

MRTS 3500 Fall 2026 Reporting for Digital Media

M/W: 9:35 AM – 10:55 AM Room 264

M/W: 12:45 – 2:05 PM Room 180F

Instructor:

Lisa Hewitt Lisa.Hewitt2@unt.edu (*Note the #2 in email address*)

Office: RTVP 229

Office Hours: Monday 11 AM - 12:30 PM

Other days/times by appointment (including Zoom)

Graduate Teaching Assistant:

John Benavides John.Benavides@unt.edu

TEXTBOOK: NONE (However, you will have several hand-outs provided in 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. Put them away.* The Department of RTVP prohibits the use of personal mobile devices during class, unless otherwise allowed by the individual 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.

- 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 ([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 (MRTSequipment@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 or five rows.** 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 absences (the equivalent of one week)**. **Beyond that, 25 points will be subtracted from each unexcused absence. Please provide some sort of documentation (dr’s note, picture, etc if you expect the absence to be “excused.”** If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to check in with another student to see what you missed. Attendance is worth 125 points toward your final grade. **Email me and John immediately if you will be absent.**

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.

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. 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.

SYLLABUS

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

<u>Week 1</u> Monday Aug 17th	-Classroom introductions, Syllabus Review -Elements of Non-fiction Storytelling 101
Wednesday Aug 19th	-Anatomy of a non-fiction story lecture -Review script format of basic broadcast story Story Anatomy Assignment: Due Tuesday Aug 25th by 11:59 PM.
<u>Week 2</u> Monday Aug 24th	-Review of “Rule of Thirds” -Sony camera Demo – Hands on with the Equipment Room
Wednesday Aug 26th	-Lecture: Rule of 3s, Slate, Key light, Light Temps, Framing, and Mic placement
<u>Week 3</u> Monday Aug 31st	-Group Assignment: Each group shoots Establishing shots of tight, medium, wide – Due Friday, Sept 4th by 11:59 PM. in Canvas with proper slate.

Wednesday, Sept 2nd	-Hands On Lighting Interview Workshop with DP Alex Simon
<u>Week 4</u> Monday Sept 7th	Labor Day – No class
Wednesday Sept 9th	-Broadcast story Pitch lecture, terms and lingo, examples of a proper pitch -How to Start a Story lecture
<u>Week 5</u> Monday Sept 14th	-Equipment room demo of lights, soft box and wireless lav mic
Wednesday Sept 16th	-Unveil “Broadcast News” Pitch assignment (teams of two people)– Pitches due Sunday Sept 27th by 11:59 pm -Examples of pitches and student NTV style stories
<u>Week 6</u> Monday Sept 21 st	-Roundtable critique of student “wide, medium, tight” footage -Storytelling advice
Wednesday Sept 23rd	-Broadcast Style Writing for Linear and Digital. -Art of the Interview - Preparing and Research
<u>Week 7</u> Monday Sept 28th	-Present NTV Style Story Pitches to classmates for roundtable feedback and discussion NTV Style Story due Sunday Oct 11th by 11:59 PM.
Wednesday Sept 30th	-Director of Photography Guest Speaker via Zoom – video sequencing, natural sound, and depth of field (Essay Assignment opportunity due Wednesday Oct 5th by 11:59 pm)
<u>Week 8</u> Monday Oct 5th	-Short Sequencing lecture -Choosing Soundbites (emotions and facts) -Writing into the soundbite
Wednesday October 7th	-Group Assignment – Gathering Sequences with nat sound – due Wednesday Oct 14th by 11:59 PM.
<u>Week 10</u> Monday October 12th	-Screen NTV style packages in class - discussion
Wednesday Oct 14th	-Continue screening NTV style PKGs – discussion
<u>Week 11</u> Monday Oct 19th	-Guest speaker – Producer/Director/Writer (Essay opportunity due Monday Oct 26th by 11:59 PM.)
Wednesday Oct 21st	-Review class Sequences
<u>Week 12</u> Monday October 26th	-Introduce final project, Pitches due Sunday, Nov 8th by 11:59 PM. - Legitimate and Unbiased News Sources

Wednesday October 28th	-PKG Tips -Two shot interview tips
<u>Week 13</u> Monday November 2nd	-Group Assignment: Two shot interview set-up and mics
Wednesday November 4th	-Edit time with Team for Two-shot Interview Assignment - -- Edited version due Tuesday Nov 10th by 11:59 PM.
<u>Week 14</u> Monday, November 9th	In-class Roundtable review of pitches in class with classmates. Rough Cut/Draft/Outline/Interview Clips due Tuesday Nov 17th by 11:59 pm
Wednesday November 11th	Review Two Shot Interview segments
<u>Week 15</u> Monday November 16th	Broadcast Lingo and Terminology Test
Wednesday November 18 th	Work day – Must come to class Review of final rough drafts/cut/outline/Interview Clips in groups
<u>Week 16</u> Monday November 23rd	Thanksgiving Break – No classes
Wednesday November 25th	Thanksgiving Break – No classes
<u>Week 17</u> Monday November 30 th	TBD based on class needs
Wednesday December 2 nd	FINAL PROJECT DUE -Screen all final projects in class

No late work accepted after Friday Dec 4th at 11:59 PM.

Your Assignments are:

Attendance	150 (after 2 absences, 25 point deduction)
Story Anatomy Assignment	75
Group Tight, Medium, and Wide Shots	75
Project 1 NTTV Style Pitch	50
NTTV Style Story	100
Group Gathering/Editing Sequence	75
Group Two-shot interview/Editing Project	75
Pitch for Final Project	50
Rough Draft for Final Project	25
Broadcast Lingo and Terminology Test	100
Final Project	150
Guest Speaker Essay (due w/in one week)	75

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.

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. 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.