



GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY  
School of Continuing Studies  
Journalism

## MPJO-508-01: VIDEO JOURNALISM

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY: MPS-JOURNALISM

Tuesdays, 8 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. | Spring 2015

### Instructor: Whitney Shefte

Teaching assistant: Zan Gillies

Georgetown Downtown, Mac Lab (C226)

- Office hours are by appointment

### COURSE OVERVIEW

This hands-on video journalism class will help participants think visually, overcome technology-related concerns or inexperience and gain awareness of multimedia options from the onset of reporting and information gathering.

We'll cover the fundamentals of framing, lighting, composition and sequencing, along with ethical reporting, shooting and editing practices. In the interest of informed decision-making, assignments will help students gain production insights and envision potential workflows suited to the realities of their professional environments.

Familiarization with technology and digital storytelling options will help inspire fresh approaches for daily and long-term assignments, whether students find themselves working individually or as part of a team. The core concepts and transferable skills covered in this course can be useful in many fields and settings, including websites, television and radio stations, public relations, non-profit organizations, governmental agencies, social networking arenas, documentary filmmaking efforts and personal projects.

**This is a core, required course of the MPS Journalism program, and students must earn a "B" (83) or higher to pass the course. Please see the Graduate Student Handbook for more details.**

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

- work individually or as a member of a team to complete assignments and projects
- transfer raw video, audio and still photos from cameras and recording devices to computers for use in editing programs, such as Premiere Pro
- edit in Premiere Pro, with the option to explore other editing programs
- shoot videos that incorporate best practices in areas of lighting, audio, framing and composition, whether the cameras are professional or pocket-sized
- edit and publish video and multimedia assignments online
- publish assignments online
- complete story proposals or "pitches" that will lead to successful final projects



- have a better understanding of multimedia tools and how best to apply them in different circumstances

## REQUIRED READING

There is no required text for this course. Instead, the instructor will assign specific articles to read or videos to watch as part of the homework. It is expected that students will come to class prepared to discuss any of those assigned readings and videos.

## EQUIPMENT

### REQUIRED FOR STUDENTS TO PURCHASE:

You must purchase your own external Firewire 800 hard drives, and you are expected to bring these to every class, both to bring in your work and to save work you do in class. (Any files saved to the Mac Lab computers will be lost during the routine clean-up of the hard drives.) These drives are an investment for your time in the program, as you will be able to use them to store work from any other class and will be particularly useful for any multimedia classes you take.

Some options include drives by LaCie, G-Tech, Iomega and OWC. We do not endorse any particular commercial brand but can help guide you through various options. The speed must be 7200 RPM to be able to handle HD material. The drives need to be formatted Mac OS Extended (not journaled). We can do this together in the classroom if you need assistance. Make sure that the drive you buy has a triple interface, including FireWire 800, FireWire 400 and USB 2.0 ports.

### OTHER EQUIPMENT:

The Digital Media Center has cameras and tripods for checking out. Each student must sign a Usage Agreement Form before being able to use the equipment, and someone from the DMC will be at the first class to discuss the procedure and to explain the options of cameras that students can use. Students may also wish to use their own equipment, including smartphones or tablets, but the class will generally be based on using the Canon Vixias in the DMC.

You may also check out equipment from the Gelardin New Media Center in the Lauinger library on Main Campus. For a list of the equipment the center has and its policies, you can get information on the website: [http://www.library.georgetown.edu/gelardin?quicktabs\\_3=2](http://www.library.georgetown.edu/gelardin?quicktabs_3=2). Gelardin also has editing suites that come equipped with iMovie and Final Cut, in case you need access to those programs: <http://www.library.georgetown.edu/carrels-lockers-space/multimedia>.

It is the responsibility of students – not that of the instructors – to make arrangements to check out whatever equipment they need and to find the time and place to edit their video pieces.

We highly recommend that students consider signing up for the subscription with Adobe to get



access on your home computers to Premiere. See the Adobe Creative Cloud website for more information.

## ATTENDANCE

As outlined by the university, missing more than two classes will result in a final grade reduction of one level (for example, an A will be converted to an A-). Absences for classes, beyond the initial two, will result in further reduction of the final grade. If you are absent for more than four classes, you will be in danger of failing this course.

