JOUR 4999.002: News Capstone

Fall 2026

Professor:

Randy Lee Loftis, MA
Senior Lecturer

Contact information:

randy.loftis@unt.edu
Email through your official yourname@my.unt account or through Canvas.

(940) 565-3495
Leave a message (email is preferred)

211 Sycamore Hall
Office hours, fall 2026:
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:300 a.m.-noon
Other hours by appointment

Class meetings:

Mondays 2:25-5:15 p.m.
Sycamore 223

Course overview:

A capstone is the traditional culmination of undergraduate studies. You're here because you have passed journalism courses including--with particulars varying by your sequence--reporting, writing, video production, photojournalism, multimedia journalism, and critical thinking. You've also passed courses in other fields of knowledge required of anyone in society.

The capstone is where you'll show that you can put that learning into practice. Through your contributions to a professional-quality, multi-element, team-produced project, you'll demonstrate your mastery of the skills, knowledge, judgment, ethics, and attitudes required of a professional journalist.

One of the most important skills of a professional journalist is the ability to work on a team. This is not the "group work" you may have experienced in a previous class. This is professional work on a project meant for publication.

No doubt there's some skill you would like to improve before you graduate. Work on it with me this semester.

Textbook:

This course has no required textbook. Required outside readings will be provided as needed.

Expected work:

Each capstone journalist will join a team drawn from the newsroom to include a range of skills. The team will work together through the semester to produce an in-depth project on a topic that I approve at the beginning.

The work plan follows the same steps professional project teams follow -- steps I've followed many times in producing award-winning, in-depth investigative projects.

Each project will include one or more of each the following professional-quality elements:

- A written news story
- A video news story (i.e., a video package or a mini-doc)
- Still photographs
- Graphic presentation(s) of data
- Audio journalism--either a reported podcast or NPR-style audio reporting
- A text box explaining the project and identifying the journalists
- A social media strategy
- A web presentation of the project

Each team will submit team-produced progress notes on the project stages. Each individual journalist will also submit notes on their own and their team's progress. In addition, each journalist will have individual duties related to the project.

Grading:

The course has a possible 1,000 points.

The grading structure reflects the expectations of professional journalism.

The grading scale is:

- 900-1,000 points: A
- 800-899 points: B
- 700-799 points: C
- 600-699 points: D. The course must be repeated for credit.
- <600 points: F. The course must be repeated for credit.

A grade of Incomplete can be given under these defined circumstances:

- Only during the last quarter (four weeks) of the semester
- Only if the student is passing
- Only if the student has a justifiable and documented reason beyond their control for not completing the required work.

The student then has a maximum of one calendar year to complete the missing assignments and replace the incomplete with the earned letter grade.

An important note about grading team projects:

The most successful projects are those in which teammates work cooperatively to produce an outstanding project. When a project succeeds, all teammates benefit.

Most journalists fulfill this responsibility. If one does not, that team member's grade will suffer but their teammates' grades will not.

Each team member's grade is based solely on their own performance and contributions.

- No student will be penalized because someone else on their team did not contribute as required.
- No student will get credit because someone else on their team made up for their unsatisfactory work.

Where the points come from:

The grading scale assumes no unexcused absences. See the Attendance section for more details.

The individual's effort and contribution to the finished project: up to 850 points (85 percent)

- Tier I, maximum 850 points: The individual team member's contribution to the finished project is significant, consistent, and of the exceptional quality expected of a graduate of the Mayborn School of Journalism and a high-performing entry-level professional journalist. The individual team member has helped the project come in on time with excellence of conception, reporting, production, and presentation. The individual team member has produced and coordinated exceptional work on their assigned principal elements. The individual team member has demonstrated accuracy, fairness, ethical practice, and willing cooperation in teamwork without needing extraordinary intervention.
- Points decline as effort and contribution decline:
    - Tier II, maximum 750 points: Acceptable quality without consistently outstanding performance
    - Tier III, maximum 650 points: Borderline quality with notable issues
    - Tier IV, maximum 550 points: Unacceptable quality with critical issues.
- How measured: Assessment of the individual team member's submissions and overall performance.

Production stages: 5 percent, up to 50 points

- Maximum points: The individual team member completes their tasks in each production stage on time and follows instruction and guidance on content and approach. The individual team member meets submission deadlines.
    - Points decline as the individual team member’s task completion declines.
- How measured: Assessment of the work and submission dates.
- Note: An unexcused absence means no credit for a team assignment due during class time. See the Attendance section for more information.

