

SYLLABUS

Yes, it's from *The Matrix*! (1999, Wachowski sisters)

COMA 344: Multimedia Production

Class Date/Time/Location: MWF 9:15 - 10:20 AM in Ingram 115B	Instructor: Dr. Marnie Ritchie , Assistant Professor of Communication, mmritchie.com
Student Hours: Tuesdays 1-3 PM in Ingram 129; also available over Zoom during this time and by appointment (email me to set it up)	Email: ritchiem@plu.edu Email is the best way to reach me. I try to respond within 24 hours. I do not correspond weekdays after 5 PM nor weekends.

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ABOUT COMA 344

Masking

I strongly encourage us to mask in our classroom space. Thank you!

Course Description

Course incorporates contemporary methods, styles, and formats used in production and editing for multimedia products. Students will oversee development and design of non-fiction multimedia presentations while adhering to professional standards of media structure.

Course Objectives

1. Advance foundational skills in media pre-production, production, and postproduction
2. Understand the importance of media theory in the process of creation/making
3. Create multimedia products that are up to professional media standards
4. Collaborate in production teams to prepare for professional media environments

Required Materials

- Articles and Book Chapters linked in the Course Schedule, as well as on Sakai under Close Readings and Resources. **There is no textbook for this course.**
- A tool (laptop, tablet, notebook) to take notes in class
- Access to the internet

Student Hours

- In-Person Hours: TBD
- I am also available on Zoom or by appointment (Email me to set up a time: ritchiem@plu.edu)

This time is set aside for you. You are not interrupting me when you pop in or set up a time to meet with me during these hours. You should feel free to use this time as you need. I am here to be responsive to your needs and ambitions in your education. Please wear a mask if we are meeting in person.

Land Acknowledgment

PLU is on the traditional lands of the Nisqually, Puyallup, Squaxin Island and Steilacoom peoples; we acknowledge and respect the traditional caretakers of this land. We recognize that members of these peoples are leaders in their communities. We recognize that land acknowledgments are not enough.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance Policy

To succeed in this course (to reach the learning goals), I believe it is important for everyone to participate in our discussions and complete assigned work. I've taken trainings with the Provost's Office at PLU about how clear attendance policies can be more inclusive for students (structure is better than no structure), so that's why we have one.

Our attendance policy:

- You are allowed two freebie absences that will not affect your grade - no note or explanation is necessary for these absences.
- Further absences beyond the two freebies will result in a 10% reduction of your participation grade.
- Three late arrivals or early departures of 10 minutes or more is equivalent to one absence.
- Eight or more absences results in automatic failure of the course.

Excused absences, for which you do not need to provide documentation, include physical sickness (including COVID), religious observation, caregiving obligations, emotional and mental health barriers to attendance, trauma and safety reasons, and family emergencies. Your grade will not automatically be reduced for missing a class day for these reasons. However, you **must email me** if that is the case. And since this is a discussion-based class, I *strongly* encourage you to attend.

Do not attend class if you believe you have been exposed to COVID. Should your health or other circumstances change, negatively impacting your ability to attend our class in person, please notify me and the [Office of Accessibility and Accommodation](#) as soon as possible.

Self Care

Your personal well-being is essential and not just to your performance in college. Learning to manage stress is an ongoing process. Asking for help is a skill. If you feel that you might fall behind in work, **I ask that you email me or come to student hours ASAP.**

I encourage you to contact the Center for Student Success (CSS), which can connect you to resources. You can contact the CSS by email (success@plu.edu) or phone (253-535-8870).

Add/Drop

Students are responsible for understanding [the policies](#) and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, and similar topics.

Academic Integrity

All graded work must be the original work of the student claiming credit for it, with proper credit given to outside sources via citations. Students who use unoriginal work or permit another student to use their work will not receive for the course. Students who are uncertain as to what constitutes plagiarism should consult with me. For more information, please see PLU's [statement on Academic Integrity](#).

