

The University of Florida | College of Journalism and Communications

Spring Semester 2022

Course: Special Study _ Foreign Correspondence

Class: #23930

Instructor: Thanos Dimadis | **Contact Info:** adimadis@ufl.edu

Class format & essential information

- This class convenes online every **Wednesday from 7.20 PM EST to 9.10 PM EST.**
- **Attendance and active participation in this class are required from all enrolled students.**
- Students will need to have their **cameras on when participating in this class online.**
- **The course is conducted in Eastern Time (E.T.). All assignments are due on E.T.**

Meeting point: To join our class, click the **Zoom** link

> <https://ufl.zoom.us/j/5018994305> (meeting ID: 501 899 4305)

Office hours: Additionally to the weekly online class meeting, the instructor is available for face-to-face virtual meetings with students upon request. Students of this class can also contact the instructor via email whenever they have questions. If you need immediate assistance, email adimadis@ufl.edu. (*Do not wait until the due date of your assignment to contact your instructor.*)

About the course

The course is designed to address the theoretical and practical aspects of foreign correspondents' reporting from abroad. This course is designed to provide knowledge of a broad spectrum of issues aspiring foreign correspondents need to know before and after they've been assigned to report from a foreign country. Furthermore, this class will provide a unique opportunity to meet and interact with a network of renowned and respected journalists who will be addressing our class exclusively. Participation in this course requires active participation from all students, and online participation is

mandatory. Each class will require students to submit assignments, participate in discussions, do research, and pursue reporting as if they were foreign correspondents in another country. Each student will be required to submit a journalism project from the perspective of a foreign correspondent as a substitute for final exams.

Grading system

The following factors will determine your final grade in this class:

- attendance and participation in our weekly meetings (**40%**)
- weekly writing or video assignments (**30%**)
- weekly discussions (**10%**)
- final assignment (**20%**)

Rubric for weekly and final assignments:

- Clarity (**15%**)
- Structure (**20%**)
- Justification (**15%**)
- Newsworthiness (**20%**)
- Creativity (**10%**)
- Research (**20%**)

Rubric for weekly discussions:

- Critical thinking (**50%**)
- Fair and meaningful feedback to your peers (**50%**)

Grading

A 94-100%

A- 90-93.95

B+ 87-89.85

B 84-86.95

B- 80-83.95

C+ 77-79.95

C 74-76.95

C- 70-73.95

D+ 67-69.95

D 64-66.95

D- 60-63.95

E Below 60

For more information about minus grades and U.F. grading policies, click [here](#).

Recommended readings

- *On All Fronts: The Education of a Journalist*, by Clarissa Ward (Penguin Group (USA), 2020) - Kindle Edition.
- *Confessions from Correspondentland: The Dangers and Delights of Life as a Foreign Correspondent*, by Nick Bryant - Kindle Edition.
- *Storyteller: A Foreign Correspondent's Memoir* by Zoe Daniel 2014 by ABC Books.

Our class's online presence requirements

Please maintain a professional appearance and conduct during our remote meetings. Consider your wardrobe and hygiene as you would if we were all in the same room, as well as your audio and visual backgrounds. **Zoom sessions require you to have the camera on.** If you have a black screen for a significant amount of time, your attendance/participation score will be deducted at the instructor's discretion. Note that lectures are recorded for educational purposes. If you have extenuating circumstances or concerns regarding Zoom attendance, please contact the instructor. If you wish to protect your surroundings or environment, we recommend using virtual backgrounds for Zoom.

Penalties

- ***Assignments and discussion posts submitted after the deadline will lose 50% of their grade.***

- ***Failure to attend our weekly meetings will result in a 20% penalty for each meeting you don't attend.***
- ***Missing more than three (3) weekly meetings in a semester results in a 40% grade deduction.***

If an emergency occurs, such as a medical emergency or a family emergency, penalties are not applied. **These situations are handled on a case-by-case basis by the instructor.**

Warnings

- For an assignment, you cannot interview a family member, friend, fellow fraternity/sorority member, coworker, neighbor, or any other close associate. In journalism, these relationships are called conflicts of interest. You can use them to get tips, story ideas, and background information which you can then verify. Interviewing one, however, will result in automatic failure.
- Presenting someone else's work as your own is stealing and lying rolled into one. This includes press releases and information found on the Internet. Your work will be continually checked for plagiarism, and if it is found, you will be given a failing grade. Each piece of information you provide must be attributed, except for known facts.

