

Syllabus
University of North Texas
Mayborn School of Journalism
PRINCIPLES OF NEWS
LOCATION - ART Room 223
Tuesday/Thursday 9:30 am – 10:50 a.m.

Instructor: Cornelius “Neil” Foote, principal lecturer

Office: 109 GAB

Office Hours: Thursdays, 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. or by appointment

Phone: 214.448.3765

E-mail: Please email me through the Blackboard site for this class. You can access Blackboard Learn through the link at the top of the UNT home page—www.unt.edu. Let me know the topic of the email in the subject line. Your email should address me as Professor Foote, and you should include your full name and student number in closing. I will make every effort to respond to student email within 24 hours Monday through Friday, but because of the size of this class and my other duties for the university that will not always be possible. I usually do not answer email during the weekend or on holidays.



Teaching Assistant: Mehri Yavari

Office: TBD

Phone: TBD.

E-mail: TBD

Office Hours: TBD

Recommended Reading/Websites:

- **The New York Times:** <http://nytimes.com>
- **Romenesko** <http://jimromenesko.com/>
- **The Poynter Institute** – <http://www.poynter.org>
- **Richard Prince’s Journal-isms:** <http://www.mije.org/richardprince>
- **American Journalism Review:** www.ajr.org
- **Columbia Journalism Review:** www.cjr.org
- **PBS Mediashift:** <http://www.pbs.org/mediashift/>
- **PaidContent:** <http://paidcontent.org>
- **BuzzMachine:** <http://buzzmachine.com>
- **Nieman Journalism Lab:** <http://niemanlab.org>
- **Mashable:** <http://mashable.com>

Required Text

“Principles of American Journalism, An Introduction,” by Stephanie Craft and Charles N. Davis (Routledge, 2003) Companion website: <http://www.routledge.com/cw/craft>

Selected readings in media studies and journalism. Additional required readings will be made available via Blackboard or on reserve at Willis Library.

Course Description and Objectives

This is a high-energy, interactive course that is designed to provide you a basic understanding of the fundamentals of news and newsgathering. The class will combine lectures, discussions, group projects, hands on activities, watching past and current film and documentaries and guest speakers to help you get a basic grasp of the he skills and methods of the 21st Century journalist. NEWS is the star of this class. Every class, we will discuss how news is gathered, distributed and published in print, online and online. We'll explore newspapers, television stations, cable/satellite, radio, the Internet, social media. You will learn some of the basics of the business and practice of journalism, including the use and application of multimedia, blogs, social media in gathering news and reader/viewer engagement. You will spend time analyzing and discussing how 21st Century news organizations must address audience information needs. You also will get introduced to basic newswriting and reporting principles.

JOURNALISM REQUIREMENTS & GUIDELINES

Information for students who plan to major in journalism:

For journalism majors, not minors: This is a pre-major class. Enrollment in this class means that you are in pre-major status, not major status. (JOUR 2320 is considered a pre-major course for students under any catalog year prior to 2009.) When you have completed this course and others in your pre-major, then you must apply to become a major and therefore have access to upper-level journalism courses. If you have questions about what counts in your pre-major, please see an advisor.

Journalism Course Registration

1. Registration will begin on the dates noted in the schedule of classes each semester. The system is a live, first come/first serve program.
2. By registering for this course, you are stating that you have taken the required prerequisites according to your catalog year and major/minor status. If the instructor later determines that you haven't taken and passed these requirements, then you may be dropped at any point in the semester. If you have questions about your prerequisites, please see an advisor.
3. A journalism major enrolled in any restricted 3000 and 4000 level classes must have taken and passed the GSP test, all pre-major courses, and Math 1680/1681 and also have applied for major status. Students must earn and maintain a 2.5 UNT and/or overall GPA (depending upon catalog year) to be eligible for major-level courses.

Email communication

Communicating with students using the UNT student email account is part of the university's contract with students. Electronic communication with students in this class will be through the students' **myunt accounts** rather than personal email accounts.

Re-taking Failed Courses

Students will not be allowed to automatically take a failed journalism course more than two times. Once you have failed a journalism course twice, you will not be allowed to enroll in that course for 12 months. Once you have waited 12 months after failing a course twice, you

may make an appeal to the professor teaching the course to be allowed to enroll a third time.

Disability Accommodation

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

Textbook policy

The Mayborn School of Journalism doesn't require students to purchase textbooks from the University Bookstore. Many are available through other bookstores or online.

SETE

The Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE) is a university-wide online evaluation and a requirement for all UNT classes. The Mayborn School of Journalism needs your input to improve our teaching and curriculum. This short survey will be available at the end of the semester, providing you a chance to comment on how this class is taught. Prompt completion of the SETE will mean earlier access to final semester grades. You're a critical part of our growth and success. We look forward to your input through SETE.

Academic Honesty

When you submit work for this class, that is the same as making a statement that you have produced the work yourself, in its entirety. Plagiarism, fabrication, copyright infringement, and similar uses of other people's work are unacceptable.

