done individually, one assignment can be done either individually or with a classmate of your choosing, and the final assignment will be a group project.

All multimedia projects should be uploaded as webpages to your student.elon.edu using Cyberduck, with the resulting URL being submitted via Moodle. Please do not email assignments or bring files to class. All multimedia projects will be sent along to producers at the student-run **Elon News Network** for their publishing consideration.

The multimedia assignments include both a draft and final version, in between which you receive feedback from both the instructor. For the first two assignments, you will also receive feedback from (and give feedback to) your classmates.

## **DEADLINES**

Deadlines are considered as important as in a newsroom. Late assignments will receive 0 percent.

Please remember that all assignments other than peer evaluations can be turned in early. If it helps to give yourself deadlines earlier than those listed, you are strongly encouraged to do so.

## **GRADING**

Assignments will be evaluated on factors that include quality of the completeness, structure and organization, style, accuracy, spelling, grammar and adherence to AP style rules. Misspelled names and major errors in fact will result in significant reductions in the assignment's grade, so double-check everything. Projects do not have length requirements (quite the opposite, actually — brevity is a trademark of good journalism). Yet a variety of sources and comprehensive reporting are paramount for successful stories.

Your three major multimedia projects will have a draft version and a final version. If you elect to not turn in a final version of your project, the graded percentage you received on your draft will apply to your final.

#### *Investigative Story 1*

- Pitch (30 points)
- Source Update (10 points)
- Draft (75 points)
- Assessment (25 points)
- Final (100 points)

#### *Investigative Story 2*

- Pitch (30 points)
- Source Update (10 points)
- Draft (75 points)
- Assessment (25 points)
- Final (100 points)

#### *Investigative Story 3*

- Draft (75 points)
- Evaluation of Group Work (20 points)
- Final (100 points)

To determine your final grade, the following grading scale is used:

A: 93.0 percent

A-: 90.0 percent

B+: 87.0 percent

B: 83.0 percent

B-: 80.0 percent

C+: 77.0 percent

C: 73.0 percent

C-: 70.0 percent

D+: 67.0 percent

D: 63.0 percent

D-: 60.0 percent

F: below 60 percent

#### **REQUIRED STATEMENTS**

The following statements are required for inclusion — either by the university, school or department — on all course syllabuses.

#### *Attendance Policy*

Students in the Department of Communications are expected to attend all classes. Just as professionals go to work each day, we expect students in a professional school to come to class on time and be prepared to work.

A student who misses more than 20 percent of scheduled classes in a term (more than eight absences for classes meeting three times a week) automatically receives an F because the student has missed too much content and participation to pass a course in a professional school.

Teachers will lower the final grade in a class for each absence beyond the equivalent of one week of class (three absences for classes meeting three times a week).

Exceptions exist for individual class absences for observance of a recognized religious holiday and for absences for participating in sanctioned university activities. Students participating in such events must follow policy as stated in the student handbook.

### *Honor Code*

Elon's honor pledge calls for a commitment to Elon's shared values of honesty, integrity, respect and responsibility. To be clear about what constitutes violations of these values, students should be familiar with code of conduct policies described in the student handbook.

Students with questions about the specific interpretation of these values and violations as they relate to this course should contact this instructor immediately. Violations in academic-related areas will be documented in an incident report which will be maintained in the Office of Student Conduct, and may result in a lowering of the course grade and/or failure of the course with an Honor Code F.

Violations specifically covered by academic honor code policies include: plagiarism, cheating, lying, stealing, and the facilitation of another's dishonesty. Multiple violations may result in a student's suspension from the university.

### *Academic Honesty*

The School of Communications takes plagiarism seriously, just as businesses and other media organizations and scholars do.

All forms of dishonesty mentioned above may result in an F in a course and expulsion from the university. Although all of these are clear violations of the university Honor Code, plagiarism is a special concern for communications professionals and scholars.

What is plagiarism? It is using someone else's work such as passages, photographs, music, video, graphics and other images, and claiming it as your own. It can be copying work that has appeared in a journal, a magazine, a newspaper or online – anywhere, really – and presenting it as your own. Cutting and pasting passages from the web into your work, for example, is plagiarism unless you credit the source of the material or images. Take this as your guiding principle: If you quote someone else's words or appropriate their image, attribute the source.

In brief, you may not adopt or reproduce the ideas, words or statements of another person without acknowledgment or attribution. In many cases, such work is copyrighted. Acknowledgment is required when borrowing facts, statistics, images or illustrative material, unless that information is common

knowledge or in the public domain. (Example: China is the most populous nation on Earth. Or: Jupiter is the largest planet in our solar system.)

