J300

Here's the plan for the semester in Visual Storytelling. The numbering of weeks is just an estimate for now and I have a more exact list of assignments, due dates, readings and lectures in another document. **Here we go…**

COURSE INTRO
(week one)

step 1

It's the start of a new thing, so we will review policies, expectations, your skills and the syllabus. We will also overview what makes "good" design so darn "good."

Student Work: *grab your books, get Top Hat installed, read the syllabus and get ready.*

Are we done yet?

PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEOGRAPHY
(weeks two through six)

step 2

Today's most familiar visual storytelling is photography. Smart phones make us instant photographers. And photography's cousin? Cell phones are also geared up with video capability now.

To help us with other visual storytelling later in the course, we will consider composition and lighting. Plus, we will practice transforming an idea into a product.

Needed: a kind of camera (likely a phone) to capture photo and video.

Student Work: *(50+10 points) a photo narrative and (50 points) a video postcard*

Are we done yet?

FORM & SHAPE
(weeks two & three)

step 3

Interlaced with our talk of photography is the beginning of our work in InDesign. We will take it very slow and hold your hand if you need it.

Student Work: *(20 points) your first InDesign document: a simple document of shapes and lines*

Are we done yet?

TYPOGRAPHY
(weeks five and six)

step 4

Know what font *this* is? Well, journalism seldom occurs *sans* words. Let's learn more about type: selecting, manipulating and matching fonts.

Student Work: *(50 points) a second InDesign project, this time a resumé featuring type*

Are we done yet?

INFOGRAPHIC
(weeks twelve through sixteen)

step 7

This chart, the one you are holding, is an infographic. To capstone this class, you will create your own.

Student Work: *(100 points, functions as your final exam) you will create an infographic with InDesign*

***Seriously*, are we done yet?**

ALL TOGETHER NOW
(weeks ten and eleven)

step 6

Text + photos + color + grids + your InDesign skills = Your Photo Layout Project. See how we're bringing it all together? I will give you all of the photos that will inspire your page design. You will be the photo editor and page designer to make a finished magazine spread.

Student Work: *(50 points) a photo layout using images I provide*

Are we done yet?

COLOR
(weeks seven & eight)

step 5

Consider both photography and color. Photography is the marriage of **art** (composition, lines, expression) and **science** (lenses, pixels, computers). With color, there are **scientific** reasons that colors appear to the eye in the way they do. But there are also **artistic** concerns for choosing the color in your design work. So, this will be a bit of science and a bit of art.

Student Work: *(20 points) our third InDesign project will require you to take a document template and change the use of color on that document*

Are we done yet?

J300 visual storytelling

this course, just like storytelling itself will have a

BEGINNING, MIDDLE, & END

13 June 2000 :: John Hershberger has worked The Wacky World Fun House for eight of the amusement's 40-year-old life. The ride will be at the Converse (Ind.) Fair this week along with other amusements, stands and livestock shows. **ERIC THOMAS PHOTO**

how easily a reader or client can discard your well-researched story or well-written presentation because it "doesn't look good" or "didn't catch my attention." For that reason, the smartest journalists and strategic communicators understand that their message must have thoughtful visuals, if not brilliant visuals.

This course aims to teach you to be a thoughtful critic and creator of visuals. At the very least, you should be able to evaluate the visual presentation of a product or publication and identify weaknesses and strengths. You should be able to say insightful and helpful things like, "The internal margin around that sans serif font doesn't seem to match the 1-pica gutter around the rest of the page elements." So, at the least you will be visually smart, if a bit full of jargon.

At the most ambitious, you will be starting — or continuing — a path toward becoming a creator of visuals. Perhaps you will leap into InDesign, photography, videography and infographics, making it your focus here at KU and your eventual career. You may become part of the legion of graphic designers and data visualization designers who have revolutionized our visual landscape.

So, remember: this is an intro course that will cover the theories, concepts and principles of visual communication and design production techniques. But it is meant to give you skills central to a career in a increasingly visual world of communication and journalism.

That — in 243 words — is why you should be signed up for this course.

