COURSE OVERVIEW: This course aims to equip students with a broad familiarity with the magazine landscape, the ingredients of successful magazines, and the skills required for developing and producing magazines and magazine content for print and digital platforms. We will examine how magazine format, content and operations have evolved over time, scrutinize and analyze examples of contemporary magazines, explore opportunities for publication, and develop proposals and prototypes for new magazines. In addition to reporting and writing articles and related material, students are expected to acquire some facility with art and design elements and digital tools, and to generate magazine stories, sidebars, visuals and web content. Each student will complete two main articles and turn one of them into a complete story package.

We meet two periods a week; our T/Th sessions will begin promptly at 12:30 p.m. Remember that, according to College of Liberal Arts and Sciences guidelines for coursework, each semester hour of credit entails at least two additional hours of work outside the classroom per week: so for this 4 s.h. course, you should expect to do at least an additional eight hours of work a week beyond class time. This is on average; some weeks may require more, others less.

During the semester, we will talk about how to come up with compelling topics and about the challenges of finding a focus, structuring the story and conveying what you think is important to the audience you have in mind. We will analyze magazines and dissect articles. We’ll work on research skills and learn about information sources and tools available on campus and in the community; you are expected to make maximum use of such resources in your reporting work. We also will hone good old-fashioned shoe-leather reporting methods: asking questions, listening, observing, thinking, analyzing and synthesizing, confirming and reconfirming. We’ll consider similarities and differences of writing for print versus online. And we will devote time and attention to writing, revision, self-editing and editing the work of others.

The skills you develop and practice in this course should contribute to your overall preparation for work in journalism and mass media. For those who might hope to become staff writers for news organizations, competence at reporting and writing in a variety of formats you will encounter in this course is a must. For those wishing to freelance while seeking work more satisfying than flipping burgers or driving a school bus, the ability to turn out solid stories can generate both spare change and essential “clips” or work samples. For those who aspire to work full-time for a magazine as writer, editor, designer or in any other capacity—or to start or manage a magazine—this course should give you a sense of the landscape.
Take note of the “Iowa Dozen”—the skills and concepts our School endeavors to foster—as you proceed through the semester. Those maxims are reiterated further down in this syllabus.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:** General expectations for all students include consistent class attendance, adequate preparation, constructive participation, conscientious independent work as well as contributions to overall class efforts, honesty and transparency about ideas, sources and methods, and completion of all assignments on deadline.

Assignments include reading, writing, presentations and story packages. Basics follow; specific instructions will be provided in class and online.

- **Common readings:** You must keep up with required readings and be prepared to discuss them in class. Most common readings, mainly examples of strong magazine writing, will be posted electronically on the class ICON site. Please complete all these assignments on schedule, read them thoroughly and come to class with comments and questions in mind. Reading assignments will be heaviest toward the start of the semester and will lighten up as you focus on producing your own stories.

- **Other readings:** As a general rule, you also are expected to read voraciously on your own initiative, on the presumption that you will not come to write well if you don’t consistently and conscientiously read a lot of good writing. Keep up with daily newspapers, a crucial fount of article ideas; look at print and online magazines constantly; find those consistently excellent journalistic websites; and don’t neglect books. Occasionally you’ll be asked to look for reporting/writing examples to share with the class or consider in relation to your own work.

- **Magazine analysis:** Each student, in consultation with the instructor, will choose a magazine to introduce to the class. You are responsible for researching the background and mission of the magazine, reading past and current issues, contacting editors if possible, selecting representative articles and items to discuss, developing a one-page handout about the publication to distribute in class, and making a 15-minute presentation on your findings.

- **Independent reporting and writing projects:** You must complete two articles during the semester. For at least one of the articles, you also must produce accompanying sidebars, visuals and/or multimedia content to constitute an entire publication package.

  - Article #1: a light feature (e.g., profile, trend story, service/informational piece, culture or behind-the-news article) drawing on local resources, issues and/or events (1,200-1,500 words, or about 5-6 double-spaced manuscript pages using standard 12-point font and 1-inch margins).

  - Article #2: a more ambitious reporting/feature project exploring an idea, event, question, controversy or other topic in depth (2,000-3,000 words, approx. 8-12 pp.).

Students will read drafts of one another’s work and are expected to offer constructive, thoughtful comments and suggestions in class workshop sessions. The final versions of your articles, with accompanying materials, will be posted to a class website.
EVALUATION: Expectations of all students are high, but your own demands on yourself should be the highest of all. Grades will be based on a combination of class engagement and performance, magazine analysis, articles, and fulfillment of all other obligations.

- class attendance, preparation & participation (25%)
- magazine analysis and presentation (10%)
- articles (55% -- reporting & writing worth 20% & 25%, package an additional 10%)
- short exercises and small assignments (10%)

Students may earn extra credit for (a) perfect attendance during the entire semester, and (b) actually getting an article developed for class subsequently published or accepted for publication in a professional magazine (you must provide confirmation).

