

**NUTR 337: Translating Nutrition Evidence into Multimedia for the Public  
Fall 2021**

<b>Class Meetings:</b>	Tuesday, 9 AM – 12 AM EST, online only
<b>Instructor:</b>	Corby Kummer, <a href="mailto:Corby.Kummer@tufts.edu">Corby.Kummer@tufts.edu</a>
<b>Office Hours:</b>	By appointment
<b>Teaching Asst.:</b>	Cordelia Sheetoh, <a href="mailto:Cordelia.Sheetoh@tufts.edu">Cordelia.Sheetoh@tufts.edu</a>
<b>Semester Hour Units:</b>	3

**Course Description:**

In this course, students learn how to structure and produce a multi-media article incorporating text, infographics, audio and animation to a publishable article in the general media and learn how to present their story to a group effectively. This distinctive course welcomes students from all Tufts disciplines (AFE, BMN, FANPP, NEDS, and NICBC). Students will work in groups to produce diverse and controversial topics and particular emphasis will be placed on conception, clarity of writing and contribution to public understanding of nutrition and the food system, extending the School's leadership role as a trusted voice. Guest lectures include faculty members from multiple degree program divisions that will focus on a variety of current nutrition, environment, and policy issues, as well as experts in the social media, podcasting, researching, and data visualization skills arena. This course introduces a variety of media topics and techniques while allowing students to focus on developing in areas of particular interest.

**Course Objectives:**

- Increase knowledge and familiarity with the goals, format, and style of a variety of food media, including newspapers, magazines, scholarly journals, professional newsletters, and blogs
- Improve skills in information researching, interviewing, and other basic journalism skills
- Develop skills to produce effective presentations and visualizations to accompany written pieces
- Analyze and present data in a compelling way that is easy to follow for the layman and scientist alike, enhancing and telling chosen story both through data visualizations alone and in conjunction with narrative text and photographs
- Write about food and nutrition in a variety of styles, including journalism, first-person narrative, and study analysis
- Develop critical thinking skills for analyzing and evaluating published food writing and the ethics of writing about food
- Enhance project management and collaboration skills, learning and drawing on the strengths of fellow students
- Provide effective and thoughtful feedback to written work in a group setting
- Identify a topical subject of pressing current interest, and produce a research-based, long-form journalism article that incorporates recent research on diets, nutrition, agriculture, and the food system. The final presentation will include imaginatively presented data; photographs; and brief video and/or recorded segment for projected podcasts.

**Texts or Materials:**

One basic text, William K. Zinsser's *On Writing Well*, will be required. Each week the instructor will assign two to three articles or chapters from books written by skilled practitioners, including Marion Nestle, Tamar Haspel, Walter Willett, and Jean Mayer. Additional materials will be posted on Canvas (<https://canvas.tufts.edu>) or placed on reserve at the Hirsch Health Sciences Library.

**Academic Conduct:**

Each student is responsible for upholding the highest standards of academic integrity, as specified in the [Friedman School's Policies and Procedures Handbook](#) and Tufts University policies (<http://students.tufts.edu/student-affairs/student-life-policies/academic-integrity-policy>). It is the responsibility of each student to understand and comply with these standards, as violations will be sanctioned by penalties ranging from failure on an assignment and the course to dismissal from the School.

### **Classroom Conduct:**

A significant portion of each student's grade will be based on in-class and Canvas discussion participation: familiarity with the week's reading, and particularly evaluation of fellow students' writing assignments. A significant learning objective of the class is self-editing and the ability to improve writing through criticism and revision. By listening to the instructor and fellow students, students will become familiar with the goals of editing for structure, direction, clarity, and concision. In order to achieve that goal, attendance is mandatory. Since this course is based on an interactive, workshop format, all writing assignments will be discussed in class.

All absences and tardiness should be relayed by email to the instructor and teaching assistant in advance of each class. Those who miss a class are required to submit a 1-page double-spaced opinionated summary of the assigned readings that week, addressing what each selection illustrates about the course theme.

