

Texas State's new drone class  
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SAN MARCOS- A new class on drones and storytelling will take flight spring of 2023 thanks to a university grant for digital innovation outside the classroom.

Associate Professor of Practice in the School of Journalism and Mass Communications (SJMC), Dale Blasingame, received a grant for \$2,300 from the Texas State Innovation Office to create a course on drones. The grant will purchase a DJI Mavic Pro 2 drone with a smart controller and a "Fly More Kit" to be used in the course, which will focus on photogrammetry.

"Photogrammetry is taking measurements from pictures," Blasingame said. "You tell the drone to go and it starts flying automatically, and it takes pictures every second or so to get this object or area covered with thousands of photos, that you can then take and put into a software, and it creates a model of some sort."

This class will allow students to become FAA certified drone pilots. In addition, the drone will be incorporated into class projects that partner with organizations such as Battleship Texas. Students will have the opportunity to use the drone to digitally map the battleship.

"It'd be a 3D model that would live on the Texas Parks and Wildlife website to where you could go through and, you know, move it all around and be able to see it from the top, see it from the side, see it from whatever angle you want it to be."

With only a few universities offering classes on drones, it is a benefit to students seeking digitally focused skills in mass communication.

Blasingame said that with completing this course, there are many endless opportunities when looking for jobs with these particular skills.

"It applies to anything and everything really, our students are not just going and getting jobs like in a newsroom or at an agency, although they could very easily, but they might go work for a tech company," Blasingame said.

For more courses offered by the School of Journalism and Mass Communications, you can visit the [website](#).