



International Fortnight Abroad
Teaching guide 2025-26

Miami stories in Motion: unveiling Global perspectives through local narratives

1. SYLLABUS

This course immerses students from Global Journalism and Screen Studies in collaborative, interdisciplinary groups, where they will combine journalistic rigor with creative storytelling to explore and communicate complex global issues as they manifest uniquely in Miami. Students will delve into topics such as immigration, climate change, and economic disparity—critical issues affecting societies worldwide yet experienced in distinct ways within Miami's diverse landscape. Through research, analysis, and fieldwork, students will learn to recognize **Miami's significance as a microcosm for these global themes**, offering them a comprehensive understanding of both the **local impact and broader global context**.

The course emphasizes the development of practical skills in both journalism and audiovisual production, guiding students to create engaging, accessible narratives for wide audiences. By fusing informative research with compelling visual storytelling, students **will learn how to present intricate social issues through clear, thoughtful, and impactful video content**. Working under the constraints of real-world limitations, students will refine their ability to produce thoroughly researched and aesthetically engaging videos. In this way, the course not only cultivates students' analytical and creative skills but also empowers them to communicate significant stories in ways that resonate and educate.

- **Diploma:** Global journalism
- **ECTS:** 3
- **Year, semester:** Second, Spring semester
- **Type of course:** Required for Global journalism students
- **Instructor:** Aurken Sierra
- **Language:** English
- **Dates:** May 17 - May 30, 2026

CAREFUL: The students enrolled in the International fortnight abroad program will automatically lose their spot if they accumulate failing grades or absences in two subjects in the previous December exam session. If that happens, the student could be asked to withdraw from the course in January.

This course's syllabus is adapted to the hosting institution and the group taking it. As the academic year progresses, we will announce the Syllabus and final assignment.

FINAL ASSIGNMENT

Students will produce an **informative and engaging video** about a global issue that has a specific manifestation in Miami. The aim of the video is to try to share complex ideas with a broad audience, through storytelling, rigorous research, and a down-to-earth approach.

The students will produce a **short video (between 4 and 5 minutes)**, starting its pre-production during the second semester of their 2nd academic year (in Pamplona) and engaging in the production and postproduction process during the two weeks at the University of Miami. The final delivered product will consist of a short video and a Report (including a title, the early production plans, and a brief engaging synopsis that explains the background that motivated its creation –the underlying idea related to one of the global challenges–).



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The following videos are suggested as possible inspiration for the final project: [YouTube List with Examples of videos that might inspire students.](#)

COURSE STRUCTURE

Two locations, Pamplona and Miami, host the International Fortnight Abroad during the spring semester. Students are expected to meet the deadlines listed below and will be graded accordingly. Please pay special attention to the pre-Miami evaluation, as the grade for the course does not depend solely on the product delivered at UM.

Part 1: Pre-Production (January – April, Pamplona)

1. Groups & Topic Selection

Groups will be assigned to the students (UN coordinators). These groups will consist of Global Journalism and Screen Studies students. Each group will be assigned a broad topic from the following list for their projects.

Topics:

TBA

Outcome: Each group will develop an initial research question or thesis as a foundation for their audiovisual project and will try to find a focus for their storytelling.

Deadline: 4th of March, 2026.

Part 2: In-Miami Pre-production & Contextual Learning (1st week intensive, May)

3. Contextual Learning: Lectures, Visits and Screenings.

A contextual learning will offer students an enriched understanding of Miami's unique context, allowing them to refine their storytelling approach. Students will attend a series of theoretical Contextual Lectures (CL) and Screenings. The lectures should take place during the first week in Miami so that UN students can get up to speed and understand the specific issues of Miami, the Screenings will take place during the two weeks there. This contextual learning will also include a series of Contextual Visits (CV) to areas or sites in Miami tied to their projects which will give students further insight into Miami as a microcosm for these global themes.

4. Practical Learning: Workshops and Professional Visits.

Several **workshops (W)** will take place during the two weeks in Miami focusing on some practical and technical skills such as video production, data visualization, editing... The students will gain hands-on skills in key technical areas, directly applicable to their project's pre-production, production and post-production phases. To complement technical workshops students will participate in a series of **Professional Visits (PV)** to leading media corporations and media-related businesses in Miami. These visits will offer students direct exposure to the inner workings of media organizations, offering valuable knowledge of the various career pathways in journalism and media.

5. Proposal Presentation Pitch & Feedback from Miami Lecturers

Objective: Students will pitch their proposals to Miami-based experts/UM instructors after receiving a specific workshop on pitching. During this pitch, students will share their ideas and production plans as if they were looking for investors or for a production/media company to support their projects. Students will need to prove that their ideas have the



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potential to become meaningful and interesting, that their specific approach is appealing and well-chosen, and that their production plan is viable. **The pitch is part of the grade (Exam Part 1, see Grading).**

Outcome: Students will have their projects approved, or rejected or might be encouraged to improve them. They will start to work on improving them right away.

