Online Journalism (019:138:001), Fall 2011
1:30 p.m. – 3:20 p.m. Tuesdays & Thursdays, W336 AJB
http://iowaonlinef11.wordpress.com

Instructor: Dr. Brian Ekdale, brian-ekdale@uiowa.edu, E324 AJB, (319) 384-3605
Office Hours: Tues. 11 a.m. – 12 noon, Wed. 1 p.m. – 3 p.m., or by appointment
DEO: Dr. David Perlmutter, david-perlmutter@uiowa.edu, E305B AJB

Lab Assistant: Suming Yuan, suming-yuan@uiowa.edu

Course Description and Goals: The world of journalism and mass communication is in flux. While many aspects are uncertain, one thing is clear: the new media landscape will incorporate multiple media, multiple platforms, and a highly selective audience. This course is designed to prepare you for this new media landscape by giving you practical experience in some of the tools and skills necessary to excel in multimedia, multiplatform journalism. Moreover, this course offers opportunities for you to use the Internet as a tool for engaging with audiences by telling strong, compelling, and important stories.

Specifically, you will:
- Learn to recognize and emulate high-quality online journalism
- Develop and maintain a personal blog centered around a topic of your choosing
- Produce stories in written text, image, audio, video, and interactive forms
- Collaborate with your classmates to launch a targeted multimedia news site
- Grapple with the issues and opportunities facing online journalists
- Recognize the value of online journalism skills for a myriad of professions

Text: The required text is JournalismNext (Mark Briggs, 2010, CQ Press). You can find additional readings from the supplied links or in PDF form in ICON.

Because multimedia files are large and space-consuming, we recommend acquiring a portable data storage device, such as an external hard drive or large flash drive (5 GB minimum).

Assignments / Grading

You will be graded on your participation in class, your performance on in-class assignments, your individual blog and story assignments, and your contributions to the class’s collaborative journalism site. Grading of assignments in this course will be designed to correlate with the ways that online media workers are assessed.

There will be no tests, but you will have 4 quizzes throughout the semester: one technology quiz scheduled on 9/1 and three short, reading quizzes. The reading quizzes will be given on a “pop quiz” basis. Readings are due the day they are listed in the syllabus. Exemplars should be considered “readings” (even when exemplars are audio podcasts, images, videos, etc.) and are fair game for reading quizzes.

Specifics details and requirements for each assignment will be provided during the semester. There are a total of 1,000 points possible. This course will use the +/- system.
In-class work and participation (100 points):
- Technology quiz (to be given on 9/1) ................................................................. 10
- Reading quizzes (three quizzes of 5 points each) ............................................ 15
- Deadline assignment (to be completed in class on 9/22) .......................... 25
- Participation (see guidelines below) ................................................................. 50

Individual blog (150 points, assigned 8/25):
- Blog posts (two posts a week for ten weeks) .................................................. 100
- Comments on blog (3 points per unique commenter, 2 points per comment) .... 50

Individual stories (450 points):
- Profile story (assigned 9/8, due 9/20) ............................................................... 50
- Live blogging assignment (assigned 9/20, due 9/27) .................................. 50
- Audio story (assigned 9/27, due 10/6) .............................................................. 50
- Image slideshow (assigned 10/4, due 10/13) ................................................... 50
- Video project (assigned 10/11, due 10/20) ....................................................... 50
- Data visualization/interactive (assigned 10/18, due 10/27) ......................... 50
- Multimedia story package (assigned 10/25, due 11/8) ................................. 50

Final project: Collaborative Journalism Site (300 points, assigned 11/8):
- CSJ multimedia story package ......................................................................... 150
- CSJ component story ....................................................................................... 100
- Editor assignment / Group multimedia ............................................................ 150

Course Policies

Late Policy: Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the appropriate due date. Assignments received more than 10 minutes after the start of class will be considered late. Late assignments will be accepted up to 24 hours after the assigned due date/time, but will be marked down 10%. Any assignments turned in more than 24 hours after the due date but less than 72 hours after that date will be marked down 50%. Assignments turned in more than 72 hours after the scheduled due date will be awarded no points.

Graduate Credit: Students enrolled in the Graduate College must successfully complete substantive additional work to receive credit for this class. Please talk with Brian about details within the first two weeks.

Attendance: Class attendance and participation are important in this class. Therefore, you are expected to attend every class period, arriving on time and staying until class is dismissed. If you have a reasonable excuse for missing class (illness, family emergency, university-sponsored event, etc.), you must let Brian know about your absence prior to the end of the class period you missed, although greater leniency will be granted to those who inform Brian before the start of class. Email is acceptable for notification of absence. Unexcused absences will negatively affect your participation grade.

