

NEWS

## Faculty Spotlight

### FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: ANDREW MATRANGA

By Isaac Vargas, Sophomore Journalism Studies Major



Andrew Matranga finds ways to stay one step ahead of the game, offering his skills and vision for what journalism on campus can look like in the years ahead.

Professor Matranga received his undergraduate degree from Syracuse University in Television, Radio, and Film before completing his masters from the University of Colorado in Journalism and Mass Communications. He currently is a part-time

faculty member in the Media, Film and Journalism Department while also serving as the [DU Clarion](#) advisor, working with students to find ways to innovate the way we distribute information around campus. Off-campus, he is on the marketing team for StickerGiant, a manufacturer and printer of custom stickers.

In addition to the many courses that he teaches like strategic communications, online and visual journalism, and digital design and editing, Professor Matranga's interterm courses might be some of the more interesting on the list. *Cannabis Journalism* is the first journalism course in the country that is focused on uncovering and recovering the truth about cannabis in our society. *Star Wars and the Power of Franchise* looks into the historical foundations of the film, the influence of the George Lucas franchise, and ultimately the movie's role in the canon of filmmaking. *Video History of World Pro Skiing* was another interterm class in which students researched, edited, and shot short documentaries for the FIS Alpine World Ski Championships in 2015.

When asked about his source for interterm ideas and reasons for teaching them he explained, "I start with my passions and interests. The secret I learned early on is that I can teach an interterm for a couple of weeks and it pays well, and I can introduce students who know nothing about journalism to the industry."

He hopes to continue to teach these courses going forward as they, "remain relevant and are constantly evolving topics today," he said. Cannabis continues to be a nationwide point of discussion for many states, and it has not slowed down since he first taught the course four years ago. Similarly, with more Star Wars movies expected to be produced, the conversations around the influence of the galactic franchise remain relevant.

When asked about his advice for students hoping to enroll in one of his courses he jokingly replied, "Welcome to my class, you're going to have fun, learn a lot more than you thought, just try to keep up." Professor Matranga is committed to fostering a learning environment for students that encourages the personal initiative to collaborate and participate in class. Twitter is an important component of his courses, which further promotes discussion and collaboration on a platform that is widely used. His more serious advice for students was ultimately, "Follow the story, believe in yourself, collaborate, and don't procrastinate."

Matranga hopes to continue to find ways to innovate the *Clarion's* output of information on campus, whether it be through social media or even podcasts.

"We all live in stories," he explained. "I always think about telling stories and being committed to the truth."