

Multimedia News Lab

JOUR 4998-001

Spring 2015

2:20 to 4:20 p.m. MW

MJ 202

Professor: Jan Schaffer

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Office Hours: By appointment, please set up a time in advance via email or text. You are also welcome to drop in anytime I am in my office. Office Room: MJ 314

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

Write, produce content for a personal blog that will house multimedia stories on important, complex topics in the city of Memphis; course will mirror collaborative opportunities underway in industry and provide students with the strongest multimedia material possible for portfolios.

Additional description:

We will write and produce enterprise content for a classroom Web site that will house multimedia stories on the meta-narrative of Living with Less in Memphis, a digital exploration of living at or near the poverty level. Some of the class stories may also be published by local media outlets. Student content will be re-purposed for individual blog portfolios.

PREREQUISITE:

JOUR 3525, JOUR 4120, JOUR 4500.

TEXTBOOKS:

Journalism Next by Mark Briggs. (2013) Second Edition. CQ Press.

EQUIPMENT:

The use of a digital single lens reflex (DSLR) camera is required in this course. The Department of Journalism has provided cameras with 30-55mm lenses for students in this course. Cameras are limited to a 24-hour checkout. Students may use their own DSLR cameras with approval from the instructor. Lost, stolen, or broken cameras and equipment will be the financial responsibility of the student; the Department of Journalism will put a financial obligation hold on your registration until the camera/equipment is replaced. **Cameras and equipment must be returned on time. Failure to return a camera on time will result in a one-letter grade deduction from your final grade for each day late.** Students with unreturned/broken cameras will receive a grade of 0/F until the financial obligation is met. Cameras can be checked out through the Journalism Office, MJ 300/334.

1. Access to a smartphone and/or digital camera and ability to upload images.
2. Access to a laptop or portable hard drive capable of holding 100GB (video storage)
3. Access to a laptop or smartphone for mobile reporting

CLASSROOM FORMAT:

The class will be run as a professional newsroom. Class sessions will consist of both lecture and laboratory time to be determined by the instructor. Class discussion will involve story coverage plans and training related to various multimedia skills.

Participation is an important consideration in final grades. **Please note that failure to attend class or to actively take part – even if all your assignments are turned in on time and done acceptably - could affect your final grade by as much as a full letter.** Assignments will require students to use a variety of software (Weebly, WordPress, SoundSlides, GoogleMaps, Storify, Audacity, Tagxedo, Final Cut Pro, etc.) to tell news stories through a variety of narrative and visual platforms.

News meetings will occur once a week, as noted in the schedule. **Students are expected to come with 1 or 2 story ideas related to the class topic they'd like to pursue.** These should be derived from Memphis news outlets – newspapers, radio, television, websites, as well as from their previous story interviews and from personal observation and experience. Assignments will be refined, with class members contributing interviewing and multimedia ideas. Failure to be present for the news meetings may result in failure to receive a story assignment and class input on an assignment.

Students are required to contribute eight stories and/or multimedia packages to the class website during the semester.

- At least one story must be built around data reporting, with accompanying charts or data visualizations.
- One story must contain some geo-location element, with an accompanying map.
- And one story can be a stand-alone video package or slideshare essay.
- One story should be enterprising enough to be published in a local media outlet.

All stories must contain links to sources and resources pertaining to the topic. Students are responsible for tweeting out their own stories and for tweeting out all class stories, once they are posted online, from their own Twitter accounts.

Students may re-write stories and add additional multimedia elements to improve their grade.

GRADING:

1. Attendance and Participation: 100 points.
2. Eight stories and/or multimedia packages: 800 points (100 each)
3. Online Portfolio: 100 points.
4. Publication in local news outlet: Extra 50 points

A = 94-100; A- = 90-93; B+ = 87-89; B = 84-86; B- = 80-83; C+ = 77-79; C = 74-76; C- = 70-73; D = 65-69; F = 0-64.

EXTRA CREDIT:

Students who wish to improve their grade may do an extra-credit story or package for the class website. I will accept the best grade towards the final grade.

AP STYLE AND GRAMMAR:

All written work in this class should follow the AP Stylebook and accepted rules of grammar and punctuation. If you don't know the style for a particular phrase, look it up or ask your classmates or the instructor.

ERRORS AND PENALTIES:

Edit stories carefully. Your website stories are graded for content minus mechanical errors. Spelling, grammar and style count for each activity. A fact error will result in the reduction of one letter grade for each error. Fact errors include inaccurate information, errors and typos in names, numbers, addresses, dates, quotes, and proper nouns. **Bottom line: REPORTERS MUST SELF-EDIT. Read and re-read, and edit and re-edit your assignments.**

FINAL COMMENT:

Sharpening multimedia, reporting, and editing skills is a journey best undertaken as a group, with open hearts, open minds and good humor. You can learn much from your peer as from your instructor. I encourage you to speak frequently and work together on stories/assignments with your classmates. We will critique our own work in class and I will accept rewrites and additional multimedia elements to stories.

If you want to talk about the class, feel free to come and see me. Don't worry if you don't have an appointment. My office door is open frequently. If my office hours are inconvenient for you, make a special appointment and I will work to accommodate you. I want to help you succeed.