Grading criteria for assignments and activities include such factors as originality, focus, accuracy and precision, logic and coherence, substance, analytic depth, clarity, writing style, presentation effectiveness, following guidelines and meeting deadlines, and will be specified in instructions. Assessment of components of the course will be weighted in final letter grades. Letter grades may be interpreted as follows: A range=superior work, B range=very good work, C range=average work, D range=unacceptable work, F=failure.

HOUSEKEEPING, POLICIES & OTHER INFORMATION (see also CLAS insert, appended)

- You must have an active U of I e-mail account. Make sure to check it regularly. Also keep tabs on the course ICON site, where much of the materials you’ll need for the course will reside.

- Meet your deadlines. You are urged to begin your work somewhat earlier than at the last minute; no-printer-available protestations are avoidable and thus unacceptable. In the absence of truly extenuating circumstances, no extensions will be granted.

- Plan ahead and pay attention to detail. You are expected to take time and care with assignments, and to revise, edit and proofread your writing conscientiously before turning it in. Note submission arrangements, including the need at times to make printouts of written assignments; e-mails at the last minute do not count. Make backups of all files, and also keep your own copies of all printouts you hand in. Make sure your name is on your papers and handouts.

- Attendance is not optional. Except in cases of death in the family, serious illness, or other genuine emergencies or crises, you are expected to attend all class meetings. If you must miss a class, notify the instructor in person or by e-mail in advance; if extenuating circumstances make advance notice impossible, you must provide a written explanation and/or documentation for your absence as soon as possible.

- Common courtesy. Otherwise known as common sense, or what you learned in kindergarten. Arriving to class late/leaving class early is disruptive and inappropriate behavior. If other classes or obligations overlap with times scheduled for this course, rearrange the other matters or drop this course. As for electronic gadgets, please turn off ringers, refrain from surfing and texting, and so on.

- Unethical conduct. Plagiarism (i.e., expropriating the words and ideas of others without due attribution) and cheating of any sort are grounds for a failing grade in the course. For details on definitions and consequences of academic misconduct, see http://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/academic-fraud-honor-code.
- **Special accommodations.** Special academic arrangements for students with disabilities are handled with the cooperation of Student Disability Services, 3015 Burge Hall, tel. 335-1462, http://www.uiowa.edu/~sds/. Students who need accommodations for any aspect of the course are urged to contact SDS and to speak with the instructor early in the semester.

- **Sexual harassment.** Sexual harassment is reprehensible and will not be tolerated by the School, College or University. For definitions, assistance, and the full University policy, see http://www.sexualharassment.uiowa.edu/; on sexual misconduct involving students, see http://www.uiowa.edu/~our/opmanual/iv/02.htm

- **Severe weather.** If a weather event disrupts class, we will seek appropriate shelter in the building; and class will resume if possible when the event is over.

- **Complaints.** Show up during office hours, make appointments, and/or contact me by e-mail with thoughts and concerns. If you feel uncomfortable bringing a concern directly to the instructor, you may consult Dr. Art Spisak, director of Honors at Iowa; Professor Julie Andsager, interim director of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication; Professor Helena Dettmer, associate dean for academic affairs of the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences; the University Ombudspersons; and/or other relevant authorities. For procedures, see http://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/student-rights-responsibilities.

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**“THE IOWA DOZEN”** – principles we endeavor to advance in class and beyond:

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
Finally, some keys to a happy heart and productive career – you are encouraged to adhere to the following tenets, at least for the duration of this course:

• **Let your journalistic instincts intrude into your daily life.** Always be on the lookout for story leads and ideas, sources of inspiration and information, and possible outlets for your work. Never leave home without writing utensil and notebook.

• **Report and write about what interests you.** In the course of indentured servitude at news organizations, you may be assigned to cover stories you think are stupid or uninteresting; and even as a freelancer you may feel compelled to do dumb or boring things for the sake of the money, the professional relationship or the byline. But as long as you’re in school, you might as well pursue topics you find engrossing.

• **Help your fellow students.** Journalism can be a cutthroat business. But the very best journalism involves cooperation; and on complex stories, two or three or ten heads are always better than one. Some of your best resources are right in the classroom. Everyone can help everyone else by brainstorming collectively, trading and sharing information and ideas, and providing constructive comments and criticisms at every stage of the process.

• **Bear in mind that your writing can only be as good as your substance.** Writing is simply the vessel for information and ideas. You need something to write about. Dogged, thorough reporting and hard thinking are essential to good writing.

• **Bear in mind that small matters can have major repercussions.** A typo in your first paragraph or garbled syntax in your second may send your manuscript directly to the recycling bin. Editors have no time for lack of professionalism. Every little thing counts.