If you have a legitimate reason for missing class, please let the instructor know prior to the class period to be missed. Make-up work will be assigned.

## CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE, CLASS PARTICIPATION AND OTHER GUIDELINES

Students should turn off all cell phones, pagers or other communication devices while in class. Class discussions should be respectful and considerate of others' views and opinions.

Class attendance, completion of the final project proposal, general homework and in-class assignments, general punctuality and written reports are all a part of the class participation grade. In addition, students are in danger of receiving point deductions if they do not come to class with the necessary equipment, including cameras, tripods, external drives and connecting cables.

Photographs, videos and interviews should portray people, scenes and action as they are in real life, with the exception of basic editing and color correction. No photographs, videos, scenes or interviews may be staged, directed, falsified, coerced or otherwise manipulated.

Students will not focus on friends or family members for interviews for final projects. Students will identify the subjects in their stories for assignments and for the final projects.

Students will not include music tracks in assignments unless music is an integral part of the story or the use of music has been approved by instructor.

In the event of a weather emergency (or any other widespread emergency) that would close the Georgetown Downtown building, we will plan to meet virtually through online videoconferencing tools. If such an emergency occurs during a hands-on lab session, we will coordinate with students on how to replace that session.

## ASSIGNMENTS

**Assignment #1, On-Camera Report**

**Deadline: Beginning of class, 1/26**



Written post: Write one 300- to 700-word post on one of the following topics: a critique of one of the videos shown in class or your own personal reaction that outlines the challenges you face in learning how to shoot, edit and publish video on the web. Make every effort to ensure that your post is well written and free of grammatical, spelling and formatting errors.

Video report: When you have finished your written report, do an on-camera version, shooting video with a partner summarizing the same topics you each wrote about. You will be graded on the video you shoot of your partner. They will be graded on the video they shoot of you.

Prepare questions for your partner by reading their written report. Set up the shot, securing the camera on the tripod, making sure the camera is stable and won't fall to the ground. Set up a softbox or use window light directed at your partner at a high, 45-degree angle coming from the side/front. Position your partner so their body will be just off center, to the right or left of the frame with an appropriate amount of "look space." Their eyes will be in the upper third of the frame and your gaze will be directed away from the lens and toward you (the "reporter" in this case) who is asking questions based on your written report. This person should only have two roles during this assignment: pushing the record button after you have set up the shot and asking the questions you have outlined.

The exercise is designed to remind you what it feels like to be on camera; to help you summarize written reports in a way that is coherent on camera; to provide an opportunity to set up the camera and shots; and to practice conducting an interview for video. This initial video may be unedited but MAY NOT EXCEED 2 MINUTES. Have your written reports and raw videos ready to post in class on 1/20.

#### *Assignment #1, Sample Grading Assessment*

Written report	Video lighting	Video framing/body position	Video composition	Clear audio	Total points
2/2	2/2	2/2	2/2	2/2	10/10

#### **Assignment #2, Man-on-the-Street Shoot**

**Deadline: Bring raw material to class on 2/2**

Conduct two separate man-on-the-street interviews on camera and post them on your Vimeo channel unedited. The topic of the interviews should be something currently in the news. For example, students can ask subjects about their thoughts on the economy, a political race, drone strikes, etc. The raw version of each interview should not exceed three minutes. Students will be graded on their reporting and how well they apply the framing, lighting and audio lessons



covered in class. The use of tripods is mandatory. Think of the video camera as your new notebook. At the start of each interview, students must ask the subject to:

- say his or her full name
- spell the full name on camera
- give his or her age
- indicate his or her occupation
- give his or her current city and state of residence

These initial questions and answers must be recorded and included in the posted video in order for shooters to receive full credit for the assignment. Ask all other interview questions in a way that the subject answers in a complete sentence.

NOTE: if you are unable to post for any reason, always bring the recorded raw material on your cameras to class for review as a back-up plan. Do not erase or lose your material.

*Assignment #2, Sample Grading Assessment*

Background info included	Tripod use	Composition + framing, lighting	Story/Narrative	Clear audio	Total points
2/2	2/2	2/2	2/2	2/2	10/10

**Assignment #3: Man-on-the-Street Edit**

**Deadline: Start of class, 2/9**

**\*This is an in-class assignment for 2/2, with extra time to make edits through the following week.**

Edit the man-on-the street interviews. Final edits must not exceed one minute and 30 seconds. You will be graded on content and the coherence of the final edit. Breaks in the interviews may be separated by fades or dips to black. For the purposes of this assignment, avoid dissolves between breaks in the interviews and use dips to black instead.

