

**JOU 4502 – Journalism Studies**  
**Summer A 2014**  
**M W R: 5<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> Period**  
**Turlington Room 2346**

Instructor: Mr. Jordan Neil  
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**Introduction:**

The aims of this class center around improving students' levels of media literacy, studying the development of journalism as a business model at the local and national level, as well as analyzing the evolution of contemporary news consumers. Class topics will help students learn to better understand the connections between media and economics, in addition to the growing societal and political challenges that have helped shape the face of the current-day media industry. We will study how these challenges are often paradoxically helped and exacerbated in a digital age, as well as the inevitable adaptations these new mediums require of journalists in our ever-changing media landscape.

**Course Goals:**

- To help students become educated media consumers and critical thinkers about the economics of journalism.
- To explore how social and political forces have impacted reporting and news distribution.
- To provide students with a basis in media research to further develop their scholarly understanding of journalism.
- To provide students with research and writing samples suitable for their portfolio in their pursuit of employment or advanced degrees.

**Prerequisites:**

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

**Readings:**

There are NO required textbooks for this class. However, I will provide ancillary materials to read throughout the semester, all of which will be listed on the class login on Sakai. These will be displayed under the “Weekly Readings” tab.

**Class Procedures:**

- Please keep your cell phones on silent and put away during class.
- Laptops and tablets are allowed in class when I am lecturing, but will typically not be needed. If you are using a laptop in class, please be alert and on task. You will not be allowed to use a laptop or tablet when other class members are presenting.
- Please check your UF email account at least three times a week for class updates.
- I will respond to all student emails within 24 hours.

**Academic Honesty:**

I expect all students in my class to adhere to the university and departmental guidelines on academic honesty. If you are unsure of what constitutes academic dishonesty, please speak to me before you submit any work for grading – a lack of knowledge on your part is not an acceptable excuse.

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 (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) 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. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor in this class.

If you are found to commit an academic honesty violation in this course, the minimum punishment you will receive is a zero on the assignment and will be reported to Student Judicial Affairs.

**Disability Requests:**

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) 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.

**Counseling and Wellness Center:**

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

**Student Feedback:**

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

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## Assignments

### **Evaluation:**

Grading for the course will be based on five factors:

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|--------------------------------|-------------|
| Class participation/attendance | 10 percent  |
| Discussion leader presentation | 20 percent  |
| Reaction Papers                | 25 percent  |
| Midterm paper                  | 20 percent  |
| Final research paper           | 25 percent  |
| Total:                         | 100 percent |

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All assignments must:

- Be written in 12 point font, Times New Roman.
- Utilize APA as your academic citation format.
- Have an appropriate title.
- Have your name and date on it.
- Be double-spaced with one-inch margins.
- Have a bibliography attached.

### **Class Participation/Attendance:**

Attendance is mandatory. However, you are afforded ONE “pass” throughout the semester, which allows for you to miss class without prior permission and this absence will not impact your class participation score (as long as you are not expected to hand in an assignment or present that day). If you miss more than one class, you will be deducted 5% for each missed class period up to a total of 10% for class participation. Therefore, outside of your allotted ONE “pass,” you are expected to attend every class, come prepared and contribute effectively. All readings are expected to be completed before the start of class. This class is dialogical in nature and I hope that you will give your own perspective, as well as challenging those offered in the weekly readings. In order to do so effectively, it is important to assimilate the course material before coming to class. If I feel that you are not completing the required readings, your participation grade will be reduced.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up assignments, as well as other work in this course are consistent with university policies and can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

### **Discussion Leader Presentations:**

Each student will serve as discussion leader for one class during the semester. In this role, you will be expected to lead class for 45 minutes on the topics covered within the readings set for that day. There may be more than one discussion leader presenting on these days, which means both presenters will have to coordinate to make sure there is no crossover. In order to add further perspective on the topics, you will need to complete and present at least one additional reading of your choice. You will be graded on creativity and ability to engage other members of the class. Please see the rubric on Sakai for full grading criteria.

### **Reaction Papers:**

Each Sunday by 1 p.m. you will submit a 2-3 page short paper to Sakai providing your views on the readings due for the following Monday’s class. Be aware, you are not expected to summarize what is in the readings, but to offer a unique understanding on the topics and

issues within them. Papers submitted after 1 p.m. up to 11:59 p.m. on the due date will receive a 50% deduction. Any submissions after this will not be accepted and will receive a zero. Please see example guidelines on Sakai for how to structure your papers.

### **Midterm Paper:**

This assignment will be broken into two components: (1) a 5-7 page paper on the success, credibility, and viability of centralized journalism within the digital age; (2) a 15-minute presentation reporting your findings. A minimum of 5 citations from academic journals and additional citations from other media sources are required. Please see the rubric on Sakai for full grading criteria.

