

**Information for Incoming Students to the
Reynolds School of Journalism
University of Nevada, Reno
May 22, 2009**

Starting with our new class of students entering in the fall, 2009 semester, we are asking each student to be prepared for the world of converged, multimedia journalism by purchasing a digital video camcorder for use on assignments in many our journalism and integrated media communication courses. This device may be used for both your video and your audio assignments.

While some camcorders may also be used to take still photographs, the images are generally of an inferior quality compared with those made by a digital still camera. Most students come to UNR already owning digital still cameras. These may be used in your Journalism classes.

Many digital video camcorders may be appropriate for use in our program (see below). However there are two models in particular that we can recommend you consider purchasing.

Canon ZR 960

<http://www.usa.canon.com/consumer/controller?act=ModelInfoAct&fcateogryid=174&modelid=18004#ModelTechSpecsAct>

This miniDV (tape cassette) camera records in standard definition. It has both a viewfinder and an LCD display. It has both a microphone and a headphone jack. FireWire (IEEE 1394) connectivity to the computer. It does not have a “still photography” mode. Its street price is currently around \$250.

Canon Vixia HF200

<http://www.usa.canon.com/consumer/controller?act=ModelInfoAct&fcateogryid=177&modelid=17994>

This high definition (HD) camera records onto an 8 - 32 GB SDHC card (not included). It offers the advantage of random access to its recorded files. It has no viewfinder, only an LCD screen. It creates its video files in AVCHD (MPEG-4, H.264), a format that is compatible with our computers and software applications. It has both a microphone and a headphone jack. It takes still photographs at a resolution of 3 megapixels. USB connectivity to the computer. Its street price is currently around \$600.

Other Camcorders

We are aware that a number of good camcorders can be found at other price points. If you choose to come to UNR with a digital video camcorder other than one of the two listed above, please use the following guidelines to select a camera:

1. It may record either to a miniDV tape or to a solid-state (flash) memory card or internal hard drive. You should not purchase a camera that records to a mini-DVD platter.
2. If it records to a memory card or an internal hard drive, it should create files in a format that is readable by the school's video editing application, *Final Cut Express* (QuickTime compatible). Some cameras' formats can be made compatible through an additional file conversion step.

If you're not sure about the compatibility of a particular camera please be sure to consult a knowledgeable technical support person for the brand you are considering. You may also e-mail Professor Howard Goldbaum at the journalism school (goldbaum@unr.edu) with your questions.

3. It may be either standard definition or HD.
4. Ideally it will have both an auxiliary microphone jack and a headphone jack.

Accessories Recommended

In addition to the camcorder, you will need to supply the following items:

1. An inexpensive carrying case for the camera.
2. MiniDV tapes or memory cards for your camera, depending upon the type of camera. If your camera takes SDHC cards, we recommend you purchase two cards, 8 or 16 GB.
3. An inexpensive tripod (e.g. http://www.bhphotovideo.com/c/product/247938-REG/Sunpak_620020_2001UT_Tripod.html)
4. If your camcorder accepts an auxiliary microphone (recommended), an inexpensive lavalier mic for recording interviews. (e.g. <http://www.amazon.com/Audio-Technica-ATR-35S-Lavalier-Microphone/dp/B00006151V>)