

COURSE SYLLABUS

Video Storytelling

Course code: JRN 255

Semester and year: Fall 2021

Day and time: Wednesday 11:30-14:15

Instructor: MA Björn Steinz

Instructor contact: bjorn.steinz@aauni.edu

Consultation hours: Wednesday 14:15-15:00

Credits US/ECTS	3/6	Level	Intermediate
Length	12 weeks	Pre-requisite	TOEFL IBT 71
Contact hours	42 hours	Course type	Elective: HSC el, PS el, JC req/el, CEA

1. Course Description

This introduction to reporting for electronic media incorporates weekly lectures, analysis of broadcast reporting and documentary production, both current and past, and, through practical exercises in electronic news gathering, students will learn the basic concepts of visual journalism. Because the course focuses on independent media production and there is a limited amount of equipment to borrow from the department, students are advised to use their own DSLR, video camera, camera phone, iPad or other recording device, MacBooks or PCs for editing your videos.

Working in groups, we will produce a series of video exercises culminating in short Final Project at the end of the semester, incorporating everything we've covered about finding, researching and reporting a story, gathering elements that may include documentation, archival material, interviews, sound and field footage. Technical considerations, such as lighting, composition, focus, audio, editing, and post production enhancements and formatting issues will also be covered.

2. Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Write a shooting script that incorporates visual storytelling, sound that adds dimension and good reporting; be able to shoot and edit field footage into a form suitable for webcast at a minimum.
- Plan, report, record and edit a short news story for broadcast.
- Comprehend and have a clear understanding of independent news gathering for the media.
- Understand and analyze news broadcasts and non-fiction films for form, content, style and impact.

3. Reading Material

Required Materials

- Kobre, Kenneth **Videojournalism: Multimedia Storytelling**
Taylor and Francis, 2012, Waltham, MA
- Copies are available in the AAU Library for you to use for the semester.

(Highly) Recommended Materials

- Smartphone
- DSLR which can record video and sound
- External microphone or audio recorder
- Laptop computer with video editing software (Davinci Resolve available for free download online)
- Recommended viewing:

Field of Vision - In the Absence

Notes From Aleppo

Living on Scrap on

Standard Operating Procedure

The Fight for Amazonia

Scenes From a Dry City

Five Broken Cameras

Marielle and Monica

God Grew Tired of Us

Exit Through the Gift Shop

<https://www.worldpressphoto.org/collection/storytelling/2017/29069/2017-Claressa>

Students should also keep up with current events and news in general. For further inspiration and to see professional work see the *New York Times*, *The Guardian* video reports, along with those of *Al Jazeera English*, *Der Spiegel* and *Der Stern* and others.
For Czech news: <https://english.radio.cz>, <https://praguemonitor.com>

4. Teaching methodology

The class will be informal and interactive. Students will learn by doing. Their work will be discussed and critiqued in class by the instructor and by the students themselves. The instructor will also provide feedback to students individually about their work. As part of a news team students will work in groups to develop story ideas for segments to be part of the final report to air late in the semester. Students will pitch their ideas to the group and discuss how they can be effectively reported, researched and written. The stories will be critiqued in class, and often the reporters will be asked to acquire more information or to do re-editing. As journalists, students will be expected to keep up with the news. In-class exercises will also acquaint students with common technical concerns and journalistic issues and problems to be worked out.

5. Course Schedule

Date	Class Agenda
01/09/2021	<p>Topic: Telling stories with video.</p> <p>Description: Meeting the pre-reqs for the course. Introduction to the course – review the syllabus, go over textbook needed and other resources. Discuss main structure and goals for the class. Review equipment needed for the next class: Smartphone, DSLR, Cord to download to computer, Headphones/ear buds, (tripod, external mic if available) editing software. Equipment available to check out from the library. Discuss possible subjects for final group projects.</p> <p>Reading: Read Ch 1 <i>Telling Stories</i> & Ch 5 <i>Camera Basics</i> - Kobre/Video-journalism</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines: Due 08/09 Analyze the two following video stories (links to video can be found in NEO)</p> <p><u><i>Social Media Videos: The End of Journalism?</i></u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How much does the quest for instant gratification affect the quality of journalism? 2. Can this type of story present reliable, credible news or is it merely a quick, highly effective means of disseminating carefully crafted points of view/propaganda/sensationalism (be it political or economic) to serve certain interests? 3. Publications often point to the desire of their readers/viewers to consume shorter news stories to go along with today's faster paced lifestyle. Should news publications cater to this desire? Why/why not? <p><u><i>My life after 44 years in prison.</i></u></p> <p>In August 2014, Otis Johnson was released from prison after serving a 44-year sentence for the attempted murder of a police officer. He went to jail when he was 25 years old. By the time he came out, he was 69.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Please analyze this video short using the Kobreguide checklist (download from NEO) <p>Reminder: Bring your smartphone, DSLR, laptop and other video equipment to class EACH WEEK.</p>

