

JOUR 3343 Fall 2026
Visual News Storytelling

Class Meets on Thursdays from 11:10am-2pm
Class Location: SYMR 223

INSTRUCTOR: Hoda Emam Hoda.Emam@unt.edu
Office hours: Office: SYMR 218
Office hours: Thursdays 9am-11am
By appointment and via Zoom on Tuesday 12pm-2pm

TEXTBOOK:

- There will not be a textbook for this class HOWEVER you will need the following in lieu of a textbook:
 - Portable hard drive with minimum 500GB storage for your files.
 - A new SDHC Class 10/U1/U3 memory card with a minimum of 32 GB and a read speed of at least 120 MB/s.

TECHNOLOGY:

- Access to a computer (PC or Mac) running current version of Adobe Premiere
- Note special discounted subscriptions to Adobe Creative Cloud
- External Hard Drive (at least 256Gb; SSD preferred)
- SD Storage (Class 10 SD card; at least 32Gb)

JOURNALISM EQUIPMENT CHECK OUT

Checkouts are for 24 hours from the time of checkout, unless specified differently from your assigned Professor. Students are authorized to keep checked out equipment for up to 72 hours, depending on the class and the Professor's approval. If the student needs equipment for longer than 72 hours, please send an email with an Approval from your Professor to: mayborn-equipment@unt.edu or ladaniel.maxwell@unt.edu.

Anyone who plans to check out equipment during the semester must complete the checkout agreement form found below:

<https://forms.office.com/r/bTSQZuq1Dr?origin=lprLink>

This form should be completed prior to checking out equipment and only needs to be done once per semester. The violations listed below will occur if due equipment is not returned on the agreed time. All equipment must be picked up and returned at a scheduled time within these hours.

Hours:

Mon-Thurs 8:30am to 9:30pm

Friday's 9:00am to 6pm

Saturday and Sunday 10:00am to 6:00pm

1st late infraction – 1 week ban from checking out equipment.

2nd late infraction – 3 weeks ban from checking out equipment.

3rd infraction – Semester long ban from any and all equipment checkout.

If you are going to be late or unable to return equipment that you checked out on time, please email **mayborn-equipment@unt.edu** or **ladaniel.maxwell@unt.edu**

Equipment room phone number is 940-565-3580.

Equipment room is located at RTFP Building room 180i

ADOBE ACCESS:

UNT now has a new contract with Adobe. For this class you will be using the Adobe Creative Cloud for editing. The software is on most of the computers on campus. However, if you'd like to purchase the suite for your own laptop/computer, here is how you can get a discounted student rate. Click on the link below for more information on purchasing the Adobe Creative Cloud Suite: The email address for students to ask questions or report problems is adobe@unt.edu.

SUMMARY & LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

This is a class where you will develop your skills in visual storytelling for traditional broadcast and other emerging platforms. You will work on reporting, visualizing and editing content developing multiple short-form stories. You will also explore different styles of visual storytelling including traditional broadcast formats (e.g. voice-overs, soundbites and short packages) and multimedia formats including the use of still photography and on-screen graphics. You will also explore natural sound storytelling and short-form documentary storytelling.

- Class projects will require work outside of scheduled class periods. Time and deadline management are important professional skills and will be emphasized in this course.
- Teamwork is an essential element of professional journalism. Students will be assigned co-workers for some assignments; some assignments will require solo work and you will be allowed to select co-workers for others.
- Second and third-party content cannot comprise more than 20% of any project and cannot violate conventional copyright or other rules. CNN Newsource material is also considered outside content for this course. If you have questions about outside content, please consult the instructor PRIOR to using such material.
- Double-dipping is NEVER allowed. If you have questions about content created outside of this class, please consult the instructor PRIOR to using such material.

