

Visual Media Theory & Practice

JRSM 7530-S01

Spring 2024

Class Meeting: Friday 5:30-8:30 p.m.

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Catalog description

Familiarization with in-depth interviews, focus groups, participant observation, and content analysis; practical experience in collecting and analyzing qualitative data.

Textbooks, Software and Required Materials

Adobe Creative Cloud or other design software

Classroom format

Class time will primarily be spent in discussion of theories, issues, and applications. To that end, students must complete the assigned readings and be prepared to discuss the night's topic. 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 — will significantly affect your final grade.

This course is designed to explore the fundamental theories of visual media, as well as the tools for their use in practice. Students will learn advanced techniques and the principles behind them to execute ideas for work in the creative industry. Further, students will build a portfolio of work. A typical class session will consist of a lecture, discussion, and assignment/lab time.

Accessing the course website

1. Go to the University of Memphis online learning home page: <http://memphis.instructure.com>
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 JRSM 7530 – S01 to enter your course and read the instructions on the welcoming page

Course Requirements

Research Colloquium

Graduate students must attend and write a one-page reflection paper about at least one Research Colloquium sponsored by the Department. Attendance and papers will count for at least 2% of your course final grade. Those who cannot attend will receive instructions about remote viewing from your instructor. Students enrolled in more than one course may write multiple reflections of one research presentation as long as the topic is customized to the individual class.

Virtual Classroom Format

This class will use Zoom, a web-based video conferencing platform. All students, whether in the on campus or online section, will be in class synchronously, with everyone meeting at the same time via Zoom. I will not be in building during class time, and I do not expect anyone else to join the class live in a classroom. All students must have a stable Internet connection, speakers and a microphone (or a headset with a built-in mic). Headsets can be purchased for approximately \$20. Students will need to be able to have video turned on for the entire class. Online students will not be permitted to attend class using a cellphone.

Repetition of Courses and Coursework

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 resume and logo).

AI/ChatGPT

You are permitted to use ChatGPT and other AI tools to assist you in gathering information, writing drafts, and revising your writing in this course. However, you are expected to include a disclosure statement at the end of your assignment describing which AI tool you used and how you used it. For example, "*ChatGPT was used to draft about 30% of this assignment and to provide revision assistance. AI-produced content was edited for accuracy and style.*" Be prepared to submit any prompts you used for assistance with your assignment as well as the original ChatGPT output and to be able to explain/show how you fact-checked and improved upon the AI's work.

Grading and Course Assignments

This is meant as a general guideline to the major assignments within the class. More detail will be provided in class and on Canvas. Deadlines are also listed in the Class Schedule. All work should be turned in via Canvas unless otherwise noted. All work is due at the start of class, 11:59 p.m. CT on the Saturday of the week assigned, unless otherwise noted.

Discussion Papers, 15 percent

Students will write a 200-word reaction to each week's readings.

Visual Activities (Various deadlines), 20 percent

Assignments meant to reinforce various visual skills. Participation in JRSM Colloquium events will be calculated into activities.

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instructor. Students enrolled in more than one course may write multiple reflections of one research presentation as long as the topic is customized to the individual class.

Visual Projects (Various deadlines), 40 percent

Assignments meant to show creativity.

Research Paper (Various deadlines), 15 percent

Minimum 10-page (maximum 8,000 words) research paper addressing a visual media issue. The paper must use primary research for most of the research, and appropriately use supporting secondary sources. Students must complete a professional presentation of research paper in class. Students will prepare a 15-minuted audio- visual presentation and be prepared for question and answer.

Portfolio (April 24), 10 percent

All Department of Journalism and Strategic Media students are required to develop and maintain an active online portfolio of their work. More information about the final review of portfolios is in the Assessment section later in the syllabus. Your final portfolio will be graded on these measures.

Grading Scale

Assignment

Discussion papers	15%
Research paper	15%
Visual activities	20%
Visual projects	40%
Portfolio	10%

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%

COURSE SCHEDULE

This is a basic schedule for topics and major assignments over the course of the semester. Although every effort will be made to stick with this schedule, please understand that some material may require more or less discussion and class time. Thus, changes to the schedule may occur. All changes will be announced in class.

Week 1: Jan. 19: Our visual world

Introduction. Old media. New media. Social media. Multiplatform and multimodal communication. Marshall McLuhan.

Week 2: Jan. 26: Project Planning

Meeting with clients. Strategy. Planning. Project coordination.

Week 3: Feb 2: Perception, Gestalt and Organization

Perception theory. Gestalt. Organization and grouping in design.

Week 4: Feb. 9: Visual rhetoric

Visual rhetoric, branding, design.

Week 5: Feb. 16: Social Semiotics

Symbolism in language and visual communication.

Week 6. Feb. 23: Visual Literacy

Understanding the language of visuals.

Week 7: March 1: Design for engagement

Visual communication. Page layout. Web design. User interface design.

Week 8: March 8: Spring Break

Week 9: March 15: Static Media

Text. Graphics. Images.

