

# Digital Storytelling

JOUR 4341 | Fall 2019

Tues. & Thurs., 2-3:20 p.m.

Fine Arts 411A

**Instructor: Dr. Erika Pribanic-Smith**

**Office:** 2114 Fine Arts Building

**Phone (UTA Comm Office):** 817-272-2163

**Hours:** 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. T/Th or by appointment

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**Faculty Profile:** <https://mentis.uta.edu/explore/profile/Erika-Pribanic-Smith>

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:

- How to become a marketable media professional.
- What digital storytelling journalism is.
- What ethical issues (i.e., intellectual property and copyright) are involved.
- How to effectively tell a story via photos, audio, and/or video.
- How to choose the appropriate multimedia element(s) to tell a given story.
- BASIC video and audio editing and production skills; remember, the focus of this class is on STORYTELLING.
- The importance of social media and interactivity.

**Course Materials:**

- 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.

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 digital storytelling, 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.

Please note that each out-of-class assignment has preliminary components, which breaks down the story process as it occurs in the professional field. To emphasize the importance of preparation and planning rather than just throwing stories together on the fly, each preliminary assignment will make up a percentage of the final project grade. Failure to complete preliminary assignments thus will be extremely detrimental to students' course averages. Students should focus on each preliminary deadline and not solely the final project deadline.

**Grading procedures:** Each major assignment will include a detailed rubric that explains exactly how the instructor will grade that assignment. Rubrics will be available when the project is assigned. Students should review the rubrics before submitting their work.

**Attendance:** At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required, but attendance is a critical indicator in student success. 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 (see below). While UT Arlington does not require instructors to take attendance in their courses, the U.S. Department of Education requires that the University have a mechanism in place to mark when Federal Student Aid recipients "begin attendance in a course." UT Arlington instructors also will report when students stopped attending a course as part of the final grading process. Specifically, when assigning a student a grade of F, faculty report the last date a student attended their class based on evidence such as a test, participation in a class project or presentation, or an engagement online via Blackboard. This date is reported to the Department of Education for federal financial aid recipients.

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. I treat my students like professionals. 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 for which their absences will not be penalized.

**Late work:** As future media professionals, 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 TO BLACKBOARD 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:** 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. Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least an additional 9 hours per week of their own time in course-related activities. If students are struggling with the material or the workload, they should see the instructor during office hours or arrange another meeting time outside of class 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).**

## 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)**. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored.

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 OSD (817-272-3364). Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability).

**Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)** is also available to all students to help increase their understanding of personal issues, address mental and behavioral health problems, and make positive changes in their lives. ([www.uta.edu/caps](http://www.uta.edu/caps); 817-272-3671)

**Non-Discrimination Policy:** *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](http://uta.edu/eos).*

**Title IX Policy:** The University of Texas at Arlington (“University”) is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from discrimination based on sex in accordance with Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which prohibits sex discrimination in employment; and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE Act). Sexual misconduct is a form of sex discrimination and will not be tolerated. *For information regarding Title IX, visit [www.uta.edu/titleIX](http://www.uta.edu/titleIX) or contact Ms. Jean Hood, Vice President and Title IX Coordinator at (817) 272-7091 or [jmhood@uta.edu](mailto:jmhood@uta.edu).*

**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>.

**Campus Carry:** Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the

University establishes as prohibited. Under the new law, openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/news/info/campus-carry/>

**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 around the corner to the right after exiting the classroom; a second exit is at the end of the hallway to the left. 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.*

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code in their courses by 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.** Additional information is available at <https://www.uta.edu/conduct/>. Students also are encouraged to review these guides on plagiarism: <http://libguides.uta.edu/researchprocess/plagiarism>; <http://libguides.uta.edu/copyright/plagiarism>

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

**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](mailto:resources@uta.edu), or view the information at [the University College website](#).

### 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	Jan. 15	Course Overview/Introduction: What this class is and what it isn't What is a story? <u>Twitter setup assigned (completed in class)</u>
	Jan. 17	Building a personal brand Digital portfolios & infographic resumes <u>Blogspace assigned</u>
2	Jan. 22	Blogspace workshop DUE (11:59 P.M.): Professional blogspace
	Jan. 24	Telling a story with photos <u>Photo essay, shot lists and story plan assigned</u>
3 Jan. 30 <b>CENSUS DATE</b>	Jan. 29	Photo storytelling on social media <u>Twitter promo assigned</u> DUE (11:59 P.M.): Prelim shot list/story plan
	Jan. 31	Fieldwork/individual meetings
4	Feb. 5	Fieldwork/individual meetings DUE (11:59 P.M.): One-shot Twitter promo
	Feb. 7	Shot logging workshop <u>Storyboard assigned</u> DUE (11:59 P.M.): Final shot list
5	Feb. 12	Storyboarding workshop ( <b><i>Bring your photos to class.</i></b> ) DUE (11:59 P.M.): Storyboard
	Feb. 14	Production workshop ( <b><i>Bring your photos to class.</i></b> ) DUE (11:59 P.M.): Photo essay
6	Feb. 19	Telling a story with audio <b><u>Audio feature, tape log, and story plan assigned</u></b>
	Feb. 21	Effective audio recording/backpack audio <u>Twitter audio teaser assigned</u> DUE (11:59 P.M.): Audio story plan
7	Feb. 26	Fieldwork/individual meetings
	Feb. 28	Fieldwork/individual meetings DUE (11:59 P.M.): Remote Twitter audio teaser
8	March 5	Tape logging workshop DUE (11:59 P.M.): Audio interview tape log
	March 7	Writing and editing the audio story <b><u>Audio feature script assigned</u></b>

9	March 19	Script-writing workshop DUE (11:59 P.M.): Audio story script
	March 21	Audio software overview/production workshop <b><i>(Bring your audio files and headphones.)</i></b>
10  March 29 <b>LAST DAY TO DROP</b>	March 26	Production workshop <b><i>(Bring your audio files and headphones.)</i></b> DUE (11:59 P.M.): Audio feature
	March 28	Telling the story with video <u>Video feature, story plan, and tape log assigned</u>
11	April 2	Backpack video <u>Twitter video teaser assigned</u> DUE (11:59 P.M.): Video story plan
	April 4	Fieldwork/individual meetings
12	April 9	Fieldwork/individual meetings DUE (11:59 P.M.): Remote Twitter video teaser
	April 11	Logging workshop
13	April 16	Logging workshop DUE (11:59 P.M.): Video feature tape log
	April 18	Writing the video story <u>Video feature script assigned</u>
14	April 23	Script-writing workshop DUE (11:59 P.M.): Video feature script
	April 25	Voiceover/standup/reshoot workshop
15	April 30	Video software overview/production workshop
	May 2	Production workshop 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.