Text screens and title screens should be used to identify the subject and condense the background information you recorded during Assignment #2. Plan on editing out the background information for this final edit. Make sure to use title screens as a way to condense that information. Make sure the title screens and text screens are factually correct (with names spelled correctly) and placed in the correct spot on the screen.

*Assignment #3, Sample Grading Assessment*



One minute max	Interview content	Story/Narrative	Effective use of title/text screens	Breaks/dips to black appropriate	Total points
2/2	2/2	2/2	2/2	2/2	10/10

### **White House News Photographers Association contest judging event**

**Deadline: 8 p.m. on 2/16**

Students will attend the judging of the White House News Photographers Association's "Eyes of History" Contest at National Geographic. The two-day event showcases many different types of visual stories. The dates for the judging are Feb. 13 and 14. Judging usually begins around 9 a.m. and lasts until about 5 p.m. More information will be given in class on exact times of the judging as the event gets closer. It is possible that the judging will wrap up early on Sunday, so don't arrive too late.

Attendance is very important. This assignment is worth 50 percent of the class participation grade. You should be able to enter the building from the main entrance. Tell the security guard you're attending the contest. WHNPA Executive Director Heidi Elswick is aware that students will be there.

Requirements:

- You must watch the judging of one video category and one multimedia category. There are several categories in each division. The still photo judging is an optional addition for this assignment.
- Write a report summarizing two categories you saw, along with your take on the stories/videos/photos you watched and the judging you witnessed. Reports should be a minimum of 700 words. First-person approaches are accepted but not required.
- **IMPORTANT:** Email your report to Whitney, along with a photo of yourself (either a self-portrait or a photo of you taken by someone else) that clearly demonstrates your presence at the contest and not just at the National Geographic building. If you appear with any contest officials, you must identify yourself and the officials in a photo caption. If you enlist someone else to take your photo, please identify the photographer in the caption.

There is no talking during the judging, but judges in the past have been careful to explain their decisions. Try not to make noise or comments, or otherwise interrupt, but feel free to approach the judges during breaks if you wish to ask them questions.

Take notes. It will help with the required written report and in-class discussions to follow. Do



identify the judges by name in your report, and be specific about the categories you watched. Direct quotes are encouraged. This is a learning experience, but it is also a reporting and writing assignment. Use correct grammar and spelling when writing reports.

Some questions to consider while watching:

- Which stories/photos/videos appealed to you and why?
- Which stories/photos/videos did not appeal to you and why?
- What did you learn by listening to the judges?
- What do you think of the contest rules?
- What are some of the criteria the judges used to make final decisions?
- Can you tell whether the entries are from online organizations, newspapers or TV stations?
- What is the role of audio in the contest?
- What questions did you have after watching the judging?
- Did you agree with the outcome of the categories you watched?

For contest rules, categories and information about past winners, visit [www.whnpa.org](http://www.whnpa.org). The judging will take place at National Geographic Studios, 1145 17th St., NW, Washington, DC 20036. Farragut North and Farragut West are two nearby Metro stations. Metro is a good option if you can use it. Phone number at National Geographic is (703) 857-7000.

The deadline for written posts and accompanying photos is Tuesday, Feb. 16 at 8 p.m.

#### *WHNPA Assignment, Sample Grading Assessment*

Written report has clear, error-free writing	Photo of self is included with written report	Student attended appropriate sessions	Student grasped concepts of contest and judging criteria	Written report is appropriate length	Total
1/1	1/1	1/1	1/1	1/1	5/5

#### **Assignment #4: Document an Action**

**Deadline: 8 p.m. on 2/23**

Shoot at least two action sequences using wide, medium and tight shots. For this assignment you must:

- Shoot at least two wide, two medium and two tight shots. The material you shoot should include people or things that are in motion and relate to one another from shot



to shot. Look for interesting moments that capture emotion, spontaneity, candidness or significance.

- Shoot no more than two minutes of material.
- Return to class by the designated deadline.
- Edit a sequence of between 30 and 60 seconds and post it to your Vimeo channel.

