Course Overview

WHAT’S MULTIMEDIA?
The term “multimedia” signifies the production and transmission of media messages through any combination of text, graphic art, sound, animation, and video. In general, multimedia productions are carried out by the usage of computer and digital technology, although the literal meaning of it does not exclude analog-based technology or traditional forms of media. In short, we are making digital messages that are a mixture of video, music, picture, and whatever you want to include.

WHAT WE WILL BE DOING
We will be covering and practicing multimedia production of journalistic stories with examples and hands-on work. That means you are going to be introduced to a lot of new things in a short period of time: technologies you maybe haven’t used before, software applications that are more complicated than your word processor, telling stories in media format that mixes different forms of messages. This isn’t meant to be a comprehensive overview of multimedia production or utilization, but a way of getting you to think about the ways stories are told in the 21st century. It’s also meant to be fun, so don’t think of it as a traditional class where the boring lecturer gives you boring facts for a long boring time, and then you leave. You’re going to be using this technology in ways that are exciting and refreshing, allowing you to really engage with stories, readers, and each other in ways.

DON’T BE AFRAID – I’M HERE TO HELP!
The goal of this class is to introduce you to the technology that you will find in other classes the school offers and, more importantly, to introduce you to the technology and storytelling methods that are increasingly common in the journalism landscape. It’s likely that you will be using techniques, technology, and devices that you haven’t encountered before. Therefore it’s natural that along the way you will have questions to ask me, and I want to be there to answer them so that your interest in a new form of multimedia production takes hold; also, I don’t want you to feel overwhelmed.

Multimedia Introduction is a new part of the course work required of all journalism majors and is taught in concert with Issues in Journalism (019:078) and Journalistic Reporting & Writing (019:098).
Required Texts and Materials

Because multimedia is a relatively new and rapidly changing field, there will not a textbook for this course. Rather, we will use examples of professionally produced multimedia. Any required or suggested readings will be available online. For the first class meeting, you will need to bring 1) twenty to thirty pictures that can generate a short audio slide show. For example, pictures taken during your vacation trip, a family gathering, and a music festival can make a good story. You will also be required to purchase 2) miniDV tapes, available from the equipment depot in Becker Communication Building for $6. While 3) earbuds from your iPod will work for editing audio and video, a decent pair of headphones will be helpful now and in the future. You will also need 4) a flash/thumb/jump/USB drive (with at least 4 GB of memory) for this class, though you will find it necessary for the rest of your life, too. You should bring these last two items to every class. You can also check out an external hard drive from the equipment depot, which will be very useful when you are editing in Final Cut Pro. 5) SD Cards, normally 8 GB will work. I will see about checking these out beforehand, so don’t buy any SD cards yet.

Grading

Multimedia assignments will be graded on a 2-point scale. A 2 indicates satisfactory work that meets requirements. A 1 score will be given if there are requirements that are not met. A 0 will be given for assignments that are incomplete, technically flawed (i.e., unplayable file type), factually incorrect or late.

Writing assignments will be given letter grades. Late work will be accepted within the next three days from original due date, but will be penalized by a full letter grade (if the work is B+ quality, you will be given a C+). Anything not turned in after three days will be considered incomplete and zero points will be awarded.

Final grades are weighted as follows:

40% Participation

We have just 3 weeks together. To make that count, you have to be here, in class, on time, interacting with me and your classmates. You are expected to have thoughtful comments and questions that show you have consumed and considered the materials we have asked you to. Additionally, on one day this semester your participation points will be determined by your ability to “live tweet” class proceedings, as well as asking questions through our Cover It Live feed.

30% Written Assignments

One of the best ways to learn how to use multimedia is to look at what professionals do. You will find there are things that work and, since no one’s perfect, things that don’t. You should point out strengths and weaknesses, use proper grammar, spelling and AP style. Written assignments include:

• Writing for the Web
• Show and Tell
• Multimedia Critique
30% Multimedia assignments
You’ll be assigned exercises to help you become familiar with the technology, how to use it and what its strengths are as a storytelling device. These will be due by the end of the day (11:59 p.m.) on the due date, unless otherwise noted. The multimedia assignments are:

• Raw audio recording
• Audio slide show in two different formats
• Raw video recording
• Edited video

Final grades will be A (90—100 percent), B (80—89 percent), C (70—79 percent), D (60—69 percent) and F (below 60 percent). Plus/minus grading may be used. Students who feel that the assessment of their work is unfair are encouraged to discuss it with me, but please do so within a week. Otherwise, the grade will stand.

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) Policies and Procedures

Administrative Home
The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is the administrative home of this course and governs matters such as the add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and other related issues. Different colleges may have different policies. Questions may be addressed to 120 Schaeffer Hall or see the CLAS Student Academic Handbook at http://www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/index.shtml.

