

Syllabus

JOU 3110: APPLIED FACT FINDING Spring Semester 2015, Florida Gym 260

Spencer Mann, Adjunct Lecturer

Email: to be announced

Office Hours: Wednesday afternoon, 1pm – 2:15, AHA Lab

Required text: Florida Public Records Handbook, downloadable from the Florida Attorney General’s Office website.

Course Objectives and Description:

Applied 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 as a working journalist, including standard reference materials, public records, and Internet resources. You will learn and practice investigative journalism techniques and discover how to analyze and interpret commonly used data, including charts, reports and statistics often provided to journalists. Public records and other publicly available sources of information will be reviewed. The course will also focus on the practical applications of these search techniques by good reports and editors. Lecture, discussion, and research will be key components of course work.

Requirements

Personal computers will be needed for research purposes and is encouraged for class note-taking. Students who bring a laptop to class are expected to use it for classroom-related activities during lecture. Please to not check email, participate in instant messaging or other non-class activity . Students who continually engage in this behavior will be limited in laptop use during lecture. It is assumed that you will check email and CANVAS regularly as part of the course.

Attendance:

Class attendance will be taken at unannounced points through the semester. It is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to obtain material missed in class through other students

Earning your Grade:

Exam 1	20 percent
Exam 2	20 percent
Exam 3	20 percent
Research Project	30 percent
Class Attendance	10 percent

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
Below 60 = E

Exams:

Exams will not be open book or notes. It will be imperative that you take good classroom notes and become familiar with the Florida Public Records Handbook. On exam days, please be ready to present your Gator photo ID in order to obtain test materials.

Makeup:

Make-up assignments and exams are not permitted. However, under an extreme circumstances, if you have an excused absence and have notified the instructor in advance, and exception may be made. Make sure exam dates are on your calendar.

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 comply with copyright laws. Any acts of plagiarism or cheating will result in disciplinary action.

Special Needs:

Students requesting classroom accommodations 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.

CANVAS:

Class information will be posted on CANVAS as the class progresses throughout the semester.

CELL PHONES:

Turn them off during class. Please do not text-message during class. If it becomes a continual distraction, the instructor will confiscate during class.

Class Behavior:

Please be courteous to your classmates during class. Talking in class is not permitted, unless it pertains to questions for the instructor. There will be plenty of opportunities to ask questions, and engage in discussion on topics covered.

Class Calendar:

- 1-7 Class 1 Introduction, Goals and Objectives, Changes in technology, textbook, Review syllabus, questions/answers
- 1-14 Class 2 Florida public records law, open government, history, Attorney Generals Office
- 1-21 Class 3 Florida public records law, open government continued
- 1-28 Class 4 Local government, state government, federal government
- 2-3 Class 5 Exam 1, questions/answers, case studies
- 2-10 Class 6 Criminal justice system, law enforcement records, jail records, discovery, the grand jury
- 2-17 Class 7 Other sources of information
- 2-24 Class 8 Assign project, minimum requirements
- 3-4 Spring break, no class
- 3-11 Class 9 Victim impact
- 3-18 Class 10 Exam 2, questions/answers, case studies
- 3-25 Class 11 Gray areas, problem areas, test cases
- 4-1 Class 12 Project due, presentation on project topic, questions/answers,
- 4-8 Class 13 Support organizations
- 4-15 Class 14 Unfinished topics, test review
- 4-22 Class 15 Exam 3, review of project, complete any unfinished business.

