

# Multimedia News Lab

JOUR 4998-001

Spring 2020

Class Meeting: MW 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m., MJ 212

## Pamela Denney

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**Office Hours:** TR 3:30 – 5:30 p.m. or by appointment

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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.

### Prerequisites

JOUR 3526

Two advanced writing courses

### Textbooks, Software and Required Materials

*The New York Times* Digital subscription is available free of charge to University of Memphis students.  
*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](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](http://www.hearstfdn.org/hearst_journalism/competitions.php))

National Public Radio's [All Things Considered](http://www.npr.org/programs/all-things-considered/)

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

NPR's [Radiolab](http://www.radiolab.org)

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

### 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. 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 every other week, which means you will pitch each project and have it approved by your editor and the instructor. **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 MemphisMirror.com.** 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 editors and instructors will work to refine story ideas during the meeting to ensure each reporter has clear direction. Failure to pitch a story during the news budget meetings will result in a lower grade.

### 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 4998-001 to enter your course and read the instructions on the welcoming page

### Course Requirements

During the semester, each student will be required to complete multimedia projects, which will be posted to MemphisMirror.com. Stories and projects that do not meet editors' and instructors' approval will not be posted, which will affect the final grade. Further information will be given for each required assignment in class. Each student will also serve as editor for one cycle during the semester. This is an important role, and it may require to put in extra work for that cycle.

- Five individual projects
- Editor assignment
- In-class assignments
- Reading assignments
- Final portfolio

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

### Class point breakdown

Participation	50 points
Five multimedia critiques	50 points (10 each)
First Portfolio Review	100 points
Five individual projects	500 points (100 each)
Editor week	250 points
Online Portfolio	200 points
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,200 points</b>

## Grading

Assignment categories and points or percentage weights.

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%

Grading Philosophy: A=Professional quality work that could be published 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.

## Other issues

**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 as 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.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

### *Week 1, Jan. 20: Introduction/Developing Project Ideas*

Course Introduction; Memphis Mirror Discussion; Developing Project Ideas; Forming of editorial teams  
Assignments:

- Multimedia Critique 1: MemphisMirror.com (Monday at the start of class.) Multimedia Critique 5: Lane Degregory (WriteLane) podcasts on developing story ideas (Sunday at 11:59 p.m.)

### *Week 2, Jan. 27: News Training Week*

Editorial team assignments; Editor training, reporter training; Introduction to MemphisMirror.com mechanics; Editorial team meetings

Assignments:

- Multimedia Critique 2: Hearst Winners and Multimedia Critique 3: Radio Lab (Sunday at 11:59 p.m.)
- Post portfolio links on class Facebook page (Sunday at 11:59 p.m.)

### *Week 3, Sept. Feb. 3: Cycle One Writing Week and Portfolio Review*

First portfolio reviews with instructor

Story budget meeting (Monday with editors/instructor)

News room hours (reporters/editors)

- Assignments: Story deadline (Sunday, 11:59 p.m. to editor/instructor)

### *Week 4, Feb. 10: Cycle One Editing & Publishing Week*

Edits rewrites; Posting to MemphisMirror.com

Assignments:

- Editors: Edits to writers (Wednesday, 11:59 p.m.)
- Writers: Final copy to editors (Friday, 11:59 p.m.)
- Editors: Final posted to site (Sunday, 11:59 p.m.)
- Multimedia Critique 4: Dailymemphian.com (Sunday, 11:59 p.m.)

### *Week 5, Feb. 17: Cycle Two Writing Week*

Story budget meeting (Monday with editors/instructor)

News room hours (reporters/editors); Social media management (editors)

Assignments:

- Story deadline (Sunday, 11:59 p.m. to editor/instructor)

### *Week 6, Feb. 24: Cycle Two Editing & Publishing Week*

Edits rewrites; Posting to MemphisMirror.com

Assignments:

- Editors: Edits to writers (Wednesday, 11:59 p.m.)
- Writers: Final copy to editors (Friday, 11:59 p.m.)
- Editors: Final posted to site (Sunday, 11:59 p.m.)

### *Week 7, March 2: Cycle Three Writing Week (Fall break no class on Monday)*

Story budget meeting (Monday with editors/instructor)

News room hours (reporters/editors); Social media management (editors)

Assignments:

- Story deadline (Sunday, 11:59 p.m. to editor/instructor)

### *Week 8, March 9: Spring Break Week (March 7-15)*

### *Week 9, March 16: Cycle Three Editing & Publishing Week*

Edits rewrites; Posting to MemphisMirror.com

Assignments:

- Editors: Edits to writers (Wednesday, 11:59 p.m.)
- Writers: Final copy to editors (Friday, 11:59 p.m.)
- Editors: Final posted to site (Sunday, 11:59 p.m.)

#### *Week 10, March 23: Cycle Four Writing Week*

Story budget meeting (Monday with editors/instructor)

News room hours (reporters/editors); Social media management (editors)

Assignments:

- Story deadline (Sunday, 11:59 p.m. to editor/instructor)

#### *Week 11, March 30: Cycle Four Editing & Publishing Week*

Edits rewrites; Posting to MemphisMirror.com

Assignments:

- Editors: Edits to writers (Wednesday, 11:59 p.m.)
- Writers: Final copy to editors (Friday, 11:59 p.m.)
- Editors: Final posted to site (Sunday, 11:59 p.m.)

#### *Week 12, April 6: Cycle Five Writing Week*

Story budget meeting (Monday with editors/instructor)

News room hours (reporters/editors); Social media management (editors)

Assignments:

- Story deadline (Sunday, 11:59 p.m. to editor/instructor)

#### *Week 13, April 13: Cycle Five Editing & Publishing Week*

Edits rewrites; Posting to MemphisMirror.com

Assignments:

- Editors: Edits to writers (Wednesday, 11:59 p.m.)
- Writers: Final copy to editors (Friday, 11:59 p.m.)
- Editors: Final posted to site (Sunday, 11:59 p.m.)

#### *Week 14, April 20: Portfolio Week*

Work on your final portfolio.

#### *Week 15, April 27: Presentations*

Present final portfolio last day of class.

Study Day: April 30.

## **ASSESSMENT AND OUTCOMES**

### **Five Pillars in JOUR 4998**

- *Critical Thinking:* Students explore options for creating and sourcing media content, researching news stories and making editorial decisions in the newsroom.
- *Media Literacy:* Students are exposed to the vocabulary and grammar of media production. Students learn how media are researched, sourced and prepared through multiple assignments in various media platforms.
- *Multimedia:* Students report news for multimedia platforms such as: photo, video, data

visualization, audio and web.

- *Professionalism*: Students learn and develop the routines of news professionals in a multimedia setting.
- *Writing*: Students develop writing skills through reporting and evaluation of multimedia news stories and packages.

### Professional Values and Competencies in JOUR 4998

- 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 current 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)*

- Develop advanced understanding of newswriting for multiple applications and media platforms
- Establish a working knowledge of professional news routines in a multimedia setting
- Learn to cover diverse communities with consideration for race, gender, gender identity, ability, sexual orientation, class, and ethnicity
- Research and report stories 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 plan and pitch a multimedia news project
- Ability to create multimedia news projects that incorporate multiple platforms and showcase many skills
- Understanding of many multimedia storytelling tools available to journalists

## How assessment of student learning will be met

### *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.

## 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.