Do NOT use dissolves or fades between the shots that comprise your sequence(s). Shots should be edited back-to-back. An effort should be made to sync related action, to maintain directional logic from shot to shot, and to represent the action fairly and honestly, without manipulating action or directing people who may appear in the sequence.

This assignment will not include interviews. Do not shoot video of yourself or classmates. This assignment will be done during class and there will be a shooting deadline. Make every effort to return to class by the deadline, which will be determined by the instructor.

*Assignment #4, Sample Grading Assessment*

Two minutes max of raw video/made shooting deadline	Final edit = 30-60 seconds max	Quality of video content (moments). Action synced.	Story/Narrative	2 wide, 2 medium and 2 tight shots included. Shots should be from different angles - high and low. Follows 180-degree rule. No jump cuts.	Total points
2/2	2/2	2/2	2/2	2/2	10/10

**Assignment #5: Document a Location in 10 Shots**

**Deadline: Post to your Vimeo channel by**

This assignment will focus on shooting sequences - tight, medium and wides. You will be graded on clean composition, sharp focus, proper white balance and whether your footage captures moments that surprise, inform, evoke emotion (in other words, good content), has a narrative arc, follows the 180-degree rule and is free of jump cuts.

*Assignment #5, Sample Grading Assessment*

Sequencing	Composition + Focus	Follows 180-degree rule. No jump cuts. Proper white balance.	Quality of video content (moments)	Story/Narrative	Total points
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2/2	2/2	2/2	2/2	2/2	10/10
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**Assignment #6: Interview and Sequence**

**Deadline: Raw material is due at the beginning of class on 3/15; final edit should be posted to the class Vimeo account at the beginning of class on 3/22**

Shoot a short video that combines at least one interview and at least two sequences. To clarify, this video should not include shots of yourself or interviews with yourself. Also, please focus the assignment on someone you do not know. The two sequences should include two entirely different actions done by the person you are interviewing.

Bring your raw material to class and we will spend time uploading, editing and posting.

The goal of the assignment is to layer interviews, action sequences and audio in a coherent way, resulting in an edited video with a minimum total run time of 45 seconds and a maximum total run time of two minutes and 30 seconds. Our goal as a group should be to have the videos posted by the end of class.

NOTE: For this assignment, it might help to focus on a single subject. One example would be interviewing an athlete about the sport he or she does, shooting video of the athlete in training or competition, and combining the interviews and the action sequences together in your edit. Other single-subject ideas include focusing on an artist, a chef or a barista. These are just examples that might make it easier for you to blend material from interviews with relevant sequences. Feel free to pursue any of these ideas if you need them. In addition, this assignment can be used as part of your final project if appropriate.

*Assignment #6, Sample Grading Assessment*

Video has at least 1 interview, 2 sequences	Interview and visual sequence material is layered and blended -- not edited in separate chunks	Interview shots include good lighting, framing, composition and correct title info	B-roll includes effective, well-synced sequences and significant "moments." Good use of ambient audio.	Story/Narrative	Total points
3/3	3/3	3/3	3/3	3/3	15/15



## **Final Project Proposal and Work Plan**

**Deadline: Verbal pitch in class on 3/17. Email written pitch to Whitney at by noon on 3/29 and email when the completed assignment is ready to be viewed and graded.**

Write a story pitch for your final project using the guidelines found in the Story Proposal Checklist and the Final Project Guidelines. This is part of your class participation grade. We'll review project proposals in class and revise as needed. Detailed feedback will be available from your instructor by email/phone later in the week for those who require it.

### Final Project Guidelines

Final projects between 1.5 and 3.5 minutes must be posted to your Vimeo channel by the beginning of class, 5/10 for full credit. Videos shorter than 1.5 minutes or longer than 3.5 minutes should be approved in advance.

Students are welcome to post drafts before deadline (just indicate that the post is a draft). Students can also send final versions ahead of deadline.

Students will write and revise proposals for their projects. They are encouraged to think through potential assignments and consult with the instructor often. For the final project, it is generally recommended that students choose topics that can be revisited rather than one-time events. Although it is important to consider story ideas early on, it is also a good idea to stay flexible until much of the coursework is covered before making a final decision about the project. Students will be expected to use their knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of visual media and the web itself to make judicious decisions about the approach that best serves their stories. The instructor will consider such decisions, in addition to the reporting, technical execution, content and overall substance of the projects.

