

Digital Storytelling

Journalism 4341 | Fall 2014

Tues. & Thurs., 11-12:20 p.m.

FAB 411A

Instructor: Dr. Erika Pribanic-Smith

Office: 2114 Fine Arts Building

Hours: Tues. & Thurs., 12:30-2 p.m. & by appt.

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Note: Because of other department and university duties, office hours occasionally will be cancelled. Cancellations will be posted on the office door and, when possible, announced in class and/or via email.

Prerequisites: Completion of JOUR 2346 and JOUR 2340.

Course Description:

Creating multimedia packages in news and narrative formats. Conducting social media journalism. Readings in newsroom practices, law, and ethics of digital communication.

Student Learning Outcomes:

This course is intended to instruct journalism students in the effective use of digital and social media technology to tell stories. Students will learn the following:

- What digital storytelling journalism is.
- What ethical issues (i.e., intellectual property and copyright) are involved.
- How to gather and store information electronically.
- Types of media that are used online and how to choose the appropriate one to tell a given story.
- Video and audio editing and production skills.
- The importance of social media and interactivity.

Course Materials:

- Readings as assigned and by the instructor (provided on Blackboard)
- Audio, video, and photo equipment. NOTE: A limited supply of equipment is available for checkout from the department, but students are encouraged to use their own when possible. Smartphones will suffice in most cases.

Blackboard:

Although all course assignments will be posted to Twitter and your blog, you still must "submit" a notice of your work on Blackboard (<http://elearn.uta.edu>). Assignments not submitted to the proper slot on time will not be graded.

The instructor also will post course Power Points to Blackboard in advance of each class, but students are encouraged to take notes in class as well. All course documents are posted to Blackboard for your reference.

All grades for individual course assignments, including in-class work, will be posted to Blackboard, and course averages will be posted there periodically. Please log in regularly to check grades and announcements. No grade information will be emailed. Students are expected to keep track of their performance throughout the semester on Blackboard and seek guidance if their grade drops below satisfactory levels.

Course Policies

Grade Calculation:

Assignment	% of grade	Grading scale
Class participation	40	A – 90-100 percent
Out-of-class assignments	60	B – 80-89 percent
		C – 70-79 percent
		D – 60-69 percent
		F – below 60 percent

CLASS PARTICIPATION: Class participation will be evaluated based on asking insightful questions and contributing informed, thoughtful comments to class discussions, as well as by completing in-class tutorials and workshops.

OUT-OF-CLASS ASSIGNMENTS: As students learn about each facet of new media reporting and technology, they will be asked to complete assignments that enable them to practice these techniques and demonstrate competence. Additional details will be provided as each assignment arises. Students will be given in-class (workshop) time to complete these assignments, but it is expected that students also will complete some work toward these assignments outside of class.

Grading procedures: Each in-class and out-of-class writing assignment handout will include a rubric that explains exactly how the instructor will grade that assignment.

Attendance: At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required. Rather, each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students' academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. As the instructor of this section, my philosophy is that students are to treat the class like a job; they are expected to attend every class and arrive on time. Employees who miss work do not get paid. Students who miss class receive 0s for work completed in their absence.

Absences from class are neither excused nor unexcused. Students are given two personal/sick days to use at their discretion over the course of the semester, which will allow the student to make up work missed in class. The student must consult with the instructor immediately upon returning to class to set a deadline for makeup work. Failure to complete the makeup work will result in a zero.

Tardiness will not be tolerated. Employees would be docked pay for arriving late to work. Students similarly will be docked points off the daily participation grade at a rate of 2 percent per minute late. In other words, students will lose a full letter grade off that day's participation exercise for every five minutes they are late.

Late work: Students are expected to adhere to deadlines as posted in the course syllabus, on assignment sheets, and on Blackboard. **ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED LATE.** Remember that even projects posted on your blog or Twitter must be submitted on Blackboard in order to be graded. Blackboard assignment portals will close at the appointed deadline. Students who have not submitted their assignments on time will receive a 0.

Note that only **unexpected emergencies (such as a death, grave illness or debilitating injury)** will excuse a student from completing an assignment on time; because of the length of time students are given to complete assignments, they should plan accordingly for religious, personal or professional obligations that may arise around the time that an assignment is due.

In the event of an emergency, the student should contact the instructor as soon as possible to indicate that the story will not be submitted on time. The instructor will not accept the assignment late without official documentation.

Computer and Internet malfunctions will NOT be given consideration for late assignments. Students should give themselves plenty of time to complete assignments so that they may regroup in the wake of a technological snafu.

Work Expectations: Students often will be working on several projects and/or homework assignments at the same time in addition to keeping up with readings for class.

Effective communication requires practice, so students can expect to produce content every week (if not every day) and to complete both out-of-class and in-class assignments. Students will need to begin their projects in advance and not start working on them the night before they are due. If students are struggling with the material or the workload, they should see the instructor during office hours to discuss it.

Behavior expectations: Students are expected to remain focused on the task at hand for the duration of class each day.

Students will be asked to leave the class if they are engaging in any of the following activities:

- ☐ Using cellphones or Smartphones for ANY reason (except as required for in-class work). Keep it silenced and in your pocket/bag for the duration of class.
- ☐ Speaking out of turn.
- ☐ Studying or working on assignments for other classes.
- ☐ Reading any sort of print media (unless required to do so for a lab activity).
- ☐ Utilizing the computer for any reason other than in-class assignments.
 - When the class is not working on an assignment, keep the monitor off and mouse upside down.
 - When the class IS working on an assignment, do not use the computer to check email or social media, surf the Web, IM, or anything else unrelated to the assignment.

