

JO303 VISUAL JOURNALISM

Teaching guide

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[Edit](#)

Class:	Tuesday	8-10:45am	room 214
Office hours:	Monday	5:15 - 7:15pm	room B33
	Wednesday	3- 5pm	room B33

course description

JO303 is a visual reporting class for all journalism students at Boston University.

Visual journalists need to think of the story's visual component first. While it is critical for words to contextualize what the audience sees, reporting with photos or video must be visually

compelling and artfully done to convey the story's message. Audio interviews, natural sound, captions and other text are important to provide context and meaning to your story, and all story components must follow the rules of journalism to be truthful, balanced, timely, and focused.

This is an introductory photojournalism and news videography course, where students learn to combine pictures and words to tell important community stories. Class workshops will provide training for students to learn basic competencies to industry standard in: shooting and editing photos and video, conducting an interview with an audio recorder and on-camera, producing stories and publishing to a blog. This class is core for those who have a passion for storytelling and a curiosity to find and dig deep into important community stories.

Technique for shooting stills and video, and recording audio, will be reviewed during class lecture and practiced as constructed situations during class workshops. Lab time will be provided during some classes to finish editing and publish work.

Students will also cover two stories and a final project during the semester. The course has a deliberate progression to build skill sets, and teamwork is a key feature of the course. Students will choose a partner during the first class to work with throughout the semester. Your partner will be a valuable asset to help with classroom exercises, provide feedback of your work, to help you with a second set of hands with equipment and to help keep you safe while working in the community.

learning outcomes

- be able to work successfully in advanced journalism courses and be able to work in a small team
- operate a DSLR camera to shoot stills and video
- operate an audio recorder to capture high-quality interviews and natural sound
- create and maintain an asset management system
- possess high competency to edit photos, video and audio
- to choose best file format to shoot, edit and export photos, video and audio
- shoot and edit a visual story
- understand visual aesthetics of composition, color, contrast, saturation and focus
- understand how to shoot and edit strong storytelling b-roll
- capture wide, medium and tight shots and edit as logical sequence
- connect with outside communities
- understand who your blog audience is – what's your beat?
- understand story arc and construction
- how to go deep with story

- capture important moments – action and reaction shots
- understand industry standards of ethics, truthfulness, fairness, and balance
- understand first amendment and copyright
- understand the importance of light and moment
- understand the 180 degree rule

Week-to-week

WEEK ONE – 1/23

introduction

meet + greet

- students discuss their background and personal class goals
- pick class partner and exchange contact info

review

- syllabus + course requirements + required reading
 - exercises, assignments, final project, and rubrics

- always look ahead to know which **gear you need for class**
- applications, gear and batteries
- deadlines, attendance, class policies and ethics
- asset management system
- how to use **the reservation system** to check out gear
- learn about the **exposure triangle**
- color temperature and white balance

homework

MediaStorm Field Guide – Chap. 1 + 8

DSLR Camera set-up + exposure

Presentation on Canon T2i camera settings.

- select file format as raw or NEF file (depending on camera model)
- set color space to RGB and picture style to neutral or standard
- adjust your camera's diopter to customize focus (next to the viewfinder)
- format your media card
- set your camera to M (manual) and adjust exposure using light meter and histogram
- adjust your aperture, shutter speed and ISO – understand

exposure triangle, set white balance

Requirements: external Apple compatible USB3 hard drive and two SD cards, one fast (95 mbs and up) of 16 or 32 Gig for camera and one slow card of 4 or 8 gig for audio recorder are required for class next week. Please plan ahead, to ensure your hard drive will be delivered on time so you will be prepared for class.

WEEK TWO – 1/30

SHOOTING WITH A DSLR

learn to edit in Lightroom

download photos and use an asset management system

review (50 mins.)

