

# Multimedia Storytelling

JOUR 3526-001

Spring 2026

Tues/Thur, 2:40 – 4:05 p.m.

Meeman Journalism Building 202

## Dr. Claire Rounkles

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Office Hours Mon/Wed, 9:00 - 2:00 p.m., Tue/Thu 9:00 -11:00 a.m. (Friday by appointment)

I am available for in-person, phone or video chat during office hours. I'm also available by appointment during normal business hours (Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. CT). Contact me via email for an appointment or for questions or comments relating to our class. Your messages via Canvas and email will get responses within 24 hours.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### Catalog description

Understanding the photograph and video as narrative through photojournalism techniques; learning to see, interpret and capture images that communicate information and have meaning and storytelling power; editing of digital images and video with software for use in broadcast, web and print; legal and ethical issues in photography.

### Prerequisites

JRSM 2121

JRSM 3900 or 3905

### Textbooks, Software and Required Materials

#### *Textbook:*

*Associated Press Stylebook*

#### *Software:*

Adobe Photoshop CC

Adobe InDesign CC

Adobe Premiere CC

Audacity

*Note: You can purchase the Adobe Creative Cloud on a month-to-month basis from Adobe.com.*

One Flash Drive (At least 2GB capacity) or some sort of storage cloud or drive

#### *Required Materials*

For some of the assignments you will be expected to use your phone for assignments so there must be enough space to shoot on your phone. Clear off excess photos, videos, music and/or apps that take up too much space so you are prepared to work.

### Classroom format

This course is designed to stock the toolbox of a talented multimedia journalist. Students will learn techniques and the principles behind multiple storytelling platforms to execute projects for a multimedia news and information environment. Further, students will build a portfolio of work to

show potential employers. Some sessions might require students to leave the classroom/workspace, in which case conduct will be governed by the rules of the classroom and the rules of the venue in which the class is meeting. A typical class session/weekly module will consist of a lecture, discussion, and assignment/lab time.

Students are required to complete multiple multimedia activities and multimedia projects throughout the semester, as well as a final portfolio. The multimedia assignments reinforce principles of the software and specific media platforms. The multimedia projects allow students to combine those skills into journalistic work.

#### Accessing the course website

1. Go to the University of Memphis online learning home page:  
<http://memphis.instructure.com>
2. Log in using your University of Memphis username and password.
3. In the Term Year course list available to you, click on the link for JOUR 3526-001 to enter your course and read the instructions on the welcoming page

#### Course Requirements

##### *Computer Usage:*

Students are expected to use a computer in this course. Students will use Apple computers running the Macintosh operating system in class but may use Windows computers at their own discretion. Students will work with the design software standard in the professional world. At this time, the professional standard is the Adobe Creative Cloud, particularly Adobe InDesign, Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Illustrator. Extensive instruction about how to use these programs will be offered in this course.

##### *Writing Style:*

Although this is not specifically a writing course, students will be required to adhere to the Associated Press style guide and other journalistic writing standards. Additionally, students will write 200 to 300-word journalistic stories with each of their Multimedia Projects during the semester.

##### *Assignment Format:*

- All multimedia assignments and multimedia projects are to be submitted electronically via Canvas.
  - Generally, each assignment and project will come with unique formatting guidelines. Be sure to follow these guidelines exactly. Work that does not comply to these guidelines, as well as the production specifications for the assignment, will receive a grade of 0.
- Students will receive a participation grade that is based on your in-class project pitches and contribution to project critiques.
  - Work will be critiqued in the classroom and must be suitable for presentation. Students are encouraged to work ahead on assignments to develop their own processes for the work.

##### *Missed Deadlines and Late Assignments:*

In this class you will work on deadline for assignments while in class and will need to submit some outside-of-class assignments by deadline as well. Deadlines are a routine part of the work life for journalists and strategic communicators in the industry.

In order to complete work by deadline, you will need to learn to manage your time and make adjustments accordingly.

Assignments are generally due at 11:59 p.m. That Canvas assignment deadline means the work must be

submitted by the listed 11:59 p.m. deadline to be on-time. An assignment submitted at 12:00:00 a.m. is LATE according to Canvas. *Leave yourself ample time to meet the deadline*

Assignments MUST be turned in by deadline. However, we recognize extraordinary circumstances sometimes mean more time is needed. Therefore, if you need the deadline to move accommodate your circumstances, it is possible to do so if you reach out to your instructor no less than 12 hours before the deadline to request and negotiate for an extension.

