

# J380V Visual Journalism

## Unique# 09109

### T 2-5 p.m. (in person)

#### Instructor:

Nuri Vallbona: [nurivallbona@utexas.edu](mailto:nurivallbona@utexas.edu)

(She, her, hers)

Office Hours: Mondays 12 - 2 p.m. on Zoom

Tuesdays 5 - 6 p.m. on Zoom/in person at BMC 3.326 or by appointment

#### Photo Editor:

Michael Minasi: [michael.minasi@utexas.edu](mailto:michael.minasi@utexas.edu)

(He, him, his)

Office Hours: By appointment

#### Description:

This is a visual course that simulates a newsroom experience as students polish news-gathering skills and journalistic values across all media: print, broadcast and online. Students will work to produce one substantial visual or audio news package in the semester with class instruction, labs and fieldwork. The class will also give students the opportunity to work with Reporting Texas reporters on stories or will give them the option to generate their own news stories. They will publish their work to a professional website they create or modify in class. I will work with the students giving input during most of the classes as students refine their individual projects.

#### Objectives:

At the end of the course, students will

- gain a mastery of 35mm still cameras.
- learn how to capture strong photos, video or audio for use in digital formats.
- acquire skills that will help them generate newsworthy visual or audio story ideas.
- understand the best practices for producing compelling photo, video or audio stories with lasting impact.
- learn to use appropriate multimedia reporting and production tools.
- understand the dynamics of team reporting when and if it becomes necessary.
- learn the ethical practices and guidelines required to produce high quality photojournalism.
- learn to produce well written photo captions with complete information that adds to the reportage of an assignment.
- publish their stories and assignments to a professional quality website they create in class.

#### Required texts and other materials:

- AP Stylebook
- Broadcast News & Writing Stylebook
- Appropriate storage materials such as CD-R and DVD-R disks, USB flash drives

- Tripod for iPhone if using it to shoot video
- Microphone for iPhone if using it to shoot video
- Trello account to interact with reporters

#### **Suggested texts:**

- “Media Now: Understanding Media, Culture, and Technology,” (6th Edition), Joseph Straubhaar, Robert LaRose, Lucinda Davenport
- “Nonlinear Editing: Storytelling, Esthetics & Craft,” Bryce Button (Paperback or Kindle)

### **The School of Journalism and Media’s protocol for field coverage:**

The pandemic and recent protests are compelling subjects but ones that rely on your commitment to safety. Refer to this link for the department’s guidelines:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Hhi3giVC11DCVYieYrGAoaf422Bdlachd3kLdzSanvs/edit#heading=h.2u06zww8o8yq>

**Statement on safety:** The School of Journalism and Media wants to make the spring semester and beyond a great experience for all of our students, faculty and staff. Journalism is a field that by its nature requires some in person interactions as we tell the important stories of the world around us. When appropriate, class lessons and exercises will be assigned to allow for social isolation. When students, faculty or staff must go into the field, we want to be sure everyone is following the latest guidelines from health officials and the university. We want everyone to be healthy and safe while still receiving a quality education.

#### **Minimum safety requirements for reporting and working in the field**

1. It is *highly* recommended that you wear a mask covering your nose and mouth and remain at least 6 feet from the person being interviewed or photographed whether you are inside or outside. Be sure you and the source discuss what safety measures you’ll both take before you arrive. You will need to be farther than 6 feet apart if people are yelling or singing. Experts are also recommending eye protection in the form of goggles or other eye shields. [More info on that here.](#)
2. Try to do all interviews outside, if possible, even if the environment is not ideal. When possible, photographic sessions and video shooting should be outside as well. If you must be indoors, limit your photographic or interview session time to 20 minutes. [The CDC explains](#) the danger levels and how being outdoors is safer than indoors with groups of people
3. Wash your hands frequently with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds each time. Carry hand sanitizer on you when you go out into the field and sanitize frequently touched surfaces if possible. Do not shake hands or get closer than 6 feet to anyone else.
4. In-person photo and video reporting field assignments require your instructor’s prior approval: [Here’s a link to the National Press Photographers Association’s \(NPPA\) health and safety guides for photojournalists and videojournalists](#)