Laptops, Tablets, Technology

I allow laptops and tablets in class, and I put considerable trust in students that you use them responsibly. Please put your phone away before our class begins.

Accommodations

I am committed to supporting the learning of all students in my class. If you have already registered with the Office of Accessibility and Accommodation (OAA), please meet with me early in the course to discuss, plan, and implement your accommodations in the course. If you have a documented disability that requires reasonable accommodations or have questions about what constitutes reasonable accommodations, please contact the OAA at 253-535-7073 or oaapl@plu.edu.

Pronoun Use

We will use one another's personally designated pronouns. Do not assume anyone's gender in the course. Some of our readings use "she and/or he" to the exclusion of a more inclusive "they." I encourage you in your reading to note these exclusions and normalize using gender neutral language in your communication practices.

Title IX

I am a mandatory reporter under Title IX. This means that if you disclose sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, sexual assault, or gender-based discrimination to me related to the Pacific Lutheran University community, I must report it to Campus Safety, Students Rights and Responsibilities, Human Resources, and/or a member of the University Dispute Resolution Committee. If you would like to confidentially submit a disclosure, meaning one that does not activate Mandatory Reporting, you can do so via the following resources:

Advocacy Services in Center for Gender Equity

(<https://www.plu.edu/diversity-justice-sustainability/advocacy-services/> or 253-538-6304)

PLU Health Center (<http://www.plu.edu/health-center/> or 253-535-7337),

PLU Counseling Center (<https://www.plu.edu/counseling/> or 253-535-7206)

PLU University Pastor (<https://www.plu.edu/campus-ministry/staff/> or 253-535-7464)

Class Inclusivity

We will strive to make our learning spaces inclusive, equitable, and just. It is my intent that students from all backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course and that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity across all dimensions, including gender, sexuality, disability, age, socio-economic status, ethnicity, race, and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated.

In addition, if any of our class meetings conflict with your religious events, please let me know so that we can make arrangements.

Here are a few best practices for ensuring our space is actively inclusive: avoid words with exclusionary histories; try to summarize what a peer is saying in class in your head before responding; do not minimize historically marginalized students' feelings; take responsibility for the impact of our words. If you are unsure what might constitute an exclusionary impact in class, let's chat in Student Hours or by appointment further.

Respectful Learning Environment

The University holds as basic the integrity and well-being of every person in the community. I am committed to providing a living, learning and working environment that is fair, consistent, caring, and supportive of intellectual and personal growth. Further, PLU is committed to protecting the rights of its community members to engage in dialogue and express ideas in an environment that is free from harassment, discrimination, and exploitation. This freedom of expression does not, however, entail the freedom to threaten, stalk, intimidate, harass, or abuse.

Students are expected to treat every individual with respect. The University prohibits any activities that cause or threaten physical or mental harm, suffering or exhaustion, that demean the dignity of any individual, and/or that interfere with one's academic progress, living environment, or employment responsibilities.

Content Warnings

Students are advised that difficult or sensitive issues may be represented or discussed in this class. While care will always be taken not to cause distress and to create a welcoming learning environment for everyone, there may be occasions where you will confront images or texts, or where you hear discussions that are uncomfortable for you. While I cannot presume to know what is and is not triggering or traumatizing for a student, the syllabus does include content warnings.

If you ever feel unable to continue to participate in a particular class, you may leave at any point. I will follow up to address any concerns and provide additional resources for support. You are also welcome to share any concerns about the course content you may have at any time during the term, and I promise to listen openly and respectfully.

ASSIGNMENTS

How to Submit Assignments

Unless otherwise specified, work should be submitted through Sakai under Assignments.

Discussion/Participation

Point Value: 200 points

Your perspective is important to the critical discussions that we will have. Your attendance affects this grade.