### **Final Research Paper:**

Your final assignment will also be broken into two components: (1) a 15-page research paper on an issue surrounding media management and the future of the media industry; (2) a 20-minute presentation reporting your findings. The position paper should be of an academic and professional standard that clearly states your opinion on a specific problem, trend, challenge, etc. and how it relates back to the broader concepts of the political and social economics of journalism. To support your argument, you are required to utilize an established academic theory, although it does not have to be one we have discussed throughout the semester. A minimum of 15 citations from academic journals and additional citations from other media sources are required. Please see the rubric on Sakai for full grading criteria.

Both the midterm paper and the final research paper must be submitted in a digital format **before the class begins** (via Turnitin on the class webpage on Sakai) and in hard-copy format **at the beginning of class** for full credit to be received. I will deduct 5% from your overall grade if you don't fulfil both aspects on the day of submission and a further 10% deduction every day the assignment is late thereafter up to 4 days after the due date. After this time, I will not accept your assignment and you will receive a zero.

### **Grading Scale:**

|    |          |    |         |    |         |    |                |
|----|----------|----|---------|----|---------|----|----------------|
| A  | = 93-100 | B  | = 84-86 | C  | = 73-76 | D  | = 63-66        |
| A- | = 90-92  | B- | = 80-83 | C- | = 70-72 | D- | = 60-62        |
| B+ | = 87-89  | C+ | = 77-79 | D+ | = 67-69 | E  | = 59 and below |

### **Extra Credit:**

You may be offered the possibility of extra credit throughout the semester for participating in research activities if these opportunities arise; however, these are not guaranteed and you should plan on achieving the highest grade possible from the main course assignments.

### Course Schedule

This schedule outlines the requirements for the course through the rest of the semester. All readings are expected to be completed before coming to class by the due date listed on the syllabus. This schedule is subject to change depending on the needs of the class.

| <u>Date</u>                                | <u>Class Topic</u>   | <u>Assignments Due</u>   |
|--|--|--|
| <b><u>Week 1</u></b><br>Mon., May 12, 2014 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Syllabus review</li> <li>• Introductions</li> <li>• State of the Media 2014</li> </ul>  |  |
| Wed., May 14, 2014                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• History of the rise and fall of the newspaper industry.</li> </ul>  |  |
| Thur., May 15, 2014                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gatekeepers of the news.</li> <li>• Media research.</li> </ul>  |  |
| <b><u>Week 2</u></b><br>Mon., May 19, 2014 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cult of celebrity and the effects of infotainment.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reaction paper 1 due on Sun., May 18, 1 p.m.</li> </ul>   |
| Wed., May 21, 2014                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The shift to online news media.</li> <li>• Cross-platform journalism.</li> <li>• Journalists' use of social media.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Discussion leader presentations</b></li> </ul>         |
| Thur., May 22, 2014                        | <b>NO CLASS</b> – I am attending a conference  |  |
| <b><u>Week 3</u></b><br>Mon., May 26, 2014 | <b>NO CLASS</b> – Memorial Day   |  |
| Wed., May 28, 2014                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Media literacy of journalists and audiences</li> <li>• Visual journalism</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reaction paper 2 due on Sun., May 25, 1 p.m.</li> </ul>   |
| Thur., May 29, 2014                        |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Midterm paper and presentations</b></li> </ul>         |
| <b><u>Week 4</u></b><br>Mon., June 2, 2014 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special topic: Political journalism and participation</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reaction paper 3 due on Sun., June 1, 1 p.m.</li> </ul>   |
| Wed., June 4, 2014                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global media systems.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Discussion leader presentations</b></li> </ul>         |
| Thur., June 5, 2014                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special topic: Health journalism and behavior.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>1-2 page final research paper proposal.</b></li> </ul> |

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|---|--|---|
| <b><u>Week 5</u></b><br>Mon., June 9, 2014  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special topic: Business and economics journalism</li> </ul>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reaction paper 4 due on Sun., June 8, 1 p.m.</li> </ul>  |
| Wed., June 11, 2014                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Media and social revolution.</li> </ul>                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Discussion leader presentations</b></li> </ul>        |
| Thur., June 12, 2014                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Journalism as an advertising/public relations tool.</li> </ul>    |   |
| <b><u>Week 6</u></b><br>Mon., June 16, 2014 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review: How the journalism business model is evolving.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reaction paper 5 due on Sun., June 15, 1 p.m.</li> </ul> |
| Wed., June 18, 2014                         | <b>NO CLASS</b> – Work on your paper   |   |
| Thur., June 19, 2014                        |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Final research paper and presentations</b></li> </ul> |