Video Production (JMC:3650:0001)
Course Syllabus

Course logistics

Schedule: Mondays & Wednesdays from 9:30–10:45am in W332 AJB

Instructor: Dr. Brian Ekdale (he/him), E324 Adler Journalism Building, brian-ekdale@uiowa.edu
Drop-in hours: Mondays from 1–3pm & Wednesdays from 11am–12pm or by appointment
Drop-in location: E324 AJB or on Zoom (https://uiowa.zoom.us/my/bekdale)

Supervisor: Associate Dean Christopher Cheatum, christopher-cheatum@uiowa.edu
SJMC DEO: Professor Melissa Tully, E332 AJB, melissa-tully@uiowa.edu

What is the point of this course?

The goal of this course is to teach you how to use digital video cameras and mobile phones to create professional videos that can be distributed across multiple platforms. It will build on the visual storytelling skills you learned in Introduction to Multimedia Storytelling. Throughout the semester, we will discuss current industry trends and preferred practices for planning, shooting, and editing compelling video stories.

This course fulfills a Designing/Producing requirement for JMC majors.

To take this course you must completed JMC:2020 and JMC:2030 with a minimum grade of C-.

Who are you?

I am an Associate Professor in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication. Before earning a Ph.D. and becoming a professor, I worked in IT and video production. At the University of Iowa, I teach courses about media production (e.g., video, audio, multimedia), and I study digital media in a global context. Please call me Brian. If you feel more comfortable using use a formal title, I prefer Dr. Ekdale or Professor Ekdale.

How will I be graded?

You will be graded on professionalism, participation, a series of video checklists, one short exam, pre-production elements, video exercises, video stories, and a final project. Grading of assigned work in this course corresponds with the ways in which video professionals are evaluated.

Specifics details about each assignment will be provided during the semester.

There are 300 points possible.

In-Class Work and Participation (100 points):
> Professionalism & Participation: 40 pts
> Video Checklist:
> - Image & Composition: 10 pts
> - Motion & Movement: 10 pts
> - Lighting & Color: 10 pts
> - Audio: 10 pts
>
> Digital Video Principles Exam: 20 pts

Video Projects (200 points):
> Time Compression Exercise: 20 pts
> Three-Point Lighting Exercise: 20 pts
> Tutorial Story: 40 pts
> Profile Story: 40 pts
> Final Project: 80 pts

Grading Scale: Your final grade will be determined by your cumulative percentage, which includes rounding up.

A+	96.5-100%	B+	86.5-89.5%	C+	76.5-79.5%	D+	66.5-69.5%
A	92.5-96.4%	B	82.5-86.4%	C	72.5-76.4%	D	62.5-66.4%
A-	89.5-92.4%	B-	79.5-82.4%	C-	69.5-72.4%	D-	59.5-62.4%
						F	59.4% and below

Grade Inquiries

If you have questions about your grade on a specific assignment or your overall performance in the course, please speak with me outside of class, either during drop-in hours or an otherwise scheduled meeting. **Due to student confidentiality, we cannot discuss grade concerns before/during/after class. These conversations also will not happen over email.** If your concern relates to a specific assignment, please contact with me within one week of receiving your grade so that it still fresh on my mind.

Is there a textbook or other required purchases?

There is no textbook. All assigned readings will be posted or linked on ICON. You are expected to complete all readings/podcasts/videos by the start of the class indicated unless otherwise directed.

You are required to own your own external hard drive for storing your video projects. You may use the same external hard drive you purchased for Introduction to Multimedia Storytelling.

You are welcome to, but are not required to, purchase your own SD cards for the video cameras and audio recorders. Manufacturer recommendations are below:

- [Sony FX30](#)
- [Canon R10](#)
- [Zoom 4Hn Pro](#)

Learning objectives

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication is committed to your academic and professional success. In line with this commitment, we have identified 12 specific learning goals for the SJMC curriculum. I have bolded the learning goals that I will emphasize in this course:

We learn to ...
- *Write correctly and clearly*
- *Conduct research and evaluate information critically*
- ***Present images and information effectively***
- ***Use media tools and technologies appropriately***
- *Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts accurately*
- ***Evaluate work for accuracy, fairness, style, and clarity***
- ***Create audience-aware, culturally responsive communication***

We explore ...
- *The multicultural history of media professionals and institutions*
- *The role of media in shaping cultures*

We value ...
- ***The First Amendment and free speech***
- ***Equity and inclusion for a diverse global community***
- ***Ethical principles in pursuit of truth, accuracy and fairness***

In addition, I have identified the following course-specific learning outcomes:
- You will build upon the narrative and technical skills in visual media learned in Introduction to Multimedia Storytelling.
- You will demonstrate proficiency at planning, producing, and editing video for distribution on a variety of different platforms.

Commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication is dedicated to equity, anti-racism and social justice. A fuller statement of this commitment can be found [here](#). We strive to serve our students well in this regard, and consider diversity, equity, and inclusion as social resources that

inform our learning environment. We train our students to achieve cultural competency across the diversity of groups that inhabit our global society. Among other things, this involves enhancing students' ability to communicate effectively with people from different backgrounds and experiences. In our classes, we discuss these themes through the concepts of media representations, bias and resulting stereotypes, and the effects of discrimination and structural inequalities as they pertain to all aspects of the media, from foundational concepts to advanced professional and graduate training. In accord with the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, and the dictates of academic freedom, we support an open discussion of all relevant viewpoints, even those with which we disagree. We encourage conversation that is based on facts and documentation, and on a mutual respect for one another.

Important policies and procedures (more policies below the course schedule)

Professionalism & Participation: The success of any course depends on the professionalism and participation of its students. To that end, you will be graded on your attendance, preparedness, contribution, and cooperation:

- Attendance means showing up. Simply put, you should be in class on time for the full time. If you have a legitimate reason for missing class (e.g. documented illness, family emergency, religious holiday, etc.) and want your absence excused, you must let me know via email about your absence prior to the start of the class period you are missing. More than a few unexcused absences will result in an automatic reduction to your Professionalism & Participation grade. Consistently missing class without will result in a required meeting and a potential reduction in your overall grade in the course.
- Preparedness means doing the necessary work prior to the start of class. You should engage with the assigned readings/exemplars before class and come prepared to discuss and ask questions.
- Contribution means sharing your ideas. Each of you offers a unique perspective based on your beliefs, upbringing, and areas of expertise. When you share your thoughts, opinions, and ideas, it provides an opportunity for all of us to learn and grow.
- Cooperation means working well with others during group exercises and class discussions. If working with partner(s) on a class exercise, you must prove yourself to be dependable. Also, our class should be a place where everyone feels comfortable sharing their views, even if those views are uncommon or unpopular. At the same time, you must always be aware of how your words and actions affect those around you. Intolerance, antagonism, and demagoguery have no place in the healthy exchange of ideas.

Makeup Work: If you miss class, please do not send me emails asking, "What did I miss?" or "Did I miss anything important?" The answers are "Lots" and "Yes." I am happy to discuss missed materials during my office hours, but I cannot cover the material in the same amount of detail as I can during class.

Late Policy: Do your best to submit your work on time. Late assignments will incur a 10 percent penalty per day late. For example, an assignment that would have received a 93% if it were turned in on time will receive an 83% if submitted a day late, 73% if submitted two days late, and so on. After 5 days late, the assignment will receive a 0 unless you speak with me first. If you run into truly extenuating circumstances, please contact me as soon as possible so we can work toward a solution together.

Original Work: Everything you submit for credit must be original content produced for this course. If you have a relevant job or internship and you want to use content produced in this course for those purposes, you must speak with me in advance to request permission and work out arrangements. **You cannot simply repurpose or repost content you have produced for another course or venue**. Doing so is considered academic misconduct.

Academic Misconduct: Academic misconduct occurs when you (intentionally or unintentionally) present someone/something else's work as your own. The University of Iowa's Code of Academic Honesty does not directly address audiovisual material, but the principles still apply to our work in this course. With that in mind, academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to:
- Incorporating video footage, images, or sounds created by someone else without obtaining permission from the creator(s), obtaining permission from the course instructor, <u>and</u> providing proper attribution
- Submitting video footage, images, or sounds created by yourself prior to the start of the semester without obtaining permission from the course instructor
- Submitting video footage, images, or sounds created by someone else as your own work
- Submitting video footage, images, or sounds created by generative AI without prior approval and explicit disclosure

Students are responsible for understanding this policy. If you have questions, please ask me for clarification. Clear evidence of academic misconduct will result in a failing grade for the assignment and possibly the course. Per college policy, I am required to report academic misconduct the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences. For more information, please see the section titled Academic Integrity under The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences: Policies and Resources page at the end of the syllabus.

Generative AI: You may use AI programs (e.g., ChatGPT, Bard, Co-Pilot) to help <u>generate ideas</u> for your assignments. However, as we will discuss throughout the semester, you should note that the material generated by these programs may be inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise problematic. It also may stifle your own independent thinking and creativity.