- create an **asset management system**
- review **Lightroom handout**
- make sure hard drive is formatted to 'Apple Journaled'
- camera set-up and manual exposure
- **exposure triangle**
- asset management and pointer files
- writing captions – think 5 W's

shooting workshop (one hour)

competency #1 – **focus and exposure**
(PW: 305) photograph your partner:

photograph your partner:

- outside in the shade
- in direct sun
- inside COM
- use plain backgrounds and shoot horizontals
- use rule of thirds for composition

Lightroom editing workshop (one hour)

deliverables due today

students must bring required USB3 external hard drive, sd card and camera to class

homework

- get a **Wordpress blog**/URL and set it up, i.e. wordpress.com/pasmith
- reshoot for competency #1 on focus + exposure if needed
- post three captioned pictures of your partner to blog by end of next class.

- Use categories and tags! Name post category 'competency.'
- review [Wordpress tutorials](#)
- **MediaStorm Field Guide** – Chap . 7

WEEK THREE – 2/6

more DSLR photography and setting up your blog

review

set up your blog and how to:

- basic formatting
- how to post a photo or video
- write headline
- use tags and categories
- edit photo for banner, add tagline
- add page for 'about me' , include a headshot
- write an extended caption

shooting workshop

competency #2 – control focus and freeze action

depth-of-field

(PW: 305)

[b+w examples](#)

[color examples](#)

[handout](#)

photograph two environmental portraits of your partner:

- find good lighting and good background
- put subject 6-8 feet from your camera
- shoot with a 50mm focal length
- use rule of thirds
- Shoot two identical photos with your (a) aperture wide open and (b)shoot second picture with aperture set to f16.
- Use your light meter and histogram to achieve proper exposure.
- Shoot horizontals

action shots

(PW: 305)

[b+w examples](#)

[handout](#)

shoot action shots of your partner in color:

- walking down interior stairs
- running down exterior stairs
- shoot horizontals (for all assignments)
- frame head to toe or from waist up

deliverables due today

competency #1 on focus + exposure

homework

- bring four double A batteries, hotshoe flash + camera gear to class next week (reserve now!)
- reshoot competency #2 if needed. Photos must be well exposed sharp and have proper white balance!
- prepare pitch for assignment 1 – audio-slideshow on a shop owner, a worker or athlete, with extended caption.
- MediaStorm Field Guide – Chap. 5

Competency #2 deliverables: Post four pictures total, two depth-of-field shots (one wide open aperture, one with aperture closed to small opening) and two action shots ascending or descending stairs (one inside, one outside). Due at the end of class next week. Name post category 'competency.' Please shoot color, use

proper white balance. Pictures must be sharp and well exposed!

WEEK FOUR – 2/13

DSLR photography – understanding light

review

lighting (45 minutes)

shooting with flash

(PW: 305)

b+w examples

handout

- using flash in TTL or manual mode and using different power settings
- silhouette technique
- discuss white balance

shooting workshop (45 minutes)

competency #3: lighting with flash and shooting a silhouette
set camera to sync speed and shoot:

- a bounce portrait of your partner inside the COM building
- go outside to shoot a portrait with fill flash

- use environmental backgrounds to give photo a sense of place.

shoot silhouettes

(PW 305)

b+w examples

handout

- of a person, place or thing

Lab time to edit, deliver and post competency #2 **(45 minutes)**

Q+A period to introduce Izzy and general questions **(30 minutes)**

deliverables due today

competency #2: depth-of-field and stop action

homework

reshoot competency #3 if needed. Photos must be sharp, well toned and have proper white balance.

prepare pitch for assignment 1, audio-slideshow of shop owner, worker or athlete

review Izzy, chapters 3-6

WEEK FIVE – 2/20

All about audio: technical, mic'ing and interview skills

pitch assignment #1, audio-slideshow of shop-owner, worker

or athlete

review

- interview technique
 - research subject and story to formulate questions
 - listen to answers, ensure soundbites are clear and succinct
 - ask follow-up questions to go for deeper meaning
 - start with general questions before focusing on specifics
 - ask open ended questions
- audio recording cheat sheet
- Tascam recorder settings
- understanding file format
- mic placement
- controlling gain
- using headphones (always)
- natural sound and room noise
- Santa Frank by Jackie Ricciardi (pw515)
- One In 8 Million, The Regular

workshop

competency #4 – interview and audio recording technique

- interview partner about their commute to COM and final leg of trip entering the building and heading to class.
- review [asset management system](#) for video editing
- intro to FCPX – [handout](#)
- cut audio interview to 20-second length, use transcript
- this interview will be combined later with b-roll shot for competency #5

deliverables due today

competency #3 – flash and silhouettes, two flash pictures (one bounce flash + one fill flash) and two silhouettes of your choice. Use category ‘competency’ when publishing to your blog.

