



GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY
School of Continuing Studies
Journalism

MPJO-: ADVANCED VIDEO JOURNALISM

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY: MPS-JOURNALISM

Mondays, 6 p.m. to 9:35p.m. | Summer 2016

Instructor: Whitney Shefte

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Georgetown Downtown, Mac Lab (C226)

- Office hours are by appointment

COURSE OVERVIEW

This hands-on advanced video journalism course will help participants build upon what they learned in the introductory video journalism course. It is required that students successfully complete the introductory class before taking this one. Students will produce short documentary-style video stories based around specific coverage areas, culminating with an in-depth final project during the second half of the semester.

We'll review the fundamentals of framing, lighting, composition and sequencing, along with ethical reporting, shooting and editing practices. However, students should already have a working knowledge of these concepts and have the ability to produce stories that are largely error-free from a technical perspective. This course will focus more on storytelling than on technical rules. 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. Work produced in this course should be portfolio-quality.

This is an elective course of the MPS Journalism program, and students must earn a C 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:

- Produce a variety of storytelling using various video methods
- Use advanced techniques in interviewing, lighting, composition and editing for video storytelling
- Prepare and publish multimedia assignments for the web
- Demonstrate successful comprehensive storytelling skills through pitches and proposals leading to a multimedia final project



REQUIRED READING

[Feature and Narrative Storytelling for Multimedia Journalists](#) by Duy Linh Tu. Other various readings may also be assigned throughout the semester.

EQUIPMENT

REQUIRED FOR STUDENTS TO PURCHASE:

You must purchase your own external Firewire 800 hard drives (or utilize the one you purchased for the introductory course), 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.)

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. Assuming availability, students are required to use Sony EX-1 cameras or other instructor-approved gear.

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. 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. Two points will be deducted each day an assignment is late.

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, Playing with aperture, shutter speed and ISO

Deadline: Beginning of class, 06/06

Test aperture, shutter speed settings on the Sony EX-1 or a DSLR with five different objects or focal points and the camera in the exact same position. Shoot each focal point with a wide open



aperture around F2.8, at mid-range at F8 and closed down at around F22. Now do the same with a single aperture but differing ISO levels. Then select at least two scenes with motion, such as cars going by or runners passing. Shoot the scenes with the slowest available shutter speed (aim for around 1/4 a second), a mid-range shutter speed (around 80 – 400) and a super fast shutter speed (1000+). Composition and audio will be considered as well, so remember to shoot with clean backgrounds, utilizing the rule of thirds, and gathering audio of the scene. Create a short edit in Premiere and upload to your Vimeo channel. Write a short paragraph or two explaining the differences you see with the different settings.

Assignment #1, Sample Grading Assessment

Aperture experiment	ISO experiment	Shutter speed experiment	Composition + Clear audio	Written evaluation	Total points
2/2	2/2	2/2	2/2	2/2	10/10

Assignment #2, Interview with three-point lighting

Deadline: Beginning of class, 06/13

Work with a partner. Find an interesting character to interview on camera about a topic of your choosing. You must utilize a three-point lighting system. You must use a lav mic for good audio. Remember to ask questions so your subject will answer in complete sentences. Your voice may not be on the video, and the only text you may use is the lower third with the person's name and either where they live or what they do for a living below the name. Remember to shoot with a clean background and in a quiet space. When editing, use dips to black when you need to jump to a new clip. The video must be shot, edited and posted to Vimeo by the next class.

Assignment #2, Sample Grading Assessment

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

Assignment #3, Event coverage

Deadline: Raw footage due on 06/20; Edit due on 06/27

Attend an event and shoot a video telling the story of what happened and edit a two-to-five-minute piece. Remember to find a way to include the *who, what, when, where* and *why*. The event can range from a protest to a festival to the aftermath of a disaster to a political rally. If you are someone who is interested in covering the news, choose a newsier event to shoot. Be



sure to shoot scenes and sequences of events as they happen, and interview 3-4 people who are attending the event. You must have your interviewees explain what is going on in a way that does not require you to use text on screen or narration.

Assignment #3, Sample Grading Assessment

Composition + framing, lighting	Quality of Interview content	Sequencing	Clear audio + moments in both sound and visuals	Story/Narrative/Edit	Total points
2/2	2/2	2/2	2/2	2/2	10/10

Assignment #4, Sports storytelling

Deadline: Raw footage due on 06/27; Edit due on 07/11

Shoot and edit a sports event for a sports news story or profile an athlete or coach for a sports feature. Remember to look for action and then reaction. Gather interviews and shoot relevant scenes to build sequences. Pay attention to moments and pacing.

Assignment #4, Sample Grading Assessment

Composition + framing, lighting	Quality of Interview content	Sequencing	Clear audio + moments in both sound and visuals; action/reaction	Story/Narrative/Edit	Total points
2/2	2/2	2/2	2/2	2/2	10/10

Assignment #5: Conceptual shooting and editing

Deadline: Footage and edit due on 07/11

This assignment will focus on shooting conceptual sequences. Select a poem to shoot scenes to and record someone reading the poem. You may use music with this piece.