You <u>may not</u> submit any text or visual material generated in part or in whole by an AI program unless explicitly instructed otherwise in an assignment prompt. Submitting any assignments that include text or visual material created by generative AI presented as if it were your own original creation constitutes academic misconduct. Doing so will result in a 0 for the assignment and a required meeting with the course instructor.

Electronic Communication: As per university policy, you are responsible for all official correspondences sent to your University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu).

Communication with Brian: I make every effort to respond to student emails within 24 hours. Typically, I respond sooner than that. While I prioritize my interactions with my students, I do have other commitments (e.g., meetings, research, family, sleep, etc.) that may keep me from immediately responding to your emails. I am happy to offer feedback and answer specific questions over email, but I will not answer a bunch of questions or review full drafts of assignments over email. If your email would take me more than 5 minutes to answer, I will advise you to visit my drop-in hours or schedule an appointment.

Equipment: Equipment used in this class is available for checkout in the equipment room located on the first floor of the Becker Communication Studies Building. We have access to video and audio recorders, cameras, microphones, lighting kits, tripods and other accessories. This is high-quality, expensive equipment, and you are responsible for maintaining it when you check it out.

Equipment checkout is a two-step process. First, you must reserve equipment using Checkout@UIowa: http://checkout.uiowa.edu/. Then, schedule an appointment to pick up your equipment. Pick up appointments after 1pm are encouraged, but morning appointments may be accommodated.

You are responsible for maintaining equipment and returning it in working order. Failure to do so will result in charges to your UBill to pay for replacements and, potentially, loss of equipment checkout privileges. Contact the Production Unit with question or concerns at cprodunit-checkout@uiowa.edu or 319-335-0587.

Using Your Own Equipment: Unless a specific technology is stated in the assignment description, you are welcome to use your own equipment, but I will only provide technical support and training for the equipment reserved for this course. The same goes for software – you are free to use other software for editing, but I will only provide support for the software provided by SJMC.

Technology Help Site: If you need help with hardware or software furnished by SJMC, please reference our help site: http://multimedia.jmc.uiowa.edu/help/.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The University is committed to providing an educational experience that is accessible to all students. If a student has a diagnosed disability or other disabling condition that may impact the student's ability to complete the course requirements as stated in the syllabus, the student may seek accommodations through Student Disability Services (SDS). SDS is responsible for making Letters of Accommodation (LOA) available to the student. The student must provide a LOA to the instructor as early in the semester as possible, but requests not made at least two weeks prior to the scheduled activity

for which an accommodation is sought may not be accommodated. The LOA will specify what reasonable course accommodations the student is eligible for and those the instructor should provide. Additional information can be found on the [SDS website](#).

Course schedule

The course schedule is subject to change, including topics, readings, and assignment due dates. I will announce any changes to the course schedule in class and on ICON.

Part 1: Digital Video Principles

Monday, 1/20 – No Meeting (MLK Day)

Wednesday, 1/22 – Course Introduction

Monday, 1/27 – Principles of Video Storytelling
- Read (before class): Regina McCombs & Kenneth Kobrè (2024). *Videojournalism*. Chapter 1: "Telling Stories"

Wednesday, 1/29 – Principles of Image & Composition
- Read (before class): Spenser Cox (n.d.). Photography Life. "Shutter Speed" "Aperture" "ISO"
- Assigned (during class): Image & Composition Checklist

Monday, 2/3 – Image & Composition Editing Lab
- Due (during class): Image & Composition Checklist <u>First</u> Cut

Wednesday, 2/5 – Principles of Motion & Movement
- Due (before class): Image & Composition Checklist <u>Final</u> Cut
- Read (before class): Kyle Cassidy (n.d.). "Camera Movement: 11 Techniques You Should Master"; Becki and Chris (2021). "How to Shoot a Sequence of ANYTHING!"
- Assigned (during class): Motion & Movement Checklist

Monday, 2/10 – Motion & Movement Checklist Editing Lab
- Due (during class): Motion & Movement Checklist <u>First</u> Cut

Wednesday, 2/12 – Principles of Lighting & Color
- Due (before class): Motion & Movement Checklist <u>Final</u> Cut
- Read (before class): Daniela Bowker (2024). "6 Basic Lighting Setups for Vlogging"; Adobe (n.d.). "What is White Balance?"
- Assigned (during class): Lighting & Color Checklist

Monday, 2/17 – Lighting & Color Checklist Editing Lab
- Due (during class): Lighting & Color Checklist <u>First</u> Cut

