

**Multimedia News Lab**

JOUR 4998-001; 002

Spring 2018

9:10 a.m. to 11:10 a.m. MW

MJ 212 & MJ 202

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**COURSE REQUIREMENTS****CATALOG DESCRIPTION:**

Write, produce content for a personal beat-driven 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:**

During the semester students will write and produce content for the class online publication, Memphis Mirror. The mission of the publication is to provide multimedia stories on important, complex topics in the city of Memphis, specifically from underrepresented or covered groups in the city. Those groups include: racial and ethnic minorities, immigrants, women, children, LGBTQ+ individuals, religious minorities, people with disabilities, the poor, the homeless and students. The overall goal of this course is to mirror collaborative opportunities underway in industry and provide students with the strongest multimedia material possible for portfolios.

During the semester, students will work individually to produce high quality multimedia packages and projects, work that could be published in any online news publication. Students will use text, audio, video, infographics, maps, photography and social media in strategic ways to tell compelling and informative stories. Students are expected to come to the class with a foundational knowledge of each of these platforms; however, additional training will be provided for each.

**PREREQUISITE:**

JOUR 3526, Two advanced writing courses

## **REQUIRED MATERIALS:**

*Telling True Stories: A Nonfiction Writer's Guide from the Nieman Foundation at Harvard University.* Kramer & Call (ed.) 2007  
*Associated Press Stylebook.*

**RECOMMENDED RESOURCES:** These sites are a great source of inspiration for stories you could do in your beat. It's a great idea to be up-to-date on the best work being done in the industry. Look for ideas everywhere, but this is a great place to start.

National Press Photographers Association

([https://contests.nppa.org/monthly\\_multimedia\\_contest/winnergalleries.php](https://contests.nppa.org/monthly_multimedia_contest/winnergalleries.php))

Hearst Multimedia Journalism Winners

([http://www.hearstfdn.org/hearst\\_journalism/competitions.php](http://www.hearstfdn.org/hearst_journalism/competitions.php))

National Public Radio's *All Things Considered*

(<http://www.npr.org/programs/all-things-considered/>)

NPR's *Radiolab*

(<http://www.radiolab.org>)

## **EQUIPMENT:**

The use of a digital single lens reflex (DSLR) camera is required in this course. The Department of Journalism and Strategic Media 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 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 O/F until the financial obligation is met. Cameras can be checked out through the Main Office, MJ 300/334.

### ***Other equipment needs:***

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 writing and multimedia skills and multicultural considerations.

Participation is an important consideration in final grades.

**Here's how attendance works: I'm not interested in hearing excuses. You get three free passes during the semester. After you cash in the passes, missed classes are reflected in your final grade. For example, if you miss one additional class, your final grade drops a letter grade. If you miss two more classes, your grade drops again. So, if you miss six classes, your final grade drops two letters.**

Assignments will require students to use a variety of software (WordPress, Adobe

Premiere Pro, GoogleMaps, Adobe Photoshop, etc.) to tell news stories through a variety of narrative and visual platforms.

We will have budget meetings the week each assignment is pitched. **Students/teams are required to come to the news budget meetings with a minimum of two viable story ideas that fit the overall mission of Memphis Mirror.** So, begin consuming area newspapers, radio broadcasts, television, and websites. Students also should consider story ideas from their previous story interviews and from personal observation and experience. The class and instructors will work to refine story ideas during the meeting to ensure each individual or group has clear direction. Failure to pitch a story during the news budget meetings will result in a lower grade.

**Assignments:** During the semester, each student will be required to complete assignments, which will be posted to Memphis Mirror. Stories and projects that do not meet the instructors' approval will not be posted, which will affect the final grade. Further information will be given for each required multimedia package during class time.

- Team assignments (seven total team assignments)
- In-class assignments
- Reading assignments
- Final portfolio

**Online portfolio:** Students will create a professional online portfolio as a tool to market themselves on the job market. The details and requirements of the portfolio will be discussed later in the semester.

**GRADING:**

Participation	50 points
Five reading assignments	50 points (10 each)
First Portfolio Review	100 points
Team project	300 points
Individual project	500 points
Online Portfolio	200 points
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,200 points</b>

- A = 92%-100%
- A- = 90%-91%
- B+ = 87%-89%
- B = 82%-86%
- B- = 80%-81%
- C+ = 77%-79%
- C = 72%-76%
- C- = 70%-71%
- D = 65%-69%
- F = 0%-64%

Grading Philosophy: A=Professional quality work that could be use with little or no modification; B=Good to excellent work and exceeds requirement, but would require revision to be used professionally; C=Satisfactory work and adequately meets requirement, but would need significant revision; D=Barely satisfies minimum requirement and below average quality; F=Unsatisfactory work and does not meet minimum requirement. NOTE:

Pluses and minuses may be given.

