

## **MRTS 3500 Fall 2025 Reporting for Digital Media**

Tues/Thu 9:30 – 10:50 AM (RTVP 264)

Tues/Thu 12:30 – 1:50 PM (RTVP 180F)

### **Instructor:**

Lisa Hewitt [Lisa.Hewitt2@unt.edu](mailto:Lisa.Hewitt2@unt.edu) (Note the #2 in email address)

Office: RTVP 229

Office Hours Tues/Thu 11 am – 12:00 pm

Other days/times by appointment (including Zoom)

### **Graduate Teaching Assistant:**

Krissiha Lagos [KrissihaLagos@my.unt.edu](mailto:KrissihaLagos@my.unt.edu)

**TEXTBOOK:** NONE (However, you will have several hand-outs provided in class.) Bring laptop to class.

### **TECHNOLOGY:**

- ✓ External Hard Drive (at least 256Gb; SSD preferred).
- ✓ SD Storage (V90 SD card; at least 64Gb)
- ✓ Access to a computer (PC or Mac) running current version of Adobe Premiere.
- ✓ Note special discounted personal subscriptions to the [Adobe Creative Suite at this link](#).

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

MRTS 3500 is a beginner-to-intermediate production course intended to follow MRTS 2210 (Introduction to Media Arts Production.) The course focuses on STORYTELLING for NON-FICTION digital media including traditional broadcast. This includes reporting, single-camera videography, editing, writing, and information gathering. You will receive hands-on experience developing, reporting, shooting and producing (both audio and video) news-style content for broadcast and online delivery. Information programming will include entertainment formats such as unscripted/reality, news, sports and documentary, across multiple platforms and distribution modes. Prerequisite(s): MRTS/CBCM major status & MRTS 2210. Stories which demonstrate excellence may be selected to air on ntTV News.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

After completing this course you will be able to:

- Demonstrate shortform storytelling techniques in the narrative non-fiction format
- Weave together stories using narration, footage, sound bites, and natural sound
- Use proper formatting for media writing
- Demonstrate video photography, editing and sound recording for media stories
- Apply proper techniques for gathering information and reporting for media stories
- Produce various media projects from concept to completion

**Mobile device policy:** *Bottom line: PLEASE GET OFF your phones and pay attention.* The Department of RTVF prohibits the use of personal mobile devices during class, unless

otherwise allowed by the individual Instructor. If no exceptions are contained in a course syllabus, then the department policy remains in effect until changed by the Instructor. Personal mobile devices are defined as anything and everything from smart phones to digital media players to personal handheld computers. All devices should be turned to SILENT MODE before entering the classroom. No “doomscrolling” or texting during class.

**Equipment:** This is the kit assigned for this class – There will be a demonstration the first few weeks of class.

- BRAND NEW Sony 4K Camera / Tripod
- Batteries / Charger
- Headphones
- Shotgun mic, handheld mic, lav mic, wireless mic
- XLR Cables
- Basic Light Kit

When using Department equipment or editing in the lab, you must use the resources assigned to this class.

You can use your own equipment for assignments produced outside of class. If you use your own equipment, expectations are EXACTLY THE SAME as if you were using school equipment. That means WORK FLOW, AUDIO and VIDEO should all be approached as if you were on professional-grade equipment. **Using appropriate microphones and tripods are always required.**

**Equipment Reservation and Check-Out:** You must reserve equipment in advance using the online checkout system: [checkout.unt.edu](https://checkout.unt.edu) (Links to an external site.). Checking out equipment without a reservation means there is no guarantee you’ll get what you need.

**Overnight Equipment** must be requested with instructor permission. Email me AND the Equipment Room ([MRTSequiment@unt.edu](mailto:MRTSequiment@unt.edu)) **ON THE SAME EMAIL** with specific check-out/check-in times and I will approve based on your request.

**Attendance:** Do NOT sit in the back of the room or you will be asked to move. **First four rows if possible.** Arrive on time, attendance will be taken within the first 10 minutes of class. Participation is key in this HANDS-ON class that includes group projects. With the amount of content covered in each individual class – attending class is the most important part of being a student. Life events do occur, so I will allow up to **2 non-excused absences (the equivalent of one week).** **Beyond that, 25 points will be subtracted from each unexcused absence.** If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to check in with another student to see what you missed. Attendance is worth 100 points toward your final grade. **Email me and Krissiha immediately if you will be absent.**

NOTE: If life events prevent you from attending class beyond the excused absences, speak to me IN PERSON to discuss and upon discretion, I will try to offer you an alternative plan.

**Submitting your work:** *You will submit all work via Canvas.* **Script assignments should be submitted as Microsoft word files** (using the two-column format). NO google docs or PDFs accepted. Assignments including video should be submitted as a **YouTube or Vimeo** link included on the two-column script. Please make certain your videos/links are NOT marked private. **ALWAYS PUT A SLATE ahead of your videos.** You should export from Adobe Premiere as **H264 using the preset HD1080i 29.97**. Templates for PITCHES, SCRIPTS, SLATES and SAMPLE ASSIGNMENTS are all provided in CANVAS.