**Safety covering crowded outdoor events and protests.**

1. It is *highly* recommended you wear a mask covering your nose and mouth.
2. When photographing or shooting B-roll video at crowded outdoor events, avoid dense areas of crowds as much as possible. However, if you find yourself in a crowd (for example, covering a demonstration), get your image and move on as swiftly as possible.
3. If you need a soundbite, ask anyone you want to interview to move to the perimeter of the event (this is good for your audio as well) and conduct the interview maintaining six-foot separation.
4. Protests can be fast changing and emotionally charged events. [Here's a Poynter Institute story on safely covering protests.](#)

**Classes:** The class should be viewed as a newsroom at a professional news organization. The instructor is your editor. Your colleagues are your fellow journalists. You will gather knowledge and opinion about the local, regional, national and international stories worth reporting and writing. This class will be conducted in person, unless otherwise indicated.

**Deadlines:** In the real world, there are few valid excuses for late assignments and missed deadlines. J380V is a training course and we expect you to be organized and meet deadlines. Part of what you will learn here is time management. Usually, assignments turned in after the Canvas window has closed or by a stated deadline are not accepted. Consult with your instructor about late and/or missing assignments because of an excused absence. A late assignment will result in a 10-point loss for each 24-hour period past the deadline. After two days, the assignment will not be graded. Sometimes life gets in the way and there are extenuating circumstances that may affect your ability to turn it in on time. If this happens, please notify the instructors BEFORE the deadline.

**Protocols:** You will experience reporting in different media and at times with assistance from different colleagues. Each student will work on one semester-long project. The chosen semester project will vary at certain points which will enable you to plan and work well ahead of the deadline.

**Story pitches:** One of the traits of a great reporter is finding good story ideas, rather than relying on assignments from editors. In this class, we will help you develop this key aspect of reporting. The important thing is for you to begin thinking at all times of good story ideas. Some of the best ideas will come to you when you are not looking for them. Follow the instructions on Canvas to submit story pitches and discussion posts.

**Written request** to instructors is required when necessary to work on your project during assigned class time.

**ATTENDANCE**

Consistent prompt attendance and participation are critical in your preparation to become a professional. Your professor will teach you what you need to do to produce meaningful stories using words and visuals. Pay attention and resist the temptation to multitask during class. That

said, some of you are facing difficult situations at home and we want to help you succeed despite the challenges. If you have to miss a lecture or lab, please let your professor know. She cares, but she needs to hear from you to help. Although attendance is not factored into the grade, if the absence is unexcused, any makeup work is at her discretion. Excessive absences may result in you failing the course because you're not absorbing crucial information.

**TARDINESS:** Instructors have the right to penalize students who are tardy without an official excuse, and do NOT have to help tardy students make up missed or incomplete assignments. In this class, you will not be penalized for tardiness, but you will be responsible for getting the information you missed.

**SOCIAL MEDIA:** If you don't have a Twitter profile, we encourage you to create an account. We will offer extra credit opportunities where you live tweet a journalism related talk or panel discussion. To get extra credit you must post at least six journalistic tweets about the talk, using the hashtag: #J380V. Follow us on Twitter: @nurivallbona and @MichaelMinasi

**GENERAL GRADING:** Plus-minus grading will be used for this course. News packages will be graded individually per student.

### **Assignments:**

The photo assignments are designed to help you gain proficiency in photography until you have the skills needed to tell a strong story. You will have the option to photograph stories running in Reporting Texas or generate your own stories. These Reporting Texas photo packages can take the place of the scheduled assignments with approval from the instructors.

### **GRADING WEIGHTS:**

#### **Assignments: 30%**

Assignment 1: Capturing Impactful Moments

Assignment 2: Portrait

Assignment 3: Joy of Life Presentation

#### **Short Visual Package: 20%**

Sounds of Austin – The Live Music Capital of the World is full of music venues, events and musicians. Turn in at least seven strong photos or a short video or audio piece illustrating one aspect of this world. Or turn in a photo package of seven photos for a Reporting Texas story.

#### **Photo Essay/Video or Audio Project – 35%**

Austin's city is teeming with diverse people and cultures. Turn in 10 strong photos that capture this diverse richness or turn in a video, audio or Reporting Texas photo story using the same parameters.

