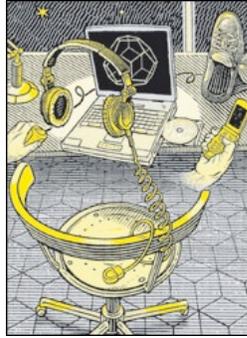


Digital Storytelling COM 329

Syllabus | Spring 2015

MWF 11-11:50 a.m.
LAU 111 & LAU 113
and other places



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Berry catalog course description

Introduction to digital media and strategies for effective communication through them. Students will analyze the technical and rhetorical possibilities of digital environments, including interactivity, hyperlinking, spatial orientation and non-linear storytelling. PR: COM 301.

Introduction

The point-of-view taken in this course is that we all are content creators, writers and editors working as part of a storytelling team. The course's perspective or approach is journalistic, seeing convergence and multimedia as forms of journalism first and foremost. This course does not assume the point-of-view of development team members in graphic design, site architecture, code writing or marketing, though we strive for knowledge in and sensitivity to those skill sets.

Throughout history humans have taught, learned, entertained and communicated with stories, and this has held constant across media. Stories transmit information and transfer experience. This course, therefore, emphasizes digital storytelling and upholds the value of narrative. This emphasis values a journalistic approach to information gathering, writing, editing and publishing online and for mobile. Journalism, in other words, serves the journalist and non-journalist alike, especially online, where the democracy of production and publishing are even threatening the relevance of such distinctions.

Architecturally, the course is divided into three sections: Foundations, a section devoted the fundamentals of writing well and the elements of journalism; Practice, a section that breaks down the individual skill sets, questions and considerations important when planning and creating content for digital environments and online publications; and Contexts, a section that looks at specific contexts and media in which we deliver our stories and continue the conversations they start.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, my goal is for students to:

- Understand how digital, networked media are changing the media industries, both in the production and distribution of content.

- Better understand the social, psychological and professional impact of technological trends and developments in digital environments.
- Be comfortable working in and with digital media.
- Know how to gather, select, organize and evaluate information and present it in digital formats.
- Know how to purposefully blend text, graphical content, multimedia and hypertextual, interactive elements.

II. Stuff you need to know

Instructor: Dr. Brian Carroll, Laughlin 100

Office phone: 706.368.6944 (anytime)

E-mail: bc@berry.edu OR bc@unc.edu

Home page: <http://www.cubanxgiants.com>

Course page: <http://www.cubanxgiants.com/berry/329>

Office hours: MWF: 1-4pm; T: 11-noon | by appointment | walk-ins are welcome

III. What you will need (required)

- *Writing & Editing for Digital Media*, by Brian Carroll (London: Routledge, 2014)
- *Elements of Journalism*, Rosenstiel and Kovach (Three Rivers Press)

IV. What you may want (not required, but recommended)

- Associated Press Stylebook
- Steve Krug's *Don't Make Me Think: A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability*, from New Riders Publishing
- Patrick Lynch's and Sarah Horton's *Web Style Guide 3* from Yale University Press. I refer to it extensively, and I point you to the guide's website quite a bit. The entire text is available online, but the bound volume is a worthwhile investment.

V. Class format

Discussion and participation are key components of this seminar-style course. Hands-on application is an emphasis. We will learn how to create content specifically for presentation in digital environments and to publish that content to the web and for mobile.

VI. Policies

- **Attendance:** Attendance is a part of your grade. Be here every day on time, just as you would for a job or even for a haircut. Everyone gets one unexcused absence, possibly two >> no questions asked. Stuff happens. After that, unexcused absences will result in deductions from the "professionalism and participation" portion of your grade -- one point for each unexcused absence or late arrival. What is excused is at the instructor's discretion, so you are best served by discussing situations and extraordinary circumstances prior to class whenever possible.
- **Distractions:** This instructor is easily distracted. Ringing or vibrating mobile phones, therefore, will be lobbed out of the classroom window and run over with a truck. Chatter during lecture will result in "professionalism and

participation" point deductions, as will texting or unauthorized device use during lecture or topic presentations, particularly after warnings have been issued. If you have to arrive late or leave early, clear it with the instructor beforehand whenever possible.