In your Canvas message, you must do these things:

- 1) State how much more time you need;
- 2) Explain why you need more time;
- 3) Explain what status your assignment is in at the time of the request; and
- 4) Explain how the additional time will make it better.

If your request is reasonable and your explanations are sound, I will move the deadline so you can turn in the best possible work.

**If you do NOT follow these steps to negotiate for a new deadline or your request is deemed unreasonable, the original due date will stand and late penalties will apply according to class policy.**

#### *Assignment Late Work Policy*

- *If you have communicated and created a plan with your instructor due to planned extended absences, extenuating circumstances, or accommodations, refer to that plan. Accommodation will include conversation with Course Coordinator*
- 5% off for 1 second to 15 minutes after 11:59 p.m. Central Time - (Canvas Time)
- 10% off if turned in “next day” before 11:59pm Central Time (Canvas Time)
  - Your phone is not the marker of the time, nor is any other clock that is not “Canvas Time”
- 20% off if assignment is turned in 2nd day late by 11:59pm
- After 11:59:00 p.m. of the 2nd day, the assignment is a zero.

#### *Resubmission Policy – For On-Time Assignments Only*

Resubmissions must meaningfully address instructor feedback and include a brief revision memo. The revised grade may replace the original grade up to a maximum of **90%**. Late submissions are not eligible for resubmission.

- Resubmissions only applicable on 4 Multimedia Assignments and on MP1 and MP2.

#### *Multimedia Assignments:*

- MA1: 3 Subject -x- 3 Photo
- MA2: Photo Editing
- MA3: DSLR photo shoot
- MA4: Audio Postcard
- MA5: Audio script writing / Editing
- MA6: Podcast Audio
- MA7: Classmate Interview
- MA8: Video Editing
- MA9: Video 1

MP2: NPR-style Audio

MP3: Video Documentary "Hidden Gems in Memphis" or "Hidden Gems in My City"

MP4: Portfolio

\*Note - Each category listed above can be made of multiple smaller, graded assignments.

*Portfolio:*

All Department of Journalism undergraduate students are required to develop and maintain an active online portfolio of their work. More information about the final review of portfolios is in the Assessment section later in the syllabus. You will need to create a section on your portfolio site for the multimedia work you've completed for JOUR 3526. We will take time in class for you to update your site.

**Grading**

Assignment categories and points or percentage weights.

A+ = 96.5-100%; A = 92.5-96.4%; A- = 89.5-92.4%

B+ = 86.5-89.4%; B = 82.5-86.4%; B- = 79.5-82.4%

C+ = 76.5-79.4%; C = 72.5-76.4%; C- = 69.5-72.4%

D+ = 66.5-69.4%; D = 59.5-66.4%

F 0-59.4%

*Grading Philosophy:*

A=Professional quality work that could be used with little or no modification; B=Good to excellent work and exceeds requirement but would require revision to be used professionally;

C=Satisfactory work and adequately meets requirement, but would need significant revision;

D=Barely satisfies minimum requirement and below average quality; F=Unsatisfactory work and does not meet minimum requirement. NOTE: Plusses and minuses may be given.

*Grade Distribution:*

Multimedia assignments	30%
Multimedia projects	40%
Portfolio	10%
Online Quizzes and	10%
Discussions	
Participation/Attendance	10%
& Professionalism	

I am completely aware that you might face some stress, challenges, or conflicts during our time together. What does that mean for you? That you may need help outside of the "classroom." I'm 110 percent committed to seeing you succeed, and I'll help you in whatever way possible. But you have to take the initiative to ask, to come to office hours, and to contact me if you have questions.

*ChatGPT & Multimedia Storytelling Course*

ChatGPT and similar AI tools, though useful in many contexts, are inappropriate for use in this multimedia storytelling course. An important outcome of this course is to strengthen your own abilities as a thinker and writer. That is only possible when you do your own work. You may not submit work that is written wholly or partially by an AI tool. Assignment submissions may be run through AI detection software. If your submission appears to have been written using AI, you may either receive a failing grade or be asked to resubmit the assignment.

