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Syllabus CMN2158 - MULTIMEDIA I

Fall 2019
Tuesday 8:30 - 11:20

INSTRUCTOR

Jean-Sébastien Marier, M.J.

OFFICE HOURS

In person, Thursday 11:00 - 14:00, Desmarais 11142
Via Google Hangouts by appointment

TO REACH ME

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This syllabus is based in large part on a course outline developed by Izabel Barsive.

ABOUT ME

I have been a part-time professor at the University of Ottawa since 2016. When not teaching, I am a multiplatform producer and in-house trainer at CBC/Radio-Canada. I primarily work for the public broadcaster's French-language service but have also filed web, radio and TV stories for the English-language network.

In past years, I also directed short independent documentary films, taught a spring course at a university in Burundi, and worked as a researcher for two TV series aired on TFO. My articles and photos have been published in *La Presse*, *The Montreal Gazette*, *The Ottawa Citizen*, and several student papers.

I hold a Master of Journalism degree from Carleton University and a Graduate Diploma in Public Ethics from Saint Paul University. I live in Ottawa with my wife Samantha.

OFFICIAL COURSE DESCRIPTION

Hands-on course introducing interactive multimedia technologies and their many possible applications. Integration of graphic design concepts with project-based assignments. Creation of interactive digital content (web development) with dynamic text, sound, animation and video.

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COURSE CONTENT

During the semester, you will learn about web design and how multimedia elements can be used to enhance user experience on the Internet. Together, we will discover the key principles of multimedia production (sound, image, and text), the types of files associated with them, as well as some of the software used to create them. You will hone your graphic design, audio production and video-making skills.

Since this is a university course, it also includes some theoretical components. You will learn about the “best practices” in digital media production, such as the concept of accessibility for people with disabilities. We will also discuss new developments in multimedia production and concepts pertaining to cyberculture.

SPECIFIC COURSE OBJECTIVES

Practical

This course aims to introduce you to the world of multimedia production and website management. At the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Identify the best medium and file format to convey your message;
2. Plan, execute, and deliver multimedia projects;
3. Design and produce basic visual documents and infographics;
4. Research, scenarize, record, edit, and publish a short audio podcast;
5. Scenarize and produce a 2D animated video;
6. Modify the layout and appearance of an existing website;
7. Create a new website using an online template;
8. Manage a website using a Content Management System (CMS).

Theoretical

As young academics, you ought to be able to take a critical stance towards multimedia production. At the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Understand and discuss the “theory” behind multimedia content, such as the basic principles of visual design or the essential elements of a podcast;
2. Present and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of multimedia tools and techniques;
3. Explain your creative process and the main steps leading to the completion of a multimedia project.

TEACHING METHODS

This is first and foremost a project-based course. Thus, most of our meetings will consist of a mix of theory and practice. I will give short lectures and we will discuss suggested readings. You will also do a group presentation. Most of our class time will be used to learn the skills and tools necessary to produce your assignments. You will then be invited to present said assignments to your classmates, in order to benefit from their feedback.

This is an in-person lecture-based course, but I will use Virtual Campus to share class content and additional resources with you. At times, I will also invite you to comment on discussion threads.

REQUIRED READINGS

You do not need to buy a textbook, since this course is primarily hands-on. However, you will be required to complete a few mandatory readings throughout the term. They are either already listed in the class calendar at the end of this syllabus or will be posted on Virtual Campus in due time.

ONLINE TUTORIALS

Throughout the term, you will need to complete online tutorials on sites such as [Adobe training and tutorials](#), [LinkedIn Learning \(Lynda.com\)](#) and [NPR Training](#). You have free access to the latter through [the university's Library system](#). You will need a stable Internet connection. Some of the tutorials are quite long but they will be replacing mandatory readings. I also encourage you to sign up and explore [Behance](#), Adobe's social media platform for creative types. It might give you inspiring ideas.

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

You must bring a laptop to each of our meetings, since we will be doing practical exercises in class. We will be using Google tools and Virtual Campus, which are already linked to your University of Ottawa account. When possible, I will recommend free and/or open source software.

You will nonetheless need access to [Adobe Creative Cloud](#). It's installed on the computers in our class lab (must be booked ahead of time by contacting Daniel Lévesque at artslab@uottawa.ca) and is also available at the [Morisset Library's Media Centre](#).

If you want your own copy of [Adobe Creative Cloud](#), the students and teachers version costs US\$19.99/month for the first year. Alternatively, you can download a 7-day trial version of each of the required software. If you choose this route, wait until you are ready to start an assignment before downloading the trial copy.

