

ONLINE JOURNALISM I – Spring 2011 (Mon/Wed)
Department of Journalism, Rowan University

Online Journalism I - 21632 - JRN 02321 - 1
Monday and Wednesday
1:45 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Boz 134

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course examines the online news landscape. Students learn which principles of traditional journalism can and should be applied to the Web, and what makes online journalism unique. Students gain this knowledge through reading assignments, class activities, and a series of reporting, writing and multimedia production assignments.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- Examine the current state of online journalism.
- Explore the unique challenges and opportunities of digital journalism.
- Gain experience reporting, writing and producing for online news publications.
- Acquire a basic knowledge of HTML/CSS and the use of a Content Management System.
- Experiment with multimedia storytelling and integrating text, links, photos, maps, audio and video.
- Produce an online publication with original reporting and content. If done well, this publication will be suitable for internship, freelance, and job applications.

TEACHING METHODS:

Students will practice online journalism in this course. Practice, in this case, means *doing* journalism, not *pretending to do* journalism to fulfill a school assignment. Students will select a topic or beat to cover for the semester. Each student will create a blog and then report, write, edit, and create multimedia content to cover the topic. All assignments will be posted online for anyone to read. Students will build an audience. I will serve as an editorial advisor and give the same responses, instruction and suggestions that I would give to professional journalists. This course stresses the ethics of journalism, solid reporting and writing, and multimedia storytelling.

TEXTS:

All lecture notes, assignments, articles and tutorials will be posted on a blog for the course called “The South Jersey Line” at <http://mbgjournalism.wordpress.com/>. It is also a portal to student work. Students should bookmark the class blog or subscribe to its RSS feed and read it regularly.

JournalismNext: A Practical Guide to Digital Reporting and Publishing

By Mark Briggs, CQ Press, ISBN # 978-1-60426-560-6
\$21.95 in Rowan bookstore, Amazon.com, and online at
<http://cqpress.com/product/Briggs.html>

The Associated Press Stylebook by Norm Goldstein (editor)

Note: All of your writing for this course must follow AP style.

I will also assign news articles to read and discuss during semester so we can discuss the most recent issues in online journalism. Links to articles will be posted on the class blog.

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 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 could receive an F for the course.

In addition, students are expected to adhere to the Cyberjournalist.net's Blogger Code of Ethics at <http://www.cyberjournalist.net/news/000215.php>

ACCOMMODATION POLICY

If you have a documented disability that may have an impact upon your work in this class, please contact me at the beginning of the semester. 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.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:

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, 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.

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. 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.

ASSIGNMENTS AND DEADLINES:

Online Journalism I is a required course for all Journalism Majors. Students must earn at least a C- for it to count toward the major requirements.

NOTE: No late work will be accepted. If your work is not posted online by the deadline, you will receive a 0 for the assignment.

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
Quizzes	(5 X 30 points each) 150 points	See dates below
Beat Blog Set Up	25 points	Feb 7
Twice-Weekly Blog Posts	(20 X 10 points each) 200 points	Saturdays, 8 p.m.
Photo Assignment	50 points	Feb 26, 8 p.m.
Audio Interview	75 points	March 12, 8 p.m.
Interactive Feature	100 points	April 16, 8 p.m.
Final Project	175 points	TBA
Class Presentation	25 points	April 25, 27
Overall Blog Assessment	100 points	End of Semester
Attendance	100 points	-
<u>Total</u>	<u>1000 points</u>	

REQUIRED WORK:

Quizzes (15% of overall grade)

There will be five quizzes on the reading and in-class course work during the semester. They will be announced ahead of time. Quizzes cannot be made up or taken early, unless you have an excused absence. (See attendance policy.)

Beat Pitch/Blog Set Up (2.5% of overall grade)

Each student will select a news beat (i.e., a subject, a neighborhood, or a focused topic). Your topic must be something that you can access on a regular basis. You must be able to attend events, interview people, and gather original audio, photographs and video related to your subject. The topic must be approved by the instructor. Students will then set up a blog with required elements.

Twice-Weekly Blog Posts (20% of overall grade)

Two weekly blog posts are required beginning the week of February 7. A total of 20 posts are required over the course of the semester. Weekly blog posts are due by 8:00 p.m. each Saturday. Each post will be graded on content and execution. Posts do not need not be long, but they must be substantive and free of errors.

Photo Assignment (5% of overall grade)

Students will create a photo essay covering an aspect of his/her beat. Students must go somewhere and photograph an event/topic/person. Students must gather full names. Photos will be posted online following the specific instructions of the assignment.

Audio Interview with Photo (7.5% of overall grade)

Students will interview a person related to her/his beat, record audio, and take digital photos of the subject. The audio recording will be edited and posted online as an .mp3 with photo and text following the specific instructions of the assignment.

Interactive Feature (10% of overall grade)

Students will create one of the following: an interactive map, timeline, live blog of an event, or audio slide show. Live blog events must be scheduled ahead of time and done in person, in real time. Maps and timelines will include text, links, photos, audio and/or video. Audio slide shows integrate audio and photographs. The chosen feature will be posted online following the specific instructions of the assignment.

Final Multimedia Project (17.5% of overall grade)

Students will create a final project that consists of a 500-word text article formatted for the web and an accompanying multimedia feature. Projects will be assessed on story content, original reporting (interviews, events attended, information gathered), quality of the presentation, and completion of each required element.

Class Presentation (2.5% of overall grade)

In the final sessions of the course, each student will have about five minutes to present her/his work to the class. Students will talk about the highlights, challenges and lessons learned.

