INTRODUCTION TO VISUAL JOURNALISM
Spring 2020
Brian Palmer, Instructor
Weinstein Room 418

Office hours: By appointment
Phone: 917-561-1964
bpalmer@richmond.edu; bxnyc@earthlink.net

This syllabus is intended to give you guidance on what will be covered. However, I reserve the right to modify it during the semester, if the need arises.

Genuine journalism is more than reporting. Fundamentally, it is nonfiction storytelling—finding, evaluating, and shaping testimony and information one gathers into narratives. We do this with words and we do this with images.

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT
You will need to have an external hard drive of at least 1TB capacity. It must be Mac compatible. (If your personal computer is a PC, you can partition the drive so half is for Mac and the other half for PC. The Help Desk can do that for you.) The Macs in the journalism lab have USB 3 ports (compatible with USB 2) and Thunderbolt 2.

A quick note: thumb/jump drives are not adequate for the purposes of this class.

It is important that whatever drive you pick has a USB port and/or a Thunderbolt port. Also, you want a drive with a high data transfer rate. In excess of 100 mbps is good. A disc speed of 7200 rpm is desirable. You should be able to find a suitable drive for less than $100. (For example the G-Technology 1TB G-Drive ev RaW USB 3.1 Gen 1 Hard Drive with Rugged Bumper from Adorama Photo is $89. There are many other options.)

We will be using Adobe Photoshop for still photos and Adobe Premiere for video. Both software packages are loaded on the computers in Weinstein 418 as well as various other locations on campus (e.g., the TLC). You may also rent those apps from Adobe for $19.99/month, if you choose. They run on both Macs and PCs. You aren’t required to have these programs on your personal computer, but if you do, please make sure that you are using a version that is not newer than the one loaded onto the computers in the lab. They’re not compatible.

All other gear, including still and video cameras, will be loaned to you by the journalism department. You will check out your gear and be held responsible for its care. If you break or lose an item, you will be expected to replace or repair it. Please note: You will not get a grade or credit for the course until broken or lost gear is repaired or replaced.
You may use your personal still camera so long as it is sophisticated enough that you can control all of the functions: shutter speed, aperture, focus, ISO, etc. Please come to me with your camera in hand so we can discuss its suitability for this class.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Our main goal for this semester is to do strong visual journalism. You will produce original photographs and videos for a variety of assignments and ongoing projects during this course. Powerful visual journalism uses words, whether written or spoken. Therefore, you will be writing and speaking throughout this course.

Introduction to Visual Journalism has two segments, photo and video. During the photography section, you will learn to create photographs with a digital single-lens reflex camera; to ingest and edit digital files using image-processing software (Adobe Lightroom, Bridge, Camera Raw, and Photoshop); to sequence your photos into meaningful stories; and to contextualize them with your reporting and writing.

In the video sequence, you will learn how to capture moving images and sound from real-world events and shape them into short digital video stories. You will learn the basics of importing video, making clips, creating sequences and assemblies, and exporting as .mov files using Premiere Pro CC. You will typically work in pairs on video projects.

To be successful, you should expect to devote an average of 10 to 12 hours each week to your work in this course.

The midterm will be a photography essay. (We will determine the topic in the coming weeks.) You will produce a video or multimedia project as a final project. There will be no final exam. The final project is due at the beginning of the second-to-last class. This gives us time to review and discuss everyone’s projects.

**GRADING**

Assignments will be screened and critiqued in class. We will all take part in the critique. My in-class critique will be translated into a letter grade that will be emailed to you. In most cases there will be no written critique.

Exercises that accomplish the technical goals with originality and creativity will earn As. Exercises that accomplish the technical goals but in an unimaginative manner will get Cs. Make no mistake, your grade will rise with the amount of effort and creativity you put into each assignment. Late assignments fail.

**FINAL PROJECT**

Each student team must produce a video story suitable for the Collegian website. That project will constitute 25 percent of the final grade. The exercises will constitute the other 50 percent. The midterm is 25% of the grade.
ATTENDANCE
You are expected to attend each class. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed. If you miss more than one class without an adequate excuse, your grade will be lowered by half a grade for each class missed.

The University is unwavering in its commitment to support survivors of sexual assault, to respond promptly to reports of any type of sexual misconduct, and to investigate and adjudicate reports in a manner that is fair and equitable to all parties involved. We understand that sexual violence can undermine a student’s academic success and we encourage students who have experienced some form of sexual misconduct to talk to someone about their experience, so they can get the support they need.

Alleged violations can be reported to the Title IX Office at report.richmond.edu. Reports to law enforcement can be made to University of Richmond Police Department at 804-289-8911. The purpose of reporting to Title IX is to connect students to support resources and accommodations. Students can choose whether or not to file a formal complaint.

Students can receive confidential support from: Center for Awareness, Response & Education (C.A.R.E.) Advocate – 804.801.6251 (call or text) / advocate@richmond.edu; Peer Sexual Misconduct Advisors (PSMA’s) – 804.346.7674 (call or text) / psma@richmond.edu; Law School PSMA’s – 804.347.9586 (call or text) / lawpsma@richmond.edu

SUGGESTED RESOURCES
There are many websites and online services that can help you troubleshoot problems with hardware and software. The first, and most obvious, are Google and YouTube. Lynda.com, which you have access to, has excellent tutorials and video, audio, and stills, and all types of software. These are how-to videos accompanied by a scrolling transcript. These are great resources, whether you feel behind or want to catch up, you’re stuck on a single problem, or you just want to explore features we haven’t covered in class. Adobe.com also has tutorials on its software, including Photoshop and Premiere Pro.

JOURNALISM (GENERAL)
The Intercept: https://firstlook.org/theintercept/
The Marshall Project: https://www.themarshallproject.org/
Military Times: https://www.militarytimes.com/
ProPublica: http://www.propublica.org/
Reveal/Center for Investigative Reporting: https://radiopublic.com/reveal
VPM: https://vpm.org/listen/stream?channel=news

JOURNALISM (ETHICS, THEORY, FUTURE)
American Press Institute: http://www.americanpressinstitute.org/
Center for Public Integrity: http://www.publicintegrity.org/
Nieman Lab: http://www.niemanlab.org/
Poynter Institute: http://www.poynter.org/
Tow Center for Visual Journalism: http://towcenter.org/

PHOTO
Lens Culture: www.lensculture.com
PetaPixel: http://petapixel.com/

VIDEO
American Documentary/POV: www.amdoc.org
America ReFramed: https://worldchannel.org/show/america-reframed/
Field of Vision: https://fieldofvision.org/
No Film School: https://nofilmschool.com/