- **Focus:** During class and lab sessions, no device use or non-class-purpose computer use. These activities prevent you from getting the information you need, and they are distracting to your classmates and to me.
- **Preparation:** Complete the assignments and be ready to tackle the activities of the day. Be ready to discuss and debate ideas and approaches.

VII. How you will be graded

Collaborative storytelling project	65%
Daily activities	15%
Discussion	10%
Professionalism & participation	10%
	<hr/> 100%

To compute your final grade, add up your point totals, apply the appropriate percentages, then refer to the Berry College Communication Department grading system, summarized here:

A = 93-100	A-= 90-92	B+=88-89	B=83-87
B- = 80-82	C+= 78-79	C=73-77	C-=70-72
D+= 60-69	F=59 and below		

Definitions of the grades can be found in the Berry College Catalog. “A” students will demonstrate an outstanding mastery of course material and will perform **far above** that required for credit in the course and **far above** that usually seen in the course. The “A” grade should be awarded sparingly and should identify student performance that is relatively unusual in the course.

VIII. Viking Honor Code

It is not just policy. It is foundational to the academic environment we enjoy and in which scholarship thrives. It is in force in this classroom and during all lab sessions. For the complete Viking Code, please consult the student handbook. In short, each student is “expected to recognize constituted authority, to abide by the ordinary rules of good conduct, to be truthful, to respect the rights of others.” The College’s mission, in part, commits to a community of integrity and justice. During an era when ethics are sometimes suspect, there seems no higher goal toward which students ought to strive than that of personal honor.

IX. Assignments

There are no exams in this course, although students may be quizzed from time to time. Deadline pressure is an important dimension to the rigor of the course. Meet the deadline or take a penalty.

- A. Weekly projects: A detailed assignment booklet will be given to you, with elaborate instructions, deadlines, word count targets, and models of superior work from previous iterations of the course.
- B. Discussion: We will discuss quite a bit, so this portion of your grade reflects your preparedness for the day's discussion and participation in discussion.
- C. Note that professionalism is a significant dimension to each grade, not merely a token 5% or so. Attendance, participation and overall professionalism are aspects of this 10%. Please see the policies section for details on how points are won and lost.
- D. Final reporting project. Details to come.

Assignment rules

While working in class, these parameters apply:

- **In-class/in-lab assignments:** You may use any and all reliable references, including stylebooks, dictionaries and online sources. Be careful with information found on the Web. When in doubt, cross-check and verify.
- **Collaboration:** I support collaboration, but any graded work must be the student's own. In some cases, I will encourage feedback sought from one another. For other assignments, I may require solitary work. Generally, students should operate under the assumption that they are accountable for their own work. *When in doubt, ask.*

Deadlines

- When an **in-class/in-lab assignment** is due, it is due. This reflects the reality of many mass communication professions and work environments. Late in-class assignments will not be accepted unless permission for extension had been granted prior to deadline. Turn in whatever has been done by deadline.
- If we have **out-of-class assignments**, they will be accepted for up to one week after deadline, but late assignments will be penalized. Remember, penalized work is not necessarily the same as 0 (zero) points. Complete out-of-class assignments and learn from them, even if they are turned in late. Partial credit can be earned. After an assignment is more than a week late, however, that work is not eligible for points.
- **Please note:** If a student misses a class when an assignment is due and that student has a legitimate excuse, I will accept the late assignment without penalty at my discretion. I define what constitutes a legitimate excuse and reserve the right not to grant full credit for assignments turned in under these circumstances. The same holds true for exams.

X. Students with special needs

If you have special needs of any kind, including learning disabilities, please let me know. Come discuss it with me. I want to make sure on the front end that we prevent any problems associated with the course. From Martha Van Cise, director of the Academic Support Center: *"Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodation in this course are encouraged to contact the Academic Support*

Center in Krannert Room 301 as soon as possible to ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.”

Academic integrity: Because academic integrity is the foundation of college life, academic dishonesty will result in automatic failure on the assignment in question. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following: cheating, unauthorized collaboration, plagiarism, fabrication, submitting the same work in multiple courses, and aiding and abetting. For definitions of these terms, please consult the instructor.

Finally, I believe we are here for a good time, not a long time, so let's have some fun!