### **Accommodation of Disabilities:**

Tufts University is committed to providing equal access and support to all students through the provision of reasonable accommodations so that each student may access their curricula and achieve their personal and academic potential. If you have a disability that requires reasonable accommodations please contact the Friedman School Assistant Dean of Student Affairs at 617-636-6719 to make arrangements for determination of appropriate accommodations. Please be aware that accommodations cannot be enacted retroactively, making timeliness a critical aspect for their provision.

### **Diversity Statement:**

We believe that the diversity of student experiences and perspectives is essential to the deepening of knowledge in this course. We consider it part of our responsibility as instructors to address the learning needs of all of the students in this course. We will present materials that are respectful of diversity: race, color, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, religious beliefs, political preference, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, citizenship, language, or national origin among other personal characteristics.

### **Assessment and Grading:**

Grading for the course will be based on the following:

- Class participation (attendance, choice of web readings for class discussion, active participation in class discussion and evaluations, active participation in Canvas discussions each week) – 35%
- Short writing assignments – 40%
- Final project – 25%

Papers will be graded on the following elements:

- Following the directions of the assignment, including word limits
- Original, engaging presentation of the subject, including graphic and audio or visual components
- Ability to identify, locate, and interview original sources, whether they be people (including visiting guests), books, or manuscripts
- Thoughtful word choice and proper use of grammar, applying lessons and suggestions offered during weekly class discussion

- Ability to construct an argument, synthesize written research and interviews, and draw conclusions about a food topic
- Smooth integration of written, graphical, and audio or visual material to be complementary rather than repetitive

**Grading Range:**

*A passing grade in the course is B- or better. Course grades will be based on the below (subject to revision during the course):*

A	> 94%
A-	90 - <94%
B+	87 - <90%
B	84 - <87%
B-	80 - <84%

**Assignments**

Every week each student is required to identify and post to Canvas one article from a popular, political, technical, or scholarly website or journal demonstrating qualities that merit class discussion—whether because of the good or bad examples they set. For each class the instructor will identify three of the submitted articles to be discussed in class. Students should pay attention to presentation—supporting infographics and audio or video clips if included and evaluate their quality. Students will post suggestions by Thursday at 6:00pm EST, and the article choices will be posted on Canvas by the Sunday before each class. The instructor will assign readings for the first two classes to set examples for students to use in their own searches for the remainder of the term.

Students will submit 3 short writing assignments (500-900 words as specified in each assignment) that may incorporate relevant visualizations throughout the term and 1 final multimedia group project (1,500 to 1,750 words paper + visualizations or other). Assignments will be discussed and critiqued in class by students and the instructor. Students are expected to provide revisions based on these discussions for the following week unless otherwise noted.

An overview of the assignments is outlined below.

1. Food History  
2-pages 500-750 words. Contrast the food history of the oldest living member of your family to contemporary diets. Focus on nutrition advice and economic necessities of the time.  

First Draft	Sept 13
Revisions	Sept 20
2. Controversial Nutrition Topic  
3 pages. 750-900 words. Select a controversial nutrition topic of your choice and report both sides clearly enough to equip the reader with enough information to make up her own mind. Written piece and infographic. This topic should begin to explore possible topics for students' final projects.  

Outline	Sept 27
Dataset idea for infographic	Sept 27
Written piece first draft	Oct 4
Infographic first draft	Oct 11
Written piece revisions	Oct 18
Infographic revisions	Oct 25
3. Improving health through individual diet choice. As with Controversial Nutrition Topic assignment above, this should explore possibilities for students' final projects.

Written piece. 3 pages, 750-900 words of advice for daily eating to reflect sound and current nutritional studies and science.

Outline	Oct 25
First draft	Nov 1
Revisions	Nov 8

Final Project: Group Multimedia Project and Presentation.