**Class participation: 10%**

Participation during discussions and critiques

Class exercises: capturing motion, portraits, presentations, infographics tutorial

Discussion posts

Story pitch - Photo Essay/Video or Audio Project

**Website: 5%****University Protocols:**

- COVID testing before coming to campus

The [university has determined](#) that all students coming to campus for the fall semester must receive a [viral test](#) (antigen test or a nucleic acid amplification test such as PCR) within 72 hours of coming to Austin. *We are asking that students take a COVID-19 test to help keep themselves and their fellow Longhorns and the community safe, to enable us to learn and be together as we did before COVID-19. Failure to test may contribute to the further spread of COVID-19 and overload our already strained healthcare system, and could usher in a semester with sick students, some of whom could require hospitalization. Additionally, all students complying will help minimize the introduction of new cases to our campus community, reducing the likelihood of disruption from missing class due to illness or exposure or the implementation of further restrictions.*

- If a student tests positive for COVID-19  
The student should follow [this guidance on reporting their positive test](#) to enable contact tracing. If a student tests positive for COVID-19, they **must isolate at home**. The COVID-19-positive student should contact the [Behavior Concerns and COVID-19 Advice Line](#)(BCCAL) to report their positive result. BCCAL can also assist the student with isolation options, class absence notification or other support. In addition, the student will need to meet **all** of the following [CDC criteria for discontinuing self-isolation](#) including:
  - 10+ days since symptom onset (if no symptoms, 10+ days since test date) AND
  - 24+ hours fever-free without use of fever-reducing medications AND
  - Other COVID-19 symptoms have improved

And before ending self-isolation for COVID-19, the student should submit the Self-declaration of release from COVID-19 isolation (see instructions [here](#)) through the [UHS portal](#).

- Student concerns and remote learning:  
If a student doesn't meet the required criteria for an accommodation allowing for remote learning and the instructor is not requesting a temporary change of modality for the next three weeks, then the instructor is under no obligation to offer an online version of their class. However, students who experience discomfort and anxiety about meeting in-person are asked to talk to the professor

privately about how succeed in this course without feeling anxious about COVID. **The professor will work with you.** Please review UHS information about COVID-19 symptoms, transmission and prevention. Students can also be encouraged to review this exposure action chart on what to do for the following scenarios:

- no symptoms with not-close-contact exposure,
- no symptoms with close-contact exposure, and
- COVID-19 symptoms

*Any students feeling COVID19-related anxiety and stress might also find the resources listed in this [link](#) useful.*

- Missed materials for a student who has to quarantine.
  - *Students who have to quarantine can participate remotely using ZOOM, and/or*
  - *Can access class recordings on Canvas, and/or*
  - *Can connect with others so that missed notes can be shared should anyone have to miss for any reason.*
  - *Consideration will be given to students who are sick with COVID or other illnesses. Deadlines will be adjusted to accommodate them. Personal circumstances disrupting their ability to meet assignment deadlines will also be considered.*

*Note, however, instructors are **not required** to teach a fully hybrid course if the class is supposed to be in-person.*

- General COVID-19 information links
  - [Required COVID-19 test](#)  
FAQs about the COVID-19 test required to be taken within 72 hours of returning or moving in to Austin residence for fall semester
  - [Student process for positive COVID-19 test](#)  
Self-reporting process and additional guidance for students if they have a positive COVID-19 test
  - [COVID-19 health information and resources](#)  
Useful information and best practices to protect yourself and our community from COVID-19 infection
  - [COVID-19 Vaccinations](#)  
UT Health information about where to obtain COVID-19 vaccinations on campus. Vaccinations are free and not billed to health insurance.
  - [What to do if you have symptoms](#)  
Guidance on what to look for and instructions on what to do if you have COVID-19 symptoms

- [University Health Services COVID-19 information](#) Student portal for all university health information, processes, and guidance related to COVID-19.
- [University's mask guidance](#)  
Make sure your recommended protective face mask covers your nose and mouth.
- [Proactive Community Testing](#)  
Will be available throughout the semester and remains an important part of the university's efforts to protect our community. Tests are fast and free.
- Visit [protect.utexas.edu](https://protect.utexas.edu) for all university COVID-19 updates and information.

- Masking

University policy is to follow CDC guidance. So, until the CDC guidance suggests differently, wearing a mask is **strongly encouraged** in this course. You will not be penalized in any way for not doing so. Please bear in mind, however, that the interests protected by masking are not just your own. **Masking to prevent transmission is very important for the health of our greater community.** It may be important for others in the room in ways that you do not know or appreciate. For all of these reasons, I urge you to do so.

