**JMC:3620:0001**

**Applied Digital and Social Media**

School of Journalism and Mass Communications / College of Liberal Arts and Sciences / University of Iowa

**Spring 2015 - 5:30 p.m. - 7:20 p.m. T Th, W336 AJB**

DEO: David Ryfe

**Instructor**
Max Freund / Digital News Product Manager
Fusionfarm
Maxwell-freund@uiowa.edu / @maximumfreund
Office hours: 7:30 to 9 p.m., T Th, W336 AJB – as needed.

**Materials**

A computer

A USB flash drive. Not required, but it could come in handy.

**To do well in this class**

This course is a best attempt to build on your skills from the introduction to multimedia course. You are journalists in the digital age, and as digital journalists, it is your responsibility to become adept at a multitude of storytelling techniques.

However, the increase in available storytelling options brings pitfalls. Ensuring you are selecting the right technique for the right story is more art than science, but throughout this class we will discuss when, why, and how a variety of techniques can be used.

We will cover audio, video, data, social, and photo based stories with an eye towards presenting these pieces in an engaging and impactful way online. There will be projects dedicated to each of these storytelling techniques.

But in order to tell these stories well, students will also be challenged to learn the fundamentals of HTML and CSS, within the framework of the Wordpress post. Learning these skills will free students to create a world that best presents their story within the predefined world of Wordpress.
While learning true web development is best done outside of an existing CMS (Wordpress), it is not the intention of this class to turn you into web developers. Rather, it is this class’ goal to provide you with just enough web development to be dangerous. The hope is that you will be able to take these new digital development skills and pair them with your toolbox of storytelling techniques. Combining the two will allow you to pick the right storytelling technique and build the right environment for that technique to shine.

Most students in this class will have no prior experience with web development. So if you are scared you are behind from the onset, or that your brain can’t handle this stuff, don’t worry, it can, and you can. Mistakes and confusion are to be expected from time to time, but together, we can break through those barriers and gain a stronger understanding of journalistic web development.

The beginning of this class will be dedicated to basic web development techniques and ideas. We will test these out inside of your Wordpress sites, build a few frameworks for stories, and then hit the ground running on storytelling techniques.

Each subsequent unit focuses on a different technique, which allows each student to explore the technology or style of storytelling further while playing with layout and design through HTML and CSS.

Doesn’t that sound fun? :D

So, if you do your homework, attend class, pay attention, follow along, take a few risks, and ask questions when you are lost, then there’s no way you won’t do well. You can do this.

**JMC Learning Outcomes**

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication is committed to your academic and professional success. In line with this commitment, we have identified particular learning outcomes that every student should obtain by the time they earn a JMC degree. You can find more information about these learning outcomes here: http://clas.uiowa.edu/sjmc/undergraduate-programs/assessment. We regularly assess the curriculum to determine whether students are achieving these outcomes.

This course contributes to these learning outcomes by helping you achieve proficiency in understanding and applying the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press in real space and cyberspace. Achieving these outcomes means the ability to:
**Media Literacy:** Understand the principles of media literacy and develop the skills necessary to access, analyze, evaluate, and create media messages across multiple media domains.

- Students will develop critical thinking skills to analyze and interpret media messages through an understanding of media practices and institutions.

**Writing and Storytelling:** Understand that clear, concise, correct writing is at the heart of journalistic expression and that reporting and communicating it effectively requires a knowledge and achievement of the highest, professionally-accepted standards in all work.

- Students will demonstrate the ability to gather factual story elements, and to evaluate and express them in logical, narrative forms for multiple media and audiences.
- Students will display the ability to access and analyze data, report facts accurately, research and edit information responsibly and in a manner commensurate with professional standards.

**Other Learning Outcomes**

- Basic HTML and CSS skills
- You should feel adept at layout and design of an article space for journalistic purposes
- You should have gained a deeper understanding and appreciation for a variety of digital storytelling techniques.
- Gain portfolio pieces focused on audio/visual storytelling, data analysis, and social media interactions.
- Be able to demonstrate an understanding of not only how to execute those techniques, but how to put them together into a cohesive, and informative piece of journalism.

**Assignments**

**In Class Presentation (50 points of your class grade)**

Each storytelling unit will have a day dedicated to discussion of that storytelling technique. While I will be providing examples for the class to view/discuss, each student will need to present a story that aligns with one of the techniques throughout the semester.

Grading expectations and breakdown of the assignment is available online at the class site.
In Class Exercises (100 points of your class grade)

We will have a variety of in class exercises throughout the semester. These will be opportunities for you to test your abilities with storytelling techniques, learn new technologies, and take chances prior to completing your actual assigned piece of work.

These assignments are graded in total at 100 points and will be based on a pass/fail scale. This is done so for the simple fact that I do not want you to be worried about telling a “good” story, but more focused on exploring the technique and taking chances.

As long as you use these assignments to experiment and learn, you will be better suited when working on your actual project to tell an engaging story.

Projects (700 points of your class grade)

The majority of your grade will come from projects completed over the course of the semester.

These projects will each have a specific storytelling technique at their core, except for the final project which will be a culmination of each technique learned throughout the semester.

What will make a project successful is the marriage between good storytelling, good use of the technology, and the layout/design of the space. The Internet is a sandbox, and as journalists, you have a variety of tools available to tell your stories. We are going to focus learning when and why to use those tools.

The first five projects will be worth 100 points each. The final project will be worth 200 points.

Grading and assignment breakdowns for each project are available on the course site.

Attendance and Participation (150 points of your class grade)

To receive full points for attendance and participation, you must be present for every class and be attentive, and engaged in that class’s content.