Assigned groups will develop a topic and research question to present a written piece (1500-1750 word count) accompanied by an infographic and audio clip to be presented to the class during reading week on December 15 during class time.

Outline and list of sources to interview:	Nov 1
Outreach plan for interview	Nov 1
Progress report on outreach	Nov 9
Group assignment	Nov 9
2-3 page written section on one interview subject	Nov 22
Audio clip first draft	Nov 22
3-page written section outlining conclusion	Nov 29
Audio clip revisions	Nov 29
Infographic first draft	Nov 29
Assemblage of text, audio, infographic	Dec 6
Final Presentation	Dec 14

The topics of final papers must be approved by the instructor before students begin writing, with outlines presented in class and to instructor. *Please submit papers in serif font (Times New Roman or Georgia), double-spaced, 12-point font, not justified; assignments are due the Monday at 11:59 pm EST the day before class.*

**Instructions for Submission of Assignments:**

Weekly web reading selections chosen by students must be posted to Canvas by **Thursday at 6:00 pm EST**. By **Sunday at 6:00 pm EST** the instructor and teaching assistant will post the three student submissions the entire class is expected to read and evaluate for Tuesday's class.

Writing assignments should be posted to Canvas by **Monday at 11:59 pm EST** the day before the Tuesday class that they are due. Assignments received after their deadline will not be accepted or graded unless extension is approved in advance. Students who are unable to complete an assignment or exam on time for any reason should notify the instructor by email prior to the deadline, with a brief explanation for why the extension is needed. Late submissions may not receive full credit.

**Course Topics and Assignment Schedule at a Glance:**

*This schedule is subject to modification at the instructor's discretion*

DATE	CLASS TOPIC	LECTURER	ASSIGNMENTS DUE
Week 1: September 14	Differentiating personal histories in economic context and utilizing verbal data	Kummer	Assigned readings Food History assignment: first draft
Week 2: September 21	Implementing data and building effective visualizations	Kummer	Web/journal reading suggestions based on showing straightforward, clear advice

*Fill last 30 minutes		Rebecca Morin and Tania Alarcon	on diet options clearly or unclearly identifying sources and including data visualizations  Food History: revisions
Week 3: September 28	Infographics: the basics of presentation and a working session	Kummer  Kyle Monahan	Web/journal reading suggestions based on badly designed visualizations  Sorting the good/bad; understanding the significance of evaluations of micronutrient effectiveness in human health  Watch Kyle's video on infographics and review sample data sets for infographic  Controversial Nutrition Topic: Outline/paragraph with idea for subject of essay and idea for data set to create infographic; Kyle will help evaluate data sources
Week 4: October 5	Understanding Narrative Structures	Kummer  Katie Dolan	Web/journal reading suggestions based on a focus on narrative structure as a way of conveying nutritional advice  Controversial Nutrition Topic: first draft
Week 5: October 12	Utilizing imagery to tell the story	Kummer  Kyle Monahan (?)	Web/journal reading suggestions based on looking at imagery that tells the story  Infographic first draft from a sample data set; Kyle will help evaluate and suggest revisions
Week 6: October 19	Writing to sort through nutrition confusion and taking contrarian views	Kummer  Tamar Haspel	Web/journal reading suggestions based on counterintuitive nutritional advice  Controversial Nutrition Topic: revisions

Week 7: October 26	Conceiving and preparing audio clips	Kummer  Gabrielle Emanuel	Web/journal reading suggestions based on notable audio components  Infographic revision  Improving Health assignment: Outline
Week 8: November 2	Conveying Conviction	Kummer  Sue Roberts	Web/journal reading suggestions based on opinion pieces around nutrition advice or policy  Improving Health first draft due  Final project: outline and sources; outreach plan for interviews
Week 9: November 9	Animation and Motion GFX	Kummer  Pao Vinitchagoon	Web/journal reading suggestions based on clear and effective motion graphics and animation  Improving Health: Revisions  Discuss group assignments for final project, dividing responsibilities for text, infographics, and audio clips; give progress reports on outreach plan
Week 10: November 16	<i>NO CLASS</i>		Improving Health: revisions
Week 11: November 23	Topic Development  Evaluating a research question	Kummer  Parke Wilde	Web/journal reading suggestions based on effective communication of data  Final project: 2-3 page written section on one interview subject; first draft audio clip
Week 12: November 30	Integrating video, photos, and data visualization into narrative reporting and storytelling	Kummer  Katrina Sarson	Web/journal reading suggestions based on notable use of photography  Final project: 3-page written section outlining conclusion;