Makeup work: Quizzes and assignments completed in class cannot be made up. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to discover what was covered that day and acquire notes from your fellow classmates. I will not respond to emails that ask “What did I miss?” or “Did I miss anything important?” I am happy to discuss missed materials during my office hours.
**Participation:** Your participation grade will be calculated as the sum of your attendance, preparedness, cooperation, and contribution in class. Attendance means showing up. Preparedness means completing the assigned readings and tasks. Cooperation means working well with your classmates, lab assistant, and instructor. Contribution means participating regularly in class discussion and activities.

**Electronic Communication:** As per university policy, you are responsible for all official correspondences sent to your University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu).

**Communicating with Brian:** I will make every effort to respond to your communication within 24 hours. Typically, I will respond sooner than that. While I prioritize my interactions with students, I do have other commitments (meetings, research, sleep, etc.) that may preclude me from offering an immediate response. I am happy to offer feedback and answer specific questions over email, but I will not review full drafts of assignments over email. If you would like me to review a full draft, please visit my office hours or schedule an appointment.

**Technology in class:** We will be using lots of technologies and social media throughout the semester as these tools relate to online journalism. These tools are to be used for class while in class. During scheduled class time, do not make phone calls, do not text, do not tweet Jimmy, do not write on Janey’s Facebook wall, etc. If you need to have your cell phone accessible for an emergency (e.g. family health) or for a source callback (for course assignments), please let me know before class so we can minimize the disturbance to the other students.

**Proposed Schedule**

Readings are subject to revision as new materials become available and as our interests dictate. The online version of the syllabus will be continually updated, so please refer to it for the latest information.

Please note that you will have three, short reading quizzes throughout the semester.

**Week 1 – Introduction**

Tuesday, 8/23 – Course overview and syllabus

Thursday, 8/25 – Introduction to Online Journalism; Online Branding

Readings:
- *JournalismNext*, Introduction
Week 2 – Technology and Resources

Tuesday, 8/30 – Tech Day!

Readings:
- *JournalismNext*, Ch. 1
- *Online Journalism*, Ch. 4 (reserve)

Thursday, 9/1 – Online Research

Readings:
- *Producing Online News*, Ch. 6 (reserve)

IN CLASS: Technology Quiz

Week 3 – Writing Online

Tuesday, 9/6 – Blogging for Journalists

Readings:
- *JournalismNext*, Ch. 2

Thursday, 9/8 – Writing Style and Structure

Readings:
- *Producing Online News*, Ch. 5 (reserve)

Week 4 – Putting It Online

Tuesday, 9/13 – Web Design

Readings:
- *Online Journalism*, p. 151-169 (reserve)
- Brad Coblow, The Brads, “This is why your newspaper is dying,” [http://bradcolbow.com/archive/view/the_brads_this_is_why_your_newspaper_is_dying/](http://bradcolbow.com/archive/view/the_brads_this_is_why_your_newspaper_is_dying/)

Thursday, 9/15 – In-Class Work on Profile Stories

Week 5 – Immediacy Online

Tuesday, 9/20 – Microblogging and Live Blogging

Readings:
Thursday, 9/22 – Breaking News Online

In Class: Deadline assignment

Week 6 – Audio News Online

Tuesday, 9/27 – Audio Stories

Readings:
- JournalismNext, Ch. 7
- Sound Reporting, Ch. 18 (reserve)

Exemplars:
- Planet Money, NPR, “Wasting money, making money,”
- Manners for the Digital Age, Slate, “Must I tell Facebook I’m ‘In a Relationship’?”
  http://www.slate.com/id/2296818/
- Robert Krulwich, NPR, “When does a person start to boil?”

Thursday, 9/29 – Audio Technology

Week 7 – Images and Slideshows Online

Tuesday, 10/4 – Image Storytelling and Technology

Readings:
- JournalismNext, Ch. 6
- Aim for the Heart, Ch. 7 & 8 (reserve)

Exemplars:
- John Moore, NPPA Best of Photojournalism 2010, 3rd Place,
  http://bop.nppa.org/2010/still_photography/winners/?cat=OPY&place=3rd&item=203290
Thursday, 10/6 – Guest Speaker TBA

Readings:
- TBA

Week 8 – Online Videos

Tuesday, 10/11 – Visual Storytelling

Readings:
- *JournalismNext*, Ch. 8
- *Aim for the Heart*, Ch. 2 (reserve)

