

**JOU 4502: Journalism Studies**  
**Spring 2015**  
**Wednesdays 3 to 6 p.m.**

Dr. Wayne Wanta

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3061 Weimer Hall

Office hours: Tuesdays 8:30-10:30 a.m., Wednesdays 1-2, and by appointment

**Course Description:** Journalism Studies is a media literacy course that helps students become educated consumers, critical thinkers and researchers of the media industry. This course will especially help those pursuing advanced degrees begin understanding research methods as well as hone their critical thinking skills to distinguish between evidence and belief. In the changing world of media and media-business models, this course will help students learn about the connections between the media and economics.

**Course Goals:**

- To understand how the journalism business model is evolving
- To understand the sociological and economic factors that have forever changed journalism.
- To learn about new and alternative distribution vehicles.
- To explore the relationship between print and digital delivery methods and how media brands use those methods in business practices

Prerequisites: JOU 3101 Reporting, JOU 4201 Editing. This is a capstone course, which requires senior standing.

**Course structure:** Most classes will consist of a split between lecture material and classroom exercises/student discussion. Course topics will include media management, economics, and the state of the industry.

**Required texts:**

None. However, several readings will be required each week.

**Grading:**

Grading for the course will be based on five factors:

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|----------------------------------|------------|
| • Midterm paper                  | 20 percent |
| • Assignments                    | 25 percent |
| • Discussion leader presentation | 20 percent |
| • Class participation/attendance | 10 percent |
| • Final research paper           | 25 percent |

**Note:** There is no final exam.

**Midterm paper:** A 5-7 page paper will be a critical analysis of some aspect of ethics. The paper should be suitable to include in your portfolio. The paper should be a combination of reporting, research and analysis. The paper should be fully footnoted.

**Assignments:** Reaction papers dealing with topics of the week will be due on Tuesdays at 5 p.m. They should be emailed to me as a document attachment. Most of the assignments involve critiquing published articles on topics of that week. The assignments will be 2 to 3 pages. Late assignments will be docked severely.

**Discussion leader presentations:** Each student will serve as a discussion leader for one class during the semester. Discussion leaders will need to do additional readings on their topics and prepare materials for the class to discuss. Creativity will be rewarded here. While the instructor will contribute to the discussion, students should be prepared to extend student interaction for much of the period.

**Class participation/attendance:** Since this is a capstone course, students are expected to attend every class and to participate in class discussions. Excuses for absences must be legitimate. DO NOT tell me that you have to go to Wrestlemania (unless you have an extra ticket for me). More than one absence will affect your final grade. Students will receive a failing grade for missing 3 or more classes.

**Final papers:** Your final paper will be a 15-page paper on an issue surrounding media economics and the future of the media industry. This paper is intended to explore trends, problems, and challenges, using examples and evidence from many situations and perspectives. Papers will be graded on the quality of the conceptualization of variables and the soundness of key points. Because the paper should be of professional quality, grammar also matters. The paper should have a minimum of 15 citations from academic journals and additional citations from other media sources.

**Plagiarism; Cheating or other Academic Misconduct:** The Academic Integrity Statement for the College of Journalism and Communications can be found here:

<http://www.jou.ufl.edu/grad/forms/Plagiarism-Guideline.pdf>

In addition, all students are bound by the university's Honor Code Policy at

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/honorcode.php>. **Anyone who violates these policies in this course will receive a failing grade in this course and face further sanctions from the college and university.**

**Special needs:** Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting an accommodation. This course conforms to all requirements of the ADA and handles with sensitivity all matters related

to gender, race, sexual orientation, age, religion or disability. Please alert the instructor if any issues arise.

**Syllabus Changes:** The instructor reserves the right to alter the syllabus or course schedule as the need arises. This includes the possibility of guest speakers and special presentations, some of which may be scheduled outside of classtime. Note: Some of the content for this syllabus was taken from syllabi from previous classes.

**Tips for getting good grades:** Come to class on time. Turn off your cellphone. Complete all of the readings before class. Laugh at my jokes.