**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 multimedia projects 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 team, with open hearts, open minds and good humor. You can learn much from your peers 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 often open. 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\***

**WEEK 1, Jan. 17, Introduction**

Course Introduction, Student Information Sheets, Memphis Mirror Discussion, Form teams for semester

*Readings: MemphisMirror.com*

*Reading Assignment 1: MemphisMirror.com Reading Assignment (Monday, Jan. 22)*

**WEEK 2, Jan. 22, 24, Developing Project Ideas/Portfolio Work**

Developing Ideas for your projects, Working in Multimedia; Review of Online Portfolio

*Readings: True Stories: "Finding Good Topics: A writer's questions," "Participatory reporting," "Being there," "Reporting across cultures," "Doing enough reporting" (Wednesday)*

*Reading Assignment 2: From True Stories—the assignment is online (Wednesday)*

**WEEK 3, Jan. 29, 31, First Portfolio Review**

Review of online portfolios, Online portfolio feedback and revisions

*First portfolio review: Due by Friday, Feb. 2 at 11:59 p.m.*

**WEEK 4, Feb. 5, 7, Pitching Team Project**

Discuss project pitch format and ideas in class.

Team project pitch: Due by Friday, Feb. 9 at 11:59 p.m.

**WEEK 5, Feb. 12, 14 Multimedia Training: Infographics**

Review of infographic apps, finding data, understanding data

*Team project infographic deadline: Due by Sunday, Feb. 18 at 11:59 p.m.*

**WEEK 6, Feb. 19, 21, Writing Workshop**

Critique team project infographics; Writing workshop for long-form stories.

*Team project long form deadline: Due by Sunday, Feb. 25 at 11:59 p.m.*

**WEEK 7, Feb. 26, 28 Multimedia Week**

Work on team project multimedia component

*Team project multimedia deadline: Due by Sunday, March 4 at 11:59 p.m.*

**WEEK 8, March 5, 7 Spring Break**

No class

Be thinking about ideas for your individual project.

**WEEK 9, March 12, 14, Team projects go live**

Post revised team projects to MemphisMirror.com

*Team project goes live: Draft should be posted by the end of class on Wednesday, March 14.*

**WEEK 10 March 19, 21, Individual project ideas/pitch**

Discuss ideas for individual projects; complete pitch for individual project

*Individual project pitch: Due by Sunday, March 25 at 11:59 p.m.*

**WEEK 11 March 26, 28, Individual project work sessions**

Work on individual projects in class. Meet with instructors to discuss the project.

**WEEK 12 April 2, 4 Individual project first deadline**

Work on individual project in class

*Individual project deadline one: Due by Sunday, April 8 at 11:59 p.m.*

**WEEK 13 April 9, 11, Work Week**

Work on individual project in class

*Individual project deadline two: Due by Sunday, April 15 at 11:59 p.m.*

**WEEK 14 April 16, 18, Revision Week**

Critiques of individual projects in class. Work on revising individual projects for the website.

**WEEK 15 April 23, 25, Portfolio Week**

Final portfolio preparation, In-Class Portfolio Presentations (Wednesday)

**FINAL EXAM: Final Projects**

**Friday April 27**

Final individual project due Friday, April 27 by 11:59 p.m.

## PILLARS OF JOUR 4998

- **Professionalism:** In JOUR 4998, 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 in 4998 report news for multimedia platforms.
- **Critical Thinking:** Students in 4998 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 is researched, sourced, and prepared through multiple assignments.

## ASSESSMENT

### PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND COMPETENCIES FOR 4998:

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 4998:**

### *Awareness:*

- Become aware of the role new media plays in society and in the field of journalism.
- Become aware of the ethical treatment of subjects and issues through a multicultural and multimedia lens.

### *Understanding:*

- Develop an understanding of multimedia tools and platforms that are appropriate for news storytelling.

### *Application:*

- Gather information from sources and from extensive research for a project related to the mission of MemphisMirror.com.
- Develop multimedia projects that incorporate several media platforms including: writing, photography, audio, audio-visual, video, and data visualization.

