Federal State Autonomous Educational Institution of Higher Education
PEOPLES' FRIENDSHIP UNIVERSITY OF RUSSIA
RUDN University

Faculty of Philology

educational division (faculty/institute/academy) as higher education programme developer

COURSE SYLLABUS

Storytelling
course title

Recommended by the Didactic Council for the Education Field of:

42.03.02 Journalism
field of studies / speciality code and title

The course instruction is implemented within the professional education programme of higher education:

Multimedia Journalism
higher education programme profile/specialisation title

2025

1. OBJECTIVE OF THE DISCIPLINE

The course Storytelling aims to develop students' ability to craft compelling narratives across various media formats. It focuses on the principles, structures, and emotional techniques that make stories effective in journalism, marketing, entertainment, and digital communication.

The main objectives are:
1. To introduce students to classical and modern narrative structures used in media storytelling.
2. To develop practical skills in character development, plot construction, and emotional engagement.
3. To explore the use of storytelling in different formats — written, visual, audio, and multimedia.
4. To enhance students' critical awareness of how stories shape perception and influence audiences.

2. REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS ON FINISHING THE COURSE

Students are expected to master the following competencies:

Table 2.1. The list of competencies formed in the mastering of the discipline (the results of the discipline)

Code	Competence	Indicators of competence achievement (within the discipline)
GPC-1	Able to create media texts and (or) media products demanded by society and industry, and (or) communication products in accordance with the norms of Russian and foreign languages, and the peculiarities of other sign systems.	GPC-1.2 Prepares journalistic texts and (or) products of various genres and formats in accordance with Russian and foreign language norms and other sign systems
GPC-3.	Able to use the diversity of achievements of national and world culture in the process of creating media texts and (or) media products, and (or) communication products.GPC-3. Able to use the diversity of achievements of national and world culture in the process	GPC-3.2 - Applies the means of artistic expression in journalistic texts and (or) products

Code	Competence	Indicators of competence achievement (within the discipline)
	of creating media texts and (or) media products, and (or) communication products.	

3. THE DISCIPLINE (MODULE) IN THE STRUCTURE OF EP HE

The discipline "Writing and Essential Editing" belongs to the Compulsory Module of Block 1 of the curriculum. Table 1 shows preceding and subsequent subjects aimed at forming competence discipline by the matrix of competencies.

Table 3.1. The list of components of the EP HE, contributing to the achievement of the planned results of the discipline

Code	Competence	Previous discipline	Subsequent disciplines
GPC-1	Able to create media texts and (or) media products demanded by society and industry, and (or) communication products in accordance with the norms of Russian and foreign languages, and the peculiarities of other sign systems.	Radio Broadcasting / Основы радиовещания Writing and Essential Editing / Литературное редактирование Russian language and culture of speech / Русский язык и культура речи Media production / Организация информационного производства Basics of academic writing / Основы академического письма	-

Code	Competence	Previous discipline	Subsequent disciplines
GPC-3.	Able to use the diversity of achievements of national and world culture in the process of creating media texts and (or) media products, and (or) communication products.GPC-3. Able to use the diversity of achievements of national and world culture in the process of creating media texts and (or) media products, and (or) communication products.	Fundamentals of Journalism Theory / Основы теории журналистики Fundamentals of Mass Communication / Основы теории коммуникации Media system / Система СМИ Межкультурная коммуникация / Intercultural communication History of Journalism / История журналистики Russian and Foreign Literature / Русская и зарубежная литература International Journalism / Международная журналистика	-

4. THE SCOPE OF THE DISCIPLINE AND TYPES OF ACTIVITIES
The overall workload of the discipline is **3** credits.

Types of activities	Total hours	Semesters							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Classroom activities (total)									
Lectures	15							15	
Practical lessons/Seminars	30							30	
Laboratory activities									
Control	30							30	
Independent work (total)	33							33	
Overall workload hours	**108**							**108**	