Here's a non-exhaustive list of the programs and tools you will need this term:

- [Adobe Photoshop](#)
- [Adobe InDesign](#)
- [Adobe Audition](#)
- [Adobe Spark](#) (Post and Video)
- [Vyond](#)
- Content Management Systems (CMS)

You will also need access to photo, audio and video production equipment. You can borrow voice recorders, microphones, photo cameras, camcorders, and tripods from the Multimedia Distribution Service, which is located in the basement of Morisset Hall. You might also be able to borrow some equipment through Daniel Lévesque.

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

This course will be taught in English but assignments can be submitted in either official language. Please carefully read [Academic Regulation I-2 - Bilingualism](#). It states that, "except in programs and courses for which language is a requirement, all students have the right to produce their written work and to answer examination questions in the official language of their choice, regardless of the course's language of instruction."

If you need help writing your assignments, please do not hesitate to visit the [Academic Writing Help Centre](#) (AWHC). I also encourage you to use software such as Antidote (installed on the computers in the Morisset Library) or Grammarly to spell check your work.

ASSIGNMENTS, PARTICIPATION & PROFESSIONALISM

Unless stated otherwise, you must submit each assignment on Virtual Campus and/or Google Drive **before 11:59 p.m. on the due date**. Detailed instructions and marking rubrics will be made available on Virtual Campus at least two weeks ahead of time.

Description	Due Date	Value
Group presentation on multimedia production tools	Sept. 24	15%
Proposal for the final project (website)	Oct. 8	10%
Assignment 1: Infographic or promotional poster	Oct. 29	10%
Assignment 2: Podcast	Nov. 12	15%
Assignment 3: 2D animation or short video	Nov. 26	10%
Final project: Website	Dec. 18	30%
Participation & Professionalism	Throughout the term	10%

The three short assignments will also need to be embedded on the website you will create as part of your final project. Thus, make sure the subject and content of each of them are closely related to the topic you will choose. Since this is a communication course, your assignments and final project will be evaluated both on their production value (technical quality) and editorial content (message, coherence, etc.).

Group presentation on multimedia production tools

We will form teams of three during the first week of class. Each group will prepare and deliver a 30-minute presentation (including a question period) on three similar multimedia production tools (software). You must first try out each software. In your presentation, you need to critically compare them by detailing their strengths and weaknesses. The topics will be selected through a draw at the beginning of the term. Topics can include:

- Photo editing
- Audio editing
- Video editing
- Animation or text on video (TOV)
- Graphic design
- Web design (without coding)

Proposal for the final project (website)

The final project is a great opportunity to hone your communication skill by creating a website with real content which caters to a given audience. It is encouraged to create (not update) a site that can be useful to an artist, organization, association, small business, etc. Sites on fellow students or friends are not accepted. Projects with fake content will be rejected and considered fraud. Fraudulent information includes invented facts, events, people, companies, organizations, etc. You need to submit a detailed three-page proposal. It must include at least the following elements:

- A description of your topic and type of website (project, NGO, company, etc.)
- The name of the company, organization, etc.
- The website's proposed title/name and URL
- The tool/platform you intend to use (Wix, WordPress, etc.) to create it
- An explanation of your website's usefulness and potential impacts on users
- A summary of the intended content
- A sitemap listing intended pages
- A project calendar highlighting the main tasks you need to complete

Assignment 1: Infographic or promotional poster

You must create a visual element which you will then embed on your website. You could, for example, create a one-page infographic summarizing an issue or the services offered by your community association, or a promotional poster for an upcoming event.

Assignment 2: Podcast

You must create a four-minute podcast which you will then embed on your website. It can be of any kind: mini-documentary, promotional, report, etc. It needs to include some music (copyright laws must be respected!), natural sounds, and at least two voices. Your podcast must be published on SoundCloud. Remember that your chosen topic must "fit-in" with your final project.

Assignment 3: 2D animation or short video

You must create a 90-second 2D animation or video which you will then embed on your website. Your animation or short video must convey a clear message through text, sounds, images, animated graphics, photos, etc. For example, you could produce an animation explaining your NGO's mandate or the services offered by your company.

Final project: Website

Your final project consists of the creation of a website on a topic of your choosing. No coding is required. You can use any online Content Management System (CMS) you like, such as [Wix](#), [Squarespace](#) or [WordPress](#). Your website must include the following:

- A menu (sidebar or top bar) so that visitors can navigate between pages
- At least 4 pages:
 - A landing/welcome page
 - A contact page
 - Two other pages of your choosing
- Relevant hyperlinks
- Original written content in English or French totalling 2000-2500 words
- A poster or infographic (assignment 1)
- A podcast (assignment 2)
- At least 3 photos you must take and enhance yourself (without major editing)
- A 2D animation or short video (assignment 3)
- All the relevant information concerning copyright
- Accessibility measures (Alt texts are working properly, etc.)