Introductory questionnaire: 5 percent, 50 points

- Submit the questionnaire by Thursday, Aug. 13.

Discretionary points: 5 percent, up to 50 points

- The individual stays on task, shows up consistently to the newsroom and to other-hours team meetings and discussions, communicates often, meets deadlines, and engages productively throughout the semester
- How measured: Assessment of the semester’s work, attendance, communication, deadlines, and colleagues' input.

Attendance:

Professional journalists show up to work.

Assigned capstone newsroom time totals just 42.5 hours from August to December--a single fulltime work week. Each unexcused absence is like skipping three hours of work.

You will sign in each week. Attendance is mandatory and is an important factor in assessing your work. You'll also recount your attendance in your individual semester-end report.

Most newsroom meetings will include time after instruction for work on project assignments that are due by that class session's end. Any team member who is not present due to an unexcused absence will receive no credit for that assignment and will not have a makeup opportunity.

Each unexcused absence will result in a 50-point deduction from the final semester score. After one unexcused absence, each will also result in the loss of discretionary points and any points for in-class assignments.

- 1 unexcused absence: 50-point deduction.
- 2 unexcused absences: 100-point deduction and loss of 25 of 50 discretionary points. Maximum possible semester grade: 875 points (B)
- 3 unexcused absences: 150-point deduction and loss of all 50 discretionary points. Maximum possible semester grade is 800 points (B).
- 4 unexcused absences: 300-point deduction and loss of all 50 discretionary points. Maximum possible semester score is 700 points (C).

Excused absences:

The best professional news organizations have high expectations but are not run like sweatshops. Things happen to us all.

If you're sick or face some other crisis, just let me know. I don't ask for a doctor's note, a copy of your loved one's published obituary, or the program from their memorial service. I try to respect your privacy and dignity. I consider self-care an important part of success.

In return, I expect everyone to demonstrate professional and personal integrity.

Academic integrity:

This is an advanced, upper-level journalism class reflecting the ethics of a professional newsroom. We will observe, follow, and enforce the highest professional standards of journalistic and academic integrity.

All work in this newsroom must be produced in compliance with professional journalism's rules governing truthfulness, accuracy, and fairness. Any violation, including plagiarism, fabrication, or distortion, may result in an automatic failing grade for the semester and other serious penalties in keeping with UNT policy,

Ethics rules for your work in this newsroom include, but are not limited to, the following:

- All written work -- stories, headlines, cutlines/captions, etc. -- must be originally produced for this newsroom by team members. Written work will be submitted to Turnitin or another plagiarism detector.
- Any submission of text or imagery produced by generative artificial intelligence is strictly forbidden. This newsroom requires original intelligence.
    - This policy does not prohibit the use of AI-based style or grammar assistance (Grammarly, MS Word Editor, etc.) to catch grammar, spelling, or punctuation issues for non-substantial editing,
- All direct quotes or paraphrases must be newly obtained by a team member for this project unless fully attributed to the original source. Quotes and paraphrases from other media may not be used without my advance permission, which is very rarely given. We do not use others' work as a substitute for our own. We get our own quotes from our own reporting.
- No anonymous sources, pseudonyms, or partial identifications of sources or photographic subjects are allowed without my advance permission, which is very rarely given.
- Quotes and paraphrases must reflect how they were obtained -- in an interview, email, statement. etc.
- Graphic presentations must be original work prepared for this project.
    - They may be prepared using a data visualization app such as Tableau or the embedded graphics tools in Google Sheets, Microsoft Excel, etc.
    - Each graphic presentation must identify and link to the source of the underlying data.
    - The underlying data must be available for inspection on request.
- Work originally assigned or produced for any other purpose, including campus or professional media or another course, may not be submitted for this course. Work produced for the course may be submitted to outside media as soon as it is submitted to the professor, Work submitted for this course may not be submitted to another course.
- Capstone journalists must make it clear that the project is being done for a class. You may not state or imply that you or the project are affiliated with any campus or professional media unless your team, with my prior approval, has a tentative

publication agreement. In the absence of such an agreement, you may state that the team plans to seek publication.