**COURSE POLICIES**

## Office Hours

Office hours are a chance for you to get help with your work, go over and ask questions about material covered in class, talk about connections you're making between class material and what you're passionate about outside of Class, and to talk about how I can help you succeed both inside our classroom and in other journalism-y things you're doing, too. Office hours are generally student-directed (e.g. you decide what we talk about), but we can also help you formulate questions to ask. You are always welcomed to bring a friend to office hours if that makes you more comfortable!

## Communication

The instructor will be as available as possible to help you with the course. Please make use of office hours. I recommend emailing in advance even if you do plan to show up during my scheduled office hours. I will make every effort to communicate in advance if unexpected meetings interfere with scheduled office hours.

I will respond as quickly as possible to email sent Monday through Friday between 9 am and 5 pm. Do not expect prompt replies on evenings, weekends and holidays. I

## Classroom Civility

It is my intention to make our classroom a welcoming space. Every student in this classroom, regardless of personal history or identity, is a valued member of our community. Your experiences are valuable and important, and you should feel free to share them as they become relevant to our class. If you find there are aspects of my course, instruction, or our classroom environment that result in barriers to your involvement, please contact me privately without fear of reprisal. I firmly believe that you are valuable, important, and necessary. I promise to treat you as such, and help you see in yourself throughout the semester that you have a unique contribution to make in the world.

I hope you will join me in this mission. As such, respecting the time, backgrounds, experiences and identities of your fellow classmates is required. Any biased and intolerant behavior or writing is unacceptable. I expect a respectful, civil atmosphere in class at all times. I will expect you to contribute to class discussions. I or other students may present points of view that you do not agree with. We can disagree politely. I will expect everyone to respect other students and myself in all our interactions, whether face-to-face or electronically.

## Electronic Devices

Laptop computers and tablets can be useful tools for learning, but they also can be a distraction. Research has determined students are more engaged in class and retain information better when taking notes by hand, but learning styles and needs vary. You are welcome to use laptops/tablets for your note taking and other tasks related to the course content as long as they do not become a distraction. I reserve the right to limit your use of electronic devices if the use is distracting to others. Cell phones should always be silenced and put away during class.

## Accessibility

We all learn differently. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible, so we can collectively make the classroom and the course more accessible. If you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need to make arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please let me know as soon as possible. If disability related accommodations are necessary (for example, a note taker, extended time on exams, captioning), please register with the Disability Resources for Students, <https://www.memphis.edu/drs/L>, 110 Wilder Tower, 901.678.2880, and then notify me of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. Additionally, there are a range of free resources available to all students on campus, including the Center for Writing and Communication and the Educational Support Program (ESP).

## On Power

A university setting creates situations where certain people have power over others. Not everyone uses that power responsibly. If a professor, TA, grad student, job supervisor, or anyone with whom you should have a professional, academic, or peer relationship seems to be pushing the boundaries of that relationship in a way that makes you uncomfortable (whether that's sexual or not), or in a way where you're not sure if you "should" be uncomfortable or not, and you need help figuring out what to do, reach out and talk to me. I will listen, and either help figure out what to do, or point you in the direction of someone who can help.

I am what is called a "mandated reporter." This means that if you tell me about someone's behavior that is targeting and harming you because of your identity, or if I witness this kind of behavior myself, I am required to report that to the Title IX office. However, you are not committed to any mandatory next step based on me contacting this office: The University of Memphis Office for Institutional Equity. Learn more about your rights and options at <https://www.memphis.edu/oie/title9/index.php> . or call 901.678.2713. You also may make an anonymous report online. I promise to support you, stand with you, and advocate for you, whatever you choose to do.

**If you are struggling with this class, with your University of Memphis experience, or any aspect of your life, you must let me know you're having an issue to get help or accommodations as it pertains to class. Do not wait until the end of the semester to try to pull together your life/health/grade in this class. Come talk to me, and I will do my best to help get you back on track.**

## Copyright in course materials

The materials you encounter in your coursework at the University of Memphis is subject to many different types of copyright protection, depending on the author as well as how it is used. In a single course you may encounter materials created by your instructor, an article that is shared with you in an extemporaneous way under the Teach Act, and materials such as course packets where each copy includes a royalty payment to the author. As a student, you are responsible for how you use course materials and must ensure that the rights of copyright holders are not violated by sharing them, posting materials online, etc.

