(Caucus Campaign Coverage)

JMC 3400:0003

Fall, 2015
Adler Journalism Building: Room W340
Website address TK

Some of the policies relating to this course (such as the drop deadline) are governed by its administrative home, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, 120 Schaeffer Hall.

Instructor
Assistant Professor Daniel Lathrop
Office: Adler Journalism Building room 337
Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 9 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. and by appointment
Phone: (319) 335 - 3331
E-mail: daniel-lathrop@uiowa.edu

School of Journalism and Mass Communication info
Director: Professor David Ryfe (david-ryfe@uiowa.edu)
Main office: E305 Adler Journalism Building
Office phone: 335-3401

Description of Course
This course will consist of coverage of the quadrennial Iowa Caucuses, the first election of the U.S. Presidential nominating process. More generally, it will be about covering electoral politics with an emphasis on critical coverage of candidates and issues.

Since this is a reporting class, the focus is on reporting assignments. Each of you will write one spot news report each week and complete five longer pieces over the course of the semester. Deadlines will be strictly enforced.

You will also read assigned current articles illustrating relevant issues assigned each week, and you will be expected to stay on top of the coverage of the presidential races as reflected in The New York Times. You will read three books: The Buying of the President 1960, which is one of the canonical pieces of 20th century political journalism, Duffy’s Iowa Caucus Cartoons and Politifact’s training materials on fact checking.

You will be expected to be able to answer questions in class related to all the readings.

If that sounds like a lot, the good news is that we have made arrangements for student work completed at an appropriate standard to be published in various professional outlets (including Politifact and Reuters).

In the words of retired professor Steve Berry, “Welcome to the big leagues.”

Objectives and Goals of the Course
The goal if this course is to prepare you for to cover electoral politics and to distinguish yourself in the coverage with high quality, thorough reportage across mediums.
Required texts:
*The Making of the President 1960* (available at the University Bookstore and probably everywhere else)
By Theodore H. White
(any edition)

*Duffy's Iowa Caucus Cartoons* (available at the University Bookstore in mid-September)
By Brian Duffy
(University of Iowa Press, 2015)

*Politifact Reporting Handbook* (will be provided in class)
(Politifact.com, 2015)

Other readings:
You are responsible for reading the campaign coverage as reflected in *The New York Times* as well as one current article assigned in class each Wednesday.

Grading System and the Use of +/-
This course and all assignments are graded on the +/- system. A+ grades are given only in extraordinary situations.

Writing assignments will be graded against suitability for professional publication. (A detailed grading rubric for each assignment type will be distributed in class.)

Assignments turned in up to 24 hours late will be penalized a full letter grade and are not eligible for revision. Assignments will not be accepted more than 24 hours late.

Any assignment which is turned in on time may be revised within 24 hours of being returned by the professor. Revised assignments will be restored for an improvement of up to one full letter grade, with a maximum of an A-.

Assignments and Percentage of Final Grade.
*Weekly news assignments (15) — 30%*
Each student is required to file one spot news report each week. It can be a text story of at least 500 words, a video story of at least 3 minutes or a substantial data visualization or multimedia presentation.

The reports must be turned in within two hours of the end of the spot news event or, in the case of embargoed material, by the time the embargo lifts. Exceptions to this deadline must be arranged in advance.

Students are encouraged to pitch their own ideas, but final say on assignments will be up to the instructor. Assignments will be given by the instructor the Wednesday of the preceding week.

There will be no weekly assignments due during the first week of the course, the week of the midterm or the week of the final.

*Fact checks (3) — 30%*
Each student will do three fact checks in the style of Politifact (and for possible publication by Politifact).

*Midterm assignment — 15%*
Each student will create an issue backgrounder in a format of their choice (text, video, data visualization, multimedia package). Text stories must be at least 2,500 words and include at least one non-text element (photo, video, graphic, etc.). Reports in other formats must involve the same amount of effort and be approved in advance by the instructor.

*Final assignment — 15%*
Each student will create an in-depth report on a single candidate or political figures in a format of their choice (text, video, data visualization, multimedia package). Text stories must be at least 2,500 words and
include at least one non-text element (photo, video, graphic, etc.). The nature of stories in other formats must involve a similar amount of effort and be approved in advance by the instructor.

