# JOUR 4410 Reporting Public Affairs

# ****FALL 2025****

**Wednesdays 3:30-6:20, Zoom, then SYC 220**

**Professor:** Dr. Tracy Everbach

**Office:** Sycamore 254

**Student office hours:** Wednesdays 1-3 p.m. (By Zoom first half of semester, in-person second half of semester)

**Contact:** Tracy.Everbach@unt.edu

            Cell: 214-995-8464

**Course Description** Check your favorite news site, read the newspaper, watch television, or listen to the radio. Public affairs reporting produces vital news for readers and viewers. As a news reporter, one of your first assignments likely will be covering cops, courts, governments, civil servants and politicians. It’s what makes villages, towns, cities, states and federal governments tick. Public affairs stories sometimes address the most mundane issues, but in the long run, the subjects of these stories directly affect the lives of readers and viewers. Many of the most coveted awards in journalism are won by journalists who have gone beyond the ordinary, who have dug deep to reveal inconsistencies, illegal behavior and wrongdoings by those in the centerpiece of public affairs. Covering public affairs is one of the most important roles of a journalist: being a watchdog of those in power.

As part of this course, you will be reporting and writing stories about communities around you as well as participating in active, in-class discussions about public policy, community journalism and media ethics.

**This semester we will be working on a special project about mental health in conjunction with the North Texas Daily. The work you do this semester will build up to a final project that will be posted on an independent website and offered to other news organizations, including the Daily. It also will be entered in journalism contests.**

**Course Objectives** At the end of this class, you should achieve the following and be ready to go out into the journalism workforce:

* Report and write stories about public institutions
* Learn the organizational structure and basic functionality of key public institutions, such as police departments, the court systems and the school boards/independent school districts
* Learn how to report, research and write short- and long-form investigative stories
* Learn about the depth and breadth of public documents and how to access them
* Understand how to file an open records request
* Understand the fundamental role of a free press, the role of the First Amendment and the importance of open government
* Learn the importance of fairness and ethics in covering government institutions and politicians

**ACEJMC Competencies (for accreditation purposes)**

* 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 gender, race ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms 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;
* 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.

**Reading and Textbook Requirements**

* **Required:** *Associated Press Stylebook*. Can download a mobile version or buy the book.
* **Required:** Read daily online editions of The Dallas Morning News, The New York Times and/or other news, including the North Texas Daily and Denton Record-Chronicle. You cannot do this job without reading news, especially local news!
* Read additional articles, essays and case studies as assigned.
* **All articles written for the class must include a source list with the names, phone numbers and emails of people interviewed as well as any website used to source content.**

**Attendance You are expected to attend every class.** Your participation is essential to your personal success. Treat this class as if it were a newsroom. Your responsibilities are the same as those for a job. If you’re going to be absent, you are responsible for all material covered during classes. If you are ill, have a death in the family, or have an emergency, you may miss class. **Missing class will impact your grade since we only meet in person once a week.**

**Class assignments** You must check Canvas regularly to get assignments and to post assignments. I will post your grades to Canvas, and in most cases will grade your work electronically. Obviously, deadlines are important, especially since this is a class mainly for journalism seniors. **If you are having a personal problem and cannot complete your work, please come talk to me. I am willing to work with you if personal issues are interfering with school.**

You will be doing extensive reporting and writing in this class. All of your assignments must list your byline, the date, and **must include a source list**. Your story assignments should be written for publication in print or online so they need care and proofreading. You may pitch them to publications, including student media, but you may not use them for other classes.

Time management is an essential component of this class along with your journalism skills, critical thinking and creativity.

**Project** You will be writing and photographing a story about mental health for your final project. **There is no final exam in this class, only the project.** The goal of this project is to combine all of your journalism skills into an enterprise article. You will draw upon your experience on what we’ve learned throughout the semester and what you have learned in previous journalism classes. The expectation is that this 1,000- to 1,500-word article along with still photographs. This will be a great opportunity for you to have a solid piece for your portfolio.

**Grading**

Academic integrity quiz bonus points

“Protecting Vulnerable Sources” webinar + reaction 10%

“Mental Health Reporting Project” course (5 units) 25%

Crime story 10%

DRAFT 1 5%

Background check                                                                        10%

DRAFT 2 10%

FOIA/Open Records letter                                                             10%

Final Project                                                                                    20%

You will be graded on your ability to turn in quality assignments on deadline. They must be accurate, clear, use AP style correctly, employ interviews with sources, and must be fairly reported. All of the above components will be part of determining your grade.