- All video and photography must be shot originally for this course. The use of stock or archived video, B-roll, or images is prohibited without advance permission, which is very rarely given. If permitted, the stock material may not be used without license or the permission of the copyright owner. Even when permitted, stock or archived video or images do not substitute for the project's requirement for original video and images.
- Digital images may not be altered or manipulated in ways that deceive, fabricate, or add or subtract elements in the original frame. The photojournalism rules of the Associated Press and the code of ethics of the National Press Photographers Association apply to this course.
- No music, regardless of the length of the clip, may be used for video or podcast without license or the permission of the copyright owner.

Week-by-week schedule:

- Subject to revision

Week 1

- Introductions and orientation. Facts, assumptions, and guesses. Explanation of the projects. Announcement of teams.
- Central questions and project proposals.
- Production plans. Sources and visuals.
- *In-class assignments:* Complete and submit CQ/project proposal, production plans, and ideas for sources and subjects. Start interviews, photo, video.
- *Out-of-class assignments:* Start background research. Start interviews.

Week 2

- Review CQs/project proposals, production plans, sources and visuals.
- Background research and summary tips.
- Sources, good to bad.
- *In-class assignments:* Complete and submit background research summary. Sources and visuals. Interviews, photo, video.
- *Out-of-class assignments:* Start seeking data. Continue interviews.

Week 3

- Review background research summaries.
- How to find and summarize data.
- *In-class assignments:* Complete and submit data summaries. Sources and visuals. Interviews, photo, video.

- *Out-of-class assignments:* Start work on data graphics. Continue interviews.

Week 4

- Review data summaries.
- Principles of data graphics.
- *In-class assignments:* Complete and submit data graphics drafts. Sources and visuals. Interviews, photo, video.
- *Out-of-class assignments:* Start work on findings of new understanding. Continue interviews.

Week 5

- Review data graphics drafts.
- Findings of new understanding.
- Draft strategies.
- *In-class assignments: Work on i*nterviews, photo, video.
- *Out-of-class assignments:* Continue interviews. Start working on drafts.

Week 6

- Lovelady sentences.
- *In-class assignments:* Complete and submit Lovelady sentences 1.0. Work on interviews, photo, video, drafts.
- *Out-of-class assignments:* Continue interviews. Work on drafts.

Week 7

- Review Lovelady sentences.
- *In-class assignments:* Work on interviews, photo, video, drafts.
- *Out-of-class assignment:* Work on drafts.

Week 8

- Being factually imaginative.
- *In-class assignment:* Work on drafts. The draft project elements (written, video, audio, still photos, data/graphics) are due two weeks from today.

Week 9

- How to assess a draft.
- *In-class assignment:* Work on drafts. The draft project is due one week from today.
- *Out-of-class assignment:* Assess and finish draft projects.

Week 10

- Submit the draft project elements.
- Present draft projects.
- *In-class assignment:* Revisions.
- *Out-of-class assignment:* Revisions. Work on the web presentation.

Week 11

- Assessing journalism for source diversity.

- *In-class assignments:* Complete and submit an assessment of your project's source diversity. Revisions. Work on the web presentation.
- *Out-of-class assignment:* Revisions. Work on the web presentation.

Week 12

- *In-class assignment:* Revisions. Work on the web presentation. Prepare and submit social media plans.
- *Out-of-class assignment:* Revisions. Work on and submit the web presentation.

Week 13

- Present finished website. Present social media plans.
- *In-class assignment:* Revisions.
- *Out-of-class assignment:* Revisions.

Week 14

- *In-class assignment:* Revisions.
- *Out-of-class assignment:* Revisions. Prepare to present finished projects next week.

Week 15

- Present final projects.
- Individual final reports due Thursday.

Mayborn and UNT information:

JOURNALISM REQUIREMENTS & GUIDELINES

JOURNALISM COURSE REGISTRATION

- 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 re-take 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 bookstores or online.

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 (https://financialaid.unt.edu/satisfactory-academic-progress-requirements) 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.

