ABOUT THIS COURSE: You’ve worked hard. You’ve learned a lot. You’ve accomplished things you never thought as a freshman that you could do. (Maybe doing some of those things had never even crossed your mind.) You’ve followed the path laid down by your instructors, editors and supervisors, and you’ve done it exceptionally well. You’ve probably taken some interesting side trips along the way.

Now you get to create your own path.

In this experimental class, you will identify, design and bring to life a capstone project of your choosing. You can do a research project about a media-related topic. You can do a media-related project with a research component. Or you can combine practice and intellectual inquiry in some other interesting way. Part of your goal is successful management of the creation process itself. The other part is a final result that you will be proud to have produced.

Success in the class, combined with your academic achievements in your other coursework, will enable you to graduate with honors in journalism and mass communication.

REQUIRED BOOK: Creative Research: The Theory and Practice of Research for the Creative Industries
Hilary Collins; AVA Publishing 2010
Available free as “ebrary” book through UI Main Library:
site.ebrary.com/lib/uiowa/docDetail.action?docID=10443182
(A UI server connection is needed to access the free book.)

WEBSITE: An updated version of this syllabus, including assignments and other class info, can be found on our WordPress site: SJMCHonorsProject.wordpress.com

INSTRUCTOR Dr. Jane B. Singer
W341 Adler Journalism Building
jane-singer@uiowa.edu; 335-3431
Office hours: 2 to 3:30 pm Tuesdays and Wednesdays, or by appointment

About your instructor: Jane has 15 years experience as a print and online journalist, and another 20 as a teacher and researcher. She worked as a reporter and editor at three East Coast newspapers before joining CBS in the early 1980s as an editor of its fledgling online service. That project evolved into the Prodigy Services Company, and she was Prodigy’s first news manager, staffing and overseeing the first national online newsroom. Jane holds a Ph.D. in journalism from the University of Missouri, an M.A. in liberal studies from New York University and a bachelor’s degree in journalism from the University of Georgia. From January 2007 to January 2010, she was the Johnston Press Chair in Digital Journalism at the University of Central Lancashire in England. She is a member of Phi Beta Kappa and Kappa Tau Alpha honor societies, and is a former national president of KTA as well as the School’s current chapter adviser. Her research focuses on the impact of digital media on journalists’ norms, roles, practices and products.
SCHOOL INFO: School of Journalism and Mass Communication, E305 Adler Journalism Building
Office phone:  335-3401 (Michele Ketchum or Rosemary Zimmerman)
Director:  David Perlmutter, E305B Adler Journalism Building
david-perlmutter@uiowa.edu; 335-3383

The School is part of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (clas.uiowa.edu), which is our administrative home. The College oversees such matters as add/drop deadlines, second-grade-only options and the like. See the CLAS Academic Policies Handbook: www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook.

HONORS INFO: To graduate with honors in journalism and mass communication, you must have (at the time of graduation) at least a 3.33 overall GPA and a 3.5 GPA in your major (SJMC) classes. You also must be a member of the UI Honors Program. Information about the program, as well as about relevant deadlines for graduation with honors: honors.uiowa.edu

Previous SJMC honors projects are available in the Resource Center.

LEARNING ENABLEMENT: Accommodations can be made for anyone with a disability that may require modification of seating, grading or other class requirements. Please register with Student Disability Services (www.uiowa.edu/~sds), then meet privately with Jane to make specific arrangements.

ADDITIONAL CLASS POLICIES

Academic integrity: Please refer to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Academic Policies Handbook (available online) for information about academic honesty. University penalties for plagiarism -- defined in Webster’s New World Dictionary as taking ideas, writings and so on from another and passing them off as one’s own -- range from grade reduction to dismissal from the University. It is also dishonest to turn in the same (or a substantively similar) paper or other work for multiple classes. The same rules apply online as elsewhere: If someone else created it, that person or organization owns it. For journalists and other public communicators, plagiarism or other dishonesty is a sin deadly to any career. Don’t do it.

Attendance: Active and ongoing class participation are crucial to this class. In case of a dire emergency that prevents your being with us, please let Jane know why you were absent within 24 hours of the missed class period. (E-mail is fine.) Unexcused absences will affect your grade.

“Attendance” involves attending mentally as well as physically. During class, cell phones must be turned off and stored, and laptops or tablets may be used only for taking notes unless instructed otherwise. Please, no email, FB, texting, etc., etc. Their use in the classroom is rude, annoying and distracting … and it turns out the human brain really doesn’t do multi-tasking very well at all.

Email: University policy specifies that students are responsible for all official correspondence, including class info, sent to their University of Iowa e-mail address (NAME@uiowa.edu).