### Additional notes on Final Projects:

- Students will not use music in their final projects unless the use of that music is part of the story they are covering. Otherwise, the use of music tracks in video projects must be approved in advance by the instructor.
- Students will not focus on family members or close friends for their final projects without prior approval from the instructor.
- First-person approaches must be approved by the instructor in advance.
- The use of extra material -- video, photo or audio from other sources -- must be approved in advance by the instructor and sourced in the final projects through captions, text screens or a written explanation that accompanies the final project. The difference between original, student-produced material and outside material must be clear in the final project, and students must have the necessary permission to use outside material.



- Sources must be identified with names and titles. Sources' names and titles may also be identified in scripted voiceovers or in narration done by the subject (a single-subject, "in their own words" video piece might be examples where this could come up).
- Points will be deducted from projects that are posted past the deadline without prior approval.
- Contact the instructor immediately if you are having technical issues. You may post to an outside site, such as youtube.com or Vimeo.com, and provide links to final projects on written posts.
- As discussed during the course of the semester, interviews, photos and videos may not be staged, coerced, falsified or manipulated. These actions will result in a failing grade on the final project.

### Story Proposal Checklist

A story proposal is a document that establishes your intentions for covering a story, outlines your methods and estimates what kind of project you will be able to publish when finished. Its purpose is to sell your story to your editors and to other editors where you work. It will also help you to look at the story from an objective perspective.

Your proposal and work plan should:

1. Be typed and neatly presented. It has been spell-checked, uses proper grammar, has a tone that is appropriate to a business setting. Have someone proofread it for you. Keep a copy.
2. Include a working headline as well as your name and today's date.
3. State the topic of the story concisely and limit the topic to a manageable scope.
4. Cover why your readers/viewers would be interested in the topic and the people you will be interviewing/shooting.
5. Use supporting research to give a basis for the story and give it relevance in your community. This research is attributed to reliable sources. This research includes discussing previous coverage on the story topic or related topics, and how this story will fit in with what the audience has seen already.
6. Estimate the types of visual images and situations that will comprise your finished story.
7. Name the people and the kind of people who will be in the story.
8. Cover where the story will occur.
9. Describe any access issues that have been addressed and/or need to be addressed.
10. Indicate which audience would be interested in this story.
11. Discuss how much time you will need to work on the project. This includes: When do pertinent events begin and end? How many days will you need to research and cover this story completely, as well as to process and edit?
12. Tells what media will be used and why.



Adapted from a checklist compiled by Elizabeth Kerbs (formerly) of the St. Petersburg Times for News Photographer Magazine.

### Final Projects

**Deadline: Initial rough cuts are due by the beginning of class on 4/12. A second rough cut is due 4/19. Final projects should be posted to your Vimeo channel by 7pm on 5/10. Each student should be prepared to present and discuss his or her project in class on 5/10.**

#### Final Project, Sample Grading Assessment

Story proposal and story board	Interview and visual sequence material is layered and blended -- not edited in separate chunks. Video has at least 1 interview, 2 sequences.	Interview shots include good lighting, framing, composition and correct title info	B-roll includes effective, well-synced sequences and includes significant "moments." Good use of ambient audio.	Story/Narrative	Total points
5/5	5/5	5/5	5/5	5/5	25/25

### GRADING

Your course grade will be based on the following:

Assignment #1, On-Camera Report:	10 points
Assignment #2, Man-On-the-Street Shoot:	10 points
Assignment #3, Man-On-the-Street Edit:	10 points
Assignment #4, Document an Action:	10 points
Assignment #5, Document a Location:	10 points
Assignment #6, Interview-and-Sequence:	15 points
WHNPA Assignment (5 points) and Overall Class Participation (5 points):	10 points
Final Project:	25 points
<b>Total:</b>	<b>100 points</b>

Punctuality is part of the overall class participation grade.

With respect to assignments, missing the initial deadline will result in an automatic one-point deduction. Points will be deducted for assignments turned in past deadline at a rate of one point per week until the assignment is posted.

Graduate course grades include A, A-, B+, B, B-, C and F. **There are no grades of C+, C- or D.**



A	100-93	B-	82.99-80
A-	92.99-90	C	79.99-70
B+	89.99-88	F	69.99-0
B	87.99-83		

The instructor will provide a warning by mid-semester to any student who appears to be on track for a poor final grade.

### UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

Georgetown offers a variety of support systems for students that can be accessed on main campus or at the downtown location:

- MPS Writing Resource Program  
Lauinger Library, 217A | 202-687-4246  
<http://writingcenter.georgetown.edu/>
- Academic Resource Center  
Leavey Center, Suite 335 | 202-687-8354 | [arc@georgetown.edu](mailto:arc@georgetown.edu)  
<http://ldss.georgetown.edu/>
- Counseling and Psychiatric Services  
One Darnall Hall | 202-687-6985  
<http://caps.georgetown.edu/>

### STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES POLICY

Students with documented disabilities have the right to specific accommodations that do not fundamentally alter the nature of the course. Students with disabilities should contact the Academic Resource Center (202-687-8354; [arc@georgetown.edu](mailto:arc@georgetown.edu); <http://ldss.georgetown.edu/index.cfm>) before the start of classes to allow time to review the documentation and make recommendations for appropriate accommodations. If accommodations are recommended, you will be given a letter from ARC to share with your professors. You are personally responsible for completing this process officially and in a timely manner. Neither accommodations nor exceptions to policies can be permitted to students who have not completed this process in advance.

### GEORGETOWN HONOR SYSTEM

All students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic and personal integrity in pursuit of their education at Georgetown. Academic dishonesty in any form is a serious offense, and students found in violation are subject to academic penalties that include, but are



not limited to, failure of the course, termination from the program, and revocation of degrees already conferred. All students are held to the Honor Code. The Honor Code pledge follows:

*In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown University Honor System: To be honest in any academic endeavor, and To conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.*

### **PLAGIARISM**

Stealing someone else's work is a terminal offense in journalism, and it will wreck your career in academia, too. Students are expected to work with integrity and honesty in all their assignments. The Georgetown University Honor System defines plagiarism as "the act of passing off as one's own the ideas or writings of another." More guidance is available through the Gervase Programs at <http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/honor/system/53377.html>. If you have any doubts about plagiarism, paraphrasing and the need to credit, check out <http://www.plagiarism.org>.

### **SYLLABUS MODIFICATION**

The syllabus may change to accommodate discussion of emerging topics. Also, the schedules of guest speakers may require some shifting of our agenda. The instructor will make every effort to provide as much advance notice as possible for any alterations.



## CLASS SCHEDULE

### WEEK 1 (TUESDAY, JANUARY 19)

Introduction to the class, the instructor, camera equipment, video editing software and the class Vimeo account. In addition to getting used to the equipment, we'll discuss:

- How video builds on students' existing skills in writing, photography, journalism and technology.
- How video is different than still photos and audio-only stories, including video challenges that are specific to traditional print and broadcast journalists.
- Examples of successful and unsuccessful online videos.
- Interview shots and on-camera reporting. We will break into small groups, using cameras (and tripods if possible) to cover the fundamentals of on-camera reporting and interview shots. We'll cover the rule of thirds, white balancing, "look space" and tips for conducting successful man-on-the-street interviews on camera.

**Homework:** *Assignment #1, On-Camera Report. Also, purchase a Mac-friendly external drive for use during the rest of the semester. Specifications and a range of options will be discussed during our first meeting.*

**Deadline:** *Your written reports and on-camera are due at the beginning of class on Jan. 20. Bring your camera, tripod, batteries (charged) and your new external drive.*

### WEEK 2 (TUESDAY, JANUARY 26)

We'll spend the first part of the class uploading your first written and video assignments together and reviewing them as a group. As mentioned, please bring your external drives with you, too.

The second part of class will be devoted to framing, lighting, composition, audio clarity and interview techniques that will build to Assignments #2 and #3. We'll review:

- The application of the rule of thirds and attention to body positions when framing initial interview shots, including things that can be done before pressing the record button
- White balancing
- The effective use of available indoor and outdoor light sources
- Techniques in using available backgrounds and eliminating visual distractions
- Ways to avoid audio pitfalls when setting up the initial shot and during interviews
- Interview questions and techniques that yield meaningful (and usable) interview clips for editing purposes

**Homework:** *Assignment #2, Man-on-the-Street Shoot.*

**Deadline:** *Bring to class on 2/2.*



### **WEEK 3 (TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2)**

Bring your raw material or saved projects from your man-on-the-street shoot back to class. We'll devote in-class time to the final edit of man-on-the street interviews. We'll begin learning Premiere Pro and go over the basics of video editing, including the use of transitions, text screens and title screens. We'll post the edited clips on Vimeo channels that each of you will create.

