

TV News Producing
JOUR 4639/6639-001
MW 2:20-4:00 p.m., MJ 212
Spring 2026

Prof. Joe Hayden

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Catalog description

Producing, writing, editing and using electronic equipment to assemble a television newscast; emphasis on performing the various tasks in a working newsroom.

Prerequisites

JOUR 4629 (TV News Writing/Reporting) or permission of instructor

Textbooks, Software and Required Materials

No books to buy, but there will be occasional reading—chapters and articles—assigned by the instructor. These will be announced in class and distributed via email or Canvas.

Required: A portable external hard drive, 500 GB. Universal for both Mac and PC.

Classroom format

After a month of training and prepping, this course will work like a newsroom to build your skills in producing television newscasts and content for those shows. Each student is expected to write, produce, perform studio work, and generate content for their classmates. Producing is all about communicating clearly and organizing effectively. Demonstrating these skills is how you'll be judged and what your grade is based on.

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 JOUR 4639 - 001 to enter your course and read the instructions on the welcoming page

Course Requirements

Producing

Each student will help produce a newscast for Tiger News. As the producer, you will be expected to organize the rundown and to manage your news team. Most of your work takes place *before* the day of

the show: (a) selecting and assigning stories, (b) communicating with your reporters, (c) writing teases and opens/closes, (d) editing scripts, and (e) checking video. In the studio, you'll work closely with the director to insure that the show starts and ends promptly.

Before going into the studio we need to deliver hard copies of the scripts to share with the news team: yourself, director, audio, TelePrompTer, anchor, floor director, assistant director, tape operator, professor. I'll take care of photocopying, but that means your rundown and scripts need to be done by noon on the day of the show.

Professional development involves accountability. After the newscast, you will evaluate each member of your team, paying particular attention to hardworking people who went above and beyond to help make the show a success—or people who dropped the ball and failed to deliver.

Other Assignments

When you are not producing a show, you will be assigned specific duties as part of this news team: writing stories, shooting and editing video, perhaps performing one of several critical roles in the studio (the prompter or CG, e.g.). Afterward, your producer will evaluate your performance in writing and turn it in to the instructor. Exemplary service and team spirit will earn you extra points. Failure to perform your duties will result in a lower grade.

“Spotlight” Producing (Extra Credit)

For their own or others' newscasts, students may invite, research, and interview a guest speaker as part of a taped segment called “Spotlight.” Highlights from the conversation are edited into a 2- to 3-minute PKG. This is a different type of producing but an important and popular feature of many news and entertainment programs. The guest and the topic must be approved in advance by the instructor. We'll also have to notify the director to make sure we have a crew for the interview, which can be taped on Mondays at 2:30. A successful segment will garner extra credit points. It also looks great as part of a résumé reel.

Portfolio

Students must update the portfolio they created and developed in earlier skills courses with content from this course—packages, stand-ups, anchoring, or Spotlight interview segments.

Grading

You will work as a television station news department. That means a great emphasis on teamwork. If the newscast fails, you all fail. If it succeeds, you all succeed. Help one another.

- Newscast 30%
- Assignments 30%
- Participation/Attendance/Attitude 30%
- 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%

Graduate students

Graduate students taking this course will also write a 10-page paper based on two books, approved in advance by the instructor. Grading for these students will be organized as follows: quizzes (10%), rundowns and teases (20%), newscast analyses (20%), packages (20%), portfolio (10%), paper (20%).

Other issues

One of the key qualities you should leave a professional program with is . . . professionalism, which means being competent, yes, but also being hardworking and dependable. Can your coworkers trust you to get the job done right and on time? Are you reliable? Can you be counted on to keep your cool and still perform well?

Deadlines are sacrosanct in journalism, television in particular. So be prepared, get organized, plan ahead, communicate clearly, complete your work, and show up on time.

We are producing something for public consumption, something that affects not only your reputation but our image as a university. Please act accordingly.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1, Wed., Jan. 21: Introduction

Broadcast terms, writing, scripting, Rundown Creator

Week 2, Jan. 26 and 28:

Readings: "Producing," *Broadcast News Handbook*

Quizzes: Q1 on chapter, Q2 on broadcast terms.

- Anchor auditions on Wed., Jan. 28, 2:30 p.m.

Week 3, Feb. 2 and 4: Newscast analysis and construction

Newscast analysis #1 due

- News anchor meeting on Wed., Feb. 4, 4:00 p.m.

Week 4, Feb. 9 and 11:

Week 5, Feb. 16 and 18:

SHOW 1 (Feb. 18)

Week 6, Feb. 23 and 25:

SHOW 2 (Feb. 25)

Week 7, March 2 and 4:

SHOW 3 (March 4)

Week 8, March 9 and 11

No classes: SPRING BREAK

Week 9, March 16 and 18:

SHOW 4 (March 18)

Week 10, March 23 and 25:

SHOW 5 (March 25)

Week 11, March 30 and April 1:

SHOW 6 (April 1)

Week 12, April 6 and 8:

SHOW 7 (April 8)

Week 13, April 13 and 15:

SHOW 8 (April 15)

- *April 16: Pro Day (UC Fountain View Room, 12:00 p.m.)*

Week 14, April 20 and 22:

Portfolios

Week 15, April 29

Wrap-up. Resume reels

ASSESSMENT AND OUTCOMES

Professional values and competencies for JOUR 4639

- Present images and information effectively and creatively, using appropriate tools and technologies.
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve.
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.
- Apply critical thinking skills in conducting research and evaluating information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.
- Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical structure.
- 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)

- Understand the variety of relationships between media and their audiences, including demography, designated market areas and ratings measurements.
- Be sensitive to the needs of diverse and under-represented groups in programming and creating messages.

- Recognize the ethical and philosophical issues that arise in media culture and understand the range of viewpoints regarding these issues.
- Understand the behind-the-scenes operations and decision-making processes of major mass communication industries.
- Understand how new technology affects the media and the public.
- Understand necessity and challenges in thematic blocking of news content
- Think critically in balancing newscasts to fit time and content requirements of news management.
- Acquire ability to think of time as newscast space through application of backtiming.
- Recognize the problems of balancing production and marketing demands with providing journalistic content for audience members.
- Develop appreciation for audience context and perspective in the communication process.

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

- Demonstrate effective newscast development, organization and broadcast writing style.
- Demonstrate advanced backtiming ability to include multiple-segment, 15- minute newscasts executed to within 10 seconds of assigned time.
- Demonstrate the ability to maintain focus and multitasking skills in “live-to-tape” newscast production.
- Produce a complete newscast.
- Work effectively with show director and news crew.
- Manage a news team.

How assessment of student learning will be met

Awareness

- Recognize diversity as a method for reaching the audience, showcasing different voices, and covering all parts of the community.
- Become aware of ethical decision-making as it applies to the writing and grouping of individual stories, source development, and audience responsibility.

Understanding

- Understand the practice of basic journalistic principles.

Application

- Each student will produce a 15-minute newscast.
- Time permitting, each student will also produce an interview segment to run during the show.
- Students will also crew shows for their classmates—anchoring, running audio, operating studio cameras, serving as assistant director, running the prompter, and working as tape-op.

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 JRS 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. You may miss two class sessions for any reason. After that, though, two points will be deducted from your course grade for each additional absence. (In other words, if you miss, say, seven classes, that will mean the drop of ten points—a whole letter grade.)

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 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.