Class Assignments will require that you practice the following:

- *Researching stories sufficiently in advance to pitch a variety of stories.*
- *Writing and editing stories on deadline making effective use of visual storytelling techniques for traditional linear broadcasts.*
- *Writing and editing stories on deadline using multi-media storytelling techniques for evolving digital platforms.*
- *Producing stories for a traditional linear broadcast including packages, voice-overs, readers and various treatments including soundbites (PKG's, VO's, VO/SOT, etc.).*
- *Journalistic decision-making in a real-time environment.*

WORK REQUIREMENTS & CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

- **Attendance Policy:** This is a face-to-face class that only meets once each week. Attendance will be taken during the first five minutes of each class. *One absence in the course is the limit without penalty toward your final grade, unless you have communicated with me from the beginning about an extraordinary problem. Coming to class late or leaving early may constitute an absence for that day. This is a seminar course, and it requires your attendance and participation each class meeting. Each UNEXCUSED absence will result in the loss of 10 points.*
- **Assignments are to be submitted on CANVAS** using the professional 2-column script template that is available on CANVAS. Video assignments are to be submitted as YouTube or Vimeo links with those links noted in the 2-column script template. DO NOT directly submit video files on CANVAS.
- **Late assignments** will automatically be penalized 20% of the applicable grade. The submitted time indicated on CANVAS will be considered official; There will be a 5-minute grace period on all assignments.
- **Rough drafts** will be required for some video projects. Each rough draft will be discussed in class and participating in that class discussion will be part of the grading rubric for those projects.
- **Final Project:** Each student must submit a final project. The project should follow all standards of journalism, focus on a single subject (not a newscast) and will be expected to demonstrate credible research and some element of investigative journalism.
- **Safety First:** Journalism is a craft that requires a high level of courage and instinct, but never at the expense of **Safety-First**. During this course, you will go to places on and off campus. Pay attention to your surroundings and personal safety at all times. Sometimes you will work in teams. Other times you will work by yourself. Do not go alone at night. When you are on assignment, let someone know in advance where you are going and when you'll be back. Before you go to cover a story, think about how you can stay safe. Use your instincts. If something or someone does not appear "safe," do not go there.

EMAIL COMMUNICATION:

Communicating with students using the UNT student email account is part of the university's contract with students. Electronic communication with students in this class will be through the **students' myunt accounts**. Make sure to regularly check your myunt email. You can expect

me to respond to email (from your myunt.edu account) within 24 hours Monday-Friday and within 72 hours on weekends. Please address any questions about your grades with me in person or during an appointment so I can respect your privacy.

GRADING FOR VIDEO SECTION:

Total points for the class is 1000 points

GRADING SCALE:

900-1,000 =A

800-899 =B

700-799 =C

600-699 =D

599 below = F

In-class Assignments	300
Video Projects (including drafts)	400
Final Project	300
TOTAL:	1,000

PRELIMINARY WEEKLY Schedule (subject to change as needed)

Week #1

Introduction, Syllabus

Recognizing and Thinking Visually; Sequencing; Finding Stories

GoPro Week!

Week #2

Camera Review

Lecture: Visual Acumen and Storytelling; Sequencing

MOS: Field Reporting/gauging public interest.

Who is impacted by community reporting?

Week #3

Creating Natural Sound Packages.

Why do local cultural groups, communities, or special interest topics matter? Who is

impacted by community reporting?

FILMING Mirror Shots- Frame within a Frame Techniques

Week #4

Advanced Editing Workshop

Lighting and Color Balance

What can you do while filming to remedy color issues

Color correcting in post production

Guest Speaker

Week #5

“Hoda Walks” Filming a process-silent movie

Narrative: Creating Narrative Storytelling with video sequences

Interviewing, Capturing Audio/Nat Sound, Profile Pitch

Week #6

Investigative storytelling

Sequencing, 5-shot sequence continued;

Finding Stories; Visuals and Storytelling

Finding stories in the mundane

Week #7

Introducing a Community Storytelling Project.