How I assess discussion:

- 180-200 points – Creative insights and questions, risked speaking in class on a regular basis (1-3 times a week), consistent evidence of preparedness, generous openness to other perspectives, excellent insights and questions, took an active role in their own success, evidence of listening to peers (references to peers' comments in close reading comments and/or in class)
- 160-179 – Adequate class participation, reliable evidence of preparedness, curiosity concerning other perspectives, was present
- 140-159 – Present in class, adequate preparedness, acknowledgment of differing perspectives
- 120-159 – Unpreparedness that disrupted others' learning, no acknowledgement of differing perspectives
- 0-119 – Student interfered with peers' learning, disrespectful of class atmosphere, consistent unpreparedness, un-self-reflexive in their treatment of others

Critiques

Point Value: 100 points

There are seven days total devoted to critique in this class. I expect students to attend all of them and actively participate in these critiques through written feedback in class.

As Dr. Kate Hoyt writes, "I expect you to be thorough, critical, honest, and respectful. You will not serve your peers well by telling them that 'everything looks good!' Failure to be critical, honest, and thorough in your feedback will leave your peer vulnerable to grade deductions when the project is turned in. Failure to be respectful in your feedback will cause defensiveness and may discourage your peer from really hearing your feedback. Failure to receive feedback graciously is a sign of lack of readiness for the professional media industry."

Close Readings

Point Value: 100 points (8 readings worth 10 points each; 20 free points to get us to 100 total)

To make for the best discussions, readings should be done before class. I recommend that students bring the readings to class, either in print or digitally, so that we can reference them.

This class asks you to engage in close readings of the assigned readings using hypotheses on Sakai. To do the close readings, click the Close Readings tab in the left-hand menu on Sakai. To receive credit, these should be completed *before* class.

Each close reading should have the following components:

1. TWO substantive comments on the reading. These can be a critical question, a reflection on why a sentence stuck out to you, a reference to other relevant sources, and/or a critique of something the author wrote. Be yourself; don't just assume the "discussion board voice."
2. AND ONE reply to a peer. This can be a specific compliment, a question, and/or a complication. If no one has responded to the reading yet, please make a third comment.

Media Case Study

Point value: 50 points

See Sakai > Assignments > "Media Case Study" for more information.

Working in groups, you will sign up for a date throughout the semester to research and present an example of a media artifact/product that is a.) innovative; b.) ethical; c.) professionally produced and d.) impactful on a community, societal, or world level.

You and your group will prepare a 15-minute (please, no longer than this) VISUAL presentation (PowerPoint, Google Slides, Prezi, etc.) that discusses: 1.) the background, synopsis, and publication (i.e. where is it published? Through what platform?) of the piece; 2.) the piece's technical/aesthetic considerations (i.e. what makes it appealing/compelling? What are certain techniques the producer(s) used? What about it especially draws YOU to it?); and 3.) ethical/critical considerations (how does this piece reinforce or challenge power hierarchies? Who does this piece give power to? Who does it take away power from? What are its impacts — both potential and reported — on the greater community/society/world?). Please leave a few minutes for Q&A or class discussion.

Depending on the date you sign up, you will have a choice between an example of: a collage, comic, podcast, photo essay, interactive documentary, and short film.

Team Demo

Point value: 50 points

See Sakai > Assignments > "Team Demo" for more information.

You and your group will prepare a 20 minute presentation that demos a multimedia topic for the class. You do not need to have *everything* about the topic figured out. The objectives of this exercise are to: 1.) prepare students for how to create media presentations; 2. provide an opportunity for students to skill-share and resource-share; and 3) demonstrate how to do online research about multimedia production.

Depending on the date you sign up, you will have a choice between the follow demo topics: How to Use Mixed Media in Collages, How to Use Color in Visual Media, How to Incorporate Sounds throughout a Podcast, How to do Intros/Outros in Podcasts, How to Choose an Interactive Platform, How to Best Incorporate B-Roll, How to Fashion Different Kinds of Shots, and How to Keep a Clean Timeline in Adobe Premiere.

Project #1: Visual Identity Collage

Point Value: 100 points

See Sakai > Assignments > “Project 1” for more information.

