# Multimedia Journalism

## J334 (07415) | J395-10 (07695)
## Fall 2010

CLASS: T-TH 9:30AM– 11:00AM ROOM: CMA A4.316
LAB: T-TH 12:30PM 2:00PM –ROOM: CMA A4.316

Professor Rosental Calmon Alves
Knight Chair in Journalism & UNESCO
Chair in Communication
Office Hours: Wed 10AM-12PM & by appt.
CMA 5.158C Tel: (512) 471-6851
Email: Rosental.Alves@austin.utexas.edu

TA: Hsuan-Ting Chen
 hsuanting.chen@gmail.com
Office Hours: W 1-3pm
Journalism TA Office: UA9

# Syllabus

## Course description

The purpose of this course is to provide intermediate and advanced training on multimedia journalism, especially regarding the creation of new storytelling techniques developed on digital platforms. Besides this hands-on training, the course will also examine the Digital Revolution and the creation of a global Information Society, with a special focus on the effects these phenomena are having on the media in general, and on journalism in particular.

The class has two components: a seminar session, based on lectures, readings, case studies and discussions about the ongoing transformations in the media and journalism environments; and a computer lab session dedicated to hands-on experience with the development of multimedia journalism projects for digital platforms. The first component helps students understand the rapidly changing media environment where journalism is practiced nowadays, and the creation of a new media ecosystem. The second component intends to give the students tools to work with multimedia narratives more attuned with this new "mediascape."

Students will learn how to develop multimedia projects, working with different formats, such as text, hypertext, photos, video, animation, databases, etc. The digital technology training will be placed within journalistic contexts, such as responsible reporting, clear writing, critical thinking, ethical principles, etc.

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## Objectives

The **three main goals** of this course are:

1. To train journalism students in the use of digital technologies to produce news stories that can combine different formats of media, such as text, hypertext, photos, video, animation, databases, etc.

2. To identify and analyze storytelling techniques and tools adopted by the news industry

to take advantage of the opportunities offered by digital technologies.

3. To study Digital Revolution's consequences for journalism, as new technologies have changed the ways we gather, produce, distribute and consume news around the world.

**Important Note:**
This class is not about computers or software, and will focus on the ways journalists can use new technology. However, it is important that students come to this class already familiarized with the basic tools of Internet publishing and multimedia journalism. Some additional, intermediate level software knowledge will be provided in class and lab sessions, including Photoshop, Audacity, Soundslides, FinalCut Pro, Flash etc.

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## Assignments

**There are four assignments in this class:**
1. Lab exercises
2. Research paper 1
3. Research paper 2
4. Multimedia project

**Lab Exercises:**
There are five laboratory exercises that each student should complete for grade to test his/her ability to work with the software taught during the lab sessions. Most of the exercises must be completed during the lab sessions marked in the calendar.

**Two short research papers:**
Students have to write two essays during the semester about topics related to digital media. Both papers should have a clear focus on journalism. Students must turn in a hard copy of the papers on the due dates (marked in the class calendar). For the J334 students, each paper must be four to five pages and for the J395 students the essay must be six to seven pages. In both cases the text should be double-spaced, using Times New Roman 12 or equivalent font. The papers are individual assignments and must be written following an academic style of student's choice (i.e. APA, Chicago, MLA).

Both research papers must contain an extended bibliography (at least half a dozen sources) and reflect some of the issues covered during the class discussions. Class notes can be also used as sources for the papers, but cannot be the majority of the citations. Students will give an oral presentation of their research papers, to be followed by class discussion.

The papers are intended to give students a chance to go more in-depth on issues covered during the class lectures and discussion, as well as the reading materials used in class. As the class is focused on current issues in journalism, news articles and other sources found on the Internet are welcome, but the use of books is highly recommended, especially those in this syllabus reading list.

**Multimedia project:**
The multimedia project is a journalistic package that combines text, audio, photos, video, animation and other elements to tell one or several related stories. The text must follow AP style, although adaptations of those rules are acceptable, considering the nature of new media. The projects will be developed individually and each student will publish a blog related to his/her project, describing its evolution and, if possible, including multimedia pieces, such as video, photos, audio, etc. The project is a journalistic package compiled in Flash or directly on a website, including text combined with multimedia elements, such as video, audio and photos.

