Digital Storytelling
JOUR 4341 | Fall 2019

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

Instructor: Dr. Erika Pribanic-Smith
Office: 2114 Fine Arts Building   **Phone (UTA Comm Office):** 817-272-2163
Hours: 12:30-1:30 p.m. T/Th or by appointment   **Email:** epsmith@uta.edu
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.

<u>Students who are asked to leave will be counted as absent for that day (no freebie allowed)</u>.

Institutional Policies and Additional Information

UTA students are encouraged to review the below institutional policies and informational sections and reach out to the specific office with any questions. To view this institutional information, please visit the Institutional Information page, which includes the following policies among others:

- Drop Policy
- Disability Accommodations
- Title IX Policy
- Academic Integrity
- Student Feedback Survey
- Final Exam Schedule

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.

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 by appointment, drop-in tutoring, mentoring (time management, study skills, etc.), major-based learning centers, counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at Resource Hotline.

The IDEAS Center (2nd Floor of Central Library) offers **FREE** tutoring and mentoring to all students with a focus on transfer students, sophomores, veterans and others undergoing a transition to UT Arlington. Students can drop in or check the schedule of available peer tutors at www.uta.edu/IDEAS, or call (817) 272-6593.

<u>Course Schedule & Due Dates</u>

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

Schedule TBA

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.