			audio revisions; first draft infographic
Week 13: December 7	Presenting information in person	Kummer	Web/journal reading suggestions based on video/audio accompanying a story  Final project: first assemblage of text, audio file, and infographic
Week 14: December 14	<b>Final Project Presentations</b>		

\*This schedule is subject to modification at the instructor’s discretion.

**Detailed Description of Course Topics, Assignments, and Learning Objectives:**

**Week 1: September 14**

**Class Topic:** Differentiating personal histories in economic context and utilizing verbal data

**Learning Objectives:**

- Provide examples of information sources for the food history assignment and develop appropriate questions for the interview
- Propose approaches to organize interview notes and form into a short, concise narrative
- Use writing and interviewing techniques to link diet to economic factors and changing nutritional advice by both decade and country; consider the effect of macroeconomic forces on individual diets
- Describe often complex nutritional information in easily accessible manner
- Explain challenges of offering nutrition and dietary advice clearly: what readers do and don’t need to know
- Establish friendly but authoritative tone in writing, part of being a trusted voice
- How to interview without inserting bias, getting the most from an interview

**Required Readings:**

- “Guess who’s coming to dinner? Nobody,” by Jean Mayer (optional)

**Assignments:**

- Submit first draft of food history writing assignment by Monday Sept 13 at 11:59pm EST
- Post web/journal reading suggestions based on showing straightforward, clear advice on diet options clearly or unclearly identifying sources and including data visualizations to Canvas by Thursday Sept 16 at 6:00pm EST
- Begin revisions for food history writing assignment due by Monday Sept 20 at 11:59pm EST

**Week 2: September 21**

**Class Topic:** Implementing data and building effective visualizations

**Learning Objectives:**

- Understand how to evaluate data sets and their credibility
- Learn what questions that can be answered with data
- Understand how to find accurate and meaningful data and determining good data sources
- Know the key concepts to look for in developing accurate and effective graph
- Determine how to choose data sets to increase reader understanding

**Required Readings:**

- *On Writing Well*, chapters 1-3
- Three selected articles posted to Canvas on Sunday evening

**Assignments:**

- Submit revisions for food history writing assignment due by Monday Sept 20 at 11:59pm EST
- Post web/journal reading suggestions based on badly designed visualizations to Canvas by Thursday Sept 23 at 6:00pm EST
- Watch Kyle's video on infographics and review sample data sets for infographic
- Controversial Nutrition Topic Assignment: Begin outline/paragraph on idea of subject essay, and idea for data set to create infographic, due Monday Sept 27 at 11:59pm EST

**Week 3: September 28**

**Class Topic:** Infographics: the basics of presentation and a working session

**Learning Objectives:**

- Demonstrate how to present data for maximal clarity and graphic ease of understanding and attractiveness
- Demonstrate familiarity with programs that efficiently translate data into visual terms
- Recognize how to effectively select data in order to leave viewer with accurate impression

**Required Readings:**

- Three selected articles posted to Canvas on Sunday evening

**Assignments:**

- Controversial Nutrition Topic Assignment: Submit outline/paragraph on idea of subject essay, and idea for data set to create infographic, by Monday Sept 27 at 11:59pm EST
- Post web/journal reading suggestions based on a focus on narrative structure as a way of conveying nutritional advice to Canvas by Thursday Sept 30 at 6:00pm EST
- Controversial Nutrition Topic Assignment: Begin first draft written, due Monday Oct 4 at 11:59pm EST