Electronic Communication
University policy specifies that students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu). Faculty and students should use this account for correspondences. (Operations Manual, III.15.2. Scroll down to k.11.)

Academic Fraud
Plagiarism and any other activities when students present work that is not their own are academic fraud. Academic fraud is a serious matter and is reported to the departmental DEO and to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs and Curriculum. Instructors and DEOs decide on appropriate consequences at the departmental level while the Associate Dean enforces additional consequences at the collegiate level. See the CLAS Student Academic Handbook.

Making a Suggestion or a Complaint
Students with a suggestion or complaint should first visit the instructor, then the course supervisor, and then the departmental DEO. Complaints must be made within six months
of the incident. See the CLAS Student Academic Handbook.

**Accommodations for Disabilities**
A student seeking academic accommodations should first register with Student Disability Services and then meet privately with the course instructor to make particular arrangements. See http://www.uiowa.edu/~sds/ for more information.

**Understanding Sexual Harassment**
Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community have a responsibility to uphold this mission and to contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment should be reported immediately. See the UI Comprehensive Guide on Sexual Harassment at http://www.uiowa.edu/~eod/policies/sexual-harassment-guide/index.html for assistance, definitions, and the full University policy.

**Reacting Safely to Severe Weather**
In severe weather, class members should seek appropriate shelter immediately, leaving the classroom if necessary. The class will continue if possible when the event is over. (Operations Manual, Part IV, 16. See items e, h, and i.)

*The CLAS policy statements have been summarized from the web pages of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and The University of Iowa Operations Manual.

**The Iowa Dozen**
As one of more than 104 programs in journalism and mass communication accredited by the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC), we must assess student learning to assure that each of our graduates meets the following standards.

**We learn to ...**
1. Write correctly, clearly and well.
2. Conduct research and gather information responsibly.
3. Edit and evaluate carefully.
4. Use media technologies thoughtfully.
5. Apply statistical concepts accurately.

**We value ...**
6. Free speech and First Amendment principles for all individuals and groups.
7. A diverse global community.
8. Creativity and independence.

**We explore ...**
10. Theories and concepts.
11. The history, structure, and economy of media institutions
12. The role of media in shaping cultures.
Schedule
We will adapt this schedule to give more attention to subjects as needed and as
equipment availability requires. Readings and other online content may be added to
supplement and elucidate as needed. Changes and additions will be posted to the class’s
ICON site. Specific grading criteria will be made available for each assignment.

Week 1 – June 17

Assignment Due This Week: Readings (available on ICON)
Multimedia cheat sheet
Anti-Intellectualism Through Wikis
The Web allows stories to be spun in new ways
Has the Internet hamsterized journalism?
5 grammar errors
7 writing mistakes
Gathering audio

First Third
The class site
What is multimedia all about?
Choosing the best medium
The media we consume

Second Third
Writing for the Web
How to write compelling headlines, captions, and more
Mac computer basics/blogging basics
Basic HTML

Final Third
Audio recording basics, avoiding common pitfalls
How to operate the recorder
Audio capturing and editing using Garageband/Audacity
Audio slideshow production
In-class work

Week 2 – June 24

Assignments Due This Week:
1. Writing for Web exercise on the course blog with basic HTML and picture integration
2. Upload raw audio and nat sound to ICON
3. Upload audio slideshow to ICON
4. Multimedia show-and-tell: find a multimedia piece that you think is very good and be
prepared to talk at length about why you like it.

Readings (available on ICON)
Photoshop Tutorial
Assessing credibility of online sources
Journalist’s guide to Twitter (Note: This guide will change over time!)
Signs of amateur video
Golden rules of videographers
Advice from a video pro

First Third
Video shooting basics
Using the camera and tripod
Keeping a good audio quality while videotaping
In-class demo

Second Third
Videotaping practice
Video capturing and aesthetics in editing
Editing using Final Cut Pro
In-class work

Final Third
Audio/Video format conversion using Compressor
Going online with your own blog

Week 3 – July 1

Assignment Due This Week:
1. Raw video scavenger hunt posted to ICON Dropbox
2. Multimedia critique posted to ICON Dropbox
3. Audio slide show posted to ICON Dropbox
3. Turn in your video DVD
4. Edited video posted to ICON Dropbox

Readings (available on ICON)
Keeping up to date in your niche
Reporter’s guide to multimedia proficiency
Two approaches to newspaper video
Advice for journalism students

First Third
Using RSS for information and reporting
Using Social media for reporting

**Second Third**
Data visualization
Photoshop for the Web
When and how to use photographs, graphics, and audios in video production
Walk through DVD Studio Pro
In-class work

**Final Third**
Multimedia packaging: Putting it all together
How to tell a story with multiple mediums
Tie up loose ends