Honor Code

The University of Florida honor code was voted on and passed by the student body in the fall 1995 semester. The preamble: In adopting this honor code, the students of the University of Florida recognize that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the university community. Students who enroll at the university commit to holding themselves and their peers to the high standard of honor required by the honor code. Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the honor code is bound by honor to take corrective action. A student-run honor court and faculty support are crucial to the success of the honor code. The quality of a University of Florida education is dependent upon the community acceptance and enforcement of the honor code.

The Honor Code:

We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or

implied: ***“On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”***

For more information about academic honesty, contact, Student Judicial Affairs, P202 Peabody Hall, 391-1261.

Disabilities

Students requesting classroom accommodation must register with the Dean of Students Office. The dean will provide documentation to the student who must provide documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

Diversity

The University of Florida’s College of Journalism and Communications Department of Journalism embraces a commitment toward an intellectual community enriched and enhanced by diversity along with a number of dimensions, including race, ethnicity and national origins, gender and gender identity, sexuality, class, age, political views, and religion.

We expect each of our journalism courses to help foster an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society. Reporters report the stories of a community and the individuals who live there. Their aim is to engage many and wide audiences with their work. Exposure to different views and experiences make us better journalists and P.R. practitioners. They expand our perspectives, increase the number of our sources, and prompt different ideas or angles for stories and assignments.

As a professional in the field and as a student in this class, you will encounter ideas and thoughts you don't share. This is to be expected. These differences should serve as a strength that we should embrace as we discuss relevant story ideas, topics, developing contacts, or possibly even storytelling techniques. You should expect and welcome this wide exposure to different views.

People you cover and write about, your classmates, and your instructor deserve respect for their views, perspectives, and experiences. Everyone also deserves common courtesy. Please let me know what I can do to make you feel respected and welcomed.

Changes to the syllabus

The instructor reserves the right to adjust modules, topics, and deadlines during the course of the term

CLASS SCHEDULE

*** Correspondents working for the US and global media will join our class on a weekly basis for off-the-record conversations with the students. The weekly keynote speakers will be announced through Canvas each week.**

Module #1

Wednesday, Jan 5: *Introduction and course discussion.*

- **Assignment #1** (Deadline 01.12.2022)
- **Discussion #1** (Deadline 01.12.2022)

Module 2

Wednesday, Jan 12: *The basics of becoming a foreign correspondent.*

- **Assignment #2** (Deadline 01.12.2022)
- **Discussion #2** (Deadline 01.12.2022)

Module 3

Wednesday, Jan 19: *Reporting from home versus reporting abroad.*

- **Assignment #3** (Deadline 01.26.2022)
- **Discussion #3** (Deadline 01.26.2022)

Module 4

Wednesday, Jan 26: *Decision making; preparation; types of foreign correspondence.*

- **Assignment #4** (Deadline 02.02.2022)
- **Discussion #4** (Deadline 02.02.2022)

Module 5

Wednesday, Feb. 2: *Getting started as a correspondent in a foreign country.*

- **Assignment #5** (Deadline 02.09.2022)
- **Discussion #5** (Deadline 02.09.2022)

Module 6

Wednesday, Feb. 9: *How to build a network of contacts abroad.*

- **Assignment #6** (Deadline 02.16.2022)
- **Discussion #6** (Deadline 02.16.2022)

Module 7

Wednesday, Feb. 16: *Managing resources in a culturally diverse environment.*

- **Assignment #7** (Deadline 02.23.2022)
- **Discussion #7** (Deadline 02.23.2022)

Module 8

Wednesday, Feb. 23: *Conducting interviews in a foreign country as a correspondent.*