UNT FALL 2026 Semester Calendar

Academic Calendar is subject to change

KEY SEMESTER DATES	Full Semester AUG. 17-DEC. 11	8 week I Session AUG. 17-OCT. 9	8 week II Session OCT. 12-DEC. 11
Schedule of Classes Available on myUNT	Mar. 9	Mar. 9	Mar. 9
Registration Opens for specifics by student group/class: https://registrar.unt.edu/when-can-i-register	Mar. 16	Mar. 16	Mar. 16
Prerequisite Drop Students not meeting course prerequisites will be dropped from their courses.	July 29	July 29	Oct. 12
Regular Registration Ends	Aug. 13	Aug. 13	Oct. 8
Late Registration Period—For Students not Registered for the Term Students registering late will incur a late registration fee of $75.	Aug. 14-21	Aug. 14-21	Oct. 9-16
Last Day to Withdrawal from Entire Term on myUNT Courses do not appear on the transcript. After this date see Dean of Students to withdrawal from the entire term.	Aug. 16	Aug. 16	Oct. 11 If only 8 week II
Classes Begin	Aug. 17	Aug. 17	Oct. 12
Last Day to Add a Class or Swap Sections A swap is switching sections of the same course in the same session.	Aug. 21	Aug. 21	Oct. 16
Last Day to Drop a Class Section Without a W (Census) Courses dropped before this date will not appear on official transcript. (Dropping courses may impact financial aid and degree completion. See advisors.)	Aug. 28	Aug. 22	Oct. 17
Drop with a Grade of W Begins Courses appear on the transcript with a grade of W and tuition and fees remain. (Dropping courses may impact financial aid and degree completion. See advisors.)	Aug. 29	Aug. 23	Oct. 18
Last day to change to pass/no pass grade option (undergrads)	Sept. 25	Sept. 4	Oct. 30
Midpoint of the Semester	Oct. 9	Sept. 11	Nov. 6
Last day for a student to drop a course or all courses with a grade of W.	Nov. 6	Sept. 25	Nov. 20
First day to request a grade of Incomplete	Nov. 7	Sept. 26	Nov. 21
Pre-Finals Days	Dec. 2-3	N/A	N/A
Last Regular Class Meeting	Dec. 3	Oct. 8	Dec. 10
Reading Day—No Classes	Dec. 4	N/A	N/A
Final Exams	Dec. 7-11	Oct. 9	Dec. 11
Last Day of Session	Dec. 11	Oct. 9	Dec. 11
University Grade Submission Deadline 4 pm	Dec. 14	Oct. 12	Dec. 14
Grades/Academic Standing posted on the Official Transcript	Dec. 16	Dec. 16	Dec. 16

Labor Day - No Classes - University Closed	September 7, 2026
Thanksgiving Break - No classes	November 23-29, 2026
University Commencement	

Last Modified: March 9, 2026

ACCREDITATION

The Mayborn, which is one of over 100 journalism programs across the world that are accredited, is renewing its credentials this year. Accreditation is important to you because it means your degree is more valuable than one that comes from an unaccredited school.

Accreditation has profound benefits. Accredited programs may offer scholarships, internships, competitive prizes, and other activities unavailable in non-accredited programs.

Accreditation also provides an assurance of quality and rigorous standards to students, parents, and the public. Students in an accredited program can expect to find a challenging curriculum, appropriate resources and facilities, and a competent faculty.

Accreditation is our promise to our students that you will receive the best education possible in journalism and mass communication. With today's technology, anyone can present information to a mass audience. But not all are trained in the creation of ethical messages that reach and serve diverse audiences that our standards uphold. What you learn in an accredited program makes you more marketable and your degree more valuable!

The Mayborn School's accreditation is determined by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) through an extensive evaluation process. Accreditation by the ACEJMC council means we embrace the value of a broad, multidisciplinary curriculum that nurtures critical thinking, analytic reasoning and problem-solving skills that are the essential foundation for all mass communication education.

ADOBE ACCESS

UNT has a contract with Adobe. The following link contains all the information that students will need to purchase a subscription, and opt-out of an existing agreement that is at a higher price: https://cvad.unt.edu/cvad-it-services/it-services-adobe-cloud-access.html

The email address for students to ask questions or report problems is adobe@unt.edu.

JOURNALISM EQUIPMENT CHECK OUT

Checkout length for the **Canon Mirrorless Camera, Batteries, Lighting Gear, Mirrorless Tripods, Individual Lenses, and Accessories** can be checked out up to 72 hours.

To checkout a **Canon Mirrorless Camera and items listed above** longer than 72 hours, the Professor for the course will need to approve the request.

Checkout length for the **Panasonic Video Camera, Batteries, SDXC, and Tripods** can be checked out up to 24 hours.

