

# Syllabus

## JOU 3110: Applied Fact Finding

Adjunct Lecturer Spencer Mann

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Office Hours: Weimer 2095, Wednesdays: Noon – 2 p.m., at the end of class, or by appointment

### Textbook

Florida Government in the Sunshine Manual, can be downloaded from the Florida Attorney General's Website at no cost.

### Course Objectives and Descriptions

Fact Finding is designed to give student journalists the skills to locate, interpret and analyze a broad variety of informational resources crucial to your success. Students will learn to retrieve data from Florida public records, federal public records, and other sources.

### The course will cover the following.....

- Open Government requirements
- Florida public records law
- Searching municipal, county and state databases
- Private databases
- Evaluating the significance of data received
- The Florida criminal justice system
- Crime victim impact
- Library systems
- Federal public records

The course will also address the reporter/agency relationship, in-the -field reporting, and other pertinent issues,

### Classroom Decorum

Students may use a laptop or tablet in class for note-taking. However, surfing the internet, checking email, text-messaging, and related activity is prohibited during class. I will not provide electronic notes or powerpoints. Part of the learning experience is to be able to listen, and take notes.

## Attendance

Class attendance is important as critical information for exams and projects will be discussed. There will be four unannounced attendance rolls taken during the semester that will be included in your grade.

### Grades will be broken down as the following:

Exam 1	20%	200 points
Exam 2	20%	200 points
Assignment 1	10%	100 points
Assignment 2	10%	100 points
Project	30%	300 points
Attendance	10%	100 points
Total	100%	1,000 points

A list of important class dates will be posted within the first two weeks of class.

### Grading Scale

A = 92-100  
A- = 90-91.99  
B+ = 88-89.99  
B = 82-87.99  
B- = 80-81.99  
C+ = 78-79.99  
C = 72-77.99  
C- = 70-71.99  
D+ = 68-69.99  
D = 62-67.99  
D- = 60-61.99  
E = Below 60

Make up assignments and exams are not permitted. However, under extreme circumstances, and **with advance notice and approval**, the instructor may make exceptions.

### Plagiarism/Cheating

It is expected that you will exhibit ethical behavior in this class. Students are expected to do their own work, use their own words in papers, and to reference outside sources appropriately. Students are further expected to observe intellectual property rights and to comply with copyright laws. Plagiarism is defined as “...taking someone’s words or ideas as if the were your own.” Source: Dictionary.com.

## **Special Needs**

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students will provide documentation of the necessary accommodation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor within the first two weeks of the semester.

## **Miscellaneous**

The instructor reserves the right to adjust schedules and content to best meet the needs of the class as the semester progresses.