08/09/2021	<p>Topic: Interviews/Exposure & Sound</p> <p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View 'How to conduct an interview' video. • Talk about Camera Exposure & Video Sound. • Choose teams/groups to work in for projects. • In class video assignment. <p>Quiz: Ch 1 & 5 Kobre/Videojournalism to be completed online in class (or in computer lab). Break into shooting groups.</p> <p>Assignment: Each group in the class will shoot a one-minute interview of another class member/someone on campus with their smartphone or DSLR and download the footage to their computer and edit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview in "silent" location • Use a tripod if available • Frame tightly • Leave the camera on auto focus and auto exposure • Download the clips to the computer • Transcribe interview • Edit in Word • Edit in software of your choice • Save the project • We will view and discuss in class. <p>Reading: Ch 6 <i>Camera Exposure and Handling</i> & Ch 8 <i>Recording Sound</i> Kobre/Videojournalism</p>
15/09/2021	<p>Topic: Finding a story to tell with video/multimedia.</p> <p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss what makes a good story and where to find to find them for your videos. • Interview assignment due: Review and discuss video assignments from last week. <p>Quiz: Ch 6 & 8 Kobre/Videojournalism to be completed online in class (or in computer lab).</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines:</p> <p>Shooting Assignment #1 - Due 22/09 - Group project - using your smartphone or DSLR, interview someone - interesting on campus or in town.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Download the clip to your computer • Type out a transcript of the whole interview (email to me or bring in copy to class next week). • Edit in Resolve - 30 sec. short edited interview. • Upload online (i.e. Google Drive, Dropbox, etc...) and send me an invite link to view in class.

22/09/2021	<p>Topic: Five shot sequence – building a story using these basic shots.</p> <p>Description: Five basic shots for a sequence, avoiding the zoom and pan, using the tripod. <i>Editing:</i> Review which software you are using, tips, help, questions. Downloading to your computer, organizing your clips into folders for easy editing, the importance of backing up your files.</p> <p>Assignment: During the second half of the class we will break into groups and shoot a short 5-shot sequence video (45-60 sec.). Edit in class, view and discuss if time allows.</p> <p>Reading: Ch 10 <i>Shooting a Sequence</i> Kobre/Videojournalism</p>
29/09/2021	<p>Topic: Successful Story Topics + Producing a story.</p> <p>Description: Successful Stories + Producing a Story. Break into working groups for final video project, discuss possible topics/story ideas. Review and discuss Shooting Assignment #1.</p> <p>Quiz: Ch 10 Kobre/Videojournalism to be completed online in class (or in computer lab)</p> <p>Reading: Ch 2 <i>Finding and Evaluating a Story</i>, Ch 3 <i>Successful story topics</i> & Ch 4.</p> <p>Take-home Quiz/Open Book: Ch 2 & 3 & 4 Kobre/Videojournalism to be completed online in class (or in computer lab) You will have until 20/10 to complete this test online.</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines:</p> <p>Shooting Assignment #2 - 17/3 Tell a story on campus (or in town) using the five shot sequence and only candid footage and natural sound. 30 to 45 sec. Use only nat sound...NO interviews.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upload online (i.e. Google Drive, Dropbox, etc...) and send me an invite link to view in class.