• **Don’t chase the illusion of “objectivity,” but strive your utmost to achieve accuracy and fairness.** Once a watchword of American journalism, absolute “objectivity” is now generally recognized as impossible. However, accuracy and fairness are eminently attainable. Be meticulous and responsible. Check and recheck information; verify everything that is verifiable. Examine issues and events from many perspectives and try to understand other points of view, even views that might be anathema to you. Take a stand when you think it’s warranted and appropriate, but make sure you substantiate it with thorough investigation and intelligent analysis.

• **Don’t become over-reliant on the Internet.** Cyberspace supplies all sorts of wonderful tools, as well as some great journalistic outlets. But the old adage “garbage in, garbage out” still applies. Web pages are only as dependable as their creators. Find out as much as you can about all your sources, and continue to make use of good old-fashioned resources like newspaper microfilm, archival documents and books. Learn to use the web for primary resources rather than for dredging up second- or third- or who-knows-how-many-hand accounts. Don’t get accustomed to what’s convenient and easy. And while Wikipedia may provide good leads, it is not an authoritative source.

• **Follow basic academic and journalistic ethics.** Rely on your own ideas and your own work. Keep your word to sources and editors. Don’t “borrow” other people’s writings or thoughts without crediting them.

• **Develop your own sense of purpose and ethics beyond the basic do’s and don’ts.** For each and every story you pursue, ask yourself the question: “What’s the point?” Sometimes the point may be as simple as establishing a human connection or conveying an experience through words. Other times, your intent might be somewhat grander, such as trying to expose a social malady and possibly contribute to its remedy. Whatever your aims, try to incorporate into your work the human values that are important to you: laughter,
tolerance, honesty, compassion, whatever else is on your personal list. Endeavor to be true to your own principles.

The University of Iowa

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS & SCIENCES

Teaching Policies & Resources — Syllabus Insert
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.

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
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).

CLAS Final Examination Policies
The final examination schedule for each class is announced by the Registrar generally by the tenth day of classes. Final exams are offered only during the official final examination period. 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. Once the Registrar has announced the date, time, and location of each final exam, the complete schedule will be published on the Registrar's web site and will be shared with instructors and students. It is the student's responsibility to know the date, time, and place of a 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 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 Department of Public Safety website.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>due</th>
<th>Tue</th>
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<th>Thu</th>
<th>etc</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AUG</td>
<td>week 1 – getting going!</td>
<td>27 introductions; shoe exercise</td>
<td>29 what is a magazine? categories, concepts, covers</td>
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<tr>
<td>AUG</td>
<td>week 2 – DO READINGS before Tuesday’s class!</td>
<td>magazine title list</td>
<td>3 analyzing magazines; story ideas, angles &amp; formats</td>
<td>magazine choice for analysis</td>
<td>5 pinnacles of magazinedom</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEPT</td>
<td>week 3 – DO READINGS</td>
<td>story idea list</td>
<td>10 planning &amp; pitching a magazine; ethics</td>
<td>article example</td>
<td>12 research &amp; reporting strategies &amp; tools</td>
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<td>SEPT</td>
<td>week 4 – DO READINGS</td>
<td>article #1 proposal</td>
<td>17 guest speaker: Linzee Kull McCray</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEPT</td>
<td>week 5 – DO READINGS</td>
<td>article #1 reporting memo &amp; source list</td>
<td>24 mag analyses: student presentations (B)</td>
<td>26 mag analyses: student presentations (C)</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCT</td>
<td>week 6 – DO READINGS</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 story structure &amp; components</td>
<td>3 the writing process, editing &amp; revision</td>
<td>DRAFT ARTICLE #1</td>
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<td>OCT</td>
<td>week 7 – COMPLETE DRAFT OF ARTICLE #1</td>
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<td>8 workshop drafts (A)</td>
<td>10 workshop drafts (B)</td>
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<td>OCT</td>
<td>week 8</td>
<td>article #2 proposal</td>
<td>15 workshop drafts (C)</td>
<td>17 workshop drafts (D)</td>
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### Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>November (NOV)</th>
<th>December (DEC)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 9</strong></td>
<td>article #2 reporting memo &amp; source list</td>
<td>22 spinoffs, sidebars, visuals, multimedia elements</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 10</strong></td>
<td>plan for story package</td>
<td>29 work on multimedia</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 11</strong></td>
<td>package elements</td>
<td>5 show &amp; tell</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 12</strong></td>
<td>Individual conferences; bring draft of article #2</td>
<td>12 conferences [E320]</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 13</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>26 workshop drafts (A)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 14</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 workshop drafts (C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 15</strong></td>
<td>FINALIZE ARTICLES &amp; CLASS WEBSITE</td>
<td>10 work on final packages</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>