If you quote someone else's words or use information or material acquired or created by someone else, then you must attribute the source. Definitions and examples of Elon Honor Code violations above may be found [online](#).

### *Disabilities Resources*

If you are a student with a documented disability who will require accommodations in this course, please [register with Disabilities Resources](#). You may reach out to Disabilities Resources for assistance in developing a plan to address your academic needs.

Disability Resources is located in the Koenigsberger Learning Center (Belk Library 226; 336-278-6568). For more information about Disabilities Resources, please [visit its website](#).

### *Religious Holidays Policies*

In supporting religious diversity, Elon has a policy and procedures for students who wish to observe religious holidays that are in conflict with the academic calendar, allowing students an excused absence. Students who wish to observe a holiday during the semester must complete the online [Religious Observance Notification Form](#) (RONF) by Sept. 17, 2018, with the exception of Rosh Hashanah. Excused absence requests for Rosh Hashanah Day 1 and Day 2 must be submitted by Sept. 7, 2018.

This policy does not apply during the final examination period. Students are required to make prior arrangements with the instructor for completion of any work missed during the absence. Once the completed RONF is received, the Truitt Center will confirm the excused absence with notification to the instructor and the appropriate academic dean, along with a copy to the student. Students may contact the Truitt Center staff with any questions (336-278-7729).

# MULTIMEDIA JOURNALISM FALL 2018

## Tuesday, Aug. 28

Introduction to multimedia journalism. Review syllabus. Investigative journalism.



Multimedia Survey

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## Thursday, Aug. 30

Examples of multimedia journalism.



At the end of the American Dream (Western Kentucky)



In the Path of the Pipeline (University of Florida)



I Live Here (University of Guelph-Humber)



Living Form (Ball State University)

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## Tuesday, Sept. 4

Visual composition.

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## Thursday, Sept. 6

Visual composition (cont.) and DSLR photography.

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## Tuesday, Sept. 11

Advanced Photoshop techniques.



Investigative Story 1 Pitch

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## Thursday, Sept. 13

No class today. **Sign up for a 30-minute timeslot** on Sept. 12 or Sept. 13 to review your investigative story 1 pitch.

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## Tuesday, Sept. 18

Coding workshop.



**Investigative Story 1 Source Update**

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## Thursday, Sept. 20

Coding workshop (cont.).

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## Tuesday, Sept. 25

Draft evaluations.



**Investigative Story 1 Draft**

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## Thursday, Sept. 27

Interview with Stacie Saunders, director of Alamance County Health Department.

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## Tuesday, Oct. 2

Data-driven reporting and data visualization.

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## Thursday, Oct. 4

Math for journalists. Data cleansing with Excel.

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## Tuesday, Oct. 9

Databases.



Investigative Story 1 Final



Please sign up for a free Caspio account

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## Thursday, Oct. 11

No class today. Fall break.

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## Tuesday, Oct. 16

Databases, cont.

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## Thursday, Oct. 18



Investigative Story 2 Pitch

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## Tuesday, Oct. 23

No class today. Sign up for a 30-minute timeslot on Oct. 22 or Oct. 23 to review your investigative story 2 pitch.

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## Thursday, Oct. 25

Guest speaker Emily Kassie of the Pulitzer Center.

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## Tuesday, Oct. 30

Mapping.

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## Thursday, Nov. 1

No class today. Investigative story 2 workday.



Investigative Story 2 Source Update



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## Tuesday, Nov. 6

Drone journalism.

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## Thursday, Nov. 8

Draft evaluations.



Investigative Story 2 Draft

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## Tuesday, Nov. 13

360-degree photography and videography.

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## Thursday, Nov. 15

Intellectual property law. Privacy and defamation law.



Investigative Story 2 Final

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## Tuesday, Nov. 20

No class today. Thanksgiving break.

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## Thursday, Nov. 22

No class today. Thanksgiving break.

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## Tuesday, Nov. 27

Careers in media.

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## Thursday, Nov. 29

No class today. **Sign up for a 30-minute timeslot** on Nov. 29 to review your investigative story 3 draft.



Investigative Story 3 Draft

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## Tuesday, Dec. 4

Group work day.

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## Thursday, Dec. 6

Group work day.

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## Monday, Dec. 10

Final project presentations 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.



Investigative Story 3 Final



Peer Evaluation of Group Work