THE INTERNET AND JOURNALISM

Course Instructor
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Office Hours: By appointment or via email

Course Site
To access the course site, log into Iowa Courses Online (ICON) using your Hawk ID and password. http://icon.uiowa.edu/index.shtml

Academic Course Home
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Prerequisites
None

Course Goal and Objectives
This course centers on the most current trend facing journalism today: the Internet’s effect on the content of news media and the work of reporters. The course begins with a survey of open source journalism and convergence culture, examining the collision between old and new media, and the mass amateurization of professional communication. We will consider the transformation of journalism in the digital age in light of the apparent shrinking size of articles, the reduction in readers’ attention span, and the decline of deep reading. The course then focuses on the debate over the effect of the Internet on culture, featuring readings arguing that the increased use of the web has placed a new premium on flashy headlines and shorter stories, a trend that has moved away from the content and explanation of fuller more nuanced pieces. Others will find unique entrepreneurial opportunities that have arisen through computer-mediated communication.

Topics include how writing and production values of major magazines and newspapers are increasingly mimicking web design and other features of the Internet. All of these trends have tended to devalue journalists as writers and threaten to transform them into replaceable “content producers.”

- Discover how the Internet has impacted journalism and the work of reporters.
- Learn major concepts in mass communication that explain the transition from print to digital news.
- Consider the cultural and cognitive effects of the digital media on reading for entertainment and news.
- Expand your thinking about job opportunities in online journalism.

Media/System Requirements
Listed below are the media/system requirements applicable to this course:

- **System requirements.** Computer with high speed Internet access.
- **Need Technical Support?** Contact the Division of Continuing Education technical support staff at dce-techsupport@uiowa.edu

Required Textbooks
The required textbooks for this course are:

Grading Criteria

Final course grades will be assessed based on the student’s performance in the following items:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>% of final grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online Exams (2)</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essays (4-5 pages) (2)</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revised Essay (1)</td>
<td>300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation in Discussion Forums (4)</td>
<td>200</td>
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Total Points: 1000 \( \text{100\%} \)

Final course grades will be assigned as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade:</th>
<th>A to A-</th>
<th>B+ to B-</th>
<th>C+ to C-</th>
<th>D+ to D-</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Points:</td>
<td>100 – 90</td>
<td>89-80</td>
<td>79-70</td>
<td>69-60</td>
<td>below 60</td>
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Course Structure

This course is being offered over the World Wide Web as a Distance Education offering. Students will login to the course site on ICON to access the course materials (syllabus, assignments, schedules), and the discussions forum. For details of the course assignments and activities, see the “Course Work” section of this syllabus.

Course content consists of the assigned books and several websites.

Students will be expected to visit the course site regularly in order to:

- **Review the “Content” page** and get familiarized with all course materials. Among other things, this page contains links to media and web-activities to be completed as part of this course.
- **Review the course homepage regularly** for any updates related to the course “News”.
- **Submit** assignments and final project to the course instructor via the ICON “Dropbox”.

In addition, students will visit the course site to:

- **Participate** in the “Discussions” forum. Discussions will be based upon the assigned textbook chapters, course videos, and assignments. There will be a Discussion Forum area for each week of the course, containing one or more discussion topics. The first posting of each topic (before any students make postings) will be from the instructor. First, it will describe what you should write in your own posting.
for that topic. All posts are graded on the quality of care, effort, and substance and quantity of responses and interactions with classmates.

Email:

Email is the official method of communication for this course. Students are expected to check their university email account frequently.

The course structure described above assumes that students have basic computer skills and are knowledgeable about the various programs and hardware they will need to use during this session (e.g. Microsoft Word). For information and computer support geared toward distance education students, access:

- the Technical Support page - http://distance.uiowa.edu/article/technical-support
- the Student Guide to ICON - https://icon.uiowa.edu/help/students/

Course Work

Exams (2):
There will be two exams via ICON Quizzes covering material from the lectures and assignments. Each exam will be worth 100 points toward the final grade.

Online Discussions (4):
Students will participate in four online discussions. Discussions will be based on questions from the instructor relevant to the lectures, and demonstration videos. Students will answer instructor questions and then discuss the questions with classmates. See the “Course Calendar” for posting deadlines. Participation in each online discussion is worth 50 points toward the final grade.

Essays (3-5 pgs.) (2):
You will have the opportunity to write on any books on the syllabus. Each of these short essays will briefly summarize the book’s main argument and provide an original analysis of the core concepts forwarded by the author. Each essay is worth 150 points.

Revised Essay (1):
You will select one of the two essays for the course and polish it into a formal academic essay, going into further depth and expanding the frame of reference to other works on the syllabus as well as outside research. This essay will function as the course’s final project.

Policies & Resources

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 Academic Policies Handbook at http://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook.

