

**Convergence Journalism – JOU 4122**  
**Spring Semester 2009**  
<http://grove.ufl.edu/~jou4122>

**Mrs. Jennifer Cox**

G-035 Weimer Hall

352-846-1060 (office)

Office hours: Monday, 7<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> & Thursday, 6<sup>th</sup>

[jencox416@ufl.edu](mailto:jencox416@ufl.edu)

239-253-7013 (cell)

**Class times**

**Lecture:** Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> period; Weimer 1068 (20 total students)

**Lab:** Thursday, 3-5 periods; Weimer 2050

**Required text and equipment**

- Quinn, S., & Filak, V.F. (2005). *Convergent journalism: An introduction*. Burlington, MA: Elsevier.
- *AP Style Book*
- *When Words Collide*
- Digital video camera and USB cord (10 are available for loan at Library West; students should pair-up to check them out)
- Digital camera (doesn't need to be fancy)
- Audio recorder (most cost about \$25-\$30)
- USB key (most cost between \$10 and \$15)

**Course goals**

Print journalism is changing shape rapidly. Print reporters can no longer rely solely on strong writing skills to tell stories; now, they must be able to use different multimedia platforms to convey their messages. This course is designed to prepare students for these challenges by familiarizing them with practices common in convergence journalism. Students should leave the course with a working knowledge of convergence journalism techniques, including shooting and editing Web video, writing for the Web, digital photography, blogging, and posting items to the Web. Students should produce packages fit for their professional portfolios.

**Prerequisites**

Strong writing skills must be thoroughly developed before multimedia skills can be used properly. Therefore, students must have completed both MMC 2100 – Writing for Mass Communication and JOU 3101 – Reporting with a “C” or higher prior to this course.

**Attendance**

Due to the pacing of this class, in addition to the abundance of material that will be covered, students must attend both lecture and lab. If a student needs to miss lab, students must seek the instructor's permission for an excused absence PRIOR to the start of class. Excused absences include family or personal emergencies, professional conferences, illnesses, military service, or jury duty. Attendance will be taken at the start of each lab and, occasionally, during lecture. **Any unexcused absence will result in the lowering of the student's final grade by half a letter grade. Quizzes and assignments that are missed during an unexcused absence cannot be made up.**

### **Classroom procedures**

- Please turn off all cell phones and pagers.
- No food or drinks are allowed in the computer labs. Drinks with caps are permitted in the lecture hall.
- Laptop use – students will be provided computers in lab; laptops are permitted for note taking during lecture, however, students who are off-task will be asked to leave the class.

### **Course requirements**

- Students should check their Gator e-mail accounts several times each week.
- Students should check the course Web site regularly for updates and information.
- Students are responsible for checking out video and audio equipment from and returning items to Library West. Students are expected to take appropriate care of the loaned equipment.

### **Students with special needs**

Any student who requires special assistance with any aspect of this class should contact the **Office of Student Services at 352-392-1261**. Students with special needs should notify the instructor immediately and are responsible for making sure the instructor is informed of any provisions needed. Students who notify the instructor of a special need after an assignment or quiz cannot make up the assignment or retake the quiz.

### **Academic honesty**

Students are expected to do their own work, inside and outside of the classroom. Students are expected to work independently, unless directed otherwise, and they may not claim anyone else's work as their own. Students are also expected to do their own work on in-class assignments or quizzes. Students who are caught cheating or using the work of others will receive a zero on the assignment or quiz.

### **Grading**

Students will be evaluated according to the University of Florida grading scale:

A = 100-90	C+ = 79-77	D = 60-66
B+ = 89-87	C = 76-70	E = 59 and below
B = 86-80	D+ = 69-67	

- Late assignments will receive a letter grade reduction for each day past the due date.
- Students should keep track of their own grades and should keep all assignments throughout the semester.
- Scores of .5 or higher will be rounded up to the next whole number.

### **eLearning**

Students' grades, along with class announcements, will be posted to the college eLearning Web site. The site login is:

<https://elearning.courses.ufl.edu/webct/entryPageIns.dowebct>. Students should check the site for class announcements prior to each class meeting.

**Assignments:**

**Paperless:**

This class will reflect the on-going media trend of “going paperless.” Unless otherwise specified, all assignments must be turned in via e-mail, eLearning or to the class server. Students at this level of study are expected to produce quality journalistic work, which includes accuracy. This is essential for stories being posted to the Web for the world to see.

**Quizzes:**

**20 percent**

Three quizzes will be given during lecture throughout the semester. These quizzes will test students’ knowledge gathered from the text readings and lecture discussions. Students with unexcused absences cannot make up quizzes. Quiz scores will be averaged together and will represent 20 percent of the student’s final grade.

**Web postings:**

**15 percent (total)**

Students will be given three chances to post Web hits to the class server:

- (5 percent) Students will write a Web hit based on information from a fact sheet.
- (5 percent) Students will write a Web hit based on a televised press conference viewed during lab.
- (5 percent) Students will write a Web hit based on an in-class, live interview.

Students will also write a short news story to accompany each Web hit. The print stories should reflect information updates and details not included in the Web hit.

**Blogging:**

**15 percent**

Students will be expected to read online newspapers throughout the semester. Students will create a blog and must post a minimum of 15 blogs (about 3-4 journalistic paragraphs each) discussing articles they read. Students should link to the story they are discussing in each blog entry. Students must also post a minimum of five photographs (taken by the student) to the blog. Students will also be asked to blog about other topics throughout the semester, which will be assigned.

**Sound slides:**

**15 percent**

Students will pick a topic or event to report on. They will create an audio interview, which will be edited by the students. They will then create a slide show of their own digital photos about the topic. Students will burn their slide shows onto a CD to be turned in to the instructor.