Good sources for additional material:

[www.readership.org](http://www.readership.org)

Excellent research on newspapers and the media environment

[www.scholar.google.com](http://www.scholar.google.com)

A good source for finding research studies

<http://www.mediachannel.org/>

A collection of original news, opinions and reports, providing information from media watch groups, university journalism departments, professional organizations, anti-censorship monitors, and trade publications.

<http://people-press.org/>

A foundation devoted to improving the performance of the press, with some great surveys of journalists and the public

<http://www.naa.org/>

The Newspaper Association of America, a nonprofit organization representing the \$46 billion newspaper industry and over 1,500 member newspapers in the United States and Canada.

<http://www.freedomforum.org/>

The Freedom Forum. a nonpartisan international foundation dedicated to free press, free speech and free spirit for all people.

<http://www.journalism.org/>

Includes the Project for Excellence in Journalism, aimed at creating initiatives that can clarify what journalism's essential role is. It also identifies examples of good journalism around the country. The project is part of the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism.

<http://www.asne.org/>

American Society of Newspaper Editors. Contains reports on journalistic practices, including a compilation of newspaper codes of ethics.

Some leading journalism publications on the Web:

American Journalism Review: <http://ajr.newslink.org/>

Columbia Journalism Review: <http://cjr.org>

Nieman Reports: <http://www.nieman.harvard.edu/Reports.aspx>

Noteworthy blogs:

Ken Doctor: [http://www.contentbridges.com/dow\\_jones/index.html](http://www.contentbridges.com/dow_jones/index.html)

Alan Mutter: <http://newsosaur.blogspot.com/>

Tim McGuire: <http://cronkite.asu.edu/mcguireblog/>

## Tentative Schedule

### **Week 1, Jan. 7**

Course introduction

### **Week 2, Jan. 14**

The State of the Media Today. Basis for this discussion is the Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism's "The State of the News Media 2012: An Annual Report on American Journalism."

<http://stateofthemedias.org/>

### **Week 3, Jan. 21**

More on the State of the Media

### **Week 4, Jan. 28**

History and the Rise and Fall of the Newspaper Industry

**Discussion leader I**

### **Week 5, Feb. 4**

Gatekeepers of the News: Who determines what is news?

**Discussion leader II**

### **Week 6, Feb. 11**

The Press and the Public: Why do people hate us?

**Discussion leader III**

### **Week 7, Feb. 18**

Media Issues in the Digital Age: Media Representation in Race and Gender, Influences on Conduct and Content, Ethics, Re-evaluating the Objectivity Norm, Source-Media Relations, the Cult of Celebrity and the Effects of Infotainment

**Discussion leader IV**

### **Week 8, Feb. 25**

Media Online: The effect of the shift from the atoms of paper and ink to pixels of digital media, to include shifts in journalistic normative standards; the concept of cross-platform journalism; the growth of citizen journalism and the concept of hyperlocalism; the issues of linking and interactivity; the effect on reporting, sourcing and writing; and the reinvention of a profession – revamping journalism education and delineating the skills of the digital journalist.

**Discussion leader V**

**Week 9, March 4**

No Class: Spring break

**Week 10, March 11**

Midterm paper presentations

**Week 11, March 18**

Journalists' Use of Social Media

**Discussion leader VI**

**Week 12, March 25**

Media Literacy: An exploration of the growing need for media literacy for both journalists and their audiences to include a focus on media structures, ownership, policy, the political economy of the media – that is the power structures that influence and/or control the media – and the effects of public relations and propaganda.

**Discussion leader VII**

**Week 13, April 1**

The Economics of Journalism and Media: How the journalism business model is evolving; New Distribution in a Digital Age: Can new distribution vehicles save journalism?

**Discussion leader VIII**

**Week 14, April 8**

Other press models: The Global News Culture and the Growing Concept of a Global Media Ethics.

**Discussion leader IX**

**Week 15, April 15**

Media and Democracy and Civil Society. An exploration of the theories of the press

**Discussion leader X**

**Week 16, April 22**

Final presentations

**Final papers due**