Week 10: March 22: Time Based Media

Audio. Video.

Week 11: March 29: Your brand and your business

Freelancing. Logo design. Branding. Résumés. Portfolios.

Week 12: April 5: Advertising and Public Relations

Design for strategic media.

Week 13: April 12: Social Media

Social platforms. Web 2.0. Content creation and evaluation.

Week 15: April 19: Presentations

JOURNALISM AND STRATEGIC MEDIA POLICIES

Portfolio requirement

As an undergraduate student in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media, you are required to develop and maintain an active portfolio of your work. Portfolios begin in JRSM 3900/3905. The portfolio should contain samples of coursework and/or professional experiences and should develop as you build skills. Portfolios will undergo a final, external review while you are enrolled in your capstone course.

You may use any type of web hosting for your portfolio, but it must have an independent and professional URL. You may use any content management system, but you are encouraged to use

WordPress, Wix, or Squarespace. It is also encouraged to purchase a URL if you plan to use the portfolio long term. You must keep the portfolio active for six months following graduation from the University of Memphis.

You should have a professional email address you plan to use throughout your professional life, 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
- Professional social media links (minimum LinkedIn)

You may wish to include a blog, video reels, photograph galleries, presentations, design PDFs, audio files or writing pieces as examples of professional work. The professional work should ultimately be tailored to the career you seek after graduation. Your portfolio should show a unique blend of work.

Email

You must have your UofM email account activated. If you are using another provider, such as Google, you are required to have all UofM emails forwarded to that account. Go to the [account management website](#) for information about implementing email forwarding. You are required to check your email daily.

Electronic devices

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

AI/Chat GPT

The use of artificial intelligence software, such as Chat GPT, is prohibited in some courses and required in others in Journalism & Strategic Media. Please refer to specific guidelines for this course in the course-specific part of the syllabus.

Attendance

Class attendance is mandatory in Journalism & Strategic Media. You may be assigned a failing grade for the semester for nonattendance or habitual tardiness.

Course repetition

Majors and minors who fail to earn the minimum passing grade (C-) in a class required by your program of study in Journalism & Strategic Media after three attempts will be dropped from the program.

You 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. Substantially reworking the original submission, or working with the same general idea, may be permissible upon discussion and with written approval from the professor of the current course.

Academic integrity

The University of Memphis expects all students to behave honestly and follow the policies stated in the Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities. If you need more information about the University policy on academic integrity visit the [Office of Student Accountability's website](#).

In addition to University-wide policies, the Department of Journalism & Strategic Media considers making up quotes from sources, turning in substantially the same assignment for credit in two different courses or receiving any assistance from others for work assigned to be done on your own, as acts of cheating and 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, you are expected to comply with copyright and intellectual property laws 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 and to evaluate proper use and assignment of sources. All creative work may be checked for policy adherence by the professor. The only exception to this policy is your online portfolio and its attendant pieces (for example, the résumé and logo). 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.

Online SETEs

You are encouraged to complete the SETEs evaluation of this course. If completed, once the instructor has posted final grades, you can immediately see that grade. To access evaluation forms, log in to MyMemphis; click the "Student Pages" dropdown menu and select "My Resources" and find the SETE evaluation forms; 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 seriously and use them to improve courses and instructional quality. Your feedback is essential and is appreciated.

Deadlines

All deadlines are firm. Because Journalism & Strategic Media is a professional program, students are expected to understand and comply with deadlines. 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.

You may be permitted to make up missing work if it is for an absence because of illness or other catastrophic emergency, such as a death in the family that can be documented.

AP Style and grammar

All written work in this class must follow the AP Stylebook and accepted rules of grammar and punctuation. You are responsible for learning these rules and checking your work for errors.

Disability and accommodations

If you need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, contact Disability Resources for Students at 901-678-2880 in 110 Wilder Tower Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations.

Diversity and inclusivity

The Department of Journalism & Strategic Media values diversity in all its forms. Some of these forms include ability, age, appearance, ethnicity, gender identity, immigration status, language, nationality, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexuality, socio-economic status, and other personal identities and experiences. As such, students are expected to participate in fostering an inclusive environment that respects the differences of others.

Students are expected to approach their work through a diverse lens. Creating messages that resonate with diverse audiences requires an understanding of a variety of perspectives, which are carried out through multiple platforms, such as digital and traditional media outlets.

The department seeks to foster healthy and positive classroom discussions and experiences. As such, faculty and students are expected to remain respectful and professional at all times.

Weather policy

Always check with local media, the University of Memphis website and the LiveSafe App regarding inclement weather.

Student support

If you are experiencing personal or academic challenges including, but not limited to food or housing issues, family needs, or other stressors, visit the Student Outreach & Support page to learn about resources that can help: <https://www.memphis.edu/deanofstudents/crisis/index.php> or contact the Dean of Students Office at 901-678-2187, or in person in Suite 359 in the University Center for assistance. You may also talk with course instructors about the challenges you are experiencing. Instructors may be able to assist in connecting you with campus or community support.