For this design exercise, you will choose elements of your identity to present visually as a collage. We will go over digital collaging in a Tools Workshop in class. The objectives of this exercise are to: 1.) introduce yourself to the class and let people learn about you; 2.) visually translate elements of your identity; 3.) (re)familiarize yourself with digital image manipulation tools such as Photoshop and Illustrator.

Project #2 Proposal

Point Value: 50

You will submit a proposal for the Podcast + Photo Essay project, outlining your proposed project’s vision, objectives, research needs, technical needs, and timeline for completion.

Project #2: Podcast and Photo Essay

Point Value: 100

See Sakai > Assignments > “Project 2” for more information.

This project entails telling stories through three different media: audio, still image, and text. This project will focus on STORYTELLING, and the theme for this project is The Underdog. Your goal is to interview someone whom you consider an underdog (in any way that you interpret that word), and tell one of three stories: 1.) that person’s greatest failure or challenge; 2.) that person’s greatest achievement or victory; or 3.) a story that this person has never told anyone (or has only told a select few). You will produce both a photo essay and a podcast on this topic, and, through publishing the story on the class blog, you will have the podcast and photo essay speak or relate to one another through layout.

Project #3 Discussion

Point Value: 50 points

No proposal. Instead, we'll have a meeting. Just come to the meeting, discuss your project's goals/what ideas you have so far, what equipment you need, and how you plan to execute it.

Project #3: Interactive Documentary

Point Value: 200 points

See Sakai > Assignments > "Project 3" for more information.

For this final project, you will work in teams of 3-4. The focus of this project is **ADVOCACY**, and the theme of the project is **Community**. You will find a community (any size, shape, or scope) that is either a.) facing a hardship; or b.) implementing a noteworthy project or initiative (no matter how big or small). You must interview **AT LEAST** two different people for this project, in addition to gathering sufficient B-roll footage for your video. Finally, you will choose an interactive platform through which to publish your video. We will go over some possibilities for interactive platforms in class. We will watch these videos and give extensive feedback in a series of watch parties at the end of the semester.

GRADES

Grade Breakdown

Assignment	Point Value
Discussion/Participation	200
Critiques	100
Close Readings and 20 Free Points	100
Media Case Study	50
Team Demo	50
Project 1	100
Project 2 Proposal	50
Project 2	100
Project 3 Proposal	50
Project 3	200
TOTAL:	1,000

Grading Scale

Please see the scale [here](#).

Explanation of Assessment

I use rubrics which are made available to students. Please wait 24 hours before speaking with me about any graded assignments. Any grade complaints must be submitted within seven days of receiving the grade in writing.

CITATIONAL ETHICS

I thank Dr. Kate Hoyt for the extensive reliance on her Multimedia Production syllabus in drafting the assignments and scaffolding for this class. She's a 🦄.

External links have been removed to protect student info & abide by copyright for readings.

SCHEDULE

The Matrix (1999, Wachowski sisters)

Please note: the course schedule is subject to change at instructor's discretion.
Any alterations will be announced over email and reflected in this "live" schedule

COURSE INTRODUCTION			
Date	Topic	Readings To Do Before Class	Assignments Due By Start of Class
W 02/08	Course Introduction and Begin to Draft Learning Community Agreement	Look over the Course Syllabus and Course Schedule (the document you are in) Read this Short Guide to Pronouns	Introduce yourself in our Introduction Slideshow
F 02/10	Finish Learning Community Agreement In-Class Poll Assign Teams for Media Case Studies	Just come to class!	---
M 02/13	Assign Teams for Team Demos What is Multimedia?	Interview with Henry Jenkins	Close Reading 1 Read over the Learning Community Agreement (What to do if a team member stops communicating or if you become that team member)

			who is overwhelmed/stops communicating)
W 02/15	Activity: Convergence Culture in Cult Films (Extra Credit Opportunity 1)	---	Bring a laptop to class if you have one
F 02/17	Activity: Make a Twine Game (Extra Credit Opportunity 2)	---	Bring a laptop to class if you have one Glance at Depression Quest , if able (CW: About clinical depression) Glance at Queers in Love at the End of the World (CW: Some sexual content)
M 02/20	No Class: PLU-Recognized Holiday		