Overall Blog Assessment (10% of overall grade)

At the end of the semester, each student will receive an overall assessment of his/her body of online work. Blog will be assessed on overall content, effort and initiative in covering the topic, and progress made over the course of the semester.

GRADING SCALE:

A	940-1000
A-	900-939
B+	870-899
B	830-869
B-	800-829
C+	770-799
C	730-769
C-	700-729
D+	670-699
D	600-669
F	0-599

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. (They can also be used for other journalism courses, and the same equipment will be

required for Online Journalism 2.) 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. 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*

2. 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
- 2GB+ memory card (will have to be purchased separately)

3. 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.

CLASS AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE – SPRING 2011

The following schedule is a guide for the semester. Deadlines and specific assignments are subject to change. Check the class blog for updates.

Week 1

Wed, Jan 19

In Class: Introduction and overview

Read “Out of Print” by Eric Alterman, *New Yorker* Magazine at <http://bit.ly/BWm1>

Read JournalismNext - Forward (p.xiv to xix) and Intro (p. 1-8)

Week 2

Mon, Jan 24

In Class: What Is Online Journalism? Why is the Internet Wreaking Havoc on News?
Read JournalismNext Chapter 1 – We are all Web workers now (p. 9-22) but skip
section on Web design (p. 23-39)
Read the Cyberjournalist.net's Blogger Code of Ethics at
<http://www.cyberjournalist.net/news/000215.php>

Wed, Jan 26

In Class: Making Sense of Journalism Blogs, Feeds and Web 2.0
Bring Blog Pitch to Class on Monday

Week 3

Mon, Jan 31

Quiz 1

Due: Blog Pitch

In Class: Setting Up Your Blog

Read "Why I Blog" by Andrew Sullivan, *The Atlantic Magazine* at <http://bit.ly/blaY1q>

Wed, Feb 2

In Class: Setting Up Your Blog

Get your blog up and ready to go by next week

Week 4

Mon, Feb 7

Due: Blog Set Up and Post 1 Due

In Class: Reporting and Writing for the Web

Read JournalismNext Chapter 2 – Advanced blogging (p. 40-67)

Read JournalismNext Chapter 4 – Microblogging (p. 93-118)

Read JournalismNext Chapter 3 – Crowd-powered collaboration (p. 68-92)

***NOTE: Twice-Weekly Blog Posts Begin This Week**

Wed, Feb 9

In Class: Copyright, Fair Use Creative Commons and some Legal and Ethical Issues to Consider

Due: Blog Posts 2 and 3 Due by 8:00 p.m. on Saturday, 8:00 p.m.

Week 5

Mon, Feb 14

Quiz 2

In Class: Managing Links, SEO, Social Networking and Building an Audience

Read JournalismNext Chap 11 – Building a digital audience for news (p. 310-334)

Read JournalismNext Chap 10 – Managing news as a conversation (p. 277-309)

Wed, Feb 16

In Class: Digital Photography (Day 1)

Read JournalismNext Chapter 5 – Visual storytelling with photographs

Due: Blog Posts 4 and 5 by 8:00 p.m. on Saturday, 8:00 p.m.

Week 6

Mon, Feb 21

In Class: Digital Photography (Day 2)

Wed, Feb 23

Quiz 3

In Class: Trouble Shooting and Work Day

Due: Photo Essay and Blog Posts 6 and 7 by 8:00 p.m. on Saturday

Week 7

Mon, Feb 28

In Class: Audio (Day 1)

Assignment: Read JournalismNext Chapter 7 – Making audio journalism visible (p. 177-205)

Wed, March 2

In Class: Audio (Day 2)

Due: Blog Posts 8 and 9 by 8:00 p.m. on Saturday

Week 8

Mon, March 7

In Class: Audio (Day 3)

Wed, March 9

In Class: Audio work day

Due: Audio Assignment and Blog Posts 10 and 11 by 8:00 p.m. on Saturday

SPRING BREAK – MARCH 14-19

Week 9

Mon, March 21

In Class: Video (Day 1)

Read JournalismNext Chapter 8 – Telling stories with video

Wed, March 23

Quiz 4

In Class: Video (Day 2)

Due: Blog Posts 12 and 13 by 8:00 p.m. on Saturday

Week 10

Mon, March 28

In Class: Interactive features - maps, timelines, live blogging, and audio slide shows

Wed, March 30

In Class: Interactive features (Day 2)

Read JournalismNext Chap 1 - Section on Web design (p. 23-39)

Due: Blog Posts 14 and 15 by 8:00 p.m. on Saturday

Week 11

Mon, April 4

Basic HTML and CSS (Day 1)

Wed, April 6

Basic HTML and CSS (Day 2)

Due: Blog Posts 16 and 17 by 8:00 p.m. on Saturday

Week 12

Mon, April 11

Quiz 5 - (HTML and CSS)

In Class: Work on Interactive Features

Wed, April 13

In Class: Work on Interactive Features

Due: Interactive Feature and Blog Posts 18 and 19 by 8:00 p.m. on Saturday

Week 13

Mon, April 18

In Class: Final Project Overview

Wed, April 20

In Class: Where do we go from here? The future of online journalism and you.

Week 14

Mon, April 25

Blog Presentations (Session 1)

Wed, April 27

Blog Presentations (Session 2)

Week 15

Finals Week - May 3-7 TBA

Due: Final Project and Post 20 Due TBA

Graduation - Friday, May 13