To obtain full points for participating, you must be vocal and contribute during class. Web development at times can be complex and confusing. I will have no idea if or
when a topic is confusing if you do not speak up. In addition, many class periods will be spent critiquing work and brainstorming project ideas. Collaboration is the best way to identify great ideas, and therefore the contribution of all class members is expected. Participation is worth 50 points.

Regarding attendance. You will begin the course with a full 100 points given for attendance.

**Unexcused Absences**
Things come up, I get it. Everyone get’s one free one.

After your first, for each unexcused absence you will be docked 15 points from your 100 points allocated to attendance.

If you have four unexcused absences total from class, you will receive a 0 for both your attendance and participation portion of your grade.

If you continue to miss classes beyond four classes, you will be subject to a 1 on 1 review during office hours, and possible automatic failure of the course.

**Excused Absences**

There will be no loss of points for excused absences, however, assignments that are due on the date of an excused absence will still need to be turned in that day, unless other arrangements are made.

Excused absences must be discussed on an individual basis, and will most likely be granted for family emergencies or serious illnesses.

Something else to remember....

The majority of the homework and project’s grading rubric will be based off of demonstrating a mastery of the lessons taught in class. Therefore, if you choose to not attend class, it is unlikely you will be equipped with the development and storytelling techniques necessary to obtain a good grade on projects.

In short, come to class. You (or your parents) are paying for this education, let’s have fun together and learn some cool stuff. I promise, it will be worth it.

(Thumbs up)

**Regarding late work**

Deadlines are real. That is true in the business world, as well as the academic. If an assignment is turned in one day late, there will be an automatic 25% reduction of
your grade. After two days, the automatic reduction will be 50%. Beyond two days, the assignment is forfeited, and you will receive a 0 for the assignment.

**The class will be graded out of 1000 points.**

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<th>Grades</th>
<th>Point Value</th>
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<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>(960 – 1000)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>(870 – 899)</td>
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<td>B-</td>
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**Assignments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Percentages and point totals</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance / Participation</td>
<td>(150 points)</td>
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<tr>
<td>In Class Presentation</td>
<td>(50 points)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Projects</td>
<td>(700 points)</td>
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<td>In Class Exercises</td>
<td>(100 points)</td>
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**Class Schedule**

A breakdown of the class schedule, including topics for each lecture and the dates for homework and other assignments is available at on the class website: [http://multimedia.jmc.uiowa.edu/maxfreund/](http://multimedia.jmc.uiowa.edu/maxfreund/)

Note: This schedule is an approximation of what will be covered. As the semester progresses, lecture subject matter may change. If there is a change in the due date of a homework assignment listed on the schedule, that change will be announced in class.

**Class Collaboration**

Web development and journalism can at times be viewed as independent activities. Whether it is the cliché view of the developer who puts their headphones on, pounds Mountain Dew, and codes in a dimly lit room, or the go-it-alone reporter who pounds the pavement to find the next big story, these disciplines can at times be solitary ones.

While that is often the case, I want this course to be a space for inclusionary conversation. Web development and journalism are artistic endeavors, and with anything artistic there are varying ways of completing tasks.
One solution you might identify, while perfectly correct in application, could be completely different from another classmate's chosen path.

We will strive to share these differences and learn from each other. This is why we will have multiple instances of “collaborate coding” exercises where two people work on the same computer. This requires open dialogue and a chance to see the inner workings of another person's processes. And don't worry, if you are a shy person and fearful your ideas may fall by the wayside, you share turns taking control of the keyboard.

That being said, collaboration on individual assignments is not allowed. It is your responsibility to develop your own stories and build your own websites. If I see instances of repeated code or plagiarism across multiple students' assignments, this will be considered academically dishonest.

**Outside of class**

As a 4-hour course, the CLAS guidelines recommend 2 hours of outside work per semester hour, per week. Therefore your 4-hour course should equate to roughly 8 hours of outside work and study per week.

While assignments will make up a large portion of this time, this course is filled with concepts that are ripe for self-exploration. The students who take it upon themselves to build their skills outside the classroom will strengthen their abilities and make a higher grade a more attainable reality.

**Now all extra bits!**

The Iowa Dozen

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.

This course particularly covers #4, #5, and #8.

**College of Liberal Arts Policy 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 Academic Policies Handbook.

**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 correspondence (Operations Manual, III.15.2. Scroll down to k.11).

**Accommodations for Disabilities**

A student seeking academic accommodations should first register with Student Disability Services and then meet with the course instructor privately in the instructor's office to make particular arrangements. See [http://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/](http://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/) for more information.

**Academic Honesty**

All students taking CLAS courses have, in essence, agreed to the College's Code of Academic Honesty: "I pledge to do my own academic work and to excel to the best of my abilities, upholding the IOWA Challenge. I promise not to lie about my academic work, to cheat, or to steal the words or ideas of others; nor will I help fellow students to violate the Code of Academic Honesty." Any student committing academic misconduct will have their grade reflect such misconduct and is reported to the College and placed on disciplinary probation or may be suspended or expelled (CLAS Academic Policies Handbook).

**Making a Suggestion or a Complaint**

Students with a suggestion or complaint should first visit with me, and if we are not able to come to a conclusion, then with the Director of Undergraduate Studies, David Dowling, Ph.D. (david-dowling@uiowa.edu). If we are still unable to resolve the
issue, then contact the departmental director, David Ryfe. Complaints must be made within six months of the incident (CLAS Academic Policies Handbook).

**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 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. For more information on Hawk Alert and the siren warning system, visit the Public Safety website.