## Student work and copyright

Just like materials created by your instructor are protected by copyright, the things you create as a student are owned by you. For example, if your instructor uses TurnItIn to check for plagiarism in student papers, the University has an agreement with TurnItIn so that no papers are shared with that company and are only used to cross-reference.

## Academic Freedom

Some students may consider some of the material covered in this course to be controversial or even offensive. It is not my intention to upset you but I do want you to routinely question what you know and how you came to think the way you do. If anyone becomes uncomfortable with any of the topics we cover, please come to see me before or after class. An alternative assignment can be arranged if needed.

## ASSESSMENT AND OUTCOMES

- Apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, both in a global context and in the United States.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the multicultural history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.
- Demonstrate culturally proficient communication that empowers those traditionally disenfranchised in society, especially as grounded in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and ability, domestically and globally, across communication and media context.
- Present images and information effectively and creatively, using appropriate tools and technologies.
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences, and purposes they serve.
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness, and diversity.
- Apply critical thinking skills in conducting research and evaluating information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.
- Effectively and correctly apply basic numerical and statistical concepts.
- Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style, and grammatical correctness.

How professional values and competencies will be met

*Cognitive objectives to be mastered (ability to explain, analyze, understand, think critically)*

- Demonstrate a basic knowledge of digital cameras for both still photography and video.
- Analyze and identify the most effective multimedia platform for telling each story.
- Demonstrate a basic understanding of spatial relationships, including the importance of depth, scale, and the elimination of distracting elements in photography and video.
- Demonstrate a basic understanding of audio recording including interviews and natural sound.
- Employ a basic knowledge of interviewing sources in a multimedia environment, which includes audio and video.
- Illustrate the ability to work in a digital framework to process images, video and audio to its maximum potential while taking care not to alter fact or otherwise create unethical representations.
- Critique the work of classmates to demonstrate an understanding of the processes of multimedia storytelling across platforms.

*Performance standards to be met (demonstrable skills, abilities, techniques, applied competencies)*

- Complete a series of multimedia assignments, which include packages representing people in various news and feature situations
- Demonstrate the ability to capture and process an image, video and audio with the appropriate, industry-standard equipment to make it suitable for presentation
- Demonstrate proficiency with image, video and audio editing software

How assessment of student learning will be met

*Awareness*

- Become aware of photo, video and audio development and ethics of visual communication.

*Understanding*

- Develop an understanding for the multimedia storytelling process from development to editing to final presentation in multiple media outlets.

*Application*

- Creation of at least four multimedia projects addressing different multimedia platforms,

photography, video, audio, audio-visual and data visualization, which are edited using a combination of Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Premiere Pro and Adobe Audition.

## JOURNALISM AND STRATEGIC MEDIA POLICIES

### Portfolio requirement

As an undergraduate student in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media, you are required to develop and maintain an active portfolio of your work. Portfolios begin in JRS 3900/3905. The portfolio should contain samples of coursework and/or professional experiences and should develop as you build skills. Portfolios will undergo a final, external review while you are enrolled in your capstone course.

You may use any type of web hosting for your portfolio, but it must have an independent and professional URL. You may use any content management system, but you are encouraged to use WordPress, Wix, or SquareSpace. It is also encouraged to purchase a URL if you plan to use the portfolio long term. You must keep the portfolio active for six months following graduation from the University of Memphis.

You should have a professional email address you plan to use throughout your professional life, via a common email service, such as Gmail.

All portfolios must contain the following items:

- Samples of work from courses and/or professional activities. (Example: Broadcasting students must include a video reel)
- A current résumé
- A personal profile
- Contact information/means of contact
- Professional social media links (minimum LinkedIn)

You may wish to include a blog, video reels, photograph galleries, presentations, design PDFs, audio files or writing pieces as examples of professional work. The professional work should ultimately be tailored to the career you seek after graduation. Your portfolio should show a unique blend of work.

### Email

You must have your UofM email account activated. If you are using another provider, such as Google, you are required to have all UofM emails forwarded to that account. Go to the [account management website](#) for information about implementing email forwarding. You are required to check your email daily.

### Electronic devices

Some classes require a tablet, laptop or a smartphone. Others do not. Instructors will set the policy for their specific classes.

### AI/Chat GPT

The use of artificial intelligence software, such as Chat GPT, is prohibited in some courses and required in others in Journalism & Strategic Media. Please refer to specific guidelines for this course in the course-specific part of the syllabus.