6. Refining the Narrative and Production Plan

With the feedback received during the Pitch, students will elaborate a revised and realistic plan for storytelling and production, with insights into local dynamics.

Briefing Session: After rethinking their projects, groups will have scheduled individual briefing sessions with the **course coordinators (FCOM)**. They will receive guidance on narrative clarity, aesthetic choices, and achievable production strategies.

Outcome: Finalized project plans ready for implementation.

Part 3: Production & Post-Production

7. Production & Content Development

Objective: Students record, gather visual materials, and refine their texts, voice-overs, and graphs in alignment with their narrative. It is encouraged to plan their filming days taking into account the Contextual and Professional visits to the city. During the second week in Miami, students will participate in workshops about technical aspects that will prove useful during the production and post-production process (*see Part 2: point 4*).

Outcome: Final version of the video project. **This will receive critical feedback from UM instructors and will be evaluated by UN coordinators as the main component of the Assignment Grade** (Assignment Part 2. *See Grading*). UN coordinators will be responsible for publishing the final mark corresponding to the course in accordance with UN norms.

Deadline: Friday 29th of May.

Part 4: Project Presentation and Evaluation

8. Final Presentation Screening

Event: Students will present their projects presented as market-ready media pieces, to a panel simulating actual media buyers or producers. During this presentation, students should prove the interest and depth of their stories and the quality of their videos. They should link their early production plans to the final project, proving that their projects have achieved their set goals. **The presentation is part of the grade (Exam Part 2, see Grading).**

Deadline: Friday 5th of June.

COURSEWORK

(Tentative breakdown)

Lectures, seminars, and guest speakers: 30 hours

Guided assignments: 21.25 hours

Tutoring: 2 hours

Personal study and work: 21.25 hours



Evaluations or exams: 0.5 hours

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Four principles guide the development of the program:

1. Immersion in global-local logics and issues.
2. Focus on how communities experience, negotiate and reshape grounded global forces in particular contexts.
3. Synthesis of critical, ethical and technical expertise for communicating empathetic, explanatory and contextualized stories.
4. Collaborative, multimedia journalism in projects that are accessible across differentially able audiences.

LEARNING OUTCOMES (Competencies)

By the end of the course, students will have increased:

- understanding and practical expertise in culturally competent reporting practices.
- understanding of how global flows are localized in global cities, and how to produce stories that illustrate human beings' constraints and agency within these contexts.
- ability to report about global issues such as immigration, climate change, public health, artistic hybridity, and global city inequalities and social struggles.
- knowledge of ethical frameworks in journalism that foreground empathy, such as feminist care, Ubuntu, and buen vivir.
- ability to communicate with empathy for understanding and action.
- knowledge about transnational audiences and media systems of global cities.
- ability to gather, analyze and visualize complex data for news audiences.
- ability to design, practice and produce multimedia stories through collaborative teamwork.

GRADING

The Short-Term Study Abroad program carries the requisites of any normal class: attendance, participation, assignments, exams, etc.

Grading will be continuous and constant, including all aspects of the program (professionalism, punctuality, attendance and participation, assignments, etc.)

Practical feedback on class projects will be given by instructors at the receiving institution.

Formal grading will be carried out by the Coordinator of the program. We would like to remind students of the importance of consistent daily work. As instructors accompany them throughout the program, assessment will be ongoing and continuous.

MAY SESSION (ORDINARY)

EXAM. 10%	Pitch of proposed projects to the UM faculty and mentors
Part 1: First exercise	



<p>ASSIGNMENT. 20%</p> <p>Part 1: Soft Skills and Professionalism</p>	<p>Assessment of professional behaviour and attitude throughout the course</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional attitude and manners • Engagement with guest speakers or hosts during field-trips • Punctuality • Mature behaviour • Collaborative attitude • Contribution to program development • Spirit of service
<p>ASSIGNMENT. 40%</p> <p>Part 2: Collaborative filmmaking project</p>	<p>Group project to develop a short film about local cultural issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical skills in filmmaking • Narrative skills, research and storytelling • Teamwork and collaboration • Adherence to sequential assignments • Creativity and originality • Relevance to cultural context
<p>EXAM. 20%</p> <p>Part 2: Final report</p>	<p>Presentation and critique of final projects on the last day of class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of final project • Presentation skills • Ability to respond to critiques • Demonstration of learning and growth
<p>PARTICIPATION. 10%</p>	<p>Active involvement in class, workshops, and group assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequency and quality of contribution in class • Engagement in workshops • Level of involvement in group assignments

JUNE SESSION (RETAKE)

1. *To successfully complete the course, attendance at the onsite sessions in Miami is mandatory. If a student completes the course but does not pass the ordinary call, a special work plan will be devised for the extraordinary exam.*

FACULTY



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Aurken Sierra

Public communication department, Ismael Sánchez Bella building, Ground floor.