06/10/2021	<p>Topic: Writing your Script</p> <p>Description: We will discuss chapter 12 and how to put together a script for your video projects. Look at examples from past classes. Review Shooting Assignment #2</p> <p>Quiz: Ch 11 Kobre/Videojournalism to be completed online in class (or in computer lab)</p> <p>Reading: Ch 12 <i>Writing a Script</i> Kobre/Videojournalism.</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shooting Assignment #2 Due: Candid footage and sound story. View videos and discuss. • Shooting Assignment #3 - 24/3 - 45 sec – 1min video report shot with your smartphone or DSLR, edited with software of your choice. Include both A roll (interview) and B roll (candid footage). Use the five shot sequence and include an interview. • Upload online (i.e. Google Drive, Dropbox, etc...) and send me an invite link to view in class. <p>Reading: Ch 11 <i>Conducting an Interview</i> Kobre/Videojournalism</p>
13/10/2021	<p>Topic: Conducting an Interview. Importance of Vox pop (Man on the Street MOS) field interviews.</p> <p>Description: Conducting an interview & adding Vox Pop interviews to your story. The importance of using the native language of respondents with translated subtitles - not just English - to give a sense of place and culture. Look at some Vox Pop examples.</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shooting assignment #3 Due. View and discuss in class. Final video project research and shooting. • Shooting Assignment #4 - 31/3 - Group project. Produce a short, well edited 45 sec – 1 min Vox pop interview from the streets of Prague. • Upload online (i.e. Google Drive, Dropbox, etc...) and send me an invite link to view in class.

20/10/2021	<p>Topic: Editing the story - Final project meetings.</p> <p>Description: Critique of Final Project progress - meet with teams.</p> <p>Quiz: Ch 12 Kobre/Videojournalism to be completed online in class (or in computer lab)</p> <p>Reading: Ch 13 <i>Editing the Story</i> Kobre/Videojournalism.</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shooting Assignment #4 DUE. View and discuss. • Begin rough draft of your Final Project script.
27/10/2021	Midterm Break
03/11/2021	<p>Topic: Ethics. Story editing: Transitions – audio and video, computer-generated titles, subtitles for non-English speaking interviewees and their importance.</p> <p>Description: Class time (workshop) for final video project work/review.</p> <p>Quiz: Ch 13 <i>Editing the Story</i> Kobre/Videojournalism.</p> <p>Reading: Ch 14 <i>Ethics</i> Kobre/Videojournalism.</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines: Final video project research and shooting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Video Project Script Due
10/11/2021	<p>Topic: Rough cuts of Final Projects and Scripts due - screened. Discussion, critique. Class time for final project work/review.</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines: Final video project research and shooting.</p>
17/11/2021	No lecture: State holiday

24/11/2021	<p>Topic: Marketing your story.</p> <p>Description: Outlets to market your stories. Writing pitches to editors. Review and critique of Final Project progress. Class time for final project work/review.</p> <p>Quiz: Ch 14 Kobre/Videojournalism to be completed online in class (or in computer lab)</p> <p>Reading: Ch 16 <i>Marketing a Story</i> Kobre/Videojournalism.</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines: Final video project research and shooting.</p>
01/12/2021	<p>Topic: New Media/The Future of Visual Journalism.</p> <p>Description: Independent Journalism. Working Freelance. Review and critique of Final video project progress. Class time (workshop) for final project work/review.</p>
08/12/2021	<p>Topic: Review and critique of Final Project progress – rough/final cut.</p> <p>Description: Class time for final video project work/review. (final workshop)</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final video project research and shooting. • Final Video Rough Cut Due – view and discuss in class • FINAL VIDEO PROJECT DUE NEXT WEEK: Make sure to bring a copy of the file to class to turn in to me.
15/12/2021	<p>Final Exam: Final Video Projects Due – bring a copy of the final video file to turn in. We will view all projects in class. Students will critique each other. Class discussion of projects.</p>

6. Course Requirements and Assessment (with estimated workloads)

Assignment	Workload (average)	Weight in Final Grade	Evaluated Course Specific Learning Outcomes	Evaluated Institutional Learning Outcomes*
Attendance and Class Participation	42	20%	Actively joining in class assignments, discussion, debate and analysis, asking questions and expressing opinions about material and issues covered. Burying yourself in your laptop screen will be harmful to your grade, as will late/missing assignments.	1,2,3
Reporting	28	20%	Proper research and context is critical to good reporting, which is the basis of broadcast news worth airing. Preparation pre-production is essential.	1,2,3
Production	30	20%	Working with colleagues to distill the best from your recorded work and other materials while adding depth through augmented materials, VOs, archival or promotional material, sound and music.	2,3
Post Production	30	20%	Working with colleagues to distill the best from your recorded work and other materials while adding depth through augmented materials, VOs, archival or promotional material, sound and music.	2,3
Quizzes	20	20%	Online and must be completed on the day assigned.	1,3
TOTAL	150	100%		