From the Inside: Telling Stories about Cultural groups

Impact local news

Micro communities, have impact nationally

Guest Speaker

Introduce the Character-Driven Event Story

CDE Story Pitches in Class

From the Inside: Telling Stories/On-the-ground Reporting

Pitching Techniques

Week #8

Advanced Audio Workshop

Lighting and Color Balance

What can you do while filming to remedy color issues

Color correcting in post production

Guest Speaker

Week #9

Monday: Lecture: Advanced Lighting, Lab: 3-Point Lighting Exercise (in class)

Week #10

COIL WEEK #1

COMMUNITY STORYTELLING: Project Screenings/Peer Reviews

One live class where students would be provided with a live lecture followed by Q&A. Time difference is considered.

-Media Landscape

-Mental Health Reporting

-Local News Reporting

Week #11

COIL WEEK #2

-Students are paired up to conduct conversations via Zoom. The recordings would be shared with their own professors. Students would be provided with talking points.

Week #12

COIL Week #3

Working Lab

Week #13

COIL Week #4

Class Critique/Presentation: CHARACTER DRIVEN EVENT NEWS PACKAGE

Week #14

AI and the latest technology in Journalism Do's and Don'ts

CHARACTER DRIVEN Pitch Presentations

Week #15

****UNT Thanksgiving November 23-27, 2026****

Week #16

Final Project Reviews: Class Critique/Presentation: CHARACTER DRIVEN EVENT NEWS PACKAGE

Final Project Submission (Deadline at 5:00 PM)

No Work Accepted after 11:59 PM on December 10

JOURNALISM REQUIREMENTS & GUIDELINES

- By registering for this course, you are stating that you have taken the required prerequisites according to your catalog year and major/minor status. If the instructor later determines that you haven't taken and passed these requirements, then you may be dropped at any point in the semester. If you have questions about your prerequisites, please see an advisor.
- A journalism major enrolled in any restricted 3000 and 4000 level classes must have taken and passed all foundational courses. Students must earn and maintain a 2.5 UNT and/or overall GPA (depending upon catalog year) to be eligible for major-level courses.
- **RE-TAKING FAILED JOURNALISM CLASSES**
Students will not be allowed to automatically take a failed journalism course more than two times. Once you have failed a journalism course twice, you will not be allowed to enroll in that course for one calendar year after the date you received the second failing grade. Once a student has waited one calendar year after failing a course twice, the student may submit a written appeal to the director to be approved to enroll a third time. Students will not be allowed to retake a failed journalism course more than three times.
- **TEXTBOOK POLICY**
The Mayborn School of Journalism doesn't require students to purchase textbooks from the University Bookstore. Many are available through other book stores or online.
- **ATTENDANCE:** One absence in the course is the limit without penalty toward your final grade unless you have communicated with me from the beginning about an extraordinary problem.

Coming to class late or leaving early may constitute an absence for that day. This is a seminar course, and it requires your attendance and participation in each class meeting.

FINANCIAL AID SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) UNDERGRADUATES

A student must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) to continue to receive financial aid. Students must maintain a minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA in addition to

successfully completing a required number of credit hours based on total registered hours per semester. Students cannot exceed attempted credit hours above 150% of their required degree plan. If a student does not maintain the required standards, the student may lose financial aid eligibility. **If at any point you consider dropping this or any other course, please be advised that the decision to do so has the potential to affect your current and future financial aid eligibility.**

Please visit [UNT Financial Aid](#) for more information about financial aid Satisfactory Academic Progress. It may be wise for you to schedule a meeting with your MSOJ academic advisor or visit the Student Financial Aid and Scholarships office to discuss dropping a course before doing so.

ACADEMIC ADVISING

All first-time-in-college students at UNT are required to schedule an appointment with their Academic Advisor and receive an advising code to register for classes both fall and spring semesters of the first year in college. ALL students should meet with their Academic Advisor at least one time per long semester (Fall & Spring). It is important to update your degree plan on a regular basis to ensure that you are on track for a timely graduation.

It is imperative that students have paid for all enrolled classes. Please check your online schedule daily through late registration to ensure you have not been dropped for non-payment of any amount. Students have been unknowingly dropped from classes for various reasons such as financial aid, schedule change fees, parking fees, etc. MSOJ will not be able to reinstate students for any reason after late registration, regardless of situation. It is the student's responsibility to ensure all payments have been made.