Exemplars:
- Marcin Szczepanski & Brian McCollum, *Detroit Free Press*, “Motown at 50: 37 Motown in Motion” [http://bcove.me/fcy71ua9](http://bcove.me/fcy71ua9)

Thursday, 10/13 – Video Technology

Week 9 – Data Visualizations and Interactives

Tuesday, 10/18 – Working with Data

Readings:
- *JournalismNext*, Ch. 9
- *Producing Online News*, Ch. 9 (reserve)

Exemplars:

Thursday, 10/20 – Making Data Visual and Interactive

Week 10 – Mobile and Multimedia
Tuesday, 10/25 – Mobile Reporting

Readings:
- *JournalismNext*, Ch. 5
- Live Chat w/ Jim Seida, “How to use an iPhone as your sole reporting tool”

Thursday, 10/27 – And a Few More Tools…

Readings and Exemplars:
- TBA

**Week 11 – “The People Formerly Known As The Audience”**

Tuesday, 11/1 – Crowdsourcing and Citizen Journalism

Readings:
- *JournalismNext*, Ch. 3

Thursday, 11/3 – In-Class Work on Individual Multimedia Story Package

**Week 12 – Introducing the Collaborative Journalism Site**

Tuesday, 11/8 – Assignment Overview; CJS Site Concept

Thursday, 11/10 – CJS Site and Story Development

**Week 13 – Rethinking Journalism**

Tuesday, 11/15 – Ethics in Online Journalism

Readings:
- *The New Journalist*, Ch. 21 (reserve)

Thursday, 11/17 – Funding Online Journalism

Readings:

**Week 14 – Thanksgiving Break**

Eat, watch sports, visit your family, recharge your batteries, etc.

**Week 15 – Journalism as Conversation**

Tuesday, 11/29 – Building a Following and Keeping It

Readings:
- *JournalismNext*, Ch. 10 & 11

Thursday, 12/1 – In-Class Work on CJS

**Week 16 – Futures**

Tuesday, 12/6 – Journalism is Dead, Long Live Journalism!

Readings:

Thursday, 12/8 – In-Class Work on CJS

**Finals Week**

Tuesday 12/13, Noon – Collaborative Journalism Site Official Launch
The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Policies and Procedures

Administrative Home: The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is the administrative home of this course and governs matters such as the add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and other related issues. Different colleges may have different policies. Questions may be addressed to 120 Schaeffer Hall, or see the CLAS Student Academic Handbook.

Accommodations for Disabilities: A student seeking academic accommodations should first register with Student Disability Services and then meet privately with the course instructor to make particular arrangements. See www.uiowa.edu/~sds/ for more information.

Academic Honesty: The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences expects all students to do their own work, as stated in the CLAS Code of Academic Honesty. Instructors fail any assignment that shows evidence of plagiarism or other forms of cheating, also reporting the student's name to the College. A student reported to the College for cheating is placed on disciplinary probation; a student reported twice is suspended or expelled.

CLAS Final Examination Policies: Final exams may be offered only during finals week. No exams of any kind are allowed during the last week of classes. Students should not ask their instructor to reschedule a final exam since the College does not permit rescheduling of a final exam once the semester has begun. Questions should be addressed to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs and Curriculum.

Making a Suggestion or a Complaint: Students with a suggestion or complaint should first visit the instructor, then the course supervisor, and then the departmental DEO. Complaints must be made within six months of the incident. See the CLAS Student Academic Handbook.

Understanding Sexual Harassment: Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community have a responsibility to uphold this mission and to contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment should be reported immediately. See the UI Comprehensive Guide on Sexual Harassment for assistance, definitions, and the full University policy.

Reacting Safely to Severe Weather: In severe weather, class members should seek appropriate shelter immediately, leaving the classroom if necessary. The class will continue if possible when the event is over. For more information on Hawk Alert and the siren warning system, visit the Public Safety web site.
The Iowa Dozen

The mission of our School is to educate journalism and mass communication professionals, scholars and faculty. Through professional and creative research activities, they enhance a continually growing and evolving understanding of the social and cultural roles, responsibilities, and contexts for communicators in a democratic society, as well as in diverse global contexts. To accomplish that mission:

We learn to ...
1. Write correctly, clearly and well.
2. Conduct research and gather information responsibly.
3. Edit and evaluate carefully.
4. Use media technologies thoughtfully.
5. Apply statistical concepts accurately.

We value ...
6. Free speech and First Amendment principles for all individuals and groups.
7. A diverse global community.
8. Creativity and independence.

We explore ...
10. Theories and concepts.
11. The history, structure and economy of media institutions.
12. The role of media in shaping cultures.