Students who are asked to leave will be counted as absent for that day (no freebie allowed) and will not be given an opportunity to make up missed work.

Department, College, and University Policies

Drop Policy: Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session, as noted in the syllabus schedule. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance.** Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://www.uta.edu/ses/fao>).

Disability Accommodations: UT Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including *The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*, *The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA)*, and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act*. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of a letter certified by the **Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD)**. Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting: **The Office for Students with Disabilities, (OSD)** www.uta.edu/disability or calling 817-272-3364. **Counseling and Psychological Services, (CAPS)** www.uta.edu/caps/ or calling 817-272-3671.

Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

Title IX: *The University of Texas at Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit uta.edu/eos. For information regarding Title IX, visit www.uta.edu/titleIX.*

Student Support Services: UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at www.uta.edu/resources.

Electronic Communication: UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

Student Feedback Survey: At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as lecture, seminar, or laboratory shall be directed to complete a Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student's feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington's effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

Final Review Week: A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips

or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

Emergency Exit Procedures: Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit, which is located at the end of the hallway in either direction from the classroom. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist individuals with disabilities.

Academic Integrity: All students enrolled in this course are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington's tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.

I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.

Instructors may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents' Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university's standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the University.

Furthermore, students are expected to model the honest and ethical behavior in this course that they would be expected to follow as professional communicators. In addition to examples of cheating, plagiarism and collusion described in the student handbook, the following behaviors in this class also constitute academic dishonesty:

- ☐ Making up sources, information or quotes except as explicitly specified for certain class assignments
- ☐ Failing to properly attribute quotes and ideas to their sources
- ☐ Asking someone to lie about a student interviewing him or her
- ☐ Getting other people to write class assignments
- ☐ Lying to a source to get information
- ☐ Copying a published story or using information from a published news account, Web page, database, research paper or press release without proper attribution
- ☐ Turning in a story students already have published or written for another class

Course Schedule & Due Dates

As the instructor for this course, I reserve the right to adjust this schedule in any way that serves the educational needs of the students enrolled in this course. –Erika J. Pribanic-Smith

Week	Dates	Topics/Assignments
1	Aug. 27	Course Overview/Introduction/Ethics Review
2	Sept. 1	Building a personal brand/digital portfolio <u>Blogspace assigned</u>
	Sept. 3	**Project Launch with Downtown Arlington** Blogspace workshop DUE (11:59 P.M.): Professional blogspace
3	Sept. 8	Telling a story via blogging <u>Blog entry assigned</u>
	Sept. 10	Blogging workshop DUE (11:59 P.M.): First blog entry
4	Sept. 14	CENSUS DATE
	Sept. 15	Telling a story on social media/Twitter set-up <u>Live tweet short story assigned</u>
	Sept. 17	Storify/blog comment workshop
5	Sept. 22	Telling a story with photos <u>Photo essay assigned</u> DUE (11:59 P.M.): Live tweet short story
	Sept. 24	Using photo slideshow software DUE (11:59 P.M.): Shot list/story plan
6	Sept. 29	Reporting Workshop: Photo essay DUE (11:59 P.M.): Twitter photo teaser
	Oct. 1	Storyboarding workshop
7	Oct. 6	DUE (11 A.M.): Storyboard Production Workshop: Photo essay
	Oct. 8	Workshop (out-of-class): Photo essay
8	Oct. 13	Telling a story with audio <u>Audio feature assigned</u> DUE (11:59 P.M.): Photo essay
	Oct. 15	Effective audio reporting and recording (fieldwork) <u>Comm Day Twitter remote assigned</u> DUE (11:59 P.M.): Audio story plan
9	Oct. 20	COMMUNICATION DAY – Class will meet at University Center DUE (11:59 P.M.): Comm Day Twitter remote
	Oct. 22	Reporting Workshop: Audio feature DUE (11:59 P.M.): Twitter audio teaser
10	Oct. 27	Writing and producing the audio story <u>NOTE: Bring your recording device and headphones to class so you can start working on your tape log following lecture</u>
	Oct 29	DUE (11 A.M.): Audio interview tape log Script-writing workshop

11	Nov. 3	DUE (11 A.M.): Audio story script Production Workshop: Audio Story
	Nov. 4	LAST DAY TO DROP
	Nov. 5	Production Workshop: Audio Story DUE (11:59 P.M.): Audio feature
12	Nov. 10	Telling the story with video <u>Video feature assigned</u>
	Nov. 12	Writing the video story/backpack video DUE (11:59 P.M.): Video story plan
13	Nov. 17	Reporting Workshop: Video Feature DUE (11:59 P.M.): Twitter video teaser
	Nov. 19	Video feature production tools <u>NOTE: Bring your recording device(s) and headphones to class so you can start working on your tape log following lecture</u>
14	Nov. 24	DUE (11 A.M.): Video interview tape log Script-writing workshop
	Nov. 26	THANKSGIVING (No class)
15	Dec. 1	DUE (11 A.M.): Video feature script Individual meetings (required, by appointment)
	Dec. 3	Individual meetings (required, by appointment)
16	Dec. 8	Production Workshop: Video Feature DUE (11:59 P.M.): Feature package

Emergency Phone Numbers:

In case of an on-campus emergency, call the UT Arlington Police Department at **817-272-3003** (non-campus phone), **2-3003** (campus phone). You may also dial 911. Non-emergency number: 817-272-3381.