*In-class assignment: Video Assignment #3, Man-on-the-Street Edit*

*Deadline: Start of class on 2/3*

### **WEEK 4 (TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9)**

Sequences, Part I: Students will be introduced to the concept of sequences, including examples of wide, medium and tight shots used in various types of videos. We will also cover what it means to "cross the axis." We'll practice shooting wide, medium and tight shots and edit them together.

*In-class assignment: Video Assignment #4, Document an Action*

*Deadline: 8 p.m. on 2/16*

### **TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16 – NO CLASS**

#### **SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT ON FEBRUARY 13 & 14**

The White House News Photographers Association contest will take place on Feb. 13 and 14 (a Saturday and Sunday). During this event, we want you to spend time watching the judging of at least two categories, one in video and one in new media. See the assignments section for more information on what is expected.

**Homework:** *Students will write reports of 700 words or more summarizing two of the required categories. These include the required photo, which will be posted with their written posts for full credit. See complete description of assignment for details.*

**Deadline:** *Completed reports and accompanying photos are due at 8 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 16.*

### **TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16 – NO CLASS**

### **WEEKS 5 & 6 (SATURDAY, FEB. 20)**

*\*Note: This class will be a double session, to make the most of shooting and editing time during daylight hours. We'll meet at 10:30 a.m. and go until 3:30 p.m.*





At the start of this session, we'll discuss the WHNPA contest and your written reports. Then we'll return to sequences.

Sequences, Part II: We will review Video Assignment #4. Shooters will work toward holding shots for the appropriate lengths of time. They will be encouraged to shoot and edit sequences that have meaning while they begin to consider sounds, moments and action as possible "ledes" in the context of video.

*Homework: Video Assignment #5, Document a Location*

*Deadline: Post to your Vimeo Channel start of class on 3/1 and email Whitney when the completed assignment is ready to be viewed and graded.*

### **WEEK 7 (TUESDAY, MARCH 1)**

Layering clips: We'll delve deeper into Premiere Pro and experiment with layering audio and video clips. We'll walk through how to import still photographs and use techniques such as panning and zooming.

We'll also cover general rules concerning libel, privacy invasions, defamation, public domain, fair use, recording phone conversations, shooting video in public places, shooting or interviewing in hospitals or crime scenes, and guidelines and considerations for conducting interviews with minors.

We'll do a practice in-class shoot with the goal of building to Assignment #6.

*Homework: Video Assignment #6, Interview and Sequence*

*Deadline: Raw video should be ready by the beginning of 3/15 class.*

*Homework: Final project pitch, proposal and work plan*

*Deadline: Verbal pitch ready to present on 3/15.*

### **NO CLASS ON MARCH 8 FOR SPRING BREAK**

### **WEEK 8 (TUESDAY, MARCH 15)**

We will spend the majority of the class time editing Video Assignment #6.

We will go around the room and discuss final project ideas. This portion of class is dedicated to brainstorming and an open exchange of tips and ideas among students with the goal of refining existing work plans (or creating brand new ones if the old ones don't pan out).

*In-class assignment: Final edit of Video Assignment #6*

*Deadline: Posted to the class Vimeo by the beginning of class on 3/22*



*Homework: Final project written proposal emailed to Whitney by noon on 3/22.*

### **WEEK 9 (TUESDAY, MARCH 22)**

We will review highlights from Assignment #6. We'll go over the finer points of shooting and editing sequences, and, for those who need it, we'll review what it means to cross the axis. We can also use this time to address questions about grades, technology issues or final projects.

Students will pitch their final project proposals and plans to the class. We will go over storyboarding for final projects.

We'll discuss the video journalist as a one-person-band, highlighting equipment needs, challenges, advantages and disadvantages. We'll discuss combining visuals with interviews, improving the narrative arc of visual stories and building to the end of a piece. We will review innovative websites, fresh online video approaches and safe/best practices.

