

Information Design

JOUR 4920-001

Spring 2020

Class meeting: TR 2:40-4:05, MJ 212

Matthew J. Haught, Ph.D.

Office: 334B Meeman Journalism Building

Office hours: Tuesday & Thursday 9 a.m.-noon or by appointment

Office number: 901.678.4521

Email: mjhaught@memphis.edu

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Catalog description

Visual presentation of quantitative and spatial information. Examines the planning, design, and preparation of statistical graphs, charts, timelines, diagrams, and maps.

Prerequisites

JRSM 3900

Textbooks, Software and Required Materials

Cairo, A. (2012). *The functional art: An introduction to information graphics and visualization*. Berkeley, CA: New Riders.

Adobe Photoshop CC, Adobe InDesign CC, Adobe Illustrator CC, Microsoft Excel, SPSS, Tableau, multiple online tools

Note: Students can purchase the Adobe Creative Cloud on a month-to-month basis from Adobe.com. Students can also access software in classroom computer labs, at the University Center Tech Hub on the UofM campus, and at citrix.memphis.edu.

One Flash Drive (At least 8GB capacity) or access to external storage.

Note: University computers are regularly erased, and lost files cannot be recovered. Saving files on university computers is not permitted.

Classroom format

This course is designed to develop skills in data visualization and information literacy. Students will learn the software used to create graphics for print and interactive platforms. As such, the course includes elements of design, coding, mathematics, statistics and production.

Accessing the course website

1. Go to the University of Memphis eLearn home page: <http://elearn.memphis.edu>
2. Log in using your University of Memphis username and password.
3. In the Term Year course list available to you, click on the link for JOUR 4920 - 001 to enter your course and read the instructions on the welcoming page

Course Requirements

- All assignments are to be submitted electronically via eCourseware.
- Generally, each assignment will come with unique formatting guidelines. Be sure to follow these guidelines exactly. Work that does not comply to these guidelines, as well as the production specifications indicated for the assignment, will receive a grade of 0.
- All major projects (except the final) can be resubmitted with corrections and revisions one week after it is returned to you.
- Work will be critiqued in the classroom and must be suitable for presentation. Students are encouraged to work ahead on assignments to develop their creative processes for the work.

Honors

Any student who would like to contract this course for honors credit must speak with the instructor before the honors deadline to complete the needed paperwork.

Grading

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: Students in Journalism and Strategic Media must earn a C- or better to earn credit in the course. Students completing an honors contract must earn a B or better for honors credit.

Grade Distribution:

Assignment	Percent of grade
Data activities	25%
Data projects	45%
Final project	25%
Portfolio	5%

A+ = 96.5-100%; A = 92.5-96.4%; A- = 89.5-92.4%
B+ = 86.5-89.4%; B = 82.5-86.4%; B- = 79.5-82.4%
C+ = 76.5-79.4%; C = 72.5-76.4%; C- = 69.5-72.4%
D+ = 66.5-69.4%; D = 59.5-66.4%
F 0-59.4%

Computer usage

Students are expected to use a computer in this course. Students will use Apple computers in class, but may use Windows computers at their own discretion. Students will work with the design software standard in the professional world. At this time, the professional standard is the Adobe Creative Cloud, particularly Adobe Illustrator, Adobe InDesign and Adobe Photoshop. Extensive instruction about how to use these programs will be offered in this course.

Writing style

Although this is primarily a design course, students will be required to write a minimal amount as part of their study. In these cases, students are expected to adhere to the Associated Press style guide. Additionally, in design projects, students will use text as part of their projects. Within creative reason, the text used in these projects must also follow the AP guidelines.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1, January 20-26

Overview of data visualization. Infographics, maps, charts, and Big Data. Why visualize data?

Read: Cairo 1

Homework: DA 1.

Week 2, January 27-February 2

Software for data visualization. Illustrator, Excel, SPSS, Tableau, Google Charts, eSpatial. Classic alternative story forms. Text graphics. Parts of an infographic. Controlling type, tone and color. Layering information/visual hierarchy.

Read: Harrower online

Homework: DA 2.

Week 3, February 3-9

Forms and functions. Visualization as a technology. Art and Communications.

Read: Cairo 2-3

Homework: DA 3, DP 1.

Week 4, February 10-16

Statistics that matter. Central tendency. Significance. Change over time.

Read: Notes online

Homework: DA 4.

Week 5, February 17-23

The complexity challenge: Presentation and Exploration.

Read: Cairo 4

Homework: DA 5, DP 2.

Week 6, February 24-March 1

The Eye and the Visual Brain. Visualizing for the Mind. Images in the Head.

Read: Cairo 5-7

Homework: DA 6.

Week 7, March 2-8

Creating infographics. Interactive graphics.

Read: Cairo 8-9

Homework: DA 7, DP 3.

Week 8, March 9-15: Spring break

Week 9, March 16-22

Mapping. Maps in Tableau. Maps in Illustrator.

Read: Readings online.

Homework: DA 8.

Week 10, March 23-29

Social network analysis.

Homework: DA 9, DP 4.

Week 11, March 30-April 5

Graphics for social media.

Homework: DA 10.

Week 12, April 6-12

Data mining. Work time.

Homework: DP 5.

Week 13, April 13-19: Work week

Week 14, April 20-26: Work week

Week 15, April 27-May 3

Final portfolio preparation.

Assignments: Portfolios.

Final Presentation, Tuesday May 5, 1-3 p.m.