**Week 4: October 5**

**Class Topic:** Understanding Narrative Structures

**Learning Objectives:**

- Understand topic order for individual articles
- Build impact and strength by careful choice of quotation and character

**Required Readings:**

- *On Writing Well*, chapters 4-5
- Three selected articles posted to Canvas on Sunday evening

**Assignments:**

- Controversial Nutrition Topic Assignment: Submit first draft by Monday Oct 4 at 11:59pm EST
- Post web/journal reading suggestions based on looking at imagery that tells the story to Canvas by Thursday Oct 7 at 6:00pm EST
- Controversial Nutrition Topic Assignment: begin first draft infographic, due Monday Oct 11 at 11:59pm EST

**Week 5: October 12**

**Class Topic:** Using a visual to tell the story, choosing the right visual

**Learning Objectives:**

- Understand techniques to using imagery in lieu of and in support of written work



- Learn strategies to selecting and promoting imagery that conveys messaging with little confusions

**Required Readings:**

- *On Writing Well*, chapters 6-7
- *Food Politics* by Marion Nestle, Chapters 1-2
- Three selected articles posted to Canvas on Sunday evening

**Assignments:**

- Controversial Nutrition Topic Assignment: Submit first draft infographic by Monday Oct 11 at 11:59pm EST
- Post web/journal reading suggestions based on counterintuitive nutritional advice to Canvas by Thursday Oct 14 at 6:00pm EST
- Controversial Nutrition Topic Assignment: Begin revisions, due Monday Oct 18 at 11:59pm EST

**Week 6: October 19**

**Class Topic:** Writing to sort through nutrition confusion and taking contrarian views

**Learning Objectives:**

- Structure research and advocacy articles to take contrarian views and interview sources expressing two sides of any issue
- Establish authoritative and clear-eyed view, also part of being a trusted voice

**Required Readings:**

- *On Writing Well*, chapters 8-10
- *Food Politics*, Chapters 3-4
- Three selected articles posted to Canvas on Sunday evening

**Assignments:**

- Controversial Nutrition Topic Assignment: Submit revisions by Monday Oct 18 at 11:59pm EST
- Post web/journal reading suggestions based on notable audio components to Canvas by Thursday Oct 21 at 6:00pm EST
- Improving Health Assignment: Begin outline, due Monday Oct 25 at 11:59pm EST
- Controversial Nutrition Topic Assignment: Begin infographics revisions, due Monday Oct 25 at 11:59pm EST

**Week 7: October 26**

**Class Topic:** Conceiving and preparing audio clips

**Learning Objectives:**

- Evaluate whether audio or visual presentation best suits a specific idea
- Become conversant in the rudiments of choosing, recording, and editing short audio and visual presentations

**Required Readings:**

- *On Writing Well*, chapters 11, 12, 15
- Three selected articles posted to Canvas on Sunday evening

**Assignments:**

- Improving Health Assignment: Submit outline by Monday Oct 25 at 11:59pm EST
- Controversial Nutrition Topic Assignment: Submit infographics revisions by Monday Oct 25 at 11:59pm EST
- Post web/journal reading suggestions based on opinion pieces around nutrition advice or policy to Canvas by Thursday Oct 28 at 6:00pm EST
- Improving Health Assignment: Begin first draft, due Monday Nov 1 at 11:59pm EST

- Final Project: Begin outline and sources, and outreach plan for interviews, due Nov 1 at 11:59pm EST

### **Week 8: November 2**

**Class Topic:** Conveying conviction

**Learning Objectives:**

- How to study and share nutrition information
- Understand techniques and skills to be authoritative in the scientific arena
- Explain complex topics in a convincing manner to those without background knowledge

**Required Readings:**

- 2017 and 2018 articles by Dr. Susan Roberts posted to Canvas
- Three selected articles posted to Canvas on Sunday evening