Class schedule:

Class	Content	Due	Readings
Week 1			
Wed., Jan. 21	Introduction. Class Expectations. Skills Survey, Job Prep, Create Team Web Bios	Student Bios	
Week 2			
Mon. Jan. 26	News Meeting: Story possibilities. Wireframe class website. First story assignments.	Research poverty stories online; email links to favorites	Briggs Intro, Ch. 1
Wed., Jan. 28	Local Speaker	Build class website	
Week 3			
Mon., Feb. 2	News Meeting: Story Assignments. Create story grid. Twitter Demo. Create Twitter handles.	Come w 1-2 story ideas	Ch. 4, Steve Buttry Twitter tips
Wed., Feb. 4	Storify, Tweet chats		
Week 4			

Mon., Feb. 9	News Meeting: Story Assignments. Story editing, posting	Come w 1-2 story ideas	
Wed., Feb. 11	Shooting, posting photos	Story 1 due	Ch.6
Week 5			
Mon., Feb. 16	News Meeting: Story Assignments. Story editing, posting	1-2 story ideas	
Wed., Feb. 18	Using Video	Story 2 due	Ch. 8
Week 6			
Mon., Feb. 23	News Meeting: Story Assignments. Story editing, posting	1-2 story ideas	
Wed., Feb. 25	Guest speaker	Story 3 due	
Week 7			
Mon., Mar. 2	News Meeting: Story Assignments. Story editing, posting	1-2 story ideas	
Wed., Mar. 4	Data Journalism	Story 4: Photo/video essay due	Ch. 9
Spring Break			
Week 8			
Mon., Mar. 16	News Meeting: Story Assignments. Story editing, posting	1-2 story ideas	
Wed., Mar. 18	Using Audio	Story 5 due	Ch. 7
Week 9			
Mon., Mar. 23	News Meeting: Story Assignments. Story editing, posting	1-2 story ideas	
Wed., Mar. 25	Using Maps, Geo-location	Story 6 -Data story due	

Week 10			
Mon., Mar. 20	News Meeting: Story Assignments. Story editing, posting	1-2 story ideas	
Wed., Apr. 1	SEO, headlines	Catch up	Ch. 11
Week 11			
Mon., Apr. 6	News Meeting: Story Assignments. Story editing, posting	1-2 story ideas	
Wed., Apr. 8	Production Day	Story 7 - Geo story due	
Week 12			
Mon., Apr. 13	News Meeting: Story Assignments. Story editing, posting	1-2 story ideas	
Wed., Apr. 15	Blogging, Create portfolio blog	Story 8 due	Ch. 2
Week 13			
Mon., Apr. 20	Final News Meeting: Assignments	Extra credit/rewrites	
Wed., Apr. 22	Final Posts, cleanup		
Week 14			
Mon. Apr. 27	Critiques of online portfolios		
Wed., Apr. 29	Online portfolios due at 1 pm; class presentations		

NOTE: Schedule and syllabus are subject to change based on the needs of this class and at the professor's discretion.

FIVE PILLARS OF JOUR4998

- *Professionalism*: Students learn and develop the routines of news professionals.
- *Writing*: JOUR 4998 addresses writing skills through reporting and evaluation of multimedia news stories.
- *Multimedia*: Students report news for multimedia platforms.
- *Critical Thinking*: Students explore options for creating and sourcing media content, researching news stories and operating a newsroom.

- *Media Literacy*: JOUR 4998 addresses media literacy by exposing students to the vocabulary and grammar of media production. Students learn how media are researched, sourced and prepared through multiple assignments.

ASSESSMENT

PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND COMPETENCIES FOR JOUR4998:

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication requires that, irrespective of their particular specialization, all graduates should be aware of certain core values and competencies and be to

- Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;
- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- Think critically, creatively and independently;
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
- Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

HOW PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND COMPETENCIES WILL BE MET IN JOUR4998:

Cognitive objectives to be mastered (ability to explain, analyze, understand, think critically):

- Develop advanced understanding of newswriting for multiple applications.
- Establish a working knowledge of professional news routines.
- Understand media respectful of a diverse audience.
- Research and report the news with multimedia tools.
- Expand knowledge of the resources available for communications professionals.

Performance standards to be met (demonstrable skills, abilities, techniques, applied competencies):

- Understanding of grammar skills specific to journalism and mass communication
- Ability to report news events
- Ability to create multimedia news reports
- Understanding of multimedia storytelling tools

HOW PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND COMPETENCIES WILL BE MET IN JOUR4998:

The class is designed to equip students with knowledge necessary to write clearly and effectively in the fields of journalism and mass communication.

- *Awareness:* Discuss the role of new media in society; Discuss ethical treatment of subjects and issues.
- *Understanding:* Embrace of multiple tools for storytelling.
- *Application:* Gather information from sources and disseminate; Develop stories for multimedia platforms; Create audio-visual packages for storytelling.

PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND COMPETENCIES FOR THE JOURNALISM PROGRAM:

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- Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;

- Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING FOR THE JOURNALISM PROGRAM:

The Council seeks to promote student learning and encourages experimentation and innovation. Assessment is a system of evaluation of student learning at the course or unit level (as opposed to grading at the individual level). Three criteria should guide assessment of student learning:

- *Awareness*: familiarity with specific information, including facts, concepts, theories, laws and regulations, processes and effects.
- *Understanding*: assimilation and comprehension of information, concepts, theories and ideas.
- *Application*: competence in relating and applying skills, information, concepts, theories and ideas to the accomplishment of tasks.