IMPORTANT NOTE: this course must be completed with a C (2.0) or better in order to move on in the journalism curriculum

BEGINNING:

let's start with us...

Instructor Eric Thomas
317 Stauffer-Flint Hall
(785) 864-7625, ericthomas@ku.edu
Office Hours: Tuesday 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. & Thursday 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Available by appointment, but seldom will be on campus Monday and Friday.

GTA Yasmeen El-Jayyousi
y155e710@ku.edu
Office Hours: Monday 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

COURSE RATIONALE

Communication with a 21st century audience demands visual skills. Consider

GOALS

• Practice the process of taking a mental concept and transforming it into a visual product

- Learn the words and phrases needed to communicate visual ideas
- Learn the basics of good design, typography, color theory, photography, videography and infographics.
- Learn how to use photography and videography to tell a story.
- Gain a basic understanding of the most widely used document creation software in journalism and strategic communication: Adobe InDesign
- Learn how to constructively critique visual messages by evaluating your work, professional work and class-mates' work.
- Think about the relationship between media and audiences and learn how to meet the needs of diverse audiences

MIDDLE:
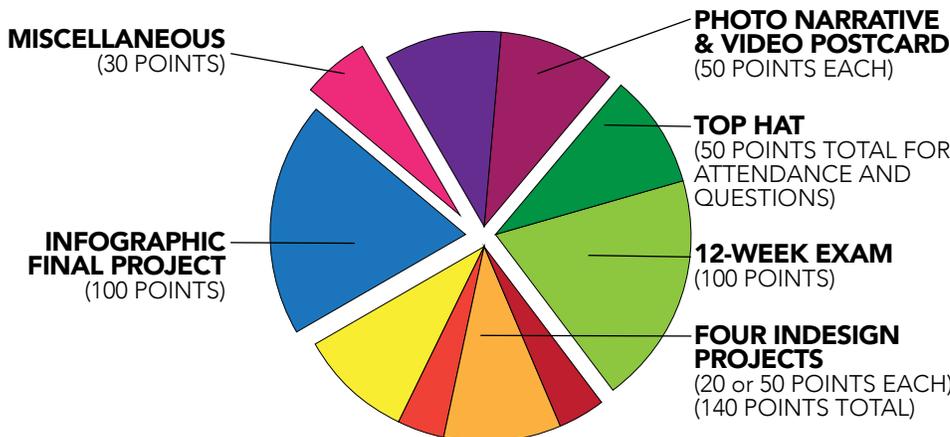### the stuff we will do...
ASSESSMENT
Learning outcomes in this class will be evaluated through one exam, photography, design projects, the TopHat app and quizzes.

RESOURCES
Books can be purchased online and at the KU bookstore.
- *The Non-Designer's Design Book* by Robin Williams. 978-0133966152
- *Design Is Storytelling* by Ellen Lupton. ISBN: 978-1942303190 Book can be purchased online and at the KU bookstore.

- *Top Hat website subscription.* We will be using the Top Hat (www.tophat.com) classroom response system in class. You will submit answers to in-class questions using an app on Apple or Android smartphones and tablets, laptops or through text message. I will also use this technology to take attendance during each class.
An email invitation will be sent to you by email, but if don't receive this email, you can register by simply visiting our course website: **https://app.tophat.com/e/152090** Our Course Join Code is **152090**
Top Hat will require a paid subscription: www.tophat.com/pricing. Should you require assistance with Top Hat at any time, please contact their Support Team (support@tophat.com) with the in-app support button, or by calling 1-888-663-5491.
- Selected readings assigned on the classroom website
- Access to Adobe InDesign. You may opt to purchase this software through Adobe or simply use the many computer labs on campus with InDesign.
- Please bring a pencil and eraser to each class. We will do a lots of sketching.
- Video tutorials from *www.JSchoolTech.org*: these videos have been produced specifically for you, the J300 student, by our technology department in the journalism school. While they will not cover the entirety of InDesign, they will aim at the main software skills needed to

DISTRIBUTION OF ASSIGNMENTS OVER 520 TOTAL POINTS FOR THE SEMESTER

MISCELLANEOUS
(30 POINTS)

PHOTO NARRATIVE & VIDEO POSTCARD
(50 POINTS EACH)

TOP HAT
(50 POINTS TOTAL FOR ATTENDANCE AND QUESTIONS)

12-WEEK EXAM
(100 POINTS)

FOUR INDESIGN PROJECTS
(20 or 50 POINTS EACH)
(140 POINTS TOTAL)

INFOGRAPHIC FINAL PROJECT
(100 POINTS)

J300
VISUAL STORYTELLING STUDENT CONTRACT
After reviewing this syllabus, please sign below.