ASSESSMENT AND OUTCOMES

Five Pillars in JOUR 4920

- *Critical Thinking:* Students must determine the best means to communicate data visually. Further, students must understand and interpret statistical output to make meaningful communication.
- *Media Literacy:* Students must understand the shortfalls of data visualizations, the tendencies of some media outlets to use them improperly, and the capabilities of data visualizations on all communications platforms.
- *Multimedia:* Students engage multiple visual storytelling platforms to communicate data messages.
- *Professionalism:* Students must consider the legal and ethical implications of communicating data to the public.
- *Writing:* Students write information for graphics and use them to communicate a message to a target audience.

Professional values and competencies for JOUR 4920

- 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, and to understand the digital world

How professional values and competencies will be met

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

- Acquire a technical awareness of the computer as a tool in design through class assignments, lectures and demonstrations.
- Establish a working knowledge of data visualization.
- Understand the basic principles of presenting quantitative and qualitative information visually.
- Integrate photos, graphics, and text.
- Become familiar with state-of-the-art developments in technology and the use of contemporary software for the design and production of specific editorial, print and collateral material.

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

- Ability to create a range of charts and graphics.
- Techniques for infographics for print and digital publication.
- Ability to create social media driven graphics.
- Write content to support data visualizations.

How assessment of student learning will be met

Awareness

- Aware of the complexities of data presentation..

Understanding

- *Understand the ways data visualization can be used to communicate a message.*

Application

- Produce data visualizations for print and digital platforms serving journalistic, public relations, advertising, strategic media and business purposes.

JOURNALISM AND STRATEGIC MEDIA 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 graduate students are to begin in JRSM 7002. Students are to contribute to it in every skills course thereafter. The portfolio should contain samples of the student's work from courses and/or professional experiences and should develop as the student builds skills. Portfolios will undergo a final, external review while students are enrolled in their capstone courses.

Students may use any type of web hosting for their portfolios, but it must have an independent and professional URL. Students may use any content management system, but students are encouraged to use WordPress, Wix or SquareSpace. Students are encouraged to consider purchasing a URL and hosting if they plan to use the portfolio for a long term, but they 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 lives, via a common email service, such as Gmail.

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 writing 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

Students must have their UofM email accounts activated. Students using another provider, such as Google, are required to have all UofM email forwarded to that account. Students should go to the <http://iam.memphis.edu> website to implement forwarding of UofM email. Students are required to check their email daily. They are responsible for complying with any email sent to by professors or others in the University.

Electronic devices

Some classes require a tablet, laptop or a smartphone. Others do not. Instructors will set the policy for their specific classes.

Attendance

Class attendance is mandatory in Journalism and Strategic Media. Students may be assigned a failing grade for the semester for nonattendance or habitual late arrival. No late work will be accepted without prior arrangements with the class 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).

Journalism and Strategic Media is a professional program, and students are expected to understand and comply with deadlines. Students who have some problem making it to class on time should make arrangements to correct the problem or consider taking another class. Students should consider this class as a "job" in the educational process and be on time just as they would elsewhere.

Course repetition

Majors and minors who fail to earn the minimum passing grade ("C-") in a class required by their program of study in Journalism and Strategic Media more than three times will be dropped from the program.

Students may not use or submit work from a previous course, even if it is the same course being repeated, to fulfill requirements for assignments in another course. If students wish to substantially rework the original submission, or to work with the same general idea, that may be permissible upon discussion with and written approval from the professor of the current course. All written work will be checked for policy adherence via TurnItIn.com. All creative work will be checked for policy adherence by the professor, and judged against previous submissions. The only exception to this policy is the student's online portfolio and its attendant pieces (for example, the résumé and logo).

Academic integrity

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 students receiving any assistance from others for work assigned to be done on their own, as acts of cheating punishable to the degree determined appropriate by the course instructor and department chair. Punishment may include grade reductions or seeking dismissal of the student from the University.

Further, as this is a journalism and strategic media 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 rating originality of your ideas. Also to evaluate proper use and assignment of sources. As part of this process, you may require to submit electronic as well as hard copies of your work. Other instructions to follow may also be given. By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process. The assignment may be included as a source document in Turnitin.com's restricted access database. It is solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Assignments not submitted according to the instructor's procedures may be penalized or may not be accepted at all. (*Office of Legal Counsel, October 11, 2018*)

Online SETEs

Students are urged to complete the SETEs evaluation of this course. Once the instructor has posted grades, student can immediately see that grade, provided they have completed a the SETE for that class. To access evaluation forms, students should log in to MyMemphis using their UUIDs and email passwords; click on the gray “Student” tab; complete an evaluation for each course listed and hit the “Submit” button at the bottom of the form. Completing the SETE will only take a few minutes. Faculty take the evaluations very seriously and use them to improve courses and instructional quality. Student feedback is essential and is appreciated.

Deadlines

All deadlines are firm. This is journalism and strategic media. Students needing an extension on an assignment must receive approval from the 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 must follow the AP Stylebook and accepted rules of grammar and punctuation. Students are responsible for learning these rules and checking their work for errors.

Disability and accommodations

Students who need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office for Disability Resources for Students at 901-678-2880 in 110 Wilder Tower Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Diversity and inclusivity

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. Media 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.

Student support

Student who are experiencing personal or academic challenges including, but not limited to food or housing issues, family needs, or other stressors, should visit the Office of Student Accountability, Outreach & Support page to learn about resources that can help: <https://www.memphis.edu/saos/sos/crisis-resources.php>. Any student who faces personal challenges including, but not limited to securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Office of Student Accountability, Outreach & Support (901-678-2187) located in the University Center, Suite 359 for assistance. Students may also talk with course instructors about the challenges they are experiencing. Instructors may be able to assist in connecting with campus or community support.