homework

MediaStorm Field Guide – Chap. 3+5

- begin assignment #1 – interview needed for class next week
- re-record interview of partner’s commute if needed
- watch chapters 3-9 at [lizzy](#)

WEEK SIX – 2/27

EDITING AUDIO

using asset management systems, adding still images to audio

finding community stories

discuss assignments and final project

review

- 20 second edited audio clip of your partner explaining commute to school
- Edit assignment one
 - create paper edit with transcript
 - how to import audio clips
 - set in/out points
 - create a radio edit in the timeline
 - sequencing, editing and exporting images from Lightroom
 - adding still images to audio

deliverables due today

competency #4 – edited audio interview, please deliver as mp3 file by email, with subject: competency #4

homework

rough draft of assignment #1
review [lizzy](#), chapters 9-15

NO CLASS MARCH 6 – HAVE A GREAT SPRING BREAK! WEEK SEVEN – 3/13

b-roll, shooting video with a DSLR

how to shoot [video with a DSLR](#)

review

rough draft of assignment #1
interview as primary story + b-roll

- the importance of strong story-telling b-roll
- how to create a paper edit with interview transcript, add timecode reference
- understanding the 180-degree rule
- how to shoot and edit a sequence
- record 20 seconds ambient/room tone before AND after

interview

- how to find a story in your community
- **Bobby the Pig** by Scott Eisen (PW: 515)
- **The Greek Billionaire** by Justin Saglio (PW: 515)

shooting + editing workshop

competency #5, b-roll

- shoot, edit and publish
- shoot video hand held and on tripod using a DSLR – *tripods can't be set up in hallways or stairwell*
- shoot a sequence to edit five clips of your partner entering the COM building, ascending stairs and entering the classroom. Shoot plenty to have five great clips to sequence.

deliverables due today

rough draft of assignment #1 – publish to blog (use 'draft' for category) review in class

homework

review **lizzy**, chapters 16-26

finish assignment #1 – audio slideshow profile

re-shoot competency #5 if needed

prepare pitch for assignment 2 – cover a community issue using DSLR + Tascam. Be prepared to defend story idea, what's new

and timely about story? What is the reporter's interest? What is community interest? How will you gain access? Who are the characters in your story?

WEEK EIGHT – 3/20

EDITING VIDEO, USE ASSET MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR

VIDEO ASSETS

pitch assignment #2: Community story

review

- download video into your project folder
- import (assets) media into your editing program
- use paper edit as guide to sequence interview
- add 'in' and 'out' points to your clips
- cut on the action
- add clips to your timeline
- export master
- export online version
- upload to Vimeo or You Tube,
 - add meta data, set permissions, copy html code

- paste code on new blog post
- use 'class exercise' for category on blog post

exercise: edit your five-clip sequence from last week together with your audio edit from week five to create a 20 second movie of your partner's arrival to COM.

deliverables due today

assignment #1: audio slideshow of shop owner, athlete or worker
– publish to blog and class folder

homework

complete competency #5
review [lizzy](#), chapters 27-36

WEEK NINE – 3/27

more video editing

review

- how to cover an event
 - [election event](#) by Ann Singer (pw515)
- how to cover a community issue

- **Bookshop Never Dies** by Xinyi Ye (pw515)

- develop sources and gain access
- shoot strong story telling b-roll
- shoot wide, medium and tight
- shoot as sequence when possible
- look for a scene setter to show location
- look for detail shots
- look for important moments – action and reaction shots

additional video editing technique:

- adjust color, contrast and saturation
- add transitions
- add credits and titles
- adjust sound levels + audio fades

deliverables due today

competencies #4 and #5 combined. Deliver your edited 20 second movie to your blog. Also, upload movie to class folder. Use category 'competency' when posting to your blog.