In signing and submitting the syllabus, you acknowledge all of the policies, both of this class in particular and the school of journalism more widely.

You also acknowledge that you understand the requirements of the course, in terms of materials, supplies and assignments.

Finally, you agree to simply work hard to create original work that helps you to grow as a visual person.

Please sign below and date.

_____

signature

_____

your printed name

_____

date
Please return to class on the second day of the course.

J300

DOODLING SPACE

On the other side of this piece of paper is your contract, so I couldn't print any important stuff here. But that doesn't mean that you can't doodle and draw and generally be a fun visual person.

Enjoy.

complete the InDesign projects. I recommend having InDesign open in one window and watching the videos at the same time on another device (or in another window). Simply watching the videos without tinkering with InDesign won't take you far. Instead, be sure to pause the videos to practice the skills being demonstrated.

- The class website for this class is *http://www.j300.journalism.faculty. ku.edu/* Please bookmark the website and use it often. The website lists assignment details, due dates and slideshows from class lectures. Chances are, if you are looking for a resource for this class, it can be found on the class website.
- Blackboard will be used for this class for three main functions: email blasts, tallying your grade and submitting some assignments digitally.

CLASS WORK

Lectures will expand on readings. You will want to take notes that go beyond the main points of lecture slides. Material from the lectures will be on the exam. I will also expect that your apply the ideas from the lectures in your design work.

TopHat encourages participation from everyone in this large class and helps me to hear from students who are generally more reserved and less likely to volunteer to speak. I will use TopHat to spur discussion and gauge comprehension. During these TopHat discussions, you should consider your responses as an extension of your course work in the class. Your responses should use correct grammar, show attention to spelling and be your original ideas. Also, your responses should showcase appropriate language for an academic setting. In short, this isn't Twitter or Snapchat. Don't treat it like it is. Similarly, plagiarism or cheating on TopHat is just like academic dishonesty in any other portion of the course. Finally, TopHat is super-savvy and can now track your location when you input the code. If you are in your bed inputting a code that your friend texted you, I will know. That is academic dishonesty and will carry the same consequences as academic dishonesty otherwise.

ASSIGNMENTS:

InDesign Projects:

The main software for this course will be Adobe InDesign Creative Cloud (CC). We chose this software because it allows use to work with form, shape, color, typography and images. It is also the software used by most designers at newspapers, magazines, advertising and strategic communication companies.

You will create four InDesign projects before the final project for the class: an infographic. Rather than use an expensive — and not terribly useful — textbook to teach the software, we will use videos aimed at the specific assignments. These videos were created by the amazing *www.jschooltech.org* and KU's Heather Lawrenz.

The earlier projects — especially Project #1 — have many more videos to review than later projects. There is much to learn about the structure of InDesign before creating even the most basic design. However, the videos are short and manageable if you give yourself time.

Please note that the InDesign project descriptions on the J300 website (*http:// www.j300.journalism.faculty.ku.edu/ assignments/indesign-projects/*) link to much longer descriptions of each assignment, including some detailed instructions for Projects #1 and #3. Please be sure to read those instructions before jumping into designing.

Also, please know that Projects #1 and #3 are intentionally assignments that test your InDesign skills rather than your creativity. We are not looking for aggressive and adventurous design here, simply completion of the tasks described in the lesson.

Finally, please understand how difficult it can be to help with technology problems over email or the phone. Please plan ahead to attend office hours or schedule time with us. We are happy to help when we have adequate notice.