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*1 = Critical Thinking; 2 = Effective Communication; 3 = Effective and Responsible Action

7. Detailed description of the assignments

Attendance and class participation:

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Attending class each week	50%
Contributing your own ideas, thoughts and questions and discussing with classmates during class	20%
Completing the in class exercises in the allotted timeframe and applying the specified techniques and instructions.	30%
	100%

Weekly quizzes:

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Ability to retain the information and techniques outlined in the specified chapters.	100%

Written assignment (Due 08/09) Analyze three video stories from using the Kobreguide checklist (Download from NEO)

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Ability to critically review the three videos and put forth a thoughtful analysis using the assigned checklist and corresponding questions as a guide.	100%

Shooting assignment #1 (Due 22/09) Group project - using your smart phone or DSLR, interview someone - interesting on campus or in town.

Assessed area	Percentage
Ability to follow instructions and apply the techniques outlined in class.	50%
Ability to turn in the project (and upload online) within the given deadline to review in class.	30%
Video and sound quality.	20%
	100%

Shooting assignment #2 (Due 06/10): Tell a story on campus (or in town) using the five shot sequence and only candid footage and natural sound. Use only nat sound...NO interviews.

Assessed area	Percentage
Ability to follow instructions and apply the techniques outlined in class.	50%
Ability to turn in the project (and upload online) within the given deadline to review in class.	30%
Video and sound quality.	20%
	100%

Shooting assignment #3 (Due 13/10): Video report (short - edited - interview) shot with your smart phone or DSLR, edited with software of your choice. Include both A roll (interview) and B roll (candid footage). Use the five shot sequence and include an interview.

Assessed area	Percentage
Ability to follow instructions and apply the techniques outlined in class.	50%
Ability to turn in the project (and upload online) within the given deadline to review in class.	30%
Video and sound quality.	20%
	100%

Shooting assignment #4 (Due 20/10): Vox pop interview on the streets of Prague or on campus.

Assessed area	Percentage
Ability to follow instructions and apply the techniques outlined in class.	50%
Ability to turn in the project (and upload online) within the given deadline to review in class.	30%
Video and sound quality.	20%
	100%

Final Video Projects – Final exam group project (Due 15/12):

Assessed area	Percentage
Ability to follow instructions and apply the techniques outlined in class.	30%
Ability to turn in the project (upload online and turn in a video file) within the given deadline to review in class.	30%
Video and sound quality.	20%
Using allotted class time efficiently to work on final project.	20%
	100%

8. General requirements

All coursework is governed by AAU's academic rules. Students are expected to be familiar with the academic rules available in the Codex and Student Handbook and to maintain the highest standards of honesty and academic integrity in their work.

Late work:

A deadline is not a goal.

Late work WILL adversely affect your final grade. Every element of journalism depends on the journalist arriving on time and producing content on deadline. (Even if you can't come to class, someone else can always uplink your project by deadline and inform the instructor.)

Missing a story critique session is the same as missing a deadline. Missing a critique session WILL adversely affect your final mark in the course.

Missed Tests:

Tests are online and must be completed in class when assigned, thus cannot be missed without grade reduction.

Electronic communication and submission

The university and instructors shall only use students' university email address for communication, with additional communication via NEO LMS or Microsoft Teams.

Students sending e-mail to an instructor shall clearly state the course code and the topic in the subject heading, for example, "COM101-1 Mid-term Exam. Question".

All electronic submissions are through NEO LMS. No substantial pieces of writing (especially take-home exams and essays) can be submitted outside of NEO LMS.

Attendance

Attendance, i.e., presence in class in real-time, is highly expected and encouraged. Students in Prague are not allowed to join classes online (just in the case of illness or similar issues exceptions are possible). Students who are absent 35 percent of classes will be failed. Students might also be marked absent if they miss a significant part of a class (by arriving late or leaving early) as specified in the syllabus.

Absence excuse and make-up options

Should a student be absent from classes for relevant reasons (illness, serious family matters), s/he can submit to the Dean of Students an Absence Excuse Request Form supplemented with documents providing reasons for the absence. These must be submitted within one week of the absence. If possible, it is recommended the instructor be informed of the absence in advance. Should a student be absent during the add/drop period due to a change in registration this will be an excused absence if s/he submits an Absence Excuse Request Form along with the finalized add/drop form.