UNIT 1: VISUAL CULTURE

Date	Topic	Readings To Do Before Class	Assignments Due By Start of Class
W 02/22	Visual Culture and Signifiers Introduce Project 1	“There Are No Visual Media,” W. J. T. Mitchell	Close Reading 2
F 02/24	Media Case Study: Collage	“Wonders, Curiosities, and Diversions,” Henry Jenkins	Close Reading 3

	<p>Media Case Study: Comic</p> <p>Visual Culture Converging with Other Cultures</p>		
M 02/27	<p>In-Class Workshop: Photoshop</p> <p>We'll meet in the Library Design Lab Room 140!</p>	---	<p>Glance at our super cool "Gender is a Construct" collages</p> <p>If you have no experience with Photoshop, I recommend looking up how to use some of the tools in this tutorial: "Every Tool in Photoshop Explained," 2022</p>
W 03/01	<p>No Class: Sorry, y'all</p>		
F 03/03	<p>In-Class Workshop, Continued: Illustrator</p> <p>We'll meet in the Library Design Lab Room 140!</p>	<p>(Optional) If you have no experience with graphic design, I do recommend scanning this: "Mini Art School," <i>White Space is Not Your Enemy</i></p>	<p>If you have no experience with Illustrator, I highly recommend going through every tool in this YouTube video: "Every Adobe Illustrator Tool," 2022 (17 min)</p>
M 03/06	<p>Team Demo: How to Use Mixed Media in Collages</p>	---	---

	Team Demo: How to Use Color in Visual Media		
W 03/08	Critiques: EVERYONE come to class pls!	---	Group A: Come prepared to get feedback. Please put a draft of your wonder cabinet image here in the folder Group A.
F 03/10	Critiques: EVERYONE come to class pls!	---	Groups B: Come prepared to get feedback. Please put a draft of your wonder cabinet image here in the folder Group B.
M 03/13	Showing and Discussing Final Projects	---	Project 1 Due. Please submit through Sakai.

UNIT 2: JOURNALISTIC STORYTELLING

Date	Topic	Readings To Do Before Class	Assignments Due By Start of Class
W 03/15	Media Case Study: Podcast Techniques for Digital Storytelling Introduce Project 2	“Storytelling Techniques” by Public Communication for Researchers	Listen to: “Colors,” Radiolab (You can listen with subtitles here) Close Reading 4 Watch the video embedded here (3 min): “Radiolab Conducts the Choral Color Experiment,” Kim Nowacki

<p>F 03/17</p>	<p>Interviewing and Field Production</p> <p>Discussion of Donald Glover’s Self-Interview (We will read together in class)</p>	<p>“Chapter 4: Reporting” by Jonathan Kern, excerpt of <i>Sound Reporting: The NPR Guide to Audio Journalism and Production</i></p>	<p>Close Reading 5</p> <p>Production Benchmark: Nothing due but strongly suggest you have the interview scheduled</p>
<p>M 03/20</p>	<p>Media Case Study: Photo Essay</p> <p>In-Class Workshop: Photo Essay, Shorthand, and Capturing Sounds</p> <p>We’ll meet in the Library Design Lab Room 140!</p>	<p>---</p>	<p>Project 2 Proposal Due</p>
<p>W 03/22</p>	<p>In-Class Workshop: Podcasting Basics in Audacity</p> <p>We’ll meet in the Library Design Lab Room 140!</p>	<p>“Chapter 6: Story Editing” by Jonathan Kern, excerpt of <i>Sound Reporting: The NPR Guide to Audio Journalism and Production</i></p> <p>(Optional) Read/listen to this example story</p>	<p>Close Reading 6</p>
<p>F 03/24</p>	<p>Team Demo: How to Incorporate Sounds throughout a Podcast</p>	<p>---</p>	<p>Production Benchmark: Nothing due but strongly suggest you have draft of general podcast structure and photo essay shot list</p>