InDesign Project 1: Form & Shape ::
For this assignment you will show basic understanding of InDesign. You will be simply creating shapes, filling them with colors and creating some lines and

columns. *(20 points)*

InDesign Project 2: Resumé :: For the purpose of redesigning your resumé and to learn about type styling, we will design a new document showcasing your educational, professional and personal achievements. *(50 points)*

InDesign Project 3: Color :: Much like the first lesson on form and shape, this lesson will focus on the mechanics of InDesign. You will be supplied an InDesign document and you will make changes to the color appearance of that document in a prescribed way. *(20 points)*

InDesign Project 4: Photo Layout :: Using photos provided, you will layout a double-page design showcasing the photos with a headline, subhead, captions and copy. No need to do the reporting, just the design. *(50 points)*

Photo Narrative Series. As our first visual assignment, you will create a set of three images that tells a story with a beginning, middle and end. *(50 points)*

Video Postcard. You will document a campus location campus by making a short and simple video showcasing that place's sights and sounds. *(50 points)*

Infographic: To complete the semester and show off all of your InDesign and visual skills, you will create an infographic. This project is in substitute for your final exam and will be due during the scheduled final exam time *(100 points)*

Exam: It's not a mid-term. And it's not a final. But this exam will be a mostly multiple-choice Scantron test over the first 12 weeks of the semester, both from reading and from lecture. I do not give make-up tests without a verifiable excuse. *(100 points each total)*

TopHat: During most lectures, I will use TopHat to drive class discussion, to ensure that you are understanding the content and to record attendance. *(25 points for attendance; 25 points for questions)*

END:
finally, the details...
RULES TO LIVE BY

- All assignments are due at the start of class (4 p.m.). Expect technical difficulties and do not wait until the last minute to print your project.

- Assignments turned in after the start of class (yes, this means even a minute or two late) will lose 10-percent credit.

- Assignments not submitted within 75 minutes of the start of class (5:15 p.m.) will lose 50-percent credit. Final projects that are more than 75 minutes late will also lose 50 percent.

- No assignment will be accepted 24 hours after the deadline without an excuse approved by me in advance.

- Late & excused work is allowed if:
  - a signed physician note documents the absence and illness
  - a KU-sponsored athletic event in which you are participating conflicts with an assignment **and** you have notified me of the absence in advance
  - you notify me in advance of the conflict and convince me of its necessity
  - you have a death in the family that you can document with an obituary or funeral program.

- No electronic or emailed versions will be accepted for the majority of . A printed version is required for credit.

- If you would like to submit an assignment early **due to absence**, you can submit it at an earlier class. Or, you can ask the journalism resource center staff to place it in my mailbox.

ORIGINAL WORK

The expectation when you come to this class is that you've come to learn, to be creative, to stretch your imagination, and expand your skills. Therefore, all the work you do in this class must be original. That means no "recycling" of assignments or designs from other classes in the j-school or from outside the j-school.

Don't recycle. If you designed something for a publication or an earlier class (either at KU or elsewhere), you cannot resubmit it (or revise and submit it) as a new assignment in this class. Likewise, I expect the photos/images that you create to be created during this semester for submission to this class.

I assume the work you do for this class is original to this class. Any efforts to recycle material will be regarded as academic dishonesty. You may receive zero credit for the assignment and have a letter explaining the academic dishonesty entered into your academic file.

ABOUT PLAGIARISM

In general, any student who turns in work that is not their own on any assignment will receive a zero on that assignment. You may also be subject to Journalism School penalties on cheating and plagiarism, which can include expulsion from the School of Journalism.

For InDesign

When you are working on projects, the work should be your own. What I mean is this: your hand should be on the mouse, making the mouse clicks and doing the InDesign work. It is fine to enlist guidance from friends, teaching assistants and others. But your hands should be making the key strokes and the mouse clicks. And each student should be working from his/her own document.

Few semesters have finished without a student in my section of J300 receiving a zero for plagiarism. Please do your work.

Policy on Plagiarism & Fabrication/Falsification: Adopted May 7, 2004:

The William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications does not tolerate plagiarism, fabrication of evidence and falsification of evidence.

Penalties for plagiarism, fabrication or falsification can include a failing grade for this course and expulsion from the School of Journalism and Mass Communications.