ACADEMIC ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Understanding the academic organizational structure and appropriate Chain of Command is important when resolving class-related or advising issues. When you need problems resolved, please follow the steps outlined below:

- Individual Faculty Member/Advisor
- Associate Dean, Mayborn School of Journalism
- Dean, Mayborn School of Journalism

OFFICE OF DISABILITY ACCESS

The University of North Texas and the Mayborn School of Journalism make reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify

their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time. However, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class.

Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student.

For additional information see the website for the [Office of Disability Access](#). You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

COURSE SAFETY STATEMENTS

Students in the Mayborn School of Journalism are urged to use proper safety procedures and guidelines. While working in laboratory sessions, students are expected and required to identify and use property safety guidelines in all activities requiring lifting, climbing, walking on slippery surfaces, using equipment and tools, handling chemical solutions and hot and cold products. Students should be aware that the University of North Texas is not liable for injuries incurred while students are participating in class activities. All students are encouraged to secure adequate insurance coverage in the event of accidental injury. Students who do not have insurance coverage should consider obtaining Student Health Insurance for this insurance program. Brochures for this insurance are available in the UNT Health and Wellness Center on campus. Students who are injured during class activities may seek medical attention at the UNT Health and Wellness Center at rates that are reduced compared to other medical facilities. If you have an insurance plan other than Student Health Insurance at UNT, please be sure that your plan covers treatment at this facility. If you choose not to go to the UNT Health and Wellness Center, you may be transported to an emergency room at a local hospital. You are responsible for expenses incurred there.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or exams; dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor, the acquisition of tests or other material belonging to a faculty member, dual submission of a paper or project, resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructors, or any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage. Plagiarism includes the

paraphrase or direct quotation of published or unpublished works *without* full and clear acknowledgment of the author/source. Academic dishonesty will bring about disciplinary action which may include expulsion from the university. This is explained in the UNT Student Handbook.

MSOJ ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

The codes of ethics from the Society of Professional Journalists, American Advertising Federation and Public Relations Society of America address truth and honesty. The Mayborn School of Journalism embraces these tenets and believes that academic dishonesty of any kind – including plagiarism and fabrication – is incongruent with all areas of journalism. The school's policy aligns with UNT Policy 06.003 and requires reporting any act of academic dishonesty to the Office for Academic Integrity for investigation. If the student has a previous confirmed offense (whether the first offense was in the journalism school or another university department) and the student is found to have committed another offense, the department will request the additional sanction of removing the student from the Mayborn School of Journalism. The student may appeal to the Office for Academic Integrity, which ensures due process and allows the student to remain in class pending the appeal.

FINAL EXAM POLICY

Final exams will be administered at the designated times during the final week of each long semester and during the specified day of each summer term. Please check the course calendar early in the semester to avoid any schedule conflicts.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

As you know, your access point for business and academic services at UNT occurs within the [My.UNT site](#)

If you do not regularly check EagleConnect or link it to your favorite e-mail account, please do so, as this is where you learn about job and internship opportunities, MSOJ events, scholarships, and other important information. Visit the [Eagle Connect website](#) for more information including tips on how to forward your email.

COURSES IN A BOX

Any MSOJ equivalent course from another university must receive prior approval from the MSOJ academic advisor to ensure that all MSOJ degree plan requirements are met. For example, courses that are taken online or from a program that offers course material via CD, booklet, or other manner of correspondence must have prior advisor approval.

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR F-1 STUDENTS TAKING DISTANCE EDUCATION COURSES

To comply with immigration regulations, an F-1 visa holder within the United States may need to engage in an on-campus experiential component for this course. This component (which must be approved in advance by the instructor) can include activities such as taking an on-campus exam, participating in multiple on-campus lectures or lab activity, or other on-campus experience integral to the completion of this course. If such an on-campus activity is required, it is the student's responsibility to do the following:

(1) Submit a written request to the instructor for an on-campus experiential component within one week of the start of the course.