homework

MediaStorm Field Guide – Chap. 4

rough draft of assignment 2

prepare pitch to expand story 1 or 2 for final project

WEEK TEN 4/3

guest speaker on connecting with community and finding a story

pitch ideas to expand assignment 2 for final project, or a new idea if assignment 2 is not going well

speakers list includes, WBUR's Sharon Brody, Investigative journalist Maggie Mulvihill, Boston Herald photo journalist, Angela Rowlings, documentary photographer Stella Johnson

review

- how to connect with your community
- finding a story – use your connections with the community
- review student work on community reporting
- review One-in-Eight-Million story
- review lens blog video
- [The Hurdy-Gurdy Couple](#) pw515

more video editing

- add transitions, audio fades
- lower thirds

- title and credits
- final adjustment to color and sound levels (-12 to -6 db)
- export master
- compressing master
- upload to class site
- upload to Vimeo or You Tube
- post to blog

deliverables due today

rough draft assignment 2 – community issue, publish to blog (use 'draft' for category) review in class

homework

MediaStorm Field Guide – Chap. 2

assignment 2 – community issue, publish to blog and class folder

WEEK ELEVEN – 4/10

discuss story construction

review

- storytelling technique
 - **Skippy's Saturday** by Ann Singer (pw: 515)
 - **The Bike Messenger** by Justin Saglio (pw: 537)
 - **The Time Traveling Couple** by Dingfang Zhou (pw: 515)
 - **The Greek Billionaire** by Justin Saglio (pw: 537) – this is an example with high production value where the student spent at least a full day working with his subject.
 - discuss media for final project
 - how to dive a little deeper into your final project
 - Finish radio edit.
 - Assess 'radio' edit to determine what non-essential clips can be trimmed or deleted. Okay if 'radio' edit length exceeds 3-5 minute limit. Movie will be tightened during rough draft.
 - Organize and review b-roll clips to determine how to cover up jump cuts and to strengthen visual story
- radio edit of final project**
- review**
- progress on final project
- transcribe interview (Quicktime 7 at half speed)
 - highlight strong soundbites (in google docs)
 - indicate timecode on transcription to help locate

clip

- copy/paste highlighted text (with approximate timecode) into separate doc
 - arrange the text sequence for good story flow
 - look for good story intro
 - introduce + develop character
 - reveal what story is really about
 - define conflict, raise questions
 - finish with story resolution
 - import assets into editing software
 - select clips using transcript as guide – maintain sequence
 - add ‘in’ + ‘out’ points to clips to match transcript
 - drop edited clips into timeline
 - refine edit with trim tool
 - do not worry about jump cuts – you will cover them next week with b-roll
- **homework – need for next class**

 - **deliverables due today**

assignment 2 – community issue

homework
final project

NO CLASS 4/17 DUE TO PATRIOTS' DAY WEEK TWELVE – 4/24

editing workshop

review

- editing workshop on rough draft
- tighten edits to focus on story
- add b-roll
- add 'nat' sound
- adjust color, adjust sound
- add transitions, audio fades
- lower thirds

- title and credits
- double check color and sound levels (-12 to -6 db)
- export master
- compress master
- upload to class site
- upload to Vimeo or You Tube
- post to blog

deliverables due today

rough draft of final project, publish to blog (use 'draft' for category)
review in class

homework

finish final project

WEEK THIRTEEN – 5/1

**review final movie and blog
deliverables due today**

final project! publish to blog and class folder!

fin!

REQUIRED READING

Students in JO303 are required to read the NYTimes, including the Lens Blog, 30-60 minutes a day. Current news stories will be an important part of class discussion.

MediaStorm Field Guide

to order

JO 303 DEADLINES, DELIVERABLES AND WEIGHTS

Show 10142550100 entries

Search:

week		concept	weight	learning progression
week 3	competency #1	focus and exposure	5%	photo skills
week 4	competency #2	depth-of-field and stop action	5%	photo skills
week 5	competency #3	flash and silhouette	5%	photo skills

we ek 6	competency #4	audio	5%	interview skills
we ek 7	rough draft assignment #1		-2% if not complete d	
we ek 8	assignment 1	audio slideshow of shop owner, athlete or worker	10%	reporting with sound + pictures
we ek 9	competency #5 (combined with #4)	b-roll	5%	visual reporting
we ek 10	rough draft assignment 2	part one community issue	-2% if not complete d	
we ek 11	assignment 2	part one community issue	10%	video shooting, editing + story producing
we ek 13	rough draft final project	in-depth multimedia project	-4% if not complete d	
we ek 14	final project	in-depth multimedia project	40%	multimedia - adding depth and layers to story
		blog	10%	publishing
		participation	5%	engagement
Edit				
		total	100%	