If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, please consult the instructor of this course.

The following definitions are from Article II, Section 6, of the University Senate Rules and Regulations, revised FY98.

Plagiarism

Knowingly presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgment of the source). The sole

exception to the requirement of acknowledging sources is when the information or ideas are common knowledge.

Fabrication and Falsification

Unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The University of Kansas is committed to helping all students learn. If you have a special need that may affect your learning, please contact me as soon as possible. Please be aware that the KU Office of Student Access Services coordinates accommodations for all students who are eligible. If you have a disability for which you wish to request accommodations and have not contacted this office, please do so as soon as possible.

Information about services can be found at https://access.ku.edu/. Or you can visit the office on the first floor of Strong Hall. The phone number is *785-864-4064*. The email is *achieve@ku.edu*

Please contact me privately regarding your needs in this course.

CLASSROOM ATTENDANCE

From the journalism school's policy:

"No student may add a journalism class after the 20th day of a semester.

"Students must attend their classes and laboratory periods. Instructors may take attendance into account in assessing a student's performance and may require a certain level of attendance for passing a course. Instructors may choose to drop students from a course, based on attendance, without consent.

"The School of Journalism reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of students who fail to attend the first class or laboratory meeting."

"The KU Office of Student Financial Aid is required by federal law to determine whether students who receive aid are attending each class in which they are enrolled. Instructors are required to report to that office absences of students who have stopped attending and names of

those who have enrolled but never have attended. Students who do not attend classes may be required to repay federal and/or state financial aid.

"Students who receive any form of financial aid should learn all requirements including minimum hours of enrollment and grades to qualify for and retain that aid."

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of inclement weather, the decision to cancel classes is made by KU officials. To determine whether snow or icy conditions have canceled classes, call 864-7669 (864-SNOW).

COPYING OR RECORDING

Course materials prepared by the instructor, as well as content of all lectures presented by the instructor, are the instructor's property. Video and audio recording of lectures without instructor consent is prohibited. On request, the instructor usually will permit students to record lectures, on the condition that these recordings are only used as a study aid by the individual making the recording. Unless the instructor gives explicit permission, recordings of lectures may not be modified and must not be transferred or transmitted to any other person, whether or not that individual is enrolled in the course.

EXTRA CREDIT

Students have two opportunities for extra credit in J300. You can do both extra-credit options to earn a total of 15 extra credit points. No other options available:

- **KSPA events.** Volunteering at the KSPA contests (Feb. 25 and early May). Volunteer slots for these events are first-come, first-served with limited slots. ***The twist?*** If you fail to show for the extra credit volunteer opportunity, I will deduct 10 points from your attendance in addition to your not earning the extra credit points. Please only sign up if you are sure you can help. *(10 points)*

- **Infographic:** If you are willing to have

your infographic submission used as an example in future semesters, you get a grade nudge *(5 points).*

GRADING SCALE

The grading scale for this course is shown below. Grades are rounded to the next percentage point. There is no curve. Please do not ask.

A = 100-93 // A- = 92-90

B+ = 89-88 // B = 87-83 // B- = 82-80

C+ = 79-78 // C = 77-73 // C- = 72-70

D+ = 69-68 // D = 67-63 // D- = 62-60

F = 59.9 and below

FINAL EXAM TIME

The university has scheduled an awful slot for us and the final exam. Instead of meeting during finals week to submit your infographic, you will submit during finals week using online Blackboard submission.

CHANGES TO SYLLABUS

As the instructor, I reserve the right to modify the syllabus and schedule, if necessary. Those changes may include altering point values for assignments. Of course, I will notify you of any changes.

CAREER & OUTREACH OFFICE

If you need assistance with resume and cover letter development, job search strategy, internships, mock interviews and LinkedIn profile, schedule an appointment with Steve Rottinghaus at steve_rottinghaus@ku.edu. He's in Stauffer Flint room 120. Make sure to follow job and internship postings on Twitter at @Rhaus90.

THANKS

I appreciate you reading all the way until the end. I am ready for a great semester and to see your inspired visual work.

Yours in Visual Storytelling,