**Attendance and Percentage of Final Grade**
Class participation — 10%
Attending and participating in the class is important. This grade will reflect the percent of class sessions at which the student attends, actively engages and demonstrates mastery of assigned materials.

**Exams and Percentage of Final Grade**
Because there are midterm and final reporting assignments, there will be no midterm or final exam.

**Course Policies**
- **Course attendance**: You are expected to attend all classes. Any unavoidable absences should be arranged in advance at the discretion of the instructor. Serious illnesses and personal emergencies will be handled in accordance with the appropriate CLAS and university policies.

- **Submitting of previously published materials**: You cannot submit previously published material to satisfy an assignment. Work for publication may be submitted to satisfy an assignment if it is turned in prior to its submission for publication, under terms arranged in advance with the instructor.

- **Publication of materials from class**: You own your words and can do what you want with them. If you elect to do so, we have arranged to submit those pieces meeting the appropriate standards for publication by Politifact.com, The Des Moines Register, IowaWatch, Reuters and other outlets.

- **The Daily Iowan**: For those covering the caucuses for The Daily Iowan, the instructor will work closely to make assignments complementary.

- **Identifying yourself**: You must always honestly represent yourself. As such you should always identify yourself. Unless you are working on a specific story assignment for a specific publication (like the D.I.), that means identifying yourself as a student journalist doing work for potential professional publication. If the outlet is known (e.g. Politifact), you should identify it as well.

- **Deadlines**: All work must be turned in through the university e-mail system and will be considered on time or late based on the e-mail time stamp. If turning in through the e-mail system is impossible, arrangements must be made in advance.

**Resources for Students**
Students might find the Writing Center and the Speaking Center very useful for this course; the Tutor Iowa site is also very valuable for students seeking extra help:

Writing Center: [http://writingcenter.uiowa.edu/](http://writingcenter.uiowa.edu/)
Speaking Center: [http://speakingcenter.uiowa.edu/](http://speakingcenter.uiowa.edu/)
Tutor Iowa: [http://tutor.uiowa.edu/](http://tutor.uiowa.edu/)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Monday, August 24, 2015</th>
<th>Assignment (due 6:06 a.m.)</th>
<th>Reading Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(no spot news assignment)</td>
<td>Wednesday, August 26, 2015</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
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<td>Reading Assignment</td>
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<td>Wednesday, September 9, 2015</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Monday, September 14, 2015</td>
<td>Assignment (due 6:06 a.m.)</td>
<td>Reading Assignment</td>
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<td>Wednesday, September 16, 2015</td>
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<td>Week 14</td>
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<td>Week 16 (Final)</td>
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<td>Friday, December 11, 2015</td>
<td>Final</td>
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The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences: Important 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 Academic Policies 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 correspondence (Operations Manual, III.15.2. Scroll down to 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://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/ for more information.

Academic Honesty
All students taking CLAS courses 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).

CLAS Final Examination Policies
The date and time of every final examination is announced by the Registrar generally by the fifth week of classes. No exams of any kind are allowed during the last week of classes. All students should plan on being at the UI through the final examination period. It is the student's responsibility to know the date, time, and place of the final exam.

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 Office of the Sexual Misconduct Response Coordinator 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 website.
The Iowa Dozen

In this class we will learn the following principles, which—when spelled out—become the “Iowa Dozen.”

We will learn:
1. to write correctly and clearly
2. to conduct research and gather information responsibly
3. to edit and evaluate carefully
4. to use media technologies thoughtfully
5. to apply statistical concepts appropriately

We will value:
6. First Amendment principles for all individuals and groups
7. a diverse global community
8. creativity and independence
9. truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity

We will explore:
10. mass communication theories and concepts
11. media institutions and practices
12. the role of media in shaping cultures

A note from the Writing Center

Visit the Writing Center this semester and take the stress out of writing assignments.

- Book a 30 minute appointment when you need it.
- Reserve a regular weekly meeting for the entire semester — register now through our website: http://writingcenter.uiowa.edu/.
- Upload a draft to our online system and get comments and suggestions by email.
- Sign up for graduate student programs and professional development opportunities.

All our services are free (it's the best deal in town). Check out our website at writingcenter.uiowa.edu or stop by to see us in 110 EPB.

The Writing Center is hosted by the Department of Rhetoric and supported by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.