

**Online Journalism II – Spring 2012**  
**Department of Journalism, Rowan University**

Online Journalism II - 21428 - JRN 02325 - 1  
Tuesday and Thursday, 10:50 a.m. – 12:05 p.m. in Bozorth 134  
Instructor: Mark Berkey-Gerard  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Students will learn to conceptualize, design and implement a basic website with emphasis on multimedia content creation and presentation. The course will examine content strategy, editing and production techniques for news related websites.

This class uses a hands-on workshop approach to explore online journalism. Students will refine their multimedia skills – integrating text, audio, photographs and video to produce news stories for an online audience. The class will create an online multimedia publication about New Jersey issues and residents. The class also consists of collaboration with students in the *Photojournalism* course.

Prerequisites: *News Reporting I* and *Online Journalism I*

Recommended: *Photojournalism, Publication Layout and Design* and/or *On-Camera Field Reporting*

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

This course is a continuation of *Online Journalism I*. Each student will become more proficient in her/his interviewing, reporting, writing, editing and multimedia production skills. Each student will contribute to the tasks of building the student-run online publication <http://njsouthbound.com> By the end of the semester, each student will also have created several multimedia news stories suitable for internship or job applications.

In this course, students will:

- Learn how to generate story ideas through original reporting.
- Explore the art of interviewing and listening to subjects in a way that allows people to tell their own stories in a vivid and intimate manner.
- Improve multimedia reporting skills including how to best use and integrate text, photos, audio, video and graphics.
- Report multimedia stories as a “one-person band” and as part of team.
- Focus on the narrative qualities of interactive storytelling.
- Work together as a class to build an online publication (<http://njsouthbound.com>) with special attention to journalistic ethics, strategy, design and interactivity.

- Uncover interesting stories about local people and issues – and hopefully gain new insight and understanding into Southern New Jersey life and culture.

#### TEACHING METHODS:

This is a fast-paced, advanced level multimedia journalism workshop. Students are assigned a series of multimedia reporting and production assignments. The class will devise a strategy and a work plan for building, editing and promoting a website to host the best multimedia projects. This class will also include collaboration with students in the *Photojournalism* course. There will be a lot of discussion, back-and-forth, and, as is the case in the creation and editing of any publication, a fair amount of chaos. The success of the course and the finished product will depend on your energy, entrepreneurial spirit, work ethic and ability to work together as a team. It will require personal responsibility and high journalistic standards. I will conduct the course as a group facilitator, editor and publisher.

#### TEXTS:

*The Associated Press Stylebook* by Norm Goldstein (editor) Note: All of your writing for this course must follow AP style. Bring it to class for editing stories.

All deadlines, assignments, links to tutorials, and class discussion will be posted at <http://www.ruoj2.wordpress.com>. Students should check it regularly.

Students will be assigned a series of tutorials, which will serve as the primary multimedia training “textbook” for the course. Tutorials consist of online classes, videos, hands-on editing assignments, and articles. Tutorials must be completed on time. A quiz, course report or assessment will follow each tutorial to gauge students’ understanding of the material. If a student is absent, the quiz cannot be made up at another time.

Students will also be assigned multimedia news stories to review (audio pieces, photo essays, audio slideshows and videos). This course will examine these closely, discussing reporting, editing, and storytelling techniques. Quizzes will occasionally cover the content of these multimedia news stories.

Students may also want to consult the text from Online Journalism I - *JournalismNext: A Practical Guide to Digital Reporting and Publishing*. It may be helpful to key review concepts and technical instructions.

#### ACADEMIC HONESTY AND JOURNALISTIC ETHICS:

Plagiarism is a serious offense. Do not use words, photos, or other kinds of content without proper attribution and copyright permission. This includes copying content from the Internet. Plagiarism also includes passing off another’s work as your own or giving your work to another student. For Rowan’s complete academic honesty policy, download the Student Information Guide from <http://www.rowan.edu/studentaffairs/infoguide/pdf/infoguide0809.pdf> (See pages 27-28 in guide.)

Anyone caught plagiarizing could receive an F for the course.