Electronic Communication
University policy specifies that students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu). Faculty and students should use this account for correspondences (Operations Manual, III.15.2, k.11).
Accommodations for Disabilities
A student seeking academic accommodations should first register with Student Disability Services and then meet with the course instructor privately in the instructor's office to make particular arrangements. See http://www.uiowa.edu/~sds/ for more information.

Academic Honesty
All CLAS students or students taking classes offered by CLAS have, in essence, agreed to the College's Code of Academic Honesty: "I pledge to do my own academic work and to excel to the best of my abilities, upholding the IOWA Challenge. I promise not to lie about my academic work, to cheat, or to steal the words or ideas of others; nor will I help fellow students to violate the Code of Academic Honesty." Any student committing academic misconduct is reported to the College and placed on disciplinary probation or may be suspended or expelled (CLAS Academic Policies Handbook).

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

Course Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1: Open Journalism</th>
<th>May 16 – May 20</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Due Dates:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Answer Discussion Questions: Due 5/19 (Thurs.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Discussion 1 with classmates: Due 5/22 (Sun.)</td>
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<td><strong>This Week:</strong></td>
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| - Watch Lectures #1-5 (ICON > “Content” page)  
  **Note:** All course media will be posted on the course site (ICON). See “Content” page.  |
| - Read We the Media: Intro-Ch. 2; & Ch. 7; Here Comes Everybody, Ch. 1-4 |
| - Post your answers to the discussion questions posted on the course site (ICON > Discussions > Week 1). |
| - Comment on at least 2 of your classmates’ initial postings to Week 1 Discussion Questions. |

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<tr>
<th>Week 2: Convergence Culture</th>
<th>May 23– May 29</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Due Dates:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Answer Discussion Questions: Due 5/26 (Thurs.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Discussion 2 with classmates: Due 5/29 (Sun.)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>This Week:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Read: Finish Here Comes Everybody; Convergence Culture, Intro-Ch. 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Watch Lectures #6-10 (“Content” page)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Post your answers to the discussion questions posted on the course site (ICON &gt; Discussions &gt; Week 2).</td>
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<td>- Comment on at least 2 of your classmates’ initial postings to Week 2 Discussion Questions.</td>
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### Week 3: Convergence Culture | May 30 – June 5

**Due Dates:**
- Exam 1: Due 5/31 (Tues.)
- Essay 1: Due 6/4 (Sat.); Write a brief summary followed by an original analysis of one of the following: *We the Media*, *Here Comes Everybody*, and *Convergence Culture*. 3-5 pages.

**This Week:**
- **Read**: Finish *Convergence Culture*, Read *The Shallows*, Ch. 3-5
- **Watch**: Lecture #11-15 (“Content” page)
- **Take**: Exam #1 (ICON > “Quizzes” page).
- **Submit**: essay 1 to ICON Drop Box in Week 3 Folder.

### Week 4: The Digital Age and its Discontents | June 6 – June 12

**Due Dates:**
- Answer Discussion Questions: Due 6/7 (Thurs.)
- Discussion 3 with classmates: Due 6/12 (Sun.)

**This Week:**
- **Read**: Finish *The Shallows*, *Fast Media/Media Fast*, Pts. I-III
- **Watch**: Lecture #16-20 (“Content” page)
- **Post**: your answers to the discussion questions posted on the course site (ICON > Discussions > Week 4).
- **Comment**: on at least 2 of your classmates’ initial postings to Week 4 Discussion Questions.

### Week 5: The Future of Journalism | June 13 – June 19

**Due Dates:**
- Answer Discussion Questions: Due 6/16 (Thurs.)
- Essay 2: Due 6/18 (Sat.); Write a brief summary followed by an original analysis of one of the following: *The Shallows*, *Fast Media/Media Fast*, and *Will the Last Reporter*. 3-5 pages.
- Discussion 4 with classmates: Due 6/19 (Sun.)

**This Week:**
- **Read**: *Fast Media/Media Fast*, Pt. IV, *Will the Last Reporter*, ch. 1-5; 18-20, 24, 29, 32
- **Watch**: Lectures #21-25 (“Content” page)
- **Submit**: essay 2 [electronically via the ICON Dropbox] (“Week 5” folder)
- **Post**: your answers to the discussion questions posted on the course site (ICON > Discussions > Week 5).
- **Comment**: on at least 2 of your classmates’ initial postings to Week 5 Discussion Questions.

### Week 6: The Future of Journalism | June 20 – June 23

**Due Dates:**
- Exam 2: Due 6/23 (Thurs.)
- Final Project (Revision of one of your short essays): Due 6/23 (Thurs.)

**This Week:**
- **Read**: All of *Entrepreneurial Journalism*; Final Project Instructions (“Content” page)
- **Watch**: Lectures #26-29 (“Content” page)
- **Take**: Exam #2 (ICON > “Quizzes” page).
- **Submit**: your final project [electronically via the ICON Dropbox] (“Week 6” folder)