(2) Ensure that the activity on campus takes place and the instructor documents it in writing with a notice sent to the International Advising Office. The UNT International Advising Office has a form available that you may use for this purpose.

Because the decision may have serious immigration consequences, if an F-1 student is unsure about his or her need to participate in an on-campus experiential component for this course, students should contact the UNT International Advising Office (telephone 940-565-2195 or email international@unt.edu) to get clarification before the one-week deadline.

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION & PROCEDURES

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify you with critical information in an event of emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials. If Canvas is not accessible during the emergency, contact me via email or phone for more information. Students should confirm that their Eagle Alert contact information is correct via the myUNT portal.

STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHING (SPOT)

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The short SPOT survey will be made available to provide you with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. You will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via *IASystem* Notification" (no-reply@iasystem.org) with the survey link. Please look for the email in your UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete your survey. Once you complete the survey you will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the [SPOT website](#) or email spot@unt.edu.

ACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other

students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found on the [Dean Of Students website](#)

CLASSROOM POLICIES

The Mayborn School of Journalism requires that students respect and maintain all university property. Students will be held accountable through disciplinary action for any intentional damages they cause in classrooms. (e.g., writing on tables). Disruptive behavior is not tolerated (e.g., arriving late, leaving early, sleeping, talking on the phone, texting or game playing, making inappropriate comments, ringing cellular phones/beepers, dressing inappropriately).

SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, & ASSAULT

UNT is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. The federal Title IX law makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses. UNT has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

[UNT's Dean of Students' website](#) offers a range of on-campus and off-campus resources to help support survivors, depending on their unique needs. Renee LeClaire McNamara is UNT's Student Advocate and she can be reached through email at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students' office at 940-565- 2648. You are not alone. We are here to help.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

UNT provides mental health services to students to help ensure there are numerous outlets to turn to that wholeheartedly care for and are there for students in need, regardless of the issue or its severity. Listed below are several resources on campus that can support your academic success and mental well-being:

1. [Student Health and Wellness Center](#)
1800 Chestnut St. (Chestnut Hall)
Phone: 940-565-2333 M-Th, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

2. [Counseling and Testing Services](#)– Free to UNT Students
801 N. Texas Blvd., Suite 140 (Gateway Center)
Phone: 940-565-274 M-F, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
3. [UNT CARE Team](#)– Free to UNT Students
Dean of Students, University Union
Phone: 940-565-2648
Email: careteam@unt.edu
4. [Psychiatric Services](#)
Phone: 940-565-2333
5. [Individual Counseling](#)– Free to UNT Students Phone: 940-369-8773

If at any time you are feeling alone or in jeopardy of self-harm, reach out to any of the following:

- National Suicide Hotline 800-273-8255
- Denton County MHMR Crisis Line 800-762-0157
- Denton County Friends of the Family Crisis Line (family or intimate partner violence) 940-382-7273
- UNT Mental Health Emergency Contacts
 - o During office hours, M-F, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m: Call 940-565-2741
 - After hours: Call 940-565-2741
 - o Crisis Line: Text CONNECT to 741741
 - o [Live chat](#)

Statement of Student Learning Outcomes, UNT Mayborn School of Journalism

Since 1969, the UNT Department of Journalism (Mayborn School of Journalism effective September 1, 2009) has been accredited by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. This national accreditation also extends to the Mayborn Graduate Institute of Journalism, the only accredited professional master's program in Texas. About one-fourth of all journalism and mass communication programs in the United States are accredited by ACEJMC. National accreditation enhances your education here, because it certifies that the department and graduate institute adhere to many standards established by the council. Among these standards are student learning outcomes, covered by journalism courses in all sequences.

This course, JOUR 3343, will help to meet the student learning outcomes that have been checked by your professor, Hoda Emam

Each student must:

Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information.

- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity

- Think critically, creatively and independently

- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve

- Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness

- Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work