

**Online Journalism II – Spring 2011**  
**Department of Journalism, Rowan University**

Online Journalism II - JRN 02325 – 1 – CRN 21630  
Tuesday and Thursday  
12:15 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.  
Bozorth 134

Instructor: Mark Berkey-Gerard  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

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

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* and *Publication Layout and Design*

**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 multiple web-based packages 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.
- Report across multimedia platforms.
- Explore interactive storytelling.
- Create an individual portfolio of multimedia work suitable for internship or job applications in the news or new media industry.
- Work together 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.

#### TEACHING METHODS:

This is a fast-paced, advanced level workshop. Students are assigned a series of multimedia reporting assignments. The class will devise a strategy and a work plan for building, editing and promoting a web site 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:

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 to complete. These tutorials will serve as the multimedia training “textbook” for the course. They consist of online classes, videos, and articles to read. Tutorials should be completed on time since we will be working on related assignments in class. A quiz 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.

Students will also be assigned multimedia news stories to review (audio pieces, photo essays, audio slideshows, and videos). The class will examine them 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.

#### 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, feel free to email me. If you have questions about assignments, please email me and I will respond as soon as I am able.

I will also email students between classes with updates on assignments, grades, and responses to your work. Please check your email throughout the week so that you receive messages.

#### COMPUTER LAB ETIQUETTE:

We will often use the computers for in-class assignments. When we do use computers, please refrain from unrelated multi-tasking. When we are not using the computers for in-class assignments, please close your browser and other applications. Please turn off your cell phone and mobile device before class begins.

## ACADEMIC HONESTY:

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 student'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 may receive an F for the course.

## 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 to receive official university services and accommodations. The Academic Success Center can be reached at 856-256-4234 and is located in Savitz Hall, 3rd floor. The staff is available to answer questions about accommodations or assist you in your pursuit of accommodations.

## 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.

### **Tutorials (15 points)**

Students will be assigned a series of tutorials to complete. These tutorials will serve as the multimedia training textbook. There are online classes to complete, videos to watch, and articles to read. Tutorials should be completed on time since we will be working on related assignments in class. A quiz 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 70 points)**

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

- Audio Assignment 10 points
- Audio Slide Show 15 points
- Group Video Project 15 points
- Final Project 25 points

### **Web Site 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 has two "free passes" during the semester.

Beginning with the third instance, points will be deducted for absence, being 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.

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   |

#### REQUIRED EQUIPMENT:

Rowan University provides the lab computers installed with software needed for this course. Students can check out microphones, video cameras, tripods, chords, and other items in the Journalism Department Office in Bozorth 105O. Equipment can be checked out on a first-come, first-serve basis and must be returned on time.

However, students are required to have their own equipment to gather audio and photos and to turn in assignments. These items must be easy to carry so students can take them on all reporting assignments. If you do not have the means to purchase this equipment, please talk to me in person ASAP.

For this course, students are required to have:

#### **1. A USB thumb drive (4 GB recommended) or external hard drive**

Bring it to class with you. A 4GB thumb drive cost about \$12. You will use your thumb drive to turn in all of your assignments. If you are using an external hard drive make sure it is formatted for Mac computers.

#### **2. Digital Audio Recorder**

The audio recorder must:

- save files in WAV, WMA or MP3 format
- be capable of uploading files to a computer via USB without additional software
- have a MIC jack
- have a headphone jack

Note that recorders that require additional software or recorders made by Sony and RCA DO NOT meet the requirements.

#### Recommended models:

- *Olympus VN-5200 – Approx \$39 on Amazon*

- *Olympus VN-6200 – Approx \$44 on Amazon*
- *Olympus WS-400 – Approx \$65 on Amazon*

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

Your digital camera must 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
- 4. 3x OPTICAL zoom or better
- USB 2 output
- 4GB+ memory card (will have to be purchased separately)

### **4. 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.

If you already have equipment and you are not sure if it will work for this course, find out what digital format(s) your recorder or camera uses and check with me. Do not assume that what you have will work.

Bring all of these items on your reporting assignments and to class regularly.

## CLASS AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE – SPRING 2011

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

### Week 1

Tues, Jan 18 and Thurs, Jan 20

In Class: Course overview and introductions

Assignments:

Browse Volumes 1-4 of <http://njsouthbound.com> and the list of “inspiring student web sites.” Come to next class ready to discuss your ideas for this semester.

### Week 2

Tues, Feb 1 and Thurs, Feb 3

In Class: Planning web site strategy and developing story ideas

Reporting Across Platforms

Assignment: Tutorial 1: Listen to This American Life episode (TBA) and watch all four parts of Ira Glass on the elements of storytelling (Quiz to follow)

Tutorial 2: NewsU Course “Reporting Across Platforms” (NewsU course report due)

### Week 3

Tues, Feb 8 and Thurs, Feb 10

In Class: Interviewing and Storytelling

Assignment: Tutorial 3: NewsU Course “Telling Stories with Sound” (NewsU course report due)

### Week 4

Tues, Feb 15 and Thurs, Feb 17

In Class: Audio Editing and Gathering  
Assignment: Tutorial 4: Audio Editing (Quiz to follow)

Week 5

Tues, Feb 22 and Thurs, Feb 28

Due: Audio Assignment

In Class: Intro to Audio Slide Shows

Assignment: Tutorial 5: NewsU Course "Language of the Image" (NewsU course report due)

Tutorial 6: Soundslides How To (Quiz to follow)

Week 6

Tues, March 1 and Thurs, March 3

In Class: Audio Slide Shows (continued)

Assignment: Tutorial 7: How to Improve Your Audio Slide Shows (Quiz to follow)

Week 7

Tues, March 8 and Thurs, March 10

Due: Audio Slide Show

SPRING BREAK – MARCH 14 - 18

Week 8

Tues, March 22 and Thurs, March 24

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)

Week 9

Tues, Oct 26 and Thurs, Oct 28

In Class: Video for the Web

Assignment: Tutorial 9: iMovie 09 tutorials (Quiz to follow)

Week 10

Tues, March 29 and Thurs, March 31

Due: Video Project

Week 11

Tues, April 5 and Thurs, April 7

In Class: Final Project Pitch

Web site Work

Week 12

Tues, April 12 and Thurs, April 14

In Class: Web site work

Final Project Work

Week 13

Tues, April 19 and Thurs, April 21

Due: Final Project Due

Week 14

Tues, April 26 and Thurs, April 28

Due: Revised Final Project Due

Week 15

FINALS WEEK – MAY 3-7 TBA

Final Editing and Posting

Web Site Launch

Course review and evaluation

**Graduation - Friday, May 13**