Participation & Professionalism

I believe that your participation and professionalism mark should not be based solely on attendance. As such, you must actively contribute to both your own learning and the learning of your peers. Among other things, I expect you to complete mandatory readings and to participate in our in-class discussions. Here are some of the criteria on which you will be evaluated:

- Frequency and relevance of in-class comments
- Professional behaviour and respect
- Attendance, punctuality, and proactive communication with the instructor
- Individual meeting during my office hours

I will post a detailed evaluation rubric on Virtual Campus. Please send me a self-evaluation (about 250 words) before the end of the exam period.

FORMATTING & STYLE OF ASSIGNMENTS

Your assignments must follow the instructions published on Virtual Campus. Since this is a communication course, I am expecting a high degree of proficiency and consistency from your part when it comes to formatting.

OFFICIAL GRADING SYSTEM

Grades are assigned using the official University of Ottawa grade scale.

Letter	%	Letter	%	Letter	%
A+	90-100 %	B	70-74	D	50-54
A	85-89	C+	65-69	E	40-49
A-	80-84	C	60-64	F	0-39
B+	75-79	D+	55-59		

List of Symbols	
ABS	Absent
EIN	Failure/Incomplete
NNR	Grade not available or not submitted because of an ongoing investigation over alleged academic fraud

See also [Academic regulation I-10 - Grading system](#).

LATE PENALTY

As future communication professionals, you must learn the utmost importance of deadlines. As such, assignments must be handed in by the deadline specified in this syllabus. If you do not hand in your assignment by the due date, I will deduct 5% from your grade for said assignment per day, unless you can produce the proper justification, as outlined in Article 9.5 of [Academic regulation I-9 - Evaluation of student learning](#).

ACADEMIC FRAUD

Plagiarism and academic fraud will not be tolerated. This includes using sentences, quotes, and ideas that are not yours without properly attributing them. In short: don't pass someone else's work off as your own.

For this course more specifically, it would be fraudulent to invent quotes or statistics, to pretend that you witnessed a situation when you did not, to use images and sound captured by another person without giving them proper credit.

Asking a friend to copy edit your work for grammar and spelling is fair game. But hiring a third party to heavily edit or write an assignment on your behalf is unacceptable. I want to evaluate your writing, not theirs. When in doubt, come talk to me.

It is also prohibited to plagiarise yourself. Don't hand in an assignment that was already submitted in another course, for an internship application, for your job, etc. When in doubt, ask me first.

Myself and the University of Ottawa take this matter extremely seriously. If you plagiarize, you expose yourself to sanctions ranging from a written warning to expulsion. Please read [Academic regulation I-14 - Academic fraud](#) very carefully.

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

I am expecting you to be in class on time. Also, you would not stay home without telling your manager. Thus, send me an email before class if you will be late or unable to attend. I will take this into account when marking your participation and professionalism mark.

I designed the assignments so that they closely match the content seen in class. I will also be giving detailed instructions for them during our weekly meetings. Suffice to say, if you miss a lecture, it is your responsibility to make sure to catch up.

OTHER CONCERNS, ACCOMMODATIONS, MENTAL HEALTH, ETC.

This syllabus is already quite long and it is impossible to include guidelines for every single potential situation. As a reminder, the University of Ottawa has policies on [I-15 - Religious accommodations](#) and [I-16 - Academic Accommodations](#).

University can sometimes be a particularly stressful environment. Should you or someone you know require assistance — or just need to speak to someone — don't hesitate to ask for help. A list of on- and off-campus resources is available on the university's [Mental Health and Wellness](#) page.

Please feel free to get in touch with me as soon as possible should you have any concerns or questions. Your well-being and success are my priorities. I promise to do everything humanly possible to help you.

CLASS CALENDAR

Some weeks are heavier than others in terms of mandatory readings and/or tutorials. Take advantage of the lighter weeks to work on your assignments.