**Deadlines:** It is inevitable that you will experience technical difficulties, so plan ahead. What you think will take an hour will take three, so don't leave anything (rendering, compressing, uploading) until the last minute.

**Late Work:** You are allowed only **TWO** late assignments, graded at 80%. And the "late work" must be turned in within **two weeks** of the original due date. Notify the instructor if you will be absent. Talk to me IMMEDIATELY if you miss a "Group Assignment." You will be expected to make up all missing group assignments on your own.

**Technical Proficiency:** This is considered an "intermediate" level class. Everyone will have had MRTS 2210 but may have different levels of experience beyond that course. THAT IS EXPECTED. If you don't feel strong in an area, this class will give you a chance to practice and expand your knowledge in producing, writing, shooting and editing both audio and video.

**No Double Dipping:** You cannot use a project you produced for another class for an assignment in this class. No re-editing prior projects, no re-using already shot footage, no rehashing old work of any kind. Everything you produce in this class should be ORIGINAL.

**Artificial Intelligence** will be periodically discussed in class. The use of artificial intelligence tools without full transparency violates professional media standards of journalism and violates the University policies regarding Academic Integrity (also see below). Violations of either or both policies will result in disciplinary action up to and including a failing grade on a specific assignment or in this course.

**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 Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities 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 at [www.unt.edu/csrr](http://www.unt.edu/csrr). Please note that if a student is disruptive or abusive, the professor has the legal right to ask that student to leave immediately. If the student does not leave, the professor has the legal right to contact UNT Police.

# SYLLABUS

***\*\*\*All dates and content are subject to change based on class needs and speakers!***

<b><u>Week 1</u></b> <b>Tuesday Aug 19th</b>	Classroom introductions, Syllabus Review, Elements of Non-fiction Storytelling 101
<b>Thursday Aug 21<sup>st</sup></b>	Anatomy of a non-fiction story <b>Story Anatomy Assignment: Due Tuesday, Aug 26th by 11:59 PM.</b>
<b><u>Week 2</u></b> <b>Tuesday Aug 26th</b>	Review of “Rule of thirds” Intro to Sony camera – Hands on with the Equipment Room
<b>Thursday Aug 28th</b>	<b>Group Assignment:</b> Each individual shoots Tight, medium, wide – <b>due by Wednesday Sept 3 by 11:59pm</b> in Canvas with proper slate.
<b><u>Week 3</u></b> <b>Tuesday Sept 2nd</b>	-Review script format of basic broadcast story -Broadcast story Pitch lecture, terms and lingo,
<b>Thursday Sept. 4th</b>	Roundtable critique of student “wide, medium, tight” footage -Review sequencing, watch “Bread Baker”
<b><u>Week 4</u></b> <b>Tuesday Sept 9th</b>	<b>Hands On Workshop</b> with Director of Photography Alex Simon ( <b>mandatory attendance unless you are on deathbed</b> )
<b>Thursday Sept. 11<sup>th</sup></b>	Broadcast Style Writing for Linear and Digital – Emphasis on weaving together narration and soundbites
<b><u>Week 5</u></b> <b>Tuesday Sept 16<sup>th</sup></b>	Unveil “Broadcast News” <b>Pitch assignment</b> (teams of two people)– <b>Pitches due Tuesday, Sept 23<sup>rd</sup> by 11:59 pm</b> Examples of NTV style stories – facts versus emotions
<b>Thursday Sept 18th</b>	Key light, Framing, and Mic Placement lecture, Key light demo with equipment room, <b>Interview Framing assignment due Sunday, Sept 28<sup>th</sup> by 11:59 PM</b>
<b><u>Week 6</u></b> <b>Tuesday Sept 23<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>Director of Photography</b> Guest Speaker via Zoom – video sequencing, natural sound, and depth of field ( <b>Essay Assignment opportunity</b> )
<b>Thursday Sept 25th</b>	Present NTV Style Story Pitches to classmates for roundtable feedback and discussion <b>NTV Style Story due on Sunday Oct 12<sup>th</sup> by 11:59 PM.</b>
<b><u>Week 7</u></b> <b>Tuesday Sept 30th</b>	Art of the Interview - Preparing and Research

