

Topics in Advanced Reporting: Sports Producing - JR 330 – Fall 2019

Day/Time	Where	Office Hours	Instructor	Contact
F: 10:00 am - 1:45 pm	Walker Building 628	Walker 604 after class by appt.	Jim Foley	James_Foley@emerson.edu 774-262-5081

Description

From the latest scores to highlights and interviews, sportscasts aim to provide a seamless stream of news on local and national sports events. Writing, accuracy and creativity are essential.

Learning Objectives

1. Students in this class will learn to produce both local and national sportscasts.
2. Actively participate in roles that include writing stories, editing relevant video, recording video with a camera, organizing story elements, anchoring on the set and reporting live.
3. Understand how to use and apply different technologies available. There is ENPS, Sienna, Final Cut Pro, camera equipment and audio track recording.
4. Research and background stories before writing. Demonstrate proper news judgement.
5. Organize a rundown. Turn it into a cohesive newscast. Collaborate as a team.
6. Enterprise original and compelling story ideas. Execute these stories by conducting interviews, gathering b-roll, writing the story out and packaging the story together.

Classes and Assignments

Sept. 6: We will introduce ourselves to each other, set class expectations and discuss the semester ahead. Participate in ENPS training. Sign EDC contracts. Review broadcast writing styles and tips. Knowing how to write is important.

Assignment: Rewrite print/web stories for broadcast. Write one story as a 20-second VO and another as a 40-second VO/SOT. Include lower-third graphics. Ensure the information you write is verified in at least two articles before you include it. No rumors.

Sept. 13: We will have training for camera equipment, Sienna and Final Cut Pro. Familiarize yourself with these items. Let's not let technical errors and bad video or audio get in the way of producing quality content this semester.

Assignment: Watch a local 11:20 p.m. weekday sportscast on WBZ 4, WCVB 5 or NBC10 Boston. Note the writing, rundown, video, sound, graphics, presentation, etc.

Sept. 20: Present your findings to the class. Explain how you interpreted the sportscast was put together. Provide details. Share what you thought worked well and what could improve. Learn about on-air delivery and presentation.

Assignment: There will be two teams of four with assignments of producer, writer/anchor, reporter/photographer and editor/graphics. Prepare yourself for the role. The more you do, the less you may be scrambling in class, and the better your execution will likely be.

Sept. 27: Create a local sportscast complete with all the elements. You are always welcome to produce or shoot any content the week leading up to class. The show will run in the studio as live. You may get a chance to redo the show before class ends if you meet your show deadline.

Assignment: Brainstorm ideas for a final project. This will be a packaged report, ideally 3-4 minutes. Ideas include: exploring the human side of sports, a unique storyline to a season or athlete, sports playing a role to overcome an obstacle. You should record all your own content and conduct all your own interviews. Check out [E:60](#), [Only A Game](#) and [Chronicle](#) for guidance on packaging compelling stories. Do this project well, and it can go right into your resume reel, separating you from the pack of applicants.

Oct. 4: What makes a compelling story? How do we execute this? Create a local sportscast complete with all the elements. Two groups of four. Individual roles will rotate every class.

Assignment: Keep working on final project. Feel free to reach out with any questions or ideas you want to run by me. Come up with a list of specific sources. Provide contact information.

Oct. 11: Create a local sportscast complete with all the elements. Two groups of four.

Assignment: Watch a multi-segment sports show. This can be SportsCenter or any of the Sunday night sports shows on Ch. 4/5/10. What stands out to you, good and bad?

Oct. 18: Present your findings to the class. Explain how you interpreted the sportscast was put together. Provide details. Create a local sportscast complete with all the elements. Two groups of four.

Assignment: Prepare for your first 30-minute show the following class. New roles will be assigned.

Oct. 25: Create a 30-minute sports show including breaks. Work as one large team. The producer will decide what to include. There can be analysis, an interview, more highlights, etc. Reminder you are welcome to produce or shoot any content the week leading up to class.

Assignment: Prepare for the following week's show.

Nov. 1: Create a 30-minute sports show including breaks. Work as one large team. The producer will decide what to include.

Assignment: Prepare for the following week's show.

Nov. 8: Create a 30-minute sports show including breaks. Work as one large team. The producer will decide what to include.

Assignment: Finish drafting your final project. Include as much detail as possible, such as tracks, SOTs, B-roll.