For this course, students are also expected to adhere to Cyberjournalist.net’s Blogger Code of Ethics at <http://www.cyberjournalist.net/news/000215.php>

## ACCOMMODATION POLICY

Your academic success is important. If you have a documented disability that may have an impact upon your work in this class, please contact me. Students must provide documentation of their disability to the Academic Success Center in order to receive official University services and accommodations. The Academic Success Center can be reached at 856-256-4234. The Center is located on the 3rd floor of Savitz Hall. The staff is available to answer questions regarding accommodations or assist you in your pursuit of accommodations.

## OFFICE HOURS:

I welcome conversations with students outside of class. My regular office hours are posted on my office door at Bozorth 105E. I may also be available other times as well. If you would like to make an appointment, email me.

I regularly email students between classes with updates on assignments, grades, and responses to your work. Please check your rowan.edu email throughout the week.

## COMPUTER LAB ETIQUETTE:

We will often use the computers for in-class assignments. When we do use computers, please refrain from unrelated multi-tasking. Please turn off your cell phone and mobile device before class begins, and I will do the same.

## ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING:

Details on deadlines, assignments, links to tutorials, and class discussion will be posted online at <http://www.ruoj2.wordpress.com> Students should check it regularly.

All work must be turned in on time or a late penalty will be assessed.

Students must earn at least a C- for the course to count toward Journalism major or minor requirements.

## **Tutorials (15 points)**

Students will be assigned a series of tutorials to complete. These tutorials will serve as the multimedia training textbook. Tutorials must be completed on time. A quiz, course report, or an assessment will follow each tutorial to gauge students' understanding of the material. If a student is absent, the quiz cannot be made up at another time.

## **Multimedia Assignments (Total 65 points)**

Each student will produce four graded multimedia assignments. Specific instructions and guidelines will be provided prior to each assignment.

- Text/Audio/Photo Assignment (individual) 10 points
- Audio Slide Show (individual or assigned team) 15 points
- Video Project (assigned team) 15 points
- Final Project (individual or team) 25 points

## **Website Production (10 points)**

To create the online publication, each student will participate in one of three teams: editorial, tech/design or social networking. Each team will be given assignments at various times in the semester and each member of the team will have specific tasks to

complete. The teams will work together and often report back to the whole class with their work.

### **Attendance and Class Participation (10 points)**

Attendance is graded and points are earned only if students arrive on time, attend and participate fully in the class. Each student receives two “free passes” during the semester. Beginning with the third instance, points will be deducted for absence, arriving late, leaving early, or failing to participate in class. Students who miss class are responsible for all material covered in that class and must meet all deadlines related to that material. Excused absences include religious observances, documented illness, death of family or loved-one and pre-approved school-related activities. Students must provide official written documentation to receive an excused absence.

### **GRADING SCALE:**

Total 100 points

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	60-66
F	0-59

### **EQUIPMENT:**

Rowan University provides the lab computers installed with software needed for this course. The instructor will also recommend free software and programs that students can use on personal computers.

Students can check out some equipment (video cameras, microphones, tripods, chords, and other items) in the Journalism Department Office in Bozorth 105O. *Do not go to the RTF equipment room for this course, please!* The equipment room is open Monday to Friday 9:30-11:00 a.m. and 1:30-4:30 p.m. Equipment can be checked out on a first-come, first-serve basis and must be returned on time.

However, there is not enough equipment for each student. Therefore students are required to have their own equipment to gather simple audio, photos, and video. This equipment is essential for any journalist working today and is increasing used in other journalism courses as well. If you take Online Journalism II, you will need this equipment for that course. These items must be easy to carry so students can take them on all reporting assignments.

Your equipment must be able to capture:

1. Audio (preferably .wav, .wma or .mp3 format) that can be uploaded to a computer and edited.

2. Digital photographs (6 megapixels or better) that can be uploaded to a computer and edited.
3. Video (min. 640 X 480 at 300 fps) with audio that can be uploaded to a computer and edited.

If you have a **smart phone or mobile device** that captures audio, photos, and video, you may be able to use it. However, you must do research on your equipment, file types, and compatibility with editing software and test it out early in the semester. Do not assume that what you have will work.

If you are looking to purchase some equipment or figuring out if yours will work, I recommend the following:

### **Headphones**

Headphones or ear buds are required when we are working with audio and video. Over-the-ear headphones work best, but any will do.