**Group Web video:**

**10 percent**

Students will each have the opportunity to shoot a short video on an assigned topic. Students will then create a 1-2-minute video on the topic. Finally, students will upload their videos to the class server.

**Final project: Web video:**

**25 percent**

Students will pick their own topic to report on. They will shoot video interviews and background footage to edit into a 4-5-minute video suitable for a newspaper Web site. Students will present their videos to the class, along with a short PowerPoint presentation detailing the student’s reporting process. Student will then upload their videos to the class server.

Spring 2009

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> period; Thursday 3-5 periods

<b>Week 1</b> <b>T</b> <b>1/6</b>	<b>Topic:</b> Course introduction and expectations <b>*Bring a digital photo of yourself to lab Thursday</b>
<b>R</b> <b>1/8</b>	<b>Topic:</b> Familiarizing students with computer software <b>Activity:</b> Write a Web profile with picture
<b>Week 2</b> <b>T</b> <b>1/13</b>	<b>Topic:</b> What is convergence? <b>DUE:</b> Read Chapter 1 (Quinn & Filak)
<b>R</b> <b>1/15</b>	<b>Topic:</b> Blogging <b>Activity:</b> Set up blogs <b>DUE:</b> Read pp. 75-77, "Blogs: Do-It-Yourself Journalism"
<b>Week 3</b> <b>T</b> <b>1/20</b>	<b>Topic:</b> Writing for the Web <b>DUE:</b> Read Chapter 5 (Quinn & Filak)
<b>R</b> <b>1/22</b>	<b>Activity:</b> Web hit and print story from fact sheet; post to class server
<b>Week 4</b> <b>T</b> <b>1/27</b>	<b>Topic:</b> Transforming good writing into good multimedia <b>DUE:</b> Read Chapter 3 (Quinn & Filak)
<b>R</b> <b>1/29</b>	<b>Activity:</b> Web hit and print story from video news conference; post to class server
<b>Week 5</b> <b>T</b> <b>2/3</b>	<b>QUIZ 1 – Bring a #2 pencil</b> <b>Discussion:</b> Selecting a topic for sound slides activity & budget lines

<b>R</b> <b>2/5</b>	<b>Activity:</b> Web hit and print story from in-class interview; post to class server
<b>Week 6</b> <b>T</b> <b>2/10</b>	<b>Topic:</b> Digital still photography <b>DUE:</b> Read Chapter 7 (Quinn & Filak) <b>* Students must e-mail instructor a budget line for their sound slide project prior to class beginning</b>
<b>R</b> <b>2/12</b>	<b>Activity:</b> Photography shooting workshop with guest speaker Deborah Silver of Scripps Treasure Coast Newspapers; familiarizing with camera functions <b>* Students should bring their digital cameras to class</b>
<b>Week 7</b> <b>T</b> <b>2/17</b>	<b>Topic:</b> Multimedia skills and packaging <b>DUE:</b> Read Chapter 10 (Quinn & Filak)
<b>R</b> <b>2/19</b>	<b>Activity:</b> Editing and optimizing photos & taking/editing audio <b>DUE:</b> 30-40 photos for editing <b>* Informal evaluations and blogging memos</b>
<b>Week 8</b> <b>T</b> <b>2/24</b>	<b>Topic:</b> Sound slides: Appropriate uses <b>Guest speaker:</b> Wasim Ahmad, Naples Daily News
<b>R</b> <b>2/26</b>	<b>Activity:</b> Editing audio and creating sound slides <b>DUE:</b> Three recorded interviews to edit
<b>Week 9</b> <b>T</b> <b>3/3</b>	<b>QUIZ 2 – Bring a #2 pencil</b> <b>Discussion:</b> Selecting a topic for video final project
<b>R</b> <b>3/5</b>	<b>Activity:</b> Present sound slides and burn them to CDs
<b>3/9- 3/13</b>	<b>No class – Spring Break</b>

<b>Week 10</b>  <b>T</b> <b>3/17</b>	<b>Topic:</b> Videography <b>Guest speaker:</b> Jim Alred, Rome News-Tribune <b>DUE:</b> Read Chapter 8 (Quinn & Filak) * Students must e-mail instructor a budget line for their final video project prior to class beginning
<b>R</b> <b>3/19</b>	<b>Activity:</b> Class video project & uploading
<b>Week 11</b>  <b>T</b> <b>3/24</b>	<b>Topic:</b> Video editing and posting workshop <b>DUE:</b> Read Chapter 9 (Quinn & Filak)
<b>R</b> <b>3/26</b>	<b>Activity:</b> Edit class video and post it to class server
<b>Week 12</b>  <b>T</b> <b>3/31</b>	<b>Outside assignment:</b> Work on shooting video for your final project
<b>R</b> <b>4/2</b>	<b>Activity:</b> Video editing
<b>Week 13</b>  <b>T</b> <b>4/7</b>	<b>Topic:</b> The future of convergence <b>DUE:</b> Read Chapters 2 & 12
<b>R</b> <b>4/9</b>	<b>Activity:</b> Video editing & burning to DVDs
<b>Week 14</b>  <b>T</b> <b>4/14</b>	<b>QUIZ 3 – Bring a #2 pencil</b> <b>DUE:</b> Blog entries must be completed by 5 p.m.
<b>R</b> <b>4/16</b>	<b>Final project presentations</b>

<b>Week 15</b>	
<b>T</b> <b>4/21</b>	<b>Final project presentations</b>
<b>R</b> <b>4/23</b>	<b>No class -- Reading Day</b>