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## Reading List

A document posted on BlackBoard site contains a list of reading material for the seminar sessions and tutorials for the lab.

Required textbook:
- Briggs, Mark, *JournalismNext: a practical guide to digital reporting and publishing*, CQ Press, Washington, DC, 2010.

*JournalismNext* can be found in online bookstores such as Amazon.com and BarnesandNoble.com  or at CQ Press publishing house Web site.

**Other recommended books:**
- Briggs, Mark, *Journalism2.0: How to Survive and Thrive*, J-Lab and the Knight Citizen News Network, Washington, DC, 2007. E-book in PDF downloadable from: http://knightcenter.utexas.edu/journalism20.php.
- Foust, James, *Online Journalism - Principles and Practices of News for the Web*, Holcomb Hathaway Publishers, Scottsdale, AZ, 2008.
- Kovach, Bill, and Rosenstiel, Tom, *The Elements of Journalism: what newspeople should know and the public should expect*. Crown Publishers, New York, 2001.
- McAdams, Mindy, *Reporter's Guide to Multimedia Proficiency*, e-book downloadable from http://www.jou.ufl.edu/faculty/mmcadams/PDFs/RGMPbook.pdf, 2009.
- Quinn, Stephen, *Convergent Journalism: The Fundamentals of Multimedia Reporting*, Peter Lang Publishing, New York, NY, 2005.
- Quinn, Setephen, *Mojo – Mobile Journalism in the Asia Region*, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Singapore, 2009 – e-book downloadable from http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas_18599-544-2-30.pdf
- Shirky, Clay, *Here Comes Everybody: the power of organizing without organizations*, Penguin Press, New York, 2008.
- The Associated Press Stylebook & Libel Manual, current edition.

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**Late Assignments and Attendance:** Assignments for this course are challenging and fun, but the class moves very quickly, so you will not want to fall behind. Missed

assignments or lab activities will receive a failing grade. A student may turn in one assignment or lab activity late during the semester, if there is an excused reason with prior arrangement with professor. Any other late assignments will receive a failing grade.

Attendance is mandatory for classes and lab sessions, and may affect the final grade (see grading session below). Any absences should be justified in a written form and with proper documentation. Because we cover so much in this class, it is no coincidence that the best projects historically have been turned in by the students with the best attendance. Students (and teachers, too) often learn best from one another, so an open environment is encouraged. Ask questions and help each other. It is important that you show up on time, as announcements tend to be made early, and you could miss valuable information.

**Supplies and Equipment:**  You will need a **USB storage device** to save a backup of your files. You may also want to consider purchasing an external portable hard drive or borrowing one from the IMC during the semester to hold larger multimedia files. You will also receive access to a Transfer folder on the department server, but it is best to have a backup on disk. You may also need to purchase a few **Mini-DV tapes** for the lab exercises/final projects you will be doing in the class. Options will be discussed in class.

Students may also need to **use their UT Webspace** to upload exercises and class material. Please visit https://webspace.utexas.edu/xythoswfs/webui for information on how to get your account setup.

**Equipment Checkout -** We will have equipment available from IMC on the 5$^{th}$ floor of the CMA building for you to use throughout the semester as you work on your projects.

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## Grading

The final grade will be based on the following work:
- Lab exercises and class participation: 20 percent
- Research papers: 30 percent
- Project: 50 percent

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## University Honor Code

All students are expected to abide by the University of Texas Honor Code, which reads: "The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community."

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**Students with Disabilities**

Please notify your instructor of any modification/adaptation you may require to accommodate a disability-related need. You will be requested to provide documentation to the Dean of Student's Office in order that the most appropriate accommodations can be determined.  Specialized services are available on campus through Services for Students with Disabilities. http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/

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**Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty**

The University defines academic dishonesty as cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to avoid participating honestly in the learning process. Scholastic dishonesty also includes, but is not limited to, providing false or misleading information to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment, and submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructor. By accepting this syllabus, you have agreed to these guidelines and must adhere to them. Scholastic dishonesty damages both the student's learning experience and readiness for the future demands of a work-career. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University.

http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php.

For the University's official definition of scholastic dishonesty, see Section 11-802, Institutional Rules on Student Services and Activities.

http://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/gi08-09/app/gi08.appc03.html#sec-11-802-scholastic-dishonesty19