	Team Demo: How to do Intros/Outros in Podcasts		
M 03/27 - F 03/31	No Class: Spring Break		
M 04/03	Work Day: Remote	---	---
W 04/05	Work Day IN CLASS!	Come to class pls 🍷	---
F 04/07	No Class: PLU-Recognized Holiday		
M 04/10	Critique Day	---	Group A: Come prepared to get feedback.
W 04/12	Critique Day	---	Group B: Come prepared to get feedback.
F 04/14 & M 04/17	No Class: Professor at Wedding		
W 04/19	No Class: Professor Trapped in Texas. Yee-haw. 🤠		
F 04/21	Critique Day 3	---	Group C: Come prepared to get feedback.

UNIT 3: INTERACTIVE DOCUMENTARY

Date	Topic	Readings To Do Before Class	Assignments Due By Start of Class
M 04/24	<p>Interactivity Documentaries (iDocs) and Production Teams</p> <p>Introduce Project 3</p> <p>Media Case Study: Interactive Documentary</p>	---	<p>Project 2 Due. Submit Shorthand story one of two ways: Add prof as a collaborator (ritchiem@plu.edu) or submit preview link through Sakai Assignments. Thanks!</p>
W 04/26	<p>Media Case Study: Short Film</p> <p>In-Class Workshop: Pre-Production, Production, and Post-Production</p> <p>We'll meet in the Library Design Lab Room 140!</p>	<p><u>“Affective Radicality: Prisons, Palestine, and Interactive Documentary.”</u> Ryan Watson</p>	<p>Close Reading 7</p> <p>(Optional) See some of Nonny de la Pena’s other works of immersive journalism here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DSc4PShv11k (CW: Traumatic experiences depicted)</p>
F 04/28	<p>Team Demo: How to Choose an Interactive Platform</p> <p>Team Demo: How to Best Incorporate B-Roll</p>	---	<p>Groups Apple, Blueberry, & Cantaloupe meet with Prof to discuss doc idea after demos</p>

M 05/01	<p>Team Demo: How to Fashion Different Kinds of Videography Shots</p> <p>Team Demo: How to Keep a Clean Timeline in Adobe Premiere</p>	---	<p>Groups Dragonfruit, Elderberry, & Fig meet with Prof to discuss doc idea after demos</p>
W 05/03	In-Class Work Day	<p>“Immersive Storytelling and Affective Ethnography in Virtual Reality,” Maud Ceuterick and Chris Ingraham</p>	Close Reading 8
F 05/05	In-Class Work Day	---	<p>Production Benchmark: Nothing due but strongly suggest you have interviews conducted and initial b-roll shot</p>
M 05/08	<p>Editing Extravaganza</p> <p>We'll meet in the Library Design Lab Room 140!</p>	---	<p>Come to class prepared to edit your interactive film with your teammates.</p>
W 05/10	Critique	---	<p>Teams A, B, & C: Come prepared to get feedback.</p>
F 05/12	Critique	---	<p>Teams D, E, & F: Come prepared to get feedback.</p>

M 05/15	Editing Extravaganza: Please be with your team doing this in a location your team agrees upon 😊	---	Please consult the feedback you got during Critique & explore interactive platform options.
W 05/17	Final Screening: Snacks on snacks on snacks will be provided.	---	Teams Apple, Blueberry, & Cantaloupe: Come prepared to screen your interactive documentary! On the interactive platform pls
F 05/19	Final Screening: Snacks on snacks on snacks will be provided. Submitting to the Tacoma Film Festival	---	Teams Dragonfruit, Elderberry, & Fig: Come prepared to screen your interactive documentary! On the interactive platform pls
M 05/22	Just our final due date. No in-person class.		Project 3 Due for Every Team, Officially on Sakai

FYI: There is no midterm or final for this course.