- Social Distancing

When possible, students should socially distance in the classroom. A student can be reported to [student conduct](#) for disruption if the student continues to intentionally ignore the required distance after a warning from the instructor or teaching assistant.

- Assigned seating for contact tracing

Please keep the same seat throughout the semester. I plan on capturing the seating plan. to help maintain health and safety should contact tracing be needed. You can find more details in [the guidance sent from the Provost](#).

## FERPA and Class Recordings:

**Class Recordings:** Class recordings are reserved only for students in this class for educational purposes and are protected under FERPA. The recordings should not be shared outside the class in any form. Violation of this restriction by a student could lead to Student Misconduct proceedings. Guidance on public access to class recordings can be found [here](#).

## Use of Canvas for this Class:



This course uses Canvas —a Web-based course management system with password-protected access at <http://canvas.utexas.edu> —to distribute course materials, to communicate and collaborate online, to post grades, to submit assignments, and for TA staff to give you online quizzes and surveys. You can find tutorials and support in using Canvas, 24/7 here: <http://edutech.ctl.utexas.edu/students/>

### **Use of E-Mail for Official Correspondence to Students:**

Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, you are responsible for reading your email for university and course-related information and announcements. You are responsible to keep the university informed about changes to your e-mail address. You should check your e-mail regularly and frequently—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time critical. You can find UT Austin’s policies and instructions for updating your e-mail address at <https://it.utexas.edu/policies/university-electronic-mail-student-notification-policy#one>

### **Attendance**

**Religious holy days.** A student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day should inform the instructor as far in advance of the absence as possible so that arrangements can be made to complete an assignment within a reasonable period after the absence. A reasonable accommodation does not include substantial modification to academic standards, or adjustments of requirements essential to any program of instruction. Students and instructors who have questions or concerns about academic accommodations for religious observance or religious beliefs may contact the [Office for Inclusion and Equity](#). The University does not maintain a list of religious holy days.

**Absence for military service.** In accordance with section 51.9111 of the Texas Education Code, a student is excused from attending classes or engaging in other required activities, including exams, if he or she is called to active military service of a reasonably brief duration. The maximum time for which the student may be excused has been defined by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) as “no more than 25 percent of the total number of class meetings or the contact hour equivalent (not including the final examination period) for the specific course or courses in which the student is currently enrolled at the beginning of the period of active military service.” The student will be allowed a reasonable time after the absence to complete assignments and take exams. Policies affecting students who withdraw from the University for military service are given in the [Withdrawal](#) section.

**Services for Students with Disabilities:** This class respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds, identities, and abilities. If there are circumstances that make our learning environment and activities difficult, if you have medical information that you need to share with me, or if you need specific arrangements in case the building needs to be evacuated,



please let me know. I am committed to creating an effective learning environment for all students, but I can only do so if you discuss your needs with me as early as possible. I promise to maintain the confidentiality of these discussions. If appropriate, also contact Services for Students with Disabilities, 512-471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329- 3986 (video phone).

<http://ddce.utexas.edu/disability/about/>

### **Q-drop Policy:**

If you realize you want to drop a class after the 12th class day, you'll need to execute a Q-drop before the Q-drop deadline, which typically occurs near the middle of the semester. See the [academic calendar](#) for exact dates.

### **Process:**

**UGS students:** You will need to [schedule an appointment](#) with your assigned academic advisor to discuss and fill out the drop form.

**Students in other colleges/schools at UT Austin:** You will need to meet with an [advisor in your College/School](#) to fill out the drop form.

### **Ramifications**

You will have a "Q" on your transcript as the grade in that class. Your GPA is not negatively affected by a Q, but you are only allowed six Q-drops while you are in college at any public Texas institution.

If by Q-dropping the class you will fall below 12 hours, you will be considered a part-time student. This might affect the following.

- Your financial aid. Contact a [financial aid counselor](#) or [learn more online](#)
- On-campus housing
- International status (for international students only)
- Car & medical insurance—contact your insurance provider
- Participation in extracurricular activities (for example: fraternity/sorority)—contact the organization
- Your academic progress (completing degree requirements, internal transfer requirements, etc.)