### **Digital Audio Recorder**

Your audio recording device should:

- save files in .wav, .wma. or .mp3 format
- be capable of uploading files to a computer via USB or connector without installing additional software
- have a MIC jack
- have a headphone jack

Recommended models:

- *Olympus VN-5200 – Approx \$40 on Amazon*
- *Olympus VN-6200 – Approx \$40 on Amazon*
- *Olympus WS-600S – Approx \$65 on Amazon*

Note that the cheapest recorders (less than \$40) that require additional software or recorders made by Sony and RCA don't meet these requirements.

### **Digital Camera for Photos/Video**

Your digital camera should meet or exceed the following:

- 6 megapixels or better
- Image stabilization (essential)
- Video at 640 x 480 at 30 fps (essential); video must include audio
- 3x OPTICAL zoom or better
- USB 2 output
- 2GB+ memory card

If you have questions about equipment or do not have the means to purchase these items, please talk to me in person.

## CLASS AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE – SPRING 2012

The following schedule is a guide to accomplishing our goals. It is subject to change as the publication evolves.

### Week 1

**Tues, Jan 17 and Thurs, Jan 19**

In Class:

- Course overview and introductions
- Equipment
- Permission, Waivers, Plagiarism, and Copyright
- Planning web site strategy and developing story ideas

Assignments:

- Get a plan for your equipment. What do you need?
- Browse student websites posted on class blog. Come to class on Thursday ready to brainstorm ideas for the semester.
- Tutorial 1: Multimedia Storytelling Lexicon (Quiz to follow)

Week 2

**Tues, Jan 24 and Thurs, Jan 26**

In Class: Building Blocks of a Multimedia Story

Interviewing and Audio Storytelling

Assignments:

- Tutorial 2: NewsU Course "Reporting Across Platforms" (NewsU course report due)
- Tutorial 3: Ira Glass, This American Life, and Storycorps (Quiz to follow)

Week 3

**Tues, Jan 31 and Thurs, Feb 2**

In Class: Audio Editing and Gathering

Assignments:

- Tutorial 4: NewsU Course "Telling Stories with Sound" (NewsU course report due)
- Tutorial 5: Audio Editing (Quiz to follow)

Week 4

**Tues, Feb 7 and Thurs, Feb 9**

In Class: Web site set up and work

Assignment: Text/Audio/Photo Assignment Due

Week 5

**Tues, Feb 14 and Thurs, Feb 16**

In Class: Intro to Audio Slide Shows

Assignments:

- Tutorial 6: NewsU Course "Language of the Image" (NewsU course report due)
- Tutorial 7: Soundslides How To, How to Improve Your Audio Slide Shows, and Examples (Quiz to follow)

Week 6

**Tues, Feb 21 and Thurs, Feb 23**

In Class: Audio Slide Shows (continued)

Assignment: More examples and work on assignment

Week 7

**Tues, Feb 28 and Thurs, March 1**

Assignment: Audio Slide Show Due

Week 8

**Tues, March 6 and Thurs, March 8**

In Class: Video Shooting and Editing

Assignment:

-Tutorial 8: NewsU Course "Video Storytelling for the Web" (NewsU receipt)

-Tutorial 9: Watch Video 101 Shooting Basics and Editing Basics (Quiz to follow)

**SPRING BREAK – MARCH 12-16**

Week 9

**Tues, March 20 and Thurs, March 22**

In Class: Video for the Web

Assignments:

-Tutorial 10: Video editing tutorials (Quiz to follow)

Week 10

**Tues, March 27 and Thurs, March 29**

In Class: Final Project Pitch

Week 11

**Tues, April 3**

In Class: Video Project Due

**Thurs, April 5 – NO CLASS – Optional extra credit trip to DC**

Week 12

**Tues, April 10 and Thurs, April 12**

Due: Final Project rough draft and raw multimedia files (audio, photo, video, etc)

Week 13

**Tues, April 17 and Thurs, April 19**

In Class: Web site work

Due: Final Project

Week 14

**Tues, April 24 and Thurs, April 26**

In Class: Web site work

Due: Revised Final Project Due

Week 15

Final Editing and Posting - TBA

Web Site Launch - TBA

Course review and evaluation

Graduation, May 11