	Choosing Soundbites (emotions and facts) Writing into the soundbite
<b>Thursday Oct 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	Interview framing examples, Pans and Tilts, Sequences GOOD/BAD VIDEO and Interview set-ups
<b><u>Week 8</u></b> <b>Tuesday Oct 7<sup>th</sup></b>	Group Assignment – Gathering Sequences and Pans/Tilts with nat sound – <b>due Tuesday Oct 7<sup>th</sup> by 11:59 PM</b>
<b>Thursday Oct 9<sup>th</sup></b>	Review of group sequences and pans/tilts
<b><u>Week 9</u></b> <b>Tuesday Oct 14<sup>th</sup></b>	Screen NTTV style packages in class - discussion
<b>Thursday Oct 16<sup>th</sup></b>	Continue screening NTTV style PKGs – discussion
<b><u>Week 10</u></b> <b>Tuesday Oct 21<sup>st</sup></b>	Guest speaker – Producer/Director/Writer ( <b>Essay opportunity</b> )
<b>Thursday Oct 23<sup>rd</sup></b>	Review of remainder of semester and deadlines, Introduce final project, <b>Pitches due Tuesday Nov 11<sup>th</sup> by 11:59 PM.</b> Sports storytelling
<b><u>Week 11</u></b> <b>Tuesday Oct 28<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>In-class Group Assignment:</b> Two shot interview set-up and mics – <b>Edited version due Tuesday Nov 4<sup>th</sup> by 11:59 PM.</b>
<b>Thursday Oct 30<sup>th</sup></b>	Premiere Pro tips (from a Pro)
<b><u>Week 12</u></b> <b>Tuesday Nov 4<sup>th</sup></b>	Legitimate and Unbiased News Sources
<b>Thursday Nov 6<sup>th</sup></b>	3-point lighting demo, wireless mics
<b><u>Week 13</u></b> <b>Tuesday Nov 11<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>In-class Writing Assignment/Quiz</b>
<b>Thursday Nov 13<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>In-class Roundtable review of pitches in class with classmates Rough Draft due Monday, Dec 1<sup>st</sup> by 11:59 pm</b>
<b><u>Week 14</u></b> <b>Tuesday Nov 18<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Broadcast Lingo and Terminology Test</b>
<b>Thursday Nov 20<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>TBD</b> based on class needs
<b><u>Week 15</u></b> <b>Tuesday Dec 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	Review of final rough drafts in groups
<b>Thursday Dec 4<sup>th</sup></b>	Review of final rough drafts in groups
<b>Friday, Dec 5<sup>th</sup></b>	READING DAY – NO CLASSES
<b>Finals Week (Dec 6<sup>th</sup> thru 12<sup>th</sup>)</b>	<b>FINAL PROJECT DUE BY Tuesday May 9<sup>th</sup> by 11:59 pm.</b> No Late Final Projects accepted. No late work whatsoever accepted after Thursday <b>May 11<sup>th</sup> midnight due</b> to grade submission deadlines.

Note: There is **NO** Final Exam in this class – Instead there is a **FINAL PROJECT**.

You **MUST attend one** of the following Friday MRTS workshops for this class. **NO EXCEPTIONS** whatsoever. All workshops take place **Friday in RTFP 184 from 2-5 pm**.

- September 19: Sound Part 1 with Omar Milano
- September 26: Sound Part 2 with Omar Milano
- October 3: Lighting Part 1 with Nick Coker
- October 10: Lighting Part 2 with Nick Coker
- November 14: Cinematography with Alex Simon

**Your Assignments are:**

<b>Attendance</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>(after 2 absences, 25 point deduction)</b>
<b>Story Anatomy Assignment</b>	<b>50</b>	
<b>Tight, Medium, and Wide Shots</b>	<b>50</b>	
<b>Interview Framing set-up with Sound</b>	<b>50</b>	
<b>Project 1 NTTV Style Pitch</b>	<b>50</b>	
<b>NTTV Style Story</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Gathering/Editing Sequence/Pans/Tilts</b>	<b>50</b>	
<b>Two-shot interview Set up</b>	<b>50</b>	
<b>In class Writing Assignment</b>	<b>50</b>	
<b>Pitch for Final Project</b>	<b>50</b>	
<b>Rough Draft for Final Project</b>	<b>25</b>	
<b>Broadcast Lingo and Terminology Test</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Final Project</b>	<b>150</b>	
<b>Guest Speaker Essay (due w/in one week)</b>	<b>50</b>	
<b>Cinematography/Audio/Lighting Workshop</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>(Mandatory to attend one)</b>

**TOTAL CLASS POINTS POSSIBLE** **1000 POINTS**

**GRADING:**

900-1000	A
800-899	B
700-799	C
600-699	D
600 or less	F

**UNT Grading Scale**

Grade Percentage

A 90+ - The work is consistently outstanding.

B 80+ - The work is consistently strong and occasionally outstanding.

C 70+ - The work is adequate, fulfilling minimum requirements.

D 60+ - The work fails to meet minimum standards.

F below 60 - The work is incomplete, or evidence of plagiarism.

**Disability Accommodations:** The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable 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 a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of reasonable 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 reasonable 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 reasonable 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, refer to the [Office of Disability Access](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access) website (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access>). You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.