### Attendance

Class attendance is mandatory in Journalism & Strategic Media. You may be assigned a failing grade for the semester for nonattendance or habitual tardiness. Here's how attendance works: You get three free passes during the semester. After you cash in the passes, missed classes are

reflected in your final grade. For example, if you miss one additional class, your final grade drops a letter grade. If you miss two more classes, your grade drops again. So, if you miss six classes, your final grade drops two letters.

#### Course repetition

Majors and minors who fail to earn the minimum passing grade (C-) in a class required by your program of study in Journalism & Strategic Media after three attempts will be dropped from the program.

You may not use or submit work from a previous course, even if it is the same course being repeated, to fulfill requirements for assignments in another course. Substantially reworking the original submission, or working with the same general idea, may be permissible upon discussion and with written approval from the professor of the current course.

#### Academic integrity

The University of Memphis expects all students to behave honestly and follow the policies stated in the Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities. If you need more information about the University policy on academic integrity visit the [Office of Student Accountability's website](#).

In addition to University-wide policies, the Department of Journalism & Strategic Media considers making up quotes from sources, turning in substantially the same assignment for credit in two different courses or receiving any assistance from others for work assigned to be done on your own, as acts of cheating and punishable to the degree determined appropriate by the course instructor and department chair. Punishment may include grade reductions or seeking dismissal of the student from the University.

Further, you are expected to comply with copyright and intellectual property laws and must have sufficient permission to use any copyrighted materials used in creative projects, unless otherwise informed in cases of exercises or reproduction.

Your written work may be submitted to Turnitin.com, or a similar electronic detection method, for rating originality of your ideas and to evaluate proper use and assignment of sources. All creative work may be checked for policy adherence by the professor. The only exception to this policy is your online portfolio and its attendant pieces (for example, the résumé and logo). By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process. The assignment may be included as a source document in Turnitin.com's restricted access database. It is solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Assignments not submitted according to the instructor's procedures may be penalized or may not be accepted at all.

#### Online SETEs

You are encouraged to complete the SETEs evaluation of this course. If completed, once the instructor has posted final grades, you can immediately see that grade. To access evaluation forms, log in to MyMemphis; click the "Student Pages" dropdown menu and select "My Resources" and find the SETE evaluation forms; complete an evaluation for each course listed and hit the "Submit" button at the bottom of the form. Completing the SETE will only take a few minutes. Faculty take the evaluations seriously and use them to improve courses and instructional quality. Your feedback is essential and is appreciated.

#### Deadlines

All deadlines are firm. Because Journalism & Strategic Media is a professional program, students are expected to understand and comply with deadlines. Students needing an extension on an assignment must receive approval from the instructor. Exceptions will be made for reasonable circumstances if the student notifies the instructor prior to the due date.

You may be permitted to make up missing work if it is for an absence because of illness or other catastrophic emergency, such as a death in the family that can be documented.

#### AP Style and grammar

All written work in this class must follow the AP Stylebook and accepted rules of grammar and punctuation. You are responsible for learning these rules and checking your work for errors.

#### Disability and accommodations

If you need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, contact Disability Resources for Students at 901-678-2880 in 110 Wilder Tower Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations.

#### Diversity and inclusivity

The Department of Journalism & Strategic Media values diversity in all its forms. Some of these forms include ability, age, appearance, ethnicity, gender identity, immigration status, language, nationality, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexuality, socio-economic status, and other personal identities and experiences. As such, students are expected to participate in fostering an inclusive environment that respects the differences of others.

Students are expected to approach their work through a diverse lens. Creating messages that resonate with diverse audiences requires an understanding of a variety of perspectives, which are carried out through multiple platforms, such as digital and traditional media outlets.

The department seeks to foster healthy and positive classroom discussions and experiences. As such, faculty and students are expected to remain respectful and professional at all times.

#### Weather policy

Always check with local media, the University of Memphis website and the LiveSafe App regarding inclement weather.

#### Student support

If you are experiencing personal or academic challenges including, but not limited to food or housing issues, family needs, or other stressors, visit the Student Outreach & Support page to learn about resources that can help: <https://www.memphis.edu/deanofstudents/crisis/index.php> or contact the Dean of Students Office at 901-678-2187, or in person in Suite 359 in the University Center for assistance. You may also talk with course instructors about the challenges you are experiencing. Instructors may be able to assist in connecting you with campus or community support.