### **University Resources for Students**

Your success in this class is important to me. We will all need accommodations because we all learn differently. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we'll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. There are also a range of resources on campus:

## **Counseling and Mental Health Center:**

Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating well, exercising, avoiding drugs and alcohol, getting enough sleep and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress. All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone. There are many helpful resources available on campus and an important part of the college experience is learning how to ask for help. Asking for support sooner rather than later is often helpful.

If you or anyone you know experiences any academic stress, difficult life events, or feelings like anxiety or depression, we strongly encourage you to seek support.

<http://www.cmhc.utexas.edu/individualcounseling.html>

## **Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL):**

If you are worried about someone who is acting differently, you may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone your concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <https://safety.utexas.edu/behavior-concerns-advice-line>.

The **Counseling and Mental Health Center**, **University Health Services** and the **Employee Assistance Program** are confidential as outlined by federal and state law. UT also offers private resources who are not confidential but are non-mandatory reporters to Title IX and the university. Advocates, University Ombuds, Faculty Ombuds, and the Interpersonal Violence Peer Support Program are all private resources and safe spaces to ask questions and receive support without making an official report to the university. These services are there for you if you would like emotional support, would like to discuss options, or are in need of academic or financial assistance.

## **Title IX Reporting:**

Title IX is a federal law that protects against sex and gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual misconduct, dating/domestic violence and stalking at federally funded educational institutions. UT Austin is committed to fostering a learning and working environment free from discrimination in all its forms. When sexual misconduct occurs in our community, the university can:

1. Intervene to prevent harmful behavior from continuing or escalating.
2. Provide support and remedies to students and employees who have experienced harm or have become involved in a Title IX investigation.
3. Investigate and discipline violations of the university's relevant policies.

Faculty members and certain staff members are considered "Responsible Employees" or "Mandatory Reporters," which means that they are required to report violations of Title IX to the Title IX Coordinator. **I am a Responsible Employee and must report any Title IX related incidents** that are disclosed in writing, discussion, or one-on-one.

Before talking with me, or with any faculty or staff member about a Title IX related incident, be sure to ask whether they are a responsible employee. If you want to speak with someone for support or remedies without making an official report to the university, email [advocate@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:advocate@austin.utexas.edu) For more information about reporting options and resources, visit [titleix.utexas.edu](http://titleix.utexas.edu) or contact the Title IX Office at [titleix@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:titleix@austin.utexas.edu).

### **Resources for Learning & Life at UT Austin:**

The University of Texas has numerous resources for students to provide assistance and support for your learning. The UT Learning Center: <http://www.utexas.edu/student/utlc/>  
Undergraduate Writing Center: <http://uwc.utexas.edu/> Counseling & Mental Health Center: <http://cmhc.utexas.edu/> Career Exploration Center: <http://www.utexas.edu/student/careercenter/>

*Libraries:* <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/>

*IT:* <https://it.utexas.edu>

*Student Emergency Services:* <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/>

**In case we're back on campus:** Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made.

Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of a building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow your instructor's instructions.
- Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, UT-Austin Police Department or the Fire Prevention Services office.

### **Academic Integrity**

Each student in the course is expected to abide by the University of Texas Honor Code:

**"As a student of The University of Texas at Austin, I shall abide by the core values of the University and uphold academic integrity."** **Plagiarism is taken very seriously at UT.** Therefore, if you use words or ideas or images that are not your own (or that you have used in previous class), you must cite your sources. Otherwise you will be guilty of plagiarism and subject to academic disciplinary action, including failure of the course. You are responsible for understanding UT's Academic Honesty and the University Honor Code which can be found at the following web address:

<https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/standardsconduct.php>

### **Academic Honesty and Plagiarism in this Journalism course includes:**

- Plagiarizing or using someone else's material without attribution and permission from archival sources, another media source, student work or even yourself and/or representing previous work of your own as new work for this class. You can't turn in a

story or research or media project using any elements of work done for a previous class without the instructor's knowledge and written permission.

- Making up quotes, sources and facts.
- Not interviewing people who appear in your stories or research projects as sources or failure write accurate photographic captions for your work.
- Not giving appropriate attribution or citation of a source or background information.
- Cheating during a quiz or an assignment. More information:

<https://guides.lib.utexas.edu/c.php?g=539686&p=8083280>

**Journalism instructors report all academic honesty infractions to the Chair of the School of Journalism and Media, and also to the Dean of Students.**