**Assignment requirement** **All articles written for the class must include a source list with the names, phone numbers and emails of people interviewed as well as any website used to source content. If the source list is missing, 10 percentage points will be dropped from the grade.**

## **Grading**

* A: 90-100% (Outstanding, excellent work. The student performs well above the minimum criteria.)
* B: 80-89% (Good, impressive work. The student performs above the minimum criteria.)
* C: 70-79% (Solid, college-level work. The student meets the criteria of the assignment.)
* D: 60-69% (Below average work. The student fails to meet the minimum criteria.)
* F: 59 and below (Sub-par work. The student fails to complete the assignment.)

**Grade-related Policies** All work turned in after the deadline will receive a grade of zero unless the student has a [university-excused absence  (Links to an external site.)](https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-039) and provides documentation with 48 hours of the missed deadline. I aim to return graded work to you within two weeks of the due date. When this is not possible, I will send an announcement to the class.

You are required to wait 24 hours before contacting me to dispute a grade. Within that time, I expect that you will review the assignment details and reflect on the quality of the work you turned in. If you would still like to meet, email me to set up a Zoom meeting (I cannot discuss grades over email). You should come to our scheduled meeting with specific examples that demonstrate that you earned a higher grade than you received. If you miss your scheduled meeting, you forfeit your right to a grade dispute. If you do not contact me to schedule a meeting within seven days of receiving your grade, you also forfeit your right to a grade dispute.

**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. The instructor reserves the right to issue a ZERO for any assignment found to have involved **plagiarism, fabrication, dual submission, unauthorized use of artificial intelligence,** or any other act of academic dishonesty.

#### **Mayborn 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.

**Artificial intelligence** All work submitted for this class must be your original work—that is, it cannot have been published already online, submitted for any other class, or **created by** Generative AI. Remember that many grammar-checking, paraphrasing, word processing programs also employ generative AI. If you have used one of these programs, you need to acknowledge it in your work and explain why you used the program. In general, the unauthorized use of generative AI for work turned in for this class will be considered a form of cheating and will be assigned the same penalties as cheating.

We will consider limited use of specific Generative AI (GenAI) tools for some assignments. These assignments help build ethical resilience and GenAI literacy, preparing you for careers in a GenAI-oriented workforce. You may use Gen AI to streamline tasks, generate prompts, draft outlines, or other uses, but you must disclose this on your assignments. In accordance with the UNT Honor Code, unauthorized use of GenAI tools is prohibited. Using GenAI content without proper credit or substituting your own work with GenAI undermines the learning process and violates UNT academic integrity. *If you're unsure whether something is allowed, please seek clarification from the instructor.*

The UNT Academic Integrity Policy may be found here: <https://vpaa.unt.edu/ss/integrity>.

If you would like to learn more about artificial intelligence, its use, and how to effectively use it in your work, the university offers these free “micro-credential” courses: <https://digitalstrategy.unt.edu/microcredentials/learning-with-ai.html>

**Disability Accommodations** 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.

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](file:///%5C%5Ccas-shared.unt.ad.unt.edu%5CSHARED%5CJOUR%5CFACSTAFF%5CADMINISTRATIVE%5CCOURSES%5CCOURSE%20SYLLABI%20%26amp%3B%20ATTACHMENTS%5CSYLLABI%20ATTACHMENTS%5C2021-2022%5CSPRING%202022%5COffice%20of%20Disability%20Access) (<http://www.unt.edu/oda>). You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

## **Discrimination, harassment, and 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: <http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources_0>.  UNT’s Survivor Advocate can be reached through e-mail at [SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu](http://SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu) or by calling the Dean of Students’ office at 940-565-2648.  You are not alone. We are here to help.

**Classroom 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 classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-012.

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, dressing inappropriately).

Final project possible story ideas (no friends or relatives as subjects; UNT students are good)

Disability and mental health

LGBTQ+ mental health

Homeless population in Denton and mental health

Refugee or immigrant mental health (Dreamers, asylum seekers, Muslim refugees etc.)