Date	Topics, Mandatory Readings, Due Dates
Class 1 Sept. 10	First class <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do we mean by “multimedia?” • Presentation of the syllabus • Required texts and equipment • Your learning objectives • Q & A session • Formation of teams for the group presentations
Class 2 Sept. 17	The nuts and bolts of multimedia production and web development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choosing the best medium to convey the message • Basic rules of web design and sitemap • Writing for the web • Hyperlinks and embedded elements • Accessibility standards and responsiveness • Search Engine Optimization (SEO) • Analysis of good and bad websites To read before class <p>Athas, E. & Grasl, S. (2018, May 7). A blueprint for planning storytelling projects [Blog post and PDF]. <i>NPR Training</i>. Retrieved from: https://training.npr.org/2018/05/07/a-blueprint-for-planning-storytelling-projects/</p> <p>Lilyquist, M. (2019, July 10). How to create a website plan [Blog post]. <i>The Balance Small Business</i>. Retrieved from: https://www.thebalancesmb.com/how-to-plan-a-website-1794805</p> To do before class <p>Find five examples of good and bad websites showcasing the work of Ottawa-based non-profit organizations. You can critique the websites’ design, content, layout, etc. Post the links in the relevant thread on Virtual Campus.</p>

Class 3 Sept. 24	Group presentation on multimedia production tools – Part A <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First round of group presentations • In-class work on your proposal for the final project
Class 4 Oct. 1	Group presentation on multimedia production tools – Part B + Photography and Photoshop – Part A <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second round of group presentations • Camera settings • Composition 101
Class 5 Oct. 8	Photography and Photoshop – Part B <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Photoshop • Group discussion on photography ethics • In-class photography and photo editing workshop • Show and tell session • Finding an idea for your infographic or promotional poster <p>To do before class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the first seven modules (up to and including “Color and Brush Essentials”) of the Photoshop CC 2018 Essential Training: The Basics course offered by Julieanne Kost on LinkedIn Learning. • Take five photos of your choosing and bring the digital files to class. We will work on them with Photoshop. <p>Due tonight: Proposal for the final project (website)</p>
----- Oct. 13 to 19 – Reading Week -----	
Class 6 Oct. 22	Graphic design and InDesign – Part A <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to InDesign • Guiding principles in graphic design • In-class work on your infographic or promotional poster • Show and tell session <p>To do before class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the InDesign CC 2019 Essential Training course offered by David Blatner on LinkedIn Learning.

Class 7 Oct. 29	<p>Graphic design and InDesign – Part B + Podcasting – Part A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-class work on your infographic or promotional poster • Show and tell session • Creating a podcast 101 • The fundamental elements of an audio story • Finding an idea for your podcast • Recording audio • In-class audio recording workshop <p>To read before class</p> <p>Macadam, A. (2018, June 19). Want to start a podcast? Read this first [Blog post]. <i>NPR Training</i>. Retrieved from: https://training.npr.org/2018/06/19/so-you-want-to-start-a-podcast-read-this-first/</p> <p>Due tonight: Assignment 1: Infographic or promotional poster</p>
Class 8 Nov. 5	<p>Podcasting – Part B</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group discussion on the “sociology” of podcasting • Introduction to audio editing with Adobe Audition • In-class work on your podcast • Show and tell session <p>To read before class</p> <p>Byers, R. (2018a, October 31). The producer's handbook to mixing audio stories [Blog post]. <i>NPR Training</i>. Retrieved from: https://training.npr.org/2018/10/31/mixing/</p> <p>Byers, R. (2018b, October 31). How to mix: 8 steps to master the art of mixing audio stories [Blog post]. <i>NPR Training</i>. Retrieved from: https://training.npr.org/2018/10/31/mixing-diy/</p> <p>To do before class</p> <p>Complete the beginner’s level Audition tutorials on Adobe training and tutorials.</p>

Class 9 Nov. 12	Podcasting – Part C + Animations and shorts videos – Part A <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-class work on your podcast • Show and tell session • Basic animation and video-making techniques • A quick word about advanced techniques (VR' 360 videos, etc.) • Finding an idea for your 2D animation or short video Due tonight: Assignment 2: Podcast
Class 10 Nov. 19	Animations and shorts videos – Part B <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group discussion on effective video storytelling • Choosing the right production and editing tools • Introduction to video editing • In-class work on your 2D animation or short video • Show and tell session To do before class <p>Complete the Telling your story on the web in 60 seconds course offered by Richard Harrington on LinkedIn Learning.</p>
Class 11 Nov. 26	Animations and shorts videos – Part C <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-class work on your 2D animation or short video • Show and tell session Due tonight: Assignment 3: 2D animation or short video
Class 12 Dec. 3	Last class <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wrap-up of the term • What have we learned? • What comes next? • Questions about the final project • In-class work on the final project

**Final assignment due
by 23:59 on Dec. 18**