Course Syllabus

News, Narrative & Design II

Spring 2015

**Course Description:** Students will dive deeper into journalistic practice, with a growing emphasis on deep reporting and community engagement as well as increasingly sophisticated design, social media and data reporting practices. Classes will be project-based and students will learn to work in teams as well as independently. Students will be encouraged to express the news and tell evidence-based stories in imaginative and exploratory ways. The class includes multiple guest lectures. Designers, social media experts and data reporters will be embedded in the class.

**Learning outcomes**

*By the successful completion of this class, students will be able to*

1) Students should demonstrate growth as news writers and evidence-based storytellers building speed, accuracy, transparency, and an ability to convey complex subjects in clear, concise prose.

2) Students should demonstrate basic understanding of design methodologies.

   Students should learn the strengths and weaknesses of each medium to tell a news story.

3) Students should gain a deepening proficiency in a broad range of news research skills, including data reporting.

4) Students should demonstrate a deepening mastery of the production process: from print to multimedia.

5) Students should be proficient in using social media, both as a reporting tool and to magnify impact.

6) Engagement: students learn the process and values of community engagement, building readership and developing innovative means of communicating with an audience.

**Course Requirements:** Students will work through four modules in the class, paying close attention both to the practice of serious journalism and inventive approaches to expressing and presenting the news.
Students will work in teams and independently to produce short pieces throughout the semester and a final project at the end.

**Graded Activities**: Grades will be based on such mundane things as attendance, participation in class and fulfillment of requirements. They will also be based on improvement, hard work, and thoughtfulness. A good grade requires pushing yourself, and stepping outside your comfort zone - on going that extra mile. There are no inflated grades. A grade of C is for satisfactory work, a B for good work, and an A for outstanding work.

**Grade calculation:**

- **Attendance/engagement/participation**: 15%
- **Effective Collaboration/Open-mindedness**: 15%
- **Short assignments**: 20%
- **Project 1**: 15%
- **Project 2**: 15%
- **Project 3**: 20%

**Schedule**

**Week one**

Jan 26th

Who are you? Who am I? What is journalism? What is it for? Where do you find your journalism?

**Assignment**: Bring in one example of journalism. And one example of media that is not journalism and be prepared to give a four-minute (no longer!!) talk explaining yourself. Use visuals. Suggestion: PowerPoint or Keynote (IE. Not, just a written document) (Hint: Four minutes is short - practice)
Jan 28:

1. Presentations. What have we decided journalism is? Our values. Our goals. Where do we fit in?


*Week two*

Feb 2

1. Discussion: “Planet Money”/"Oslo Landslide"


Feb 4

1. Discussion of reading.

**Assignment:** Please pick the piece that interested you the most and write a 300-400 word analysis of it. Why was it journalism? What were the different elements of the piece – quotes, expository writing, images, sounds, interactive. In what ways was the piece successful? In what ways could it have been more successful?

*Week three*

Feb 9

1. 1. Interviewing people about their news habits: Why chains, what they say vs. what they do: 20 minutes

2. 2. 30 minutes out in the field
3. Creating user profiles: 40 minutes.

Assignment: Read brainstorming rules. Read POV materials. Read HMW

Feb 11

1. Finish user profiles 40 minutes
2. Create POV or problem statement. [USER] needs to [USER’S NEED] because [SURPRISING INSIGHT] 20 mins
3. Brainstorming solving user needs HMW: 30 mins

Assignment: In your team choose one HMW and come up three brief paper prototype (see instructions)

Week four

Feb 16

NO CLASS

Feb 18

1. Share paper prototypes in teams. 60 minutes
2. Assumptions/biases: 30 minutes

Assignment: Reading, The Elements of Journalism, pgs ; “How to Detect Bias in News Media,” FAIR; Active Listening

Week five

Feb 23

1. Listen/observe: 60 minutes
2. Regroup: brainstorm what we heard and saw: 30 minutes

Assignment: Pick a story based on something revealed. Six-hundred words. Are you breaking news? Are you explaining? Is it topical? Do you have a diversity of voices? At least three quotes. All assertions
backed up by facts. Please consider who this story is for and what need it meets. You can put it on tumblr, wordpress, medium or another platform of your choice. Although the emphasis on this piece is on writing, please include on visual element. Please check how it reads/looks/feels on mobile. Due March 1 at 6PM. Please read your classmates work and be ready to discuss on March 2.

Feb 25

NO CLASS

Week six

March 2

1. Project 1 DUE Workshop stories

March 4

Data Lesson 1

Assignment: Data assignment. Rewrites of stories

Week seven

March 9

1. data assignment review
2. workshopping second drafts

March 11

1. data person
Assignment: TBA

Week eight
March 16
NO CLASS
March 18
  1. data editor workshop

Week nine
Spring break

Week 10
March 30
  1. social media editor visit
Assignment: TBA

April 1
  1. social media editor visit
Assignment TBA

Week 11
April 6
Decide on project
April 8
Designer visit
Week 12

April 13
Designer visit

April 15
Lab class

Week 13

April 20

Project 2 due: Workshop
Designer visit

April 22

Week 14

April 27
April 29

Week 15

May 4
May 6

Week 16:

May 11
Final project due

May 13

Review. What did we learn?