Nov. 15: Present your first draft script for your final project.

Assignment: Prepare for the following week's show.

Nov. 22: Create a 30-minute sports show including breaks. Work as one large team. The producer will decide what to include.

Enjoy your break!

Dec. 6: By this point you'll be experienced in several roles. Now is your chance to speak up and ask questions about anything. Share your fears, your hopes, your dreams. It's an open forum. This career has given me extreme highs and lows in both my professional and personal life. I will help you as much as I can.

Assignment: Complete final project to be ready for air during the final class. Include anchor toss and elements along with package.

Dec. 13: Our final show! This will include everyone's final projects. Let's make it award-worthy material. Create a full show complete with anchor tosses, graphics, etc.

Roles for local sportscast

Producer: Lead your team. Select stories. Stack rundown. Ensure proper production cues. Time out sportscast. Communicate throughout prep. Review scripts and cues in rundown before show. Meet your deadline.

Writer/Anchor: Write stories with proper grammar. Write shot sheets to highlights. Stay within time assigned. Anchor with accuracy and good presentation.

Reporter/Photographer: Come up with story idea. Shoot video with interviews and b-roll. Record good quality video and audio. Package story together. Stay within time assigned.

Editor/Graphics: Edit all stories. Ensure proper audio levels, no jump cuts, enough pad. Deliver video to Sienna. Create graphics including lower thirds, full screens and OTS.

Roles for 30-minute show

Producer: Lead your team. Select stories and segments. Stack rundown. Ensure proper production cues. Time out sportscast. Meet your deadline.

Associate Producer: Work with producer to create show. Communicate throughout prep. Review scripts and cues in rundown before show.

Writer/Anchor 1: Write stories with proper grammar. Write shot sheets to highlights. Stay within time assigned. Anchor with accuracy and good presentation.

Writer/Anchor 2: Write stories with proper grammar. Write shot sheets to highlights. Stay within time assigned. Anchor with accuracy and good presentation.

Studio Reporter/Analyst: Create segment for in studio. Get creative. Provide either analysis or insight into timely story. Can include dialogue with anchor.

Reporter/Photographer: Come up with story idea. Shoot video with interviews and b-roll. Record good quality video and audio. Package story together. Stay within time assigned.

Editor: Edit all stories. Ensure proper audio levels, no jump cuts, enough pad. Deliver video to Sienna.

Graphics: Create graphics including lower thirds, full screens and OTS. Communicate with producer to ensure accuracy.

Grading Scale

A: Excellent journalistic work that would make air at a professional news station and published on a professional news website. Sourcing is clear. Writing follows style and demonstrates understanding of topic. Contains no technical errors you caused.

B: Good journalistic work that could make air or publication with some minor adjustments. Contains few technical errors.

C: Work exhibits problems in communication and coordination, failure to keep up with updated information, format errors. Has gaps in reporting and story organization (Words and pictures don't match in video, no transitions in video or in text)

D: Work exhibits little or no understanding of story's focus. Hard to follow. Shows no attempt to follow style rules. Contains grammatical errors such as subject-verb disagreement

F: Any misrepresentation, major factual error, copying without permission is journalistic failure. A lack of attribution, proper sourcing. Failure to turn in required journalistic work within deadline parameters. ZERO.

Grading Percentage

Producing. 20%. Team leadership, story selection, proper production cues, time management, timing of sportscast.

Sportscast Role. 30%. Execution of the other roles filled for each sportscast. Descriptions for each role are detailed in the syllabus.

Homework Assignments. 20%. Analyses of sportscasts, broadcast scripts, preparation for each show, etc.

Reflections. 10%. Describe the role you played in creating the sportscast. Analyze the process you went through to execute your task and how you performed. Explain what you learned.

Final Project. 20%. End-of-semester package and everything that goes into putting it together. Quality of storyline, video, audio, writing, editing, quantity of sources, etc.

Policies

PREPAREDNESS. Come prepared for the job assigned to you that day. If you do not know how to edit, take the extra time EARLY in the semester to practice and learn. You are REQUIRED to be fully up-to-date on the sports news. Read the paper/news organization websites and listen to/watch a sportscast BEFORE you walk into the newsroom. If you see a problem, or someone who needs help with his/her assignment, offer to help out.