*Homework: Storyboards must be emailed by 8pm on 3/29.*

*Work on reporting and shooting for final projects. Keep an open dialogue with your instructor by phone and email during the week to discuss logistics, permissions and other issues that crop up. Also, feel free to post drafts on Vimeo during the week if you wish for feedback ahead of class.*

### **WEEK 10 (TUESDAY, MARCH 29)**

Innovative interviews, social media and multimedia projects: We'll cover the use of wireless mics and creative interview shooting techniques. We'll also explore the implications of social media, including Facebook and Twitter with guidelines on how to use both in professional settings. We will look at innovative multimedia projects to explore unique approaches to video storytelling.

We will review storyboards in class, and work on final project edits.

### **WEEK 11 (TUESDAY, APRIL 5)**

Guest speaker TBD

*Homework: Work on reporting and shooting for final projects*

*Deadline: Bring raw material to class on April 12 for review to make sure we're on track.*



## **WEEK 12 (TUESDAY, APRIL 12)**

Review early final project material and drafts. We'll have some time to work on edits and answer questions. We'll talk about story structures, transitions, pacing and finishing strong.

*Rough cuts of Final Projects are due at the beginning of the next class. Your instructor will want to see:*

- 1) An intact version of the introduction, including any combination of interviews, voiceover, b-roll, text or natural sound that serves as a way into the final piece. For all of you writers, this is the video version of your "lede."
- 2) Edited interview tracks and, if applicable, edited voiceover tracks in the order they will most likely appear in the final version. Make sure that the overall point of the story is not lost in the edit. In print journalism terms, this means incorporating a "nut graf." For example, the heart of the story might be summarized neatly by a source during an interview. If not, you might have to include the relevant information and context in a voiceover or text screen. Perhaps a caption can help do the job. We'll explore options as you near completion.
- 3) B-roll, sequences, sourced photos and any other visual or recorded material you plan to use for the final project. Ideally, this material should be layered over the interviews and/or voiceover and be as close to a final edit as possible.
- 4) Correctly spelled text screens, title screens, and, if necessary, attribution information if you're using outside material for which you have permission. Note: placement and inclusion of transitions (such as dissolves or fades) can be left off until the very end of the editing process -- especially if you feel they are slowing you down.
- 5) A decision about how you plan to end the piece.

*Homework: Rough cut 1*

*Deadline: Beginning of class, April 19.*

## **WEEK 13 (TUESDAY, APRIL 19)**

We will spend this class working on Final Projects. By now, most of the reporting and shooting should be finished. We'll use class time to edit and polish existing materials ahead of next week's final project deadline. If there are any gaps in the reporting or shooting, this is your last week to address them before the deadline. In need of a bit of extra b-roll? Better shoot it. Need information to fill gaps or provide context? Now's your chance!

It is preferable to avoid surprises at this stage, so let's discuss in detail any plans for additional shooting to make sure it will accomplish your goals. We'll also evaluate pacing and length, to



make sure the final edit is going to be between 90 seconds minutes and three and a half minutes. Videos shorter than 90 seconds or longer than three and a half minutes should be approved in advance.

*Rough cuts of Final Projects are due at the beginning of the next class. In addition to requirements for the first rough cut, your instructor will want to see:*

1) Correctly spelled text screens, title screens, and, if necessary, attribution information if you're using outside material for which you have permission. Note: placement and inclusion of transitions (such as dissolves or fades) can be left off until the very end of the editing process -- especially if you feel they are slowing you down.

2) A complete edit of the piece, including the beginning, middle and end. This edit should be in what you consider to be its final condition.

*Homework: Rough cut 2*

*Deadline: Beginning of class, April 26.*

#### **WEEK 14 (TUESDAY, APRIL 26)**

We will spend this class tweaking Final Projects. Projects should be in what you consider to be complete condition.

We will discuss how to promote your work in the future, and how to continue grow as a video journalist.

*Homework: Final Projects*

*Deadline: Post to your Vimeo Channel by noon on 5/10*

#### **NO CLASS ON MAY 3 FOR STUDY DAYS**

#### **WEEK 15 (TUESDAY, MAY 10)**

The essential enterprise story: Students will give a brief, 5- to 10-minute presentation of their projects. Students should be prepared to answer questions from the instructor and fellow classmates about the reporting, shooting, writing and editing decisions that went into the final edit.