

ISABELLA DOUGLAS

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Strategic communications professional with expertise in high-stakes reporting, reputational risk analysis and data-driven accountability journalism.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Tampa Beacon — Tampa, FL

Correspondent

February 2026 — Present

- Interviewed and wrote profiles featuring community members, students and businesses, including an article about how a [national chess master](#) is rebuilding Tampa's competitive chess community.

The Island Packet & Beaufort Gazette — Hilton Head, SC

Accountability Reporter

June 2024 — November 2025

- Worked on several "In the Spotlight" sagas, including a [series of articles](#) looking into Beaufort County's role in statewide book bans, revealing how one Beaufort County parent's challenges led to restrictions on more than half of the books banned across South Carolina.
- Analyzed traffic collision data and fatality rates to identify Beaufort County's [Top 10 most dangerous intersections](#), leading to conversations with residents and county council for reform.
- Held officials accountable for traffic project delays after investigating and analyzing why only [10% of traffic projects were completed](#) after a 2018 penny tax raised \$146M.
- Broke stories on two Beaufort County teachers suing local parents for defamation over ["grooming" allegations](#) over reading material, tracked civil suit developments and reported on rising tensions over LGBTQ+ discourse in schools.
- Covered [high-profile court hearings](#) for Becky Hill, the Murdaugh trial's ex-court clerk, who now faces obstruction and perjury charges — contextualizing the case within the ongoing fallout of the Murdaugh trials.

The Kansas City Star — Kansas City, MO

Freelance Reporter

August 2023 — May 2024

- Worked closely with editors at The Star to finish an investigation into an organization that has sexual, emotional, spiritual, physical and drug abuse claims against them.
- Breaking News and Criminal Justice Reporter, Intern
- June 2023 — August 2023
- Wrote a narrative story about the [2023 winner of Mr. Gay America](#), who is also an elementary school teacher and activist for transgender rights — in a time where their rights are disputed.
 - Wrote a [breaking news story](#) about Taylor Swift fans who booked a hotel and upon arrival found it closed with signs warning "Do not enter" — the story reached more than 95k people and had more than 103k page views.

Fresh Take Florida — Gainesville, FL

Politics & Accountability Reporter

January 2024 — May 2024

- Covered issues of statewide importance, including upcoming general elections, Florida's governor and other aspects of public policy and state government.
- Scoured court documents to write a story about a man who threatened to behead a U.S. judge, which was published in the [Sun Sentinel](#).

Data & Coding Reporter

December 2022 — June 2023

- Covered the Rosewood Massacre after 100 years, which was published in [The Miami Herald](#), Orlando Sentinel, South Florida Sun Sentinel and more.
- Created a [Crime Map](#), with Python and SQL, of UF with a searchable database to help users after UF removed about 8 years of crime data from its crime log.

The Independent Florida Alligator — Gainesville, FL

Editor-in-Chief

August 2023 — December 2023

- Led a more than 70-person staff on university, metro, enterprise, sports and entertainment coverage as well as coordinated photos, graphics, social media and newsletters.
- Edited articles about [Ben Sasse' presidency](#) and team, made and combined data sets for Alligator staff members to use in their stories as well as edited code used in projects and on The Alligator website.
- Created and coordinated ["Mind over Stigma"](#) — a mental health semesterlong project with a 24-page paper, interactive website, public record data and animation.

Digital Managing Editor

August 2022 — December 2022

- Led a more than 50-person staff on university, metro, enterprise, sports and entertainment coverage as well as coordinated photos, graphics, social media and newsletters.
- Edited articles and projects on Roe v. Wade, UF presidential finalist Sen. Ben Sasse, Terrell Bradley's police K-9 brutality case and the 2022 state primary election.
- Enhanced SEO on all Alligator articles published during this term, began the process of switching The Alligator's Google Analytics from Universal Analytics to GA4 and increased engagement on all social media platforms, most notably with Instagram.
- Coded a website from scratch for The Alligator's [Roe v. Wade](#) staff-wide project.

Metro Editor

May 2022 — August 2022

- Oversaw a team of seven reporters, where I edited breaking news, city and county commission articles, East Gainesville-centered stories and investigative features impacting the community, including the alleged [police K-9 brutality case](#) and ["We Wear Orange"](#) gun violence protests.

Criminal Justice and Breaking News Reporter

August 2021 — January 2022

- Wrote daily breaking news briefs and bi-weekly investigative features impacting the Gainesville and UF community, including homicides, gun violence, sexual assaults, bomb threats and protests.
- Obtained gun violence data and wrote a feature broadcasting [gun violence survivors](#) and their families' voices, covered [Erica Thompson's case](#) where she gave birth in an Alachua County jail cell, broke the news of two UF students who were [sexually assaulted and kidnapped](#) near Gator Place apartments, broke coverage on a UF student who detailed [sexual violence](#) at Reitz Union as well as broke coverage on a [Gators' football player](#) involved in a motor accident.

News Assistant

May 2021 — August 2021

- Wrote 1-3 stories per week covering the university and metro area and produced a [COVID-19 international project](#) in seven weeks by speaking with more than 30 students from 13 countries on their experiences with the pandemic.

Atrium Magazine — Gainesville, FL

Staff Writer and Web Development Team Member

September 2022 — December 2023

- Reported on a [cold case narrative investigation](#) into a missing child, which police believe involved foul play (pg. 62).
- Worked on SEO tags to enhance readership with the 2022 magazine.

New Tampa & Wesley Chapel Neighborhood News — Tampa, FL

Contributing Writer

August 2021 — August 2022

- Interviewed and wrote profiles featuring community members, students and businesses, including a Sunshine State Games [gold medal-winning ice skater](#) who was forced to stop skating due to long Covid-19.

WUFT News — Gainesville, FL

Multimedia Reporter

January 2022 — May 2022

- Created online, audio, data and photography stories with Adobe Creative Cloud and Canva, including an article and audio wrap featuring Ukrainian voices and [Ukraine-Russia war's](#) impact in Gainesville.

EDUCATION

University of Florida — Gainesville, FL

Bachelor of Science in Journalism
Criminology Concentration

SPECIALIZATIONS

Magazine & Feature
Narrative Nonfiction
Data Analysis
Coding

SKILLS

HTML, CSS, JavaScript,
Python, SQL, Flask,
Excel, Data Wrapper, Tableau,
Adobe Creative Cloud, Elvix,
Mailchimp, Hootsuite,
Power-BI, Marfeel,
LexisNexis, Pacer,
CUE, SEO and AP Style

AWARDS

SC Press Association:

First Place for Government Beat Reporting (2025)

First Place for Arts and Entertainment Writing (2025)

UF College of Journalism & Communications:

Jean Chance Service Award (2024)

FL Society of News Editors Journalism Contest Student Division:

Third Place for Enterprise Writing for "Mind Over Stigma" (2024)

SPJ National Award:

Best All-Around Large Student Newspaper in the Country (2024) (2023)

SPJ Sunshine State Award:

Second Place for Best Student Publication (2022)

REFERENCES

