

# JOU 3110 - Applied Fact Finding | Summer A, 2024

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## Contact Information

### Instructor:

Brandon Meyer

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Phone: (954)789-5389

### Office hours:

By appointment Monday - Thursday 2 p.m. to 7 p.m over Zoom.

## Introduction

Students will learn sleuthing methods to gather and analyze public records and publicly accessible records. They will learn to understand the importance of records for uncovering information about public figures including politicians, athletes, celebrities and other newsworthy people, organizations and businesses, and for identifying prospective information sources and verifying what people say about themselves. They will discover what kinds of records are generally available in Florida and beyond, and learn strategies for finding and obtaining them for free or reduced costs. They will gain practical experience finding records and using them to generate lines of inquiry. Although designed for journalists, the course will be useful for anyone who needs better, faster access to reliable information. Your grade will be based on your homework, participation in a weekly online discussion platform and graded quizzes and tests.

## Class Requirements and Policies

### Attendance:

Students can learn the material only by watching the online course lectures, and completing assigned readings and assignments. You also are responsible for arranging to complete any missed quizzes, assignments, or other graded work within one week of your return to class. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx> (Links to an external site.)

### Class requirements:

Class-wide communication will arrive via Canvas. **Please install the Canvas app on your smart phone and enable notifications**, and please regularly log in using your laptop. Please keep in touch with me or your teaching assistants regularly if you have any questions.

### Grading policies:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/> (Links to an external site.)

### A word about 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 a number of dimensions, including race, ethnicity and national origins, gender and gender identity, sexuality, class 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.

I want to create a learning environment for students that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives and experiences, and honors your identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, etc.) To help accomplish this:

- If you have a name and/or set of pronouns that differ from those that appear in your official records, please let me know.
- If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please do not hesitate to come and talk with me. I want to be a resource for you.
- If something was said in class (by anyone) that made you feel uncomfortable, please talk to me about it.

### Accommodating students with disabilities:

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

### Course evaluation:

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu> (Links to an external site.). Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/> (Links to an external site.).

### Honesty policy:

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor

and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. 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.' The Honor Code (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/> (Links to an external site.)) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel.

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center: 352-392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 911 for emergencies.

## **Grading**

There are four quizzes that will be based on the lecture material only and will be a combination of multiple-choice and true/false questions. Each quiz is worth 100 points. There are five assignments, worth 30 points each. There will be three graded tests, worth 150 points each.

### **Grade breakdown**

Grading	Points
4 quizzes @ 100 each	400
5 assignments @ 30 each	150
3 tests @ 150 each	450

### **Grading scale**

A = 94-100  
A- = 90-93  
B+ = 87-89  
B = 83-86  
B- = 80-82  
C+ = 75-79  
C = 70-74  
C- = 67-69  
D+ = 63-66  
D = 60-63

D- = 55-59  
F = 54 or below

NOTE: The journalism school requires a minimum grade of a C in this course. If you end the semester with fewer than 70 percent, you may have to retake it.

## Weekly Schedule

<b>Week</b>	<b>Module</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
Week One - Ends May 17	Orientation & Modules 1-4	Overview of the class, grading, office hours, textbook, expectations  Introduction discussion assignment  Homework assignment #1 due before 11:59 p.m. Friday  Homework assignment #2 due before 11:59 p.m. Friday  Quiz #1
Week Two - Ends May 24	Module 5	Homework assignment #3 due before 11:59 p.m. Friday  Test #1
Week Three - Ends May 31	Modules 6-8	Homework assignment #4 due before 11:59 p.m. Friday  Quiz #2  Test #2

Week Four - Ends Jun. 7	Modules 9-10	Quiz #3
Week Five - Ends Jun. 14	Modules 11-13	Homework assignment #5 due before 11:59 p.m. Sunday  Quiz #4
Week Six - Ends Jun. 21	Module 14	Test #3

This schedule is subject to adjustments, which I will announce in advance.