Office: 621

Email: aurken@unav.es

You can book an appoint at [Google appointments](#).

Faculty at **Miami University**:

Alberto Cairo: Associate professor and knight chair visual journalism

Professor Cairo is a journalist and designer with many years of experience leading graphics and visualization teams in several countries. Alberto teaches courses on infographics and data visualization around the world. With Grinfeder, he is the director of the [Center for Visualization, Data Communication & Information Design](#) at UM's Institute for Data Science and Computing, and a Faculty Fellow at the Abess Center for Ecosystem Science and Policy. He is author of *How Charts Lie: Getting Smarter About Visual Information* (W.W. Norton, 2019) and many other works on data visualization. His work has appeared in *The New York Times*, *Scientific American* and other publications.

Gina Presson: Lecturer and UMTV Advisor

Professor Presson is an award-winning, multiplatform reporter and producer who specializes in long form storytelling. Gina's work focuses primarily on environmental, social, political and cultural issues and has been published on both network and PBS affiliates and in major news papers. She founded Presson Perspectives: news, documentary and digital production; and created MedForum, one of the first health news websites in the United States. Her most recent production "The Peafowl Predicament: Friend or Foul?" is being screened in several film festivals. Sheserves on the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Suncoast Chapter Board of Governors and is co-chair of the Student Production Awards Committee. She also serves as a judge for national and international television awards for the Emmys, Society of Professional Journalists and Broadcast Education Association. Her interests include Global Journalism, which she on the University of Miami study abroad program in London.

Hannah Artman: Graduate coordinator

Professor Artman is a third-year Ph.D. student at the University of Miami, where she was awarded the Graduate School's Dean's Fellowship. Her research interests focus on mass media, news production and consumption, communication for development, and intercultural communication. She earned her BA and MA in Latin American Studies at the University of Miami, focusing on linguistics, production, and Spanish-language mass media in the United States. Before returning for her Ph.D, Artman's previous positions include senior account executive at [a public opinion polling firm](#) focusing on multicultural publics in Miami, executive producer of a national current events podcast, and freelance digital marketing associate for a South Florida hospitality group. Her current research focuses on the political economy of diasporic media and transnational circuits of disinformation.

Kim Grinfeder: Associated professor and Chair, Interactive Media

Professor Grinfeder is a multidisciplinary media producer and designer who uses emergent technologies to practice new ways to communicate social and environmental issues. Km's work often explores new media tech across the spectrum including immersive storytelling, interactive installations, UI Design, branching narratives & emerging communication



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technologies. His current research and creative work interests are in producing 360° films, immersive storytelling, and non-linear narratives. With Cairo, he is the director of the Center for Visualization, Data Communication & Information Design at UM's Institute for Data Science and Computing. His work has been recognized at film and technology festivals globally, but he's most proud of his students' accomplishments.

[Kyle Walkine \(tbd\): Graduate assistant](#)

Professor Walkine, a native of the Bahamas, is a first-year PhD student at the School of Communication. A journalist for 10 years before entering academia, Kyle was senior reporter at *The Nassau Guardian* and news anchor at *Our News* in The Bahamas reporting on major events such as live coverage of Hurricane Dorian, the strongest to ever hit the country, to general elections and most recently continuous coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic. Kyle is an adjunct professor at The University of the Bahamas and holds a Masters of Science in Global Strategic Communication.

[Sallie Hughes: Professor and Associate Dean](#)

Professor Hughes began studying journalism and Spanish at age 14 and hasn't stopped. Sallie is now a journalism educator, social scientist and 20- year Miami resident. Living in Miami prompted her to write *Making a Life in Multiethnic Miami: Immigration and the Rise of a Global City* and develop the university's first course on Latinx media and audiences. She is a member of the scientific advisory committee for Reporters Without Borders and coordinates the Latin American region of the Worlds of Journalism Study, which uses comparative survey research to understand journalists' work environments, practices and worldviews in more than 60 countries. Her research has received numerous awards and has been published in her field's highest-impact journals, as well as received mentions in *The New York Times*, *The Columbia Journalism Review* and elsewhere. She sits on the editorial boards of *Journalism Practice* and *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, and especially enjoys mentoring young academics.