Women and mental health amid reduction in rights

Neurodiversity and mental health

Athlete mental health

Difficulty of getting mental health care

Elderly mental health (caregiver mental health)

Parenting and mental health

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* **ALL assignments DUE at 11:59 p.m. Wednesdays**
* **EVERY STORY MUST CONTAIN A SOURCE LIST WITH CONTACT INFORMATION (PHONE AND/OR EMAIL) FOR THE SOURCES.**
* **ALL STORIES SHOULD BE WRITTEN FOR A NEWS WEBSITE.**

Tentative Class Schedule (subject to change—all changes will be announced in class and on Canvas):

**Week 1 – Aug. 20** Introduction to class. What is public affairs? Overview of class, why covering public affairs matters, why community journalism matters. Brainstorming about mental health project. Why is journalism important? Review of journalists’ obligations. *The Elements of Journalism*. Academic integrity.

**Week 2 – Aug. 27 Safety and trauma journalism. Profession, job, and journalism style resources. Story ideas for mental health project. Discussion of panel for tomorrow. AUGUST 28 1-2:30 p.m. panel for our mental health project in the UNT Union 339**

**On your own: Take course on “Covering Vulnerable Sources” through Poynter Institute.** <https://www.poynter.org/shop/ethics/covering-vulnerable-sources-mental-health-webinar/>

**This course is free, but you will need to set up an account with the Poynter Institute if you do not already have one.**

**DUE: Academic Integrity quiz**

**Week 3 – Sept. 3** Story ideas. Engaging sources. Watchdog journalism. Interviewing. How to cover a government meeting. Making government meeting coverage interesting.

**DUE**: **Response to “Covering Vulnerable Sources” webinar. Approximately 500 words.**

Your essay will be graded on the following rubric:

-Ability to write clearly and in an organized manner.

-Proper use of grammar, punctuation, spelling and AP style.

-Direct references to the reading material. Academic citations are not required, but are allowed. If you use no academic citations, you should make in-text references to key themes you to support your argument.

**Week 4 – Sept. 10** Fact checking, discerning fake news, CRAAP Test, discuss what you learned in mental health online course.

**DUE: Complete first unit of Mental Health Reporting Project: “Getting started covering mental health.” Submit screenshot of completed quiz. https://www.poynter.org/shop/ethics/the-mental-health-reporting-project/**

**Week 5 – Sept. 17** Covering law enforcement, crime and courts. Crime beat basics. Key terms. Understanding the arrest process. Understanding crime stats. The criminal justice system.

**Week 6 – Sept. 24** Eight Paths to a Story

**DUE: Crime story**

Find a news release from a local police department. Rewrite the news release into a story or brief that can be published online by a news organization rather than a police-generated piece. Choose a press release (or more than one related press releases) and rewrite it into a news story, following AP style. Figure out what the lead is and rewrite into a coherent story or brief for the public. Avoid jargon. You may use one of these cities’ releases or another area city’s information. INCLUDE THE RELEASE OR LINK TO THE RELEASE ALONG WITH YOUR STORY.

Denton PD: <https://www.cityofdenton.com/CivicAlerts.aspx?CID=9>

Dallas PD: <https://dpdbeat.com/>

Fort Worth PD: <https://police.fortworthtexas.gov/news-articles>

Arlington PD: <https://www.arlingtontx.gov/City-Services/Public-Safety/Police-Department/Police-Newsroom/Police-News>

Plano PD: <https://www.plano.gov/1562/Police-Press-Releases>

Grading rubric for this story:

-Relevant lead on story.

-Ability to recognize what is news.

-Factual accuracy.

-Organization of story.

-Clear and understandable writing.

-Fairness

-Proper use of grammar, punctuation, spelling and AP style.

**Week 7 – Oct. 1**

Eight paths to a story.

**DUE: Complete second unit of The Mental Health Reporting Project, “Using tools to responsibly report on mental health.” Submit screenshot of completed quiz.**

**Week 8 – Oct. 8**

Covering politics/elections/campaign financing. Following the money. Web Resources for Reporters (being nosy and doing background checks.)

DUE: **Complete third unit of The Mental Health Reporting Project, “How to cover mental health equity.” Submit screenshot of completed quiz.**

**Week 9 – Oct. 15**

Investigative reporting.