- **Assignment #8** (Deadline 03.02.2022)
- **Discussion #8** (Deadline 03.02.2022)

Module 9

Wednesday, Mar 2: *Breaking exclusive stories as a foreign correspondent.*

- **Assignment #9** (Deadline 03.16.2022)
- **Discussion #9** (Deadline 03.16.2022)

Wednesday, Mar. 9: No Class - Spring Semester

Module 10

Wednesday, Mar. 16: *National and local media.*

- **Assignment #10** (Deadline 03.23.2022)
- **Discussion #10** (Deadline 03.23.2022)

Module 11

Wednesday, Mar. 23: *Disinformation, political agendas, nationalism, and propaganda in foreign media.*

- **Assignment #11** (Deadline 03.30.2022)
- **Discussion #11** (Deadline 03.30.2022)

Module 12

Wednesday, Mar. 30: *Press freedom, Censorship, and Democracy.*

- **Assignment #12** (Deadline 04.06.2022)
- **Discussion #12** (Deadline 04.06.2022)

Module 13

Wednesday, Apr. 6: *Career prospects in your work as foreign correspondents*

- **Assignment #13** (Deadline 04.13.2022)
- **Discussion #13** (Deadline 04.13.2022)

Module 14

Wednesday, Apr. 13: *Keynote speaker*

Final Project (Deadline 04.20.2022)

Module 15

Wednesday, Apr. 20: *Wrap-up meeting*

Final Project (Deadline 04.20.2022)

About the Instructor

Thanos Dimadis is an American who was born in Veroia, Greece, and raised in Brussels, Belgium. Currently, he is the Executive Director/President of the Association of Foreign Press Correspondents in the United States (ForeignPressCorrespondents.org & ForeignPress.org)

During his fifteen years of journalism, Thanos worked as a foreign correspondent from Washington, D.C., New York, Brussels, London for two of the most prominent Greek broadcasting companies (SKAI TV and ALPHA TV). When he was in Athens, Greece, he was appointed as the head of the political break news unit of the most widely watched T.V. station in Greece, ALPHA TV. While in Athens, he presented several T.V. shows and political talk shows on European elections and politics. His primary coverage as a foreign correspondent involved the European and Greek financial crisis in 2010 with live reporting from the IMF, White House, and State Department in Washington, D.C., and the European Institutions in Brussels. In his career as a foreign correspondent, Thanos conducted several exclusive interviews with officials, IMF executive members, and European leaders, including Jose Manuel Barroso, former

President of the European Commission. He has published numerous articles and analyses on European and Greek politics and press freedom issues in international and Greek media. Thanos produced and presented the most viewed documentary in Greece on the Eurozone and the Greek crisis. He is the author of two books in Greece about the European financial crisis and the role of the media in Greek politics.

Greece has the highest degree of political manipulation of the press and the lowest level of press freedom. Thanos Dimadis learned first-hand the risks of independent journalism and investigative reporting when he in 2016 became the target of retaliation from a former minister in Greece and his associates in the government. In the 2020 Annual Human Rights Practices report about Greece," the U.S. State Department made a particular reference to Thanos "for being slandered by a former minister" who controlled the media in Greece and stated the journalist had proven to the court that the accusations were false and slanderous. Because of his career achievements as a foreign correspondent covering business and economics about the Eurozone crisis, Columbia Journalism School awarded Thanos the prestigious Knight-Bagehot Fellowship in 2018.

Thanos graduated from George Washington University Political Management School with a Master's degree in communications and political management. He also graduated from the City University of London with a Master's degree in Media, the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens with a Master's degree in Political Science, and from the Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences of Athens with a Master's degree in European Law and Policy. He completed the Executive Education program "Leadership in the 21st Century" at Harvard Kennedy School. He completed his undergraduate studies at the Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences of Athens at the Journalism and Mass Media Department. He was honored with a scholarship from the Alexander S. Onassis Foundation.

Website: [ThanosDimadis.com](https://www.thanosdimadis.com) | LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/thanosdimadis/>