

9-2009

JOUR 400.01: Online Journalism

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JOUR 400 – *Online Journalism*

Syllabus - Fall 2009 (subject to change)

Goal: This course will introduce students to the basics of Web site design and organization, explore how the Internet can be used to generate sources for stories and introduce multi-media storytelling into their reporting techniques.

Objectives

Students who complete this course should be able to:

1. Better understand news consumers' expectations for the online space and how to design and organize basic Web sites.
2. Plan and execute the reporting necessary for digital journalism.
3. Gather and edit digital audio.
4. Create an audio slideshow in Soundslides.
5. Shoot and edit acceptable video for a short online clip.
6. Write in styles that are appropriate to online media.
7. Evaluate online story packages and explain why they work well in the medium, or why they do not.
8. Understand the use of blogs, web links and content aggregation as part of digital reporting.
9. Explore the use of Facebook, Twitter and other online media as both reporting resources and distribution opportunities.
10. Conduct research online, determine the reliability of sources found, and use the results appropriately as part of a story.

Grading options: This course must be taken for a traditional letter-grade. No credit grading is not permitted. The Montana University System's plus/minus grading system will be used in this class.

Class meets Tuesdays, 1:10-2:00 p.m., in DAH 316.

Grades

Student final grades will be made up of the following:

- 10% Evaluation of the Journalism Site
- 10% New site proposal
- 15% Project One
- 15% Project Two
- 25% Final Project
- 25% Additional Web Assignments/Final Exam

Office: Don Anderson Hall 406

Office hours are 11:00 a.m.-noon Tuesdays and Thursdays. 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. Wednesdays. I'm also available at other times by appointment.

Academic Honesty

I expect your honesty in presenting your own work for this course. Academic misconduct at The University of Montana is subject to an academic penalty ranging from failing the assignment to expulsion from the university. Students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code.

<http://www.umt.edu/SA/VPSA/index.cfm/page/1321>

Plagiarism

As defined by "The University of Montana Student Conduct Code" plagiarism is: "Representing another person's words, ideas, data, or materials as one's own." This is strictly prohibited in this class and any case of plagiarism in this course will be subject to the penalties outlines in the student code of conduct.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities will receive reasonable modifications in this course. Your responsibilities are to request them from me with sufficient advance notice, and to be prepared to provide verification of disability and its impact from Disability Services. Please speak with me after class or during my office hours to discuss the details. For more information, visit the Disability Services for Students website at <http://life.umt.edu/dss>.

Section One: Understanding News on the Web

September 1, 2009: Introduces students to the course, and begins to explore how news consumers utilize the Web differently then their newspapers or newscasts.

Readings assigned: The Long Tail, Chris Anderson -- <http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/12.10/tail.html>

Pew Center for the People and the Press -- <http://people-press.org/report/?pageid=1354>

September 8, 2009: Students will discuss the difference in consumption habits, expectations and the importance of archiving stories online. This day will also introduce students to the importance of search and site structure for attracting and maintaining audience.

Reading assigned: OJR Article on Eyetracking -- <http://www.ojr.org/ojr/stories/070312ruel/>

Smashing Magazine: Newspaper Website Design --
<http://www.smashingmagazine.com/2008/11/11/newspaper-website-design-trends-and-examples/>

September 15, 2009: Discuss Web site design and article layout to better understand the audience and how they use the Web and also trends within news organizations to react to those user demands.

Assignment: Write a three page brief about the Journalism School's site, explain the target audiences, critique the layout and propose remedies for problems.

Section Two: Understanding the platform

September 22, 2009: Critique the site. The full class will discuss the site critique they have just turned in and begin to discuss new features for the site -- what is missing and what can we do to fill it out. We will also discuss key online platforms that students need to better understand, including blogs, soundslides, Flickr and Twitter.

Reading Assigned: What Makes a Good Blog --
<http://www.43folders.com/2008/08/19/good-blogs>

<http://www.abqtrib.com/news/2006/aug/27/kate-nash-blogs-have-changed-how-i-do-my-job-for/?printer=1/>

September 29, 2009: Blogs. Discuss what makes a good blog; should there be a blog on the journalism site? Why or why not?

Reading Assigned:
Audacity Intro -- http://www.jtoolkit.com/audio/Audacity_Guide.pdf

Soundslides Intro --
<http://multimedia.journalism.berkeley.edu/tutorials/using-soundslides/>

Using Flickr --
http://www.wiredjournalists.com/profiles/blog/show?id=1976249%3ABlogPost%3A4661&page=2#comment-1976249_Comment_74848

Using Twitter --
http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/twitter_for_journalists.php

October 6, 2009: Social and multimedia. Based on your reading, we will discuss the use of different social and multimedia tools as part of

the journalism site. Students will be divided into groups of two or three to develop a proposal.

Assignment: Draft a three-page proposal for a new feature for the journalism site.

Section Three: Projects

October 13, 2009: Present your proposals in class. Instructor and other students will critique the idea/story pitch.

Assignment: Report for project one

October 20, 2009: Multimedia Production. This session will be a general Q&A about the first multimedia-reporting project.

Assignment: Complete Project One by Week 9 Class

October 27, 2009: Data reporting. Discuss the possible uses of data in reporting stories and in developing online content. Additionally students will receive their project plans back and be asked to focus on the reporting for their first project.

Assignment: Propose a second project built off of a data source or that includes a data element.

Reading Assigned: Data as Journalism; Journalism as Data --
<http://www.readership.org/blog2/2007/11/data-as-journalism-journalism-as-data.html>

Gapminder: <http://www.gapminder.org/world/>

Patchwork Nation: <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/patchworknation/>

November 3, 2009: Present your proposals in class. Instructor and other students will critique the idea/story pitch.

Assignment: Report for project one

November 10, 2009: Multimedia Production. This session will be a general Q&A about the second multimedia-reporting project.

Assignment: Complete Project Two by Week 12 Class

November 17, 2009: The bleeding edge. This class will be a look at some of the emerging trends. I will lecture for the full hour about some of the longer-term trends in journalism online. We will also use the class as a chance to evaluate the j-school site. Based on earlier work, we will divide into three groups in this class to develop and execute the final project.

Assignment: Group develops a one-page proposal for the final project

November 24, 2009: Present your proposals in class. Instructor and other students will critique the idea/story pitch.

Assignment: Report on final project

December 1, 2009: Production Meeting for final projects. Each group will have the basic outline and reporting done for their final project. Production questions and brainstorming will be done by the group and the full class.

Assignment: Complete Final Project

December 8, 2009: Present final projects in class. Review the course work and preview the final.

December 15, 2009: Final Exam