**Assignments:**

- Improving Health Assignment: Submit first draft by Monday Nov 1 at 11:59pm EST
- Final Project: Submit outline and sources, and outreach plan for interviews by Nov 1 at 11:59pm EST
- Post web/journal reading suggestions based on clear and effective motion graphics and animation to Canvas by Thursday Nov 4 at 6:00pm EST
- Final project: Begin to discuss group assignments for final project, dividing responsibilities for text, infographics, and audio clips; give progress reports on outreach plan
- Improving Health Assignment: Begin revisions by Monday Nov 8 at 11:59pm EST

### **Week 9: November 9**

**Class Topic:** Animation and Motion GFX

**Learning Objectives:**

- Become conversant in techniques of motion graphics in online articles
- Judge when and how to use motion graphics in multimedia projects.
- Work smoothly in group presentation of infographic

**Required Readings:**

- Willett article
- Three selected articles posted to Canvas on Sunday evening

**Assignments:**

- Improving Health Assignment: Submit revisions by Monday Nov 8 at 11:59pm EST
- Post web/journal reading suggestions based on effective communication of data to Canvas by Thursday Nov 18 at 6:00pm EST
- Final project: Begin 2-3 page written section on one interview subject and first draft audio clip due Monday Nov 22 at 11:59pm EST

### **Week 10: November 16**

**Class Topic:** NO CLASS

**Required Readings:**

**Assignments (as with the previous week):**

- Improving Health Assignment: Submit revisions by Monday Nov 15 at 11:59pm EST
- Post web/journal reading suggestions based on effective communication of data to Canvas by Thursday Nov 18 at 6:00pm EST
- Final project: Begin 2-3 page written section on one interview subject and first draft audio clip due Monday Nov 22 at 11:59pm EST

**Week 11: November 23**

**Class Topic:** Topic Development and evaluating a research question

**Learning Objectives:**

- Communicate data results and findings in a clear, accurate way your targeted audience will understand
- Spot misleading statements in web/journal readings and understand why they are misleading

**Required Readings:**

- *On Writing Well*, Chapters 22-24
- Three selected articles posted to Canvas on Sunday evening

**Assignments:**

- Final project: Submit 2-3 page written section on one interview subject and first draft audio clip by Monday Nov 22 at 11:59pm EST
- Post web/journal reading suggestions based on notable use of photography to Canvas by Thursday Nov 25 at 6:00pm EST
- Final project: Begin 3-page written section outlining conclusion, audio revisions, and first draft due by Monday Nov 29 at 11:59pm EST

**Week 12: November 30**

**Class Topic:** Integrating video, photos, and data visualization into narrative reporting and storytelling

**Learning Objectives:**

- Streamline video, photos, data visualization, and written text to incorporate into a cohesive narrative.
- Recognize effective and ineffective examples of multimedia projects in mainstream media

**Required Readings:**

- *On Writing Well*, Chapter 25
- Three selected articles posted to Canvas on Sunday evening

**Assignments:**

- Final project: Submit 3-page written section outlining conclusion, audio revisions, and first draft by Monday Nov 29 at 11:59pm EST
- Post web/journal reading suggestions based on notable use of photography to Canvas by Thursday Dec 2 at 6:00pm EST
- Final project: Begin first assemblage of text, audio file, and infographic due by Monday Dec 6 at 11:59pm EST

**Week 13: December 7**

**Class Topic:** Presenting information in person

**Learning Objectives:**

- Effectively convey a your story verbally in person and online
- Understand techniques that allow you to respond to questions on your feet, convey messaging convincingly and come across as an authoritative source

**Assignments:**

- Final project: Submit first assemblage of text, audio file, and infographic due by Monday Dec 6 at 11:59pm EST
- Final project: Begin preparing for final presentations

**Week 14: December 14**

**Class Topic:** FINAL PRESENTATIONS (and final class)