Students whose absence has been excused by the Dean of Students are entitled to make up assignments and exams provided their nature allows. Assignments missed due to unexcused absences which cannot be made up, may result in a decreased or failing grade as specified in the syllabus.

Students are responsible for contacting their instructor within one week of the date the absence was excused to arrange for make-up options.

Late work: No late submissions will be accepted – please follow the deadlines.

Electronic devices

Electronic devices (e.g. phones, tablets, laptops) may be used only for class-related activities (taking notes, looking up related information, etc.). Any other use will result in the student being marked absent and/or being expelled from the class. No electronic devices may be used during tests or exams unless required by the exam format and the instructor.

Eating is not allowed during classes.

Cheating and disruptive behavior

If a student engages in disruptive conduct unsuitable for a classroom environment, the instructor may require the student to withdraw from the room for the duration of the class and shall report the behavior to the Dean.

Students engaging in behavior which is suggestive of cheating will, at a minimum, be warned. In the case of continued misconduct, the exam or assignment will be failed and the student will be expelled from the exam or class.

Plagiarism and Academic Tutoring Center

Plagiarism is “the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one’s own original work.” (Random House Unabridged Dictionary, 2nd Edition, Random House, New York, 1993)

Turnitin’s White Paper ‘The Plagiarism Spectrum’ (available at <http://go.turnitin.com/paper/plagiarism-spectrum>) identifies 10 types of plagiarism ordered from most to least severe:

1. CLONE: An act of submitting another’s work, word-for-word, as one’s own.
2. CTRL-C: A written piece that contains significant portions of text from a single source without alterations.
3. FIND-REPLACE: The act of changing key words and phrases but retaining the essential content of the source in a paper.
4. REMIX: An act of paraphrasing from other sources and making the content fit together seamlessly.
5. RECYCLE: The act of borrowing generously from one’s own previous work without citation; To self-plagiarize.
6. HYBRID: The act of combining perfectly cited sources with copied passages—without citation—in one paper.
7. MASHUP: A paper that represents a mix of copied material from several different sources without proper citation.
8. 404 ERROR: A written piece that includes citations to non-existent or inaccurate information about sources
9. AGGREGATOR: The “Aggregator” includes proper citation, but the paper contains almost no original work.
10. RE-TWEET: This paper includes proper citation, but relies too closely on the text’s original wording and/or structure.

At minimum, plagiarism from types 1 through 8 will result in a failing grade for the assignment and shall be reported to the Dean. The Dean may initiate a disciplinary procedure pursuant to the Academic Codex. Allegations of bought papers and intentional or consistent plagiarism always entail disciplinary hearing and may result in expulsion from AAU.

If unsure about technical aspects of writing, students are encouraged to consult with the tutors of the AAU Academic Tutoring Center. For more information and/or to book a tutor, please contact the ATC at: <http://atc.simplybook.me/sheduler/manage/event/1/>.

Course accessibility and inclusion

Students with disabilities are asked to contact the Dean of Students as soon as possible to discuss reasonable accommodations. Academic accommodations are not retroactive. Students who will be absent from course activities due to religious holidays may seek reasonable accommodations by contacting the Dean of Students in writing within the first two weeks of the term. All requests must include specific dates for which the student requests accommodations.

9. Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage*	Description
A	95–100	Excellent performance. The student has shown originality and displayed an exceptional grasp of the material and a deep analytical understanding of the subject.
A–	90–94	
B+	87–89	Good performance. The student has mastered the material, understands the subject well and has shown some originality of thought and/or considerable effort.
B	83–86	
B–	80–82	
C+	77–79	Fair performance. The student has acquired an acceptable understanding of the material and essential subject matter of the course, but has not succeeded in translating this understanding into consistently creative or original work.
C	73–76	
C–	70–72	
D+	65–69	Poor. The student has shown some understanding of the material and subject matter covered during the course. The student’s work, however, has not shown enough effort or understanding to allow for a passing grade in School Required Courses. It does qualify as a passing mark for the General College Courses and Electives.
D	60–64	
F	0–59	Fail. The student has not succeeded in mastering the subject matter covered in the course.

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* Decimals should be rounded to the nearest whole number.

Prepared by: Björn Steinz (based on the previous structure by James Fassinger)

Date: August 2021

Approved by: Ted Turnau

Date: Aug. 31st, 2021