ATTENDANCE. This is a lab class. Your attendance is mandatory. Three unexcused absences will result in a failing (F) grade. In my book, an excused absence means you are sick, dead, incapacitated by bad weather, in jail or in a mental health facility (or an immediate family member is suddenly ill, dead or incapacitated and in need of your immediate presence). You must inform me by email as early as possible as to any absence.

TARDINESS. Class begins PROMPTLY at 10 a.m. Absences due to illness need to be reported as EARLY as possible, preferably by 8 a.m. at the latest. Please provide me with sufficient reason why more than 1 additional absence due to illness should not count as an unexcused absence. Showing up more than 20 minutes late for class without prior notification will be counted as an unexcused absence unless you have a verifiable excuse. Showing up 20 minutes late will result in a zero in your grade for that day.

SNOW DAYS/DELAYS. This is Boston, so the chance that school might be cancelled or opening late due to weather is a possibility. Make sure you know how to check online, via phone, etc. for delayed openings or cancellations. Here is a link to help you get information and to sign up for alerts:

<http://www.emerson.edu/policy/emergency-closing-delayed-opening>

DIVERSITY. Each student in this class will be honored and respected as an individual with distinct experiences, talents, and backgrounds. You will be treated fairly regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identification, disability, socio-economic status, or national identity. Issues of diversity may be a part of class discussion, assigned material, and projects. I will make every effort to ensure that an inclusive environment exists for all. If you have any concerns or suggestions for improving the classroom climate, please do not hesitate to speak with me or to contact the Office of Diversity and Inclusion at 617-824-8528 or by email at diversity_inclusion@emerson.edu.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES.

Emerson is committed to providing equal access and support to all students who qualify through the provision of reasonable accommodations, so that each student may fully participate in the Emerson experience. If you have a disability that may require accommodations, please contact Student Accessibility Services at SAS@emerson.edu or 617-824-8592 to make an appointment with an SAS staff member. Students are

encouraged to contact SAS early in the semester. Please be aware that accommodations are not applied retroactively.

PLAGIARISM. ALL your work must be original. I will give an F to anyone involved in copying, using other people's work (photos, video, words) as his/her own, and creating or misrepresenting sources. I consider wholesale cut-and-pasting of wire copy or newspaper copy in scripts as plagiarism and will treat those of you who do so as plagiarists.

As journalists, credibility is your calling card. If you are dishonest, you will not survive in the profession. Journalists who make things up or who steal another's work undermine their credibility and that of every honest, hard-working journalist in the industry. Anyone in the class caught violating the basic tenets of truth in journalism by making up soundbites or sources or stories will automatically fail the course and face possible suspension from Emerson College.

SOURCING. You are required to *provide the name and phone number or email address of all sources* at the end of any reporting assignment you submit for class. Any report that does not have this information will get a ZERO until this information is provided.

Inaccuracies in this information will be dealt with in the same manner as factual errors within a news report. That means F. Every picture, piece of audio and piece of video you turn in must have contact information of the people presented in the picture, audio and video.

These source lists will allow you to do what every profession reporter does: a) check back with sources on deadline to confirm a point or add a detail and b) begin to build a resource list of people to call on stories. These sources all should be part of your building your beat book.

As at a professional news organization, I will periodically call your sources to check on the accuracy of the information in your articles.

The two degrees of separation rule: You are not allowed to interview relatives, friends, coworkers, classmates or anyone else

you know. Interviewing people in your circle of family and friends presents a conflict of interest. Every source will have expectations and you'll feel obliged to leave out harsh truths.

No anonymous sources: Everyone you interview must be on record. You must use their real, full name.

If you have source material, whether it is from an encyclopedia, book or web site, YOU MUST CITE YOUR SOURCES. You cannot take any material off the web or from books and magazines and make it your own without citations or else you have plagiarized.

If you have any questions about how to attribute appropriately, quote appropriately or footnote appropriately, it is incumbent on you to consult me about it. Ignorance is not a defense against cheating. For more information on academic honesty and plagiarism, please see page 62 in the Student Handbook regarding the Emerson College policy on plagiarism and page 96 on the Student Code of Conduct.

COPYRIGHT. If you didn't create it or own it, then you don't have the right to use it UNLESS you received permission or can make a strong argument for fair use.

**NOTE THAT THIS SYLLABUS IS A GUIDELINE AND IS
SUBJECT TO CHANGE AS EVENTS WARRANT**