

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY  
SJMC  
RTV 4101 ADVANCED WRITING FOR TELEVISION/Fall 2014

Assistant Professor: Kate MacMillin  
Time: Mo-We 1- 2:50 Room ACII 242  
Email address: kmacmill@fiu.edu  
Office Hours: Mon & Wed. 3-4

**COURSE PRE-REQUISITE:** All students must have previously taken and passed MMC 3104, Writing Strategies. No exceptions will be made (per SJMC policy).

**TEXT:** No text required

**COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:**

This course is intended to introduce the student to various types of writing for television and Internet/Journalism videos. This will include storytelling for short videos and short documentaries. Class time will be divided between lectures, guest speakers, shooting and video editing workshops.

**This course will be devoted to various approaches to ONE TOPIC: Sea Level Rise. There will be all kinds of opportunities for serious reporting on this issue.**

**Why Sea Level Rise?**

*By Ben Strauss*

*Note: First published in the Miami Herald*

Florida is in the crosshairs of climate change. Rising seas, a population crowded along the coast, porous bedrock, and the relatively common occurrence of tropical storms put more real estate and people at risk from storm surges aggravated by sea level rise in Florida, than any other state by far.

Some 2.4 million people and 1.3 million homes, nearly half the risk nationwide, sit within 4 feet of the local high tide line. Sea level rise is more than doubling the risk of a storm surge at this level in South Florida by 2030. For the hundreds of thousands of Floridians holding 30-year mortgages, that date is not far off in the future.

The world's oceans are already rising, thanks to global warming. Global average sea level has gone up about 8 inches since 1880. In South Florida, taxpayers are already paying the price for climate change as salt water pushes through porous bedrock into coastal drinking-water supplies, and rivers and canals choked by heavy rains have a harder time draining into the ocean. A recent Florida Atlantic University study estimated that just 6 more inches of sea level rise — very plausible within two decades — would cripple about half of South Florida's flood control capacity.

It's now, not later, for sea level rise in South Florida.

- See more at: <http://sealevel.climatecentral.org/news/floria-and-the-rising-sea#sthash.LvJ0oixe.dpuf>

**ASSIGNMENTS: Two mini-docs 2- 2:30 in length, plus a written summary/overview for each.**

**EVALUATION:**

Grades on in-class exercises and other projects will be as follows:

Meets all format requirements: 50%

Grammar, spelling, etc.: 30%

Artistic evaluation/visual storytelling: 20%

The overall grade for the course will be based on:

First Doc: Summary overview: 10%

First Doc: Video 25%

Second Doc: Summary overview 15%



**Week two: Wed., September 3 (no class on Monday, Sept. 1 – LABOR DAY)**

**Researching your topic: Come to class with topic ideas for videos on sea level rise, including names of people you'd like to interview. You will present an oral presentation to the class on your approach. Give the written ideas to the professor.**

**Week three: September 8**

Practicing Shooting interviews in class and editing them. Some students may possibly begin shooting the pumping stations in Miami Beach. (Pending approval of Miami Beach Public Works Department).

**Week four: September 15**

Locking in your interviews for Doc. #1

**Week five: September 22**

Submitting your outline/topics, video for Doc #1 (and possibly taping some interviews this week).

*Over the next five weeks students will learn short form documentary format. You will continue to master visual and print storytelling and the editing system.*

**Week Six: September 29**

*We will be preparing for KING TIDE WEEK, which begins on October 6, and how and what you will be videotaping. Many of you will produce a 2:30 second doc about this person/topic. We will watch short documentaries from various Web sites: [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com), [www.miamihearld.com](http://www.miamihearld.com), etc.*

**Week Seven: October 6**

Everyone will be out shooting during this week.

**Week Eight: October 13**

Logging and writing a paper cut of your doc.

**Week Nine: October 22**

Editing doc #1

**Week Ten: October 27**

Editing doc #1

**Week Eleven: November 3**

Ideas for doc #2

**Week Twelve: November 10**

Shooting doc #2

**Week Thirteen: November 17**

Finish editing doc #2

**Discussing the half-hour show format and writing the script**

**Nov. 24 Presenting final ½ show format**

### **Academic Honesty**

As FIU students, you are expected to strictly follow the honor code regarding academic honesty. Florida International University outlines your responsibilities as follows:

*Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly to demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Handbook.*

*Misconduct includes: Cheating – The unauthorized use of books, notes, aids, electronic sources; or assistance from another person with respect to examinations, course assignments, field service reports, class recitations; or the unauthorized possession of examination papers or course materials, whether originally authorized or not. Plagiarism – The use and appropriation of another's work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student's own. Any student who fails to*

*give credit for ideas, expressions or materials taken from another source, including internet sources, is responsible for plagiarism.*

Any students who fail to meet these expectations will receive an “F” for the course grade and will be reported to the chair of the department, as well as the dean of the school.

**This syllabus may be changed by the instructor if adjustments are required because of students’ skill sets or community-based projects that may be offered to FIU classes.**