Severe weather: Not uncommon in Iowa! If threatening weather occurs during class, seek appropriate shelter immediately. Class will continue if possible when the event is over. The Hawk Alert site (hawkalert.uiowa.edu) has details about notification of weather and other emergencies.

Student rights and responsibilities: You have the right to expect an environment that enables you to learn. You have a responsibility to colleagues and the instructor to help create an environment in which others may learn. If you have a complaint against any faculty member, you are responsible for following procedures outlined in the CLAS Academic Policies Handbook. However, please try to work out a solution with those involved first, starting with Jane.

The University also has an explicit policy related to sexual harassment, which subverts the mission of the institution and threatens the well-being of its members. 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 harassment should be reported at once.

TIME ALLOCATION: College policy states that for each semester hour of credit in a course, students should expect to spend two hours per week in out-of-class work or preparation. This class is worth three semester hours, which means an average of six hours a week of outside-of-class work.
GRADING

Your grade in Honors Workshop, based on a possible total of 1,000 points, will be determined by your accomplishments at two interim checkpoints and on the quality of the final project. Each of the three graded elements will incorporate a set of required components. Details about those components will be provided in class. Barring a medical or other emergency, weekly class attendance is required for full credit at each checkpoint. Additional online readings may be incorporated as we go.

Plan

- **200 points**
- **February 6**

**Creative Research:** Read Foreword, Intro, Context and Part One

**Components:**
- Idea generation and sharing
- Provision and incorporation of feedback
- Identification of / contact with faculty mentor
- Creation of project outline / timetable

Draft Version

- **400 points**
- **April 3**

**Creative Research:** Read Parts Two, Three and Four (and appendices you find useful)

**Components:**
- Weekly log (through SJMCHonorsProject.wordpress.com)
- Information gathering and structuring
- “Literature review”
- Provision and incorporation of feedback (class members)
- Incorporation of feedback (faculty mentor)
- Creation of honors project draft

Final Version

- **400 points**
- **May 1**

**Components:**
- Additional information gathering and structuring as needed
- Additional “literature review” as needed
- Revision of draft / creation of final honors project
- Creation of project evaluative summary (for hands-on projects)
- Presentation of final project

- Formatting / title page creation and Honors Office signoff **May 8**
- Final signatures and Honors office submission **May 15**

PLUS-MINUS:

We will use plus-minus indications for final grades. You must earn at least a B to graduate with honors in JMC.

GRADE CHANGES:

If you believe a grade is wrong, you must see Jane within **one week** after the graded item has been returned to you. After that, the grade stands.
PROPOSED SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

Additional readings, guest speakers and other related items and activities will be incorporated throughout the semester. Please check the online syllabus (SJMCHonorsProject.wordpress.com/syllabus) for updates.

PART ONE: IDEAS and PLANS

During this segment, please read Foreword, Intro, Context and Part One of Creative Research (though p. 59)

January 23: Introductions and Preliminary Ideas

January 30: Refining Your Ideas

Come to class with:
- Idea pitch
- Identification of faculty mentor

February 6: The Plan

Come to class with:
- Project plan (outline) and timetable

PART TWO: PROJECT DRAFT

During this segment, please read the rest of Creative Research

February 13: Sourcing

Before class:
- Write online log entry

Come to class with:
- List of key information sources (human / document) and “contact information”

February 20: Constructing context

Before class:
- Write online log entry

Come to class with:
- Draft of “literature review” for your project

February 27: Data Gathering One: Documents

Before class:
- Write online log entry

Come to class with:
- Annotated list of relevant online / text / visual source materials

March 6: Data Gathering Two: People

Before class:
- Write online log entry

Come to class with:
- Annotated list of your human sources

March 13: Organizing What You’ve Got

Before class:
- Write online log entry

Come to class with:
- The pieces you’ve got so far, organized into a logical narrative

March 20: SPRING BREAK!!
March 27: So What?

*Before class:* Write online log entry

*Come to class with:* A draft version of your conclusions and “take-away points”

April 3: Project Draft

*Before class:* Post project draft online

*Come to class with:* All the pieces put together – your project draft!

**PART THREE: THE FINAL PROJECT**

April 10: The Revision Process

*Come to class with:* Ideas for others

April 17: Incorporating Feedback

*Come to class with:* Ideas for your own revisions

April 24: “Spit and Polish”

*Come to class with:* An eagle eye for a close peer edit

May 1: Final Project

*Come to class with:* Your completed project!

May 8: The Formalities

No class today. Use the time to create materials specified by Honors Office for honors projects / theses.

May 15: Final Deposit

Deadline for deposit of honors project / thesis, with all required signatures, in the Honors Office, hooray!

**HAVE A SUPER SUMMER, AND CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR **HONORS** GRADUATES!
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, we 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.