Showing 1 to 13 of 13 entries

PreviousNext

WEIGHT SUMMARIES

Edit

competencies	25%
assignments	20%
final project	40%
blog	10%
participation	5%

GRADING RUBRIC

Each assignment will be graded on the following:

- **Technical (40%):** Photos and video must be of high visual quality – they must be sharp, well-edited and have proper white balance. Audio should be clear and easy to understand. Text (titles, credits, lower thirds) must be complete and accurate. Use transitions to show the passage of time. Use proper compression for smooth play.
- **Story telling (40%):** Use interesting original reporting that is factual and accurate with strong b-roll and important decisive moments that define the story. Proper access is critical as is sufficiently in-depth coverage. Your story needs to have a strong arc, be well-balanced, have multiple reliable sources

and good use of text. Characters should be well developed.

- **Aesthetics (20%):** Composition using the rule of thirds is critical and images should be well-framed, easy to read and understand, with good use of lines and shapes for dynamic effect and interesting story-telling backgrounds. Images should be well-toned and exposed and should exhibit good use of light, smart use of depth-of-field and thoughtful color.

POLICIES

how to be successful in this course

To do well in JO303 Visual Journalism, students should show up fully prepared, homework completed, work filed on time and be fully engaged and ready to exceed class goals and expectations.

Cellphone usage is disruptive and discourteous.

Class attendance is critical for success. Deadlines are non-negotiable – loss of a full grade for each week assignment is late. No credit is given for final project if deadline is missed. Unexcused absence will result in a deduction of points from final grade.

If you are unwell, contact your professor to make arrangements to get caught up on material that you missed. Your partner will also be an important asset in helping you get caught up.

Students must be familiar with college handbook and have a full understanding of expected code and conduct. The academic code

of conduct is fully explained at: <http://www.bu.edu/academics/academic-conduct-code/>.

Plagiarism is a particular concern in journalism so it is critically important to give attribution of original content and to get permission and give credit.

BU policy on recording in classes

Please note that classroom proceedings for this course might be recorded for purposes including, but not limited to, student illness, religious holidays, disability accommodations, or student course review. Note also that recording devices are prohibited in the classroom except with the instructor's permission.

Grades are based on quality, content, and punctuality of work submitted. Late assignments lose one grade (A to B) for each week they are late. Assignments that are not turned in receive zero credit. The final grade is an average of all grades received during the semester. Assignments are DUE at the end of class.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

BU has strict guidelines on classroom behavior and practices when it comes to treatment of students and guests on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, mental or physical disability, genetic information, military service, national origin, or due to marital, parental, or veteran status. Discrimination for any of these reasons is prohibited. Please refer to the [Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Policy](#) for more details.

DISABILITY SERVICES

If you are a student with a disability or believe you might have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact the [Office for Disability Services](#) (ODS) at 617-353-3658 to coordinate any reasonable accommodation requests. ODS is located at 19 Deerfield Street, up on the second floor.

STUDENT ATHLETICS

All student-athletes should be provided with a sheet from Student-Athlete Support Services regarding absences throughout the semester. These sheets should be handed in as soon as possible to avoid potential conflicts and so arrangements can be made to provide for missed lecture notes, classwork, or discussion.

percentage-based grade scale

[Edit](#)

A: 93-100

B+: 87-89.99

C+: 77-79.99

D: 60-69.99

F: 0-59.99

A-: 90-92.99

B: 83-86.99

C: 73- 76.99

B-: 80-82.99

C-: 70-72.99

GPA conversion

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Search:

[Edit](#)

A	4.0
A-	3.7
B+	3.3
B	3.0
B-	2.7
C+	2.3
C	2.0
C-	1.7
D	1.0
F	0