To checkout a **Panasonic Video Camera and items listed above** longer than 72 hours, the Professor for the course will need to approve the request.

Please send extended reservations approval from the Professor to the following email: **mayborn-equipment@unt.edu**

Journalism Equipment Room - Location and Contact Information

The Journalism equipment room is located at **Chilton Hall 410 S. Ave. C, Room 155.**

Equipment room phone number is **940-565-3580.**

Equipment room email is **mayborn-equipment@unt.edu.**

Equipment room supervisor can be reached at **ladaniel.maxwell@unt.edu**

Journalism Equipment Room - Operating Hours

Monday/Wednesday: 9 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Tuesday/Thursday: 9 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Friday: 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Sat-Sun: 12 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Journalism Equipment Room - Agreement Form

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

Journalism Web Checkout Agreement Form

This form must completed prior to checking out equipment and only needs to be done once per semester.

Journalism Equipment Room - Late Returns/Abuse of Checkout Policy

For every hour the student is late; a ban will be placed on the student's account accumulating the same amount of time.

A **ban** restricts the student from checking out any equipment within the Journalism Equipment Room.

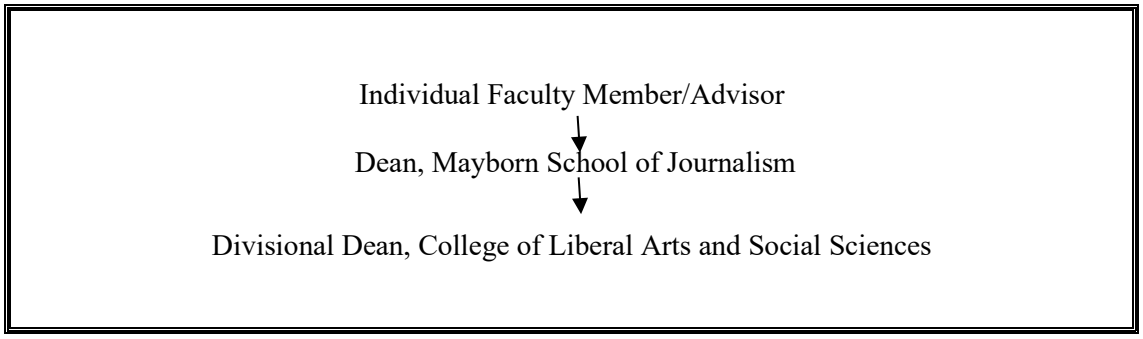
For example, if the student returns equipment 2 hours late, a 2 hour ban will be placed on the student's account.

If the student returns equipment 72 hours late, a 72 hour ban will be placed on the student's account.

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**

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:



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 (http://www.unt.edu/oda). 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.

This course does not have a final exam.

As you know, your access point for business and academic services at UNT occurs within the My.UNT site (www.my.unt.edu). If you do not regularly check EagleConnect or link it to your favorite e-mail account, please so do, 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 (http://eagleconnect.unt.edu/) 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 lecture 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 (www.spot.unt.edu) or email spot@unt.edu. Spots survey dates:

Term	Survey Administration Dates
8W1	September 29-October 8
8W2	December 1-December 10
Reg Fall Term	November 17-December 3

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 (www.deanofstudents.unt.edu).

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, HARRASSMENT, & 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 (http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources_0) 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 e-mail 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
(https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center#programs)
1800 Chestnut St. (Chestnut Hall)
940-565-2333
M-Th, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

2. Counseling and Testing Services – Free to UNT Students
(https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services)
801 N. Texas Blvd., Suite 140 (Gateway Center)
940-565-2741
M-F, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

3. UNT CARE Team – Free to UNT Students
(https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care)
Dean of Students, University Union
940-565-2648
careteam@unt.edu

4. Psychiatric Services
(https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry)
940-565-2333

5. Individual Counseling – Free to UNT Students
(https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling)
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
    - During office hours, M-F, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m: Call 940-565-2741
    - After hours: Call 940-565-2741
    - Crisis Line: Text CONNECT to 741741
    - Live chat: (http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

STATEMENTS OF STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Statement of Student Learning Outcomes

- Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances
- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications
- Demonstrate an understanding of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society
- 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
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work
- 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 basic numerical and statistical concepts

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