## **DEPARTMENT POLICIES**

### **PORTFOLIO REQUIREMENT:**

All students in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media are required to develop and maintain an active portfolio of their work. Undergraduate students are to begin the portfolio in JRSM 3900 and contribute to it from every course thereafter. The portfolio should contain samples of the student's work from his/her courses and/or professional experience and should develop as the student builds skills. Portfolios will undergo a final, external review while students are enrolled in the capstone course for their majors.

Students may use any type of web hosting for their portfolios, but it must have an independent and professional URL. The department requires students to use WordPress to build their portfolio sites. Students are encouraged to consider purchasing a URL and hosting if they plan to use the portfolio for a long term, but must keep the portfolio active for six months following graduation from the University of Memphis.

Students should have a professional email address they plan to use throughout their professional life, via a common email service, such as Gmail or Yahoo.

All portfolios must contain the following items:

- Samples of work from courses and/or professional activities. (Example: Broadcasting students must include a video reel)
- A current résumé
- A personal profile
- Contact information/means of contact
- Social media links

Students might wish to include a blog, video reels, photograph galleries, SoundSlides presentations, design PDFs, audio files, and Storify pieces as examples of professional work. The professional work should ultimately be tailored to the career the student seeks after graduation. Thus, each student's portfolio should show a unique blend of work.

**EMAIL:**

You must have your UM email account activated. If you are using another provider such as Google, you are required to have your UM email forwarded to that account. Go to the <http://iam.memphis.edu> website to implement forwarding of UM email. You are required to check your email daily. You are responsible for complying with any email sent to you by your professor or the University.

**MOBILE PHONES AND LAPTOPS:**

Some classes require a tablet, laptop or a smartphone. Others do not. Your instructor will set the policy for her/her specific class.

**ATTENDANCE:**

Class attendance is mandatory in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media. You may be assigned a failing grade for the semester for nonattendance, or habitual late arrival. No late work will be accepted without prior arrangements, which are acceptable to your professor. Students may not be permitted to make up any missing work unless it is for an absence because of illness or other catastrophic emergency such as a death in the family that can be documented (e.g. with a doctor's note or a copy of the newspaper obituary). This is a professional program for journalists who are expected to understand and comply with deadlines. If you have some problem making it to class on time make arrangements to fix the problem or consider taking another class. You should consider this class your "job" in the educational process and be on time just as you would elsewhere.

**CHEATING:**

In addition to university-wide policies stated in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media considers making up quotes from sources, turning in substantially the same assignment for credit in two different courses, or a student receiving any assistance from others for work assigned to be done on his/her own, as acts of cheating punishable to the degree determined appropriate by the course instructor and department chair. That may include grade reductions or seeking dismissal of the student from the university.

Further, as this is a journalism/mass communication class, students are expected to comply with copyright law, and must have sufficient permission to use any copyrighted materials used in creative projects, unless otherwise informed in cases of exercises or reproduction.

"Your written work may be submitted to Turnitin.com, or a similar electronic detection method, for an evaluation of the originality of your ideas and proper use and attribution of sources. As part of this process, you may be required to submit electronic as well as hard copies of your written work, or be given other instructions to follow. By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process and that the assignment may be included as a source document in Turnitin.com's restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Any assignment not submitted according to the procedures given by the instructor may be



penalized or may not be accepted at all.” (Office of Legal Counsel, October 17, 2005)

**ONLINE SETEs:**

You are urged to complete the SETEs evaluation of this course. Once your instructor has posted your grade, you can immediately see that grade, provided you completed a teacher evaluation for that class. How to access your evaluation forms: Log in using your UUID and email password; click on the gray “Student” tab; complete an evaluation for each course listed and hit the “Submit” button at the bottom of the form. It will only take a few minutes of your time. We take the evaluations very seriously and use them to improve courses and instructional quality. Your feedback is essential and will be appreciated.

**DEADLINES:**

Remember there’s a reason “DEAD” makes up half the word “deadline.” All deadlines are firm. This is journalism and strategic media. If you get into trouble, talk to your instructor. Exceptions will be made for reasonable circumstances if the student notifies the instructor prior to the due date.

**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.

**DISABILITY:**

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact your instructor privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services at 901-678-2880 in 110 Wilder Tower Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

**DIVERSITY:**

Students are required to respect the differences of others and treat all persons with respect. Discriminatory, derogatory and threatening language or behavior will not be tolerated. Further, students are expected to consider their work through a diverse mind. Mass communications reach a mass audience, and students should be aware of how those messages are received by a diverse audience.

**WEATHER POLICY:**

Always check with local media and the University of Memphis website regarding inclement weather. If the university is closed or classes are canceled, this course will not meet. However, students will still be responsible for that day’s work.