Wednesday, 2/19 – Principles of Audio for Video
- Due (before class): Lighting & Color Checklist <u>Final</u> Cut

- Read (before class): NPR Training, "A glossary of audio production terms" "Which mic should I use?"
- Assigned (during class): Audio Checklist

Monday, 2/24 – Audio for Video Checklist Post-Production Day
- Due (beginning of class): Principles Exam
- Due (during class): Audio Checklist <u>First</u> Cut

Part 2: Video Stories

Wednesday, 2/26 – Introduction to Video Tutorials
- Watch: *Exemplars posted on ICON*
- Due (before class): Audio Checklist <u>Final</u> Cut
- Assigned: Tutorial Story
- Assigned: Time Compression Exercise

Monday, 3/3 – Time Compression Exercise Production Day

Wednesday, 3/5 – Time Compression Exercise Post-Production Day
- Due (end of class): Time Compression Exercise

Monday, 3/10 – Tutorial Story Production Day

Wednesday, 3/12 – Tutorial Story Post-Production Day
- Due (end of class): First-Person Story

SPRING BREAK

Monday, 3/24 – Introduction to Video Profiles
- Watch: *Exemplars posted on ICON*
- Assigned: Profile Story
- Assigned: Three-Point Lighting Exercise

Wednesday, 3/26 – Three-Point Lighting Lab

Monday, 3/31 – Three-Point Lighting Production Day

Wednesday, 4/2 – Three-Point Lighting Post-Production Day / Introduction to Final Project
- Due (end of class): Three-Point Lighting Exercise

Monday, 4/7 – Profile Story Production Day

Wednesday, 4/9 – Profile Story Post-Production

- <u>Due</u> (end of class): Profile Story

Part 3: Final Project (Schedule TBD)

Additional university, college, departmental, and course policies

Attendance and Absences: University regulations require that students be allowed to make up examinations which have been missed due to illness or other unavoidable circumstances. Students with mandatory religious obligations or UI authorized activities must discuss their absences with me as soon as possible. Religious obligations must be communicated within the first three weeks of classes.

Exam Policies

School of Journalism and Mass Communication Resources
- Find Your Path – SJMC careers page
- Journalism Student Center: on the third floor of Adler, find our internship coordinator, academic advisor, and peer mentors here
- School of Journalism and Mass Communication social media: Instagram, Facebook, Linked In, Twitter
- School of Journalism and Mass Communication labs: rooms and hours for our multimedia labs

Help with Classes and Careers
- Center for Inclusive Academic Excellence: Support for historically marginalized and/or first-generation students and students from low socioeconomic backgrounds
- Writing Center: hake in-person or online appointments for writing help
- Tutor Iowa: Resources for all kinds of academic support
- Career Center: help with jobs, internships, and other career services
- Student Disability Services: help with course accommodations for students with disabilities

Health Support and Advocacy
- University Counseling Service: mental health counseling support
- Mental Health at Iowa: comprehensive list of resources including 24/7 support line
- CommUnity Crisis Services: free, nonjudgmental emotional support to anyone who needs it via phone, chat or text
- Student Health: Provides medical care to all University of Iowa students
- Rape Victim Advocacy Program: Free, confidential care for people affected by sexual violence
- Domestic Violence Intervention Program: Free services for people affected by domestic violence and dating violence

Food, Finances, and Other Basic Needs
- Financial Aid Offices: support and information on loans and other financial support
- Student Life Emergency Fund: support for students in a financial emergency
- UI Food Pantry: free food for any student, staff, or faculty member at Iowa who needs it

- [Being Not Rich at Iowa](): crowd-sourced resource guide by University of Iowa Student Government
- [Hawkeye Meal Share:]() you can request up to 14 free meals a semester from dining halls through Hawkeye Meal Share

Identity and Belonging
- [Pride House]()
- [Afro-American Cultural House]()
- [Asian Pacific American Cultural House]()
- [Internation Student Support and Engagement]()
- [Latino Native American Cultural Center]()
- [Women's Resource and Action Center]()

The Dean of Students also has a [master list]() that has more campus resources for students. And the Division of Student Life has this page for [Basic Needs and Support]().

University Policies
[Classroom Expectations]()
[Exam Make-up Owing to Absence]()
[Free Speech and Expression]()
[Mental Health]()
[Military Service Obligations]()
[Non-discrimination]()
[Religious Holy Days]()
[Sexual Harassment/Misconduct and Supportive Measures]()
[Sharing of Class Recordings]()