Credits	3						3	

5. CONTENT OF THE DISCIPLINE

Table 5.1 Content of the discipline (module) by type of activity

Name of the Unit	Content of the Units (topics)	Type of activity
Lecture 1: The Power and Purpose of Storytelling	Why humans tell stories Storytelling across cultures and platforms Story as a tool for meaning-making and communication	Lecture
Lecture 2: Narrative Structures and Story Arcs	Classical narrative (Freytag's pyramid, the hero's journey) Three-act structure and nonlinear storytelling Case studies from journalism, film, and branded content	Lecture
Seminar 1: Deconstructing a Story	Group analysis of a selected text, podcast, or video Identifying structure, conflict, turning points, and resolution Discussion: What makes the story work (or not)?	Seminar
Lecture 3: Characters, Conflict, and Emotion	Creating relatable and complex characters Types of conflict and their role in story development Emotional arcs and audience engagement strategies	Lecture
Seminar 2: Character and Point of View Workshop	Writing exercises: inventing a character, choosing a perspective Practice in switching between first-, second-, and third-person POV Peer review and constructive feedback	Seminar
Seminar 3: Telling Stories Across Formats	Comparing the same story told via article, podcast, and video Group task: adapt a short story into a different medium Discussion on format-specific storytelling techniques	Seminar
Seminar 4: Personal Narrative and Voice	Writing a brief personal story (real or fictionalized) Focus on tone, rhythm, and authenticity Workshop: reading aloud and refining voice	Seminar

6. MATERIAL AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT OF THE DISCIPLINE

The discipline is implemented using e-learning and distance learning technologies

Table 6.1. Material and technical support of the discipline

Type of classroom	Classroom equipment	Specialized educational/laboratory equipment, software and materials for the mastering the discipline (if necessary)
Digital Classroom	Computer, TV VCR and a transparency projector; CD players and DVD players.	
Lecture room	Computer, internet, TV VCR and a transparency projector	
Home for independent work	Computer, internet,	
Library for independent work	Computer, internet	

** The classroom for students' independent work **MUST be indicated**!*

7. EDUCATIONAL AND METHODICAL AND INFORMATIONAL SUPPORT OF THE DISCIPLINE

Main readings
1. McKee, R. (2021). Story: Substance, Structure, Style and the Principles of Screenwriting. HarperCollins.
2. Gottschall, J. (2021). The Storytelling Animal: How Stories Make Us Human. Mariner Books.
3. Salmon, C. (2022). Storytelling: Bewitching the Modern Mind. Verso Books.

Other recommended readings
1. Denning, S. (2020). The Secret Language of Leadership: How Leaders Inspire Action Through Narrative. Wiley.
2. Lamott, A. (2020). Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life. Anchor Books.
3. Houston, J. (2022). The Hero and the Outlaw: Building Extraordinary Brands Through the Power of Archetypes. McGraw-Hill.

Web-sites and online resources
1. ЭБС РУДН и сторонние ЭБС, к которым студенты университета имеют доступ на основании заключенных договоров:
- htpp://www.rad.pfu.edu.ru/
- www.libfl.ru
- www.portalus.ru
- www.project.phil.pu.ru
- www.lib.fl.ru
- www.gutenberg.net
- www.ipl.org
- www.theeuropeanlibrary.org; www.epoch-net.org

- http://gabro.ge/biblio/0707/3066/filosof.historic.ru/books/item/f00/s00/z00358/st000/htm/

2. Databases and search systems:
− web search engine google.com
− online encyclopedia wikipedia.org
− news aggregation website drudgereport.com
− Googlescholar.com

Teaching materials for students' independent work while mastering the discipline/module*:
1.   A course of lectures on the discipline.
2.   Practical assignments and their brief contents;
3.   Questions for self-check, and test assignments.
       * - all educational and methodical materials for students' independent work are published in the current order on the page of the discipline in TUIS!

8. GRADING MATERIALS AND GRADING-RATING SYSTEM FOR ASSESSING THE LEVEL OF COMPETENCE FORMED IN THE DISCIPLINE

The grading materials and grading-rating system* for assessing the level of competence (part of competencies) for the discipline are presented in the Appendix to this Working program of the discipline.
       * - are formed based on the requirements of the corresponding local normative act of RUDN University.