Watch film, “She Said,” and be prepared for discussion. Stream through UNT Media Library. <https://digitalcampus-swankmp-net.libproxy.library.unt.edu/unt302806/play/c761fee4587f688d?referrer=direct;%20target%3D>

The basics of investigative reporting. Accessing sources. **Familiarize yourself with the IRE database:** <http://ire.org/resource-center/>.

DUE: **Complete fourth unit of The Mental Health Reporting Project, “Covering suicide and addiction.” Submit screenshot of completed quiz.**

**Week 10 – Oct. 22** Discussion of “She Said.” Covering politics/elections/campaign financing. Following the money. Explanation of background check story. Doing background checks.

**DUE: Complete fifth** **unit of The Mental Health Reporting Project, “Trauma informed reporting.”**

Due NEXT week: Background check of politician

**Week 11 – Oct. 29** Data Journalism/Dissecting public documents/Freedom of Information and open records letters.

**DUE this week: DRAFT 1 of story.**

Grading rubric for this story:

-Relevant lead on story.

-Ability to recognize what is news.

-Factual accuracy.

-Organization of story.

-Clear and understandable writing.

-Fairness

-Proper use of grammar, punctuation, spelling and AP style.

**Week 12 – Nov. 5** FOIA/Open Records request.

Websites to peruse/bookmark:

Student Press Law Center: <http://www.splc.org/>

Reporters’ Committee for Freedom of the Press, FOIA project: <https://www.ifoia.org/#!/>

**DUE this week: Background check.**

Grading rubric for this story:

-Elements of open records

-Factual accuracy.

-Organization of story

-Clear and understandable writing.

-Fairness

-Proper use of grammar, punctuation, spelling and AP style.

**Week 13 – Nov. 12** Story workshop in lab

**DUE: FOIA/Open Records letter** requesting information from a government agency

Work on your final story.

**WEEK 14 – Nov. 19** Story workshop in lab

Public vs. private lives / government & news media /

**DUE: DRAFT 2 of final story**

Grading rubric for this story:

-Relevant lead on story.

-Ability to recognize what is news.

-Factual accuracy.

-Organization of story.

-Clear and understandable writing.

-Fairness

-Proper use of grammar, punctuation, spelling and AP style.

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**Week 15 – Dec. 3** Story workshop in lab

Discussion of jobs and careers in journalism. Advice on job searches, resumes, interviews.

**\*\*FINAL STORIES DUE Wednesday, DEC. 3.**

**\*\*NO FINAL EXAM\*\***

# 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) (<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.

## A green and white calendar with white text  AI-generated content may be incorrect.

## Accreditation

The Mayborn is an accredited program. 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.

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## 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:

<https://forms.office.com/r/q9fakNFTM8>

This form should be 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.eduorladaniel.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:

|  |
| --- |
| Individual Faculty Member/AdvisorAssociate Dean, Mayborn School of JournalismDean, Mayborn School of Journalism |

## 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.

## ACCESS TO INFORMATION

As you know, your access point for business and academic services at UNT occurs within the [My.UNT site](http://www.my.unt.edu/)([www.my.unt.edu](http://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](http://eagleconnect.unt.edu/) 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](http://www.spot.unt.edu/) ([www.spot.unt.edu](http://www.spot.unt.edu)) or email spot@unt.edu. Spots survey dates:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Term** | **Survey Administration Dates** |
| [Regular Academic Session](https://vpaa.unt.edu/spot/calendars/fall-calendars/fall-regular.html) | November 11 - December 04 |
| [8W1](https://vpaa.unt.edu/spot/calendars/fall-calendars/fall-8w1.html) | September 30 - October 09 |
| [8W2](https://vpaa.unt.edu/spot/calendars/fall-calendars/fall-8w2.html) | December 02 - December 11 |

## 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)

(<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](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/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](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care) – 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)

(<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry>)

940-565-2333

5. [Individual Counseling](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/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/): [(](file:///%5C%5Ccas-shared.unt.ad.unt.edu%5CSHARED%5CJOUR%5CFACSTAFF%5CFACULTY%20%26%20STAFF%5CSYLLABI%20%26%20ATTACHMENTS%5CSYLLABI%20ATTACHMENTS%5C2020-2021%5CFALL%202020%5CFROM%20THORNE%20FOR%20CANVAS%5C%28)<http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>)