Assignment #5, Sample Grading Assessment

Imagination	Technical quality	Shot variety,	Use of	Story/Narrative/Edit	Total
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utilized with conceptual shots	of video: composition + framing, lighting	sequencing, pacing	music, ambient sound		points
2/2	2/2	2/2	2/2	2/2	10/10

Assignment #6: Storytelling with narration
Deadline: Footage due 07/18; Edit due 07/25

Select a complex topic that will require narration to tell the story. The main character is the issue. Find human character(s) to follow to tell the story about the topic. Weave narration that you record with interviews and scenes/sequences to tell the story. Pay attention to inflection, pacing, moments and scenes.

Assignment #6, Sample Grading Assessment

Narration: writing, performance and use in edit	Interviews: Technical and journalistic quality	Quality of video content (moments). Action synced. Sequences flow with no errors.	Ambient sound	Story/Narrative/Editing including pacing	Total points
3/3	3/3	3/3	3/3	3/3	15/15

Final Project Proposal and Work Plan
Deadline: 07/18

Write a story pitch for your final project using the guidelines found in the Story Proposal Checklist and the Final Project Guidelines. 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 3 and 8 minutes must be posted to your Vimeo channel by the beginning of class, for full credit. Videos shorter than 1.5 minutes or longer than 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 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: Rough cuts are due by the beginning of class on 08/08. Final projects should be posted to your Vimeo channel before class begins on 08/15. Each student should be prepared to present and discuss his or her project in class on 08/15.

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



Show and Tell

Each student is required to select a piece of video journalism to show to the class and discuss what works and what doesn't work about the piece. These videos should be a maximum of ten minutes long unless given advance approval by the instructor. Each student must also write a one-page paper explaining what techniques were used in the piece and what worked and didn't work. This paper is due before the class when the student is scheduled to show the piece they have selected. This assignment is worth five points.

GRADING

Your course grade will be based on the following:

Assignment #1, Playing with aperture, shutter speed and ISO:	10 points
Assignment #2, Interview with three-point lighting:	10 points
Assignment #3, Event coverage:	10 points
Assignment #4, Sports storytelling:	10 points
Assignment #5, Conceptual shooting and editing:	10 points
Assignment #6, Storytelling with narration:	15 points
Show and Tell (5 points) and Overall Class Participation (5 points):	10 points
Final Project:	25 points
Total:	100 points

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
<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; <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



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School of Continuing Studies
Journalism

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 (MONDAY MAY 23)

Introduction to the class, the instructor, camera equipment and syllabus. We will review technical fundamentals of aperture, shutter speed, ISO and other camera functions, and go over how to use Sony cameras. We will shoot assignment one in class.

Homework: Assignment #1, due before the next class

MONDAY MAY 30 – NO CLASS

WEEK 2 (MONDAY JUNE 6)

We will critique assignment one. We will then learn how to shoot an interview with three-point lighting using studio lights, doing an in-class exercise. 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, Interview with three-point lighting

Deadline: Edit due at the beginning of the next class

WEEK 3 (MONDAY JUNE 13)

We will critique assignment #2. We will review any concerns students have about using Adobe Premiere. Students will have time to work on assignment two edits, which should be no longer than two minutes. We will discuss techniques for event coverage as well, and review techniques for shooting scenes and building sequences.

Homework: Assignment #3, Event coverage

Deadline: Raw footage for assignment #3 due at the beginning of the next class

WEEK 4 (MONDAY JUNE 20)

Students will do a short in-class editing assignment. Students will complete edits for assignment #3. We will discuss techniques for sports storytelling. We will go over audio gathering techniques.



Homework: : Assignment #4, Sports storytelling; complete assignment #3 if not done in class

Deadline: Assignment #3 edits due at the beginning of class. Footage for assignment #4 due at the beginning of next class. Edits due at the end of the next class.

WEEK 5 (MONDAY JUNE 27)

Critique assignment #3. Edit assignment #4. We will discuss techniques for conceptual shooting and do an in-class exercise that must be completed by the end of class

Homework: Complete edit for assignment #4. Shoot and edit assignment #5.

Deadline: Beginning of next class, July 11.

MONDAY JULY 4 – NO CLASS

WEEK 8 (MONDAY JULY 11)

We will critique assignment #5. We will then discuss techniques for writing and recording narration as well as implementing it into an edit. We will do an in-class narration exercise.

Homework: Assignment #6, storytelling with narration; Final project proposals

Deadline: Raw footage and proposals due at the beginning of the next class

WEEK 9 (MONDAY JULY 18)

We will edit assignment #6. Final project proposals will be discussed in class.

Homework: Assignment #6, Storytelling with narration edit; Storyboards

Deadline: Edit and storyboards due at the beginning of the next class.

WEEK 10 (MONDAY JULY 25)

Critique assignment #6. Work on final projects. Guest speaker TBD.

Homework: 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 11 (MONDAY, AUGUST 1)



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

Deadline: Beginning of class, August 8.

WEEK 12 (MONDAY AUGUST 8)

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: Final edit posted to your Vimeo channel

Deadline: Beginning of class, August 15

WEEK 13 (MONDAY, AUGUST 15)

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.