Plagiarism, in a nutshell, is using other people's written words as your own. Some people consider the use of 7-10 words in a row, copied from another source, as plagiarism. Be sure to include citations when using other people's writing, because plagiarism is a serious offense in any discipline, especially in journalism. It is a firing offense in the professional world.

Mayborn School of Journalism Academic Integrity Policy

The codes of ethics from the Society of Professional Journalists, American Advertising Federation and Public Relations Society of America address truth and honesty. The Mayborn School of Journalism embraces these tenets and believes that academic dishonesty of any kind – including plagiarism and fabrication – is incongruent with all areas of journalism. The school's policy aligns with UNT Policy 18.1.16 and requires reporting any act of academic dishonesty to the Office for Academic Integrity for

investigation. If the student has a previous confirmed offense (whether the first offense was in the journalism school or another university department) and the student is found to have committed another offense, the department will request the additional sanction of removing the student from the Mayborn School of Journalism. The student may appeal to the Office for Academic Integrity, which ensures due process and allows the student to remain in class pending the appeal.

First Class Day Attendance

Journalism instructors reserve the right to drop any student who does not attend the first class day of the semester.

Attendance

One absence in the course is the limit without penalty toward your final grade, unless you have communicated with me from the beginning about an extraordinary problem. Coming to class late or leaving early may constitute an absence for that day. Your attendance and participation at each class meeting is an integral component to the class – and your success in this class..

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing the course, you should be able to:

- Understand the role of journalists and democracy
- Understand fundamentals of news and newsgathering
- Understand fundamentals of how news organizations operate
- Understand the importance of photojournalism and the use of images in news stories.
- Understand the fundamentals of broadcast journalism
- Understand the role of readers and audience
- Understand the role of social media and news
- Understand the diversity of groups in a global society in relationship to communication
- Critically evaluate mass media content
- Understand the functions and operations of news organizations
- Understand the legal and ethical issues that impact news organizations

Grading

Your semester grade will be determined by your score on three online quizzes, in-class activities, group discussions, and a final.

The exams, including the final, will not be cumulative but instead will cover about one-third of the course content.

Semester grades will be assigned based on the following scale:

90-100 percent	A
80-89 percent	B
70-79 percent	C
60-69 percent	D
Less than 60 percent	F

Points possible:

Online Quizzes (Three @ 15 points each)	45%
Group Discussions/Leadership (10 @ 30points each)	30%
Final	15%
Attendance/Attitude	5%
Teacher Evaluation	5%
Total	100%

If a student demonstrates exceptional improvement in test scores and has exceptional attendance, I will consider raising a borderline grade to the next highest level.

I will make every effort to adhere to this grading scale, but I reserve the right to change the number of assignments and percentages as needed.

Groups

The goal with this class is to go beyond the lecture and engage you as much as possible in the discovery and the conversations. You will be divided into small groups. At least one class each week, we will break down into your groups to spend about 30-minutes to discuss and present the day's topic. The topic will be tied to the week's primary theme. You'll be given the questions and assignment at the beginning of that class. Each of you will serve as a group leader at least three times during the semester. As group leader, you will lead the discussion. The last half of the class, we will have a class discussion where each of your groups will present your answers.

Final Exam

This will test you on the core concepts of the class.

Course policies

You should regularly check the Blackboard Learn site for announcements and assignments. If UNT closes for any reason, including inclement weather, you will be responsible for any assignments posted on the site.

You are responsible for doing the assignments on Blackboard, reading the textbook before class, attending class, taking notes and participating in class activities. There will be material covered in class that is not in the textbook, but will be on the quizzes and exams. In addition, at times I will present some information that is different from the material in the textbook, and I will expect you to know that for the exams.

You will lose the points for any exams or other assignments that you miss because of absence or tardiness. **Deadlines are crucial in journalism.**

Making up missed work, including exams, will only be allowed in the case of documented illness, family emergency or official UNT functions. Documentation for an illness is a note from a doctor or nurse that states explicitly that the student was too ill to attend class. Documentation for a family emergency could be a note from a relative explaining the emergency and should include a phone number so the instructor can verify the note. **You are responsible for turning in such documentation during the class period within one week of the absence(s).** **You will not be allowed to make up missed work, including exams, if you miss this deadline.**

Students who disrupt the class by talking, entering the classroom late, using cell phones, and/or using laptops for games or surfing may be asked to leave. The instructor may drop students who repeatedly disrupt the class with these types of behaviors.

Cheating, including but not limited to plagiarism, copying from another student's exam, will not be tolerated.

Course Schedule
(Subject to change)

NOTE: Reading/Homework assignments are due the following week.

Week 1 – August 29

Introduction

READING ASSIGNMENT:

- Chapters 1, 2 & 3, *Principles of American Journalism*, Stephanie Craft & Charles Davis

Week 2 – September 3 & 5

News & Democracy

Role of journalism & democracy. What is journalism. Elements of journalism. How do people get their news. Where does news come from. The role of news organizations. Real. V. fake news. News blogs v. opinion blogs.

READING ASSIGNMENT:

- The following are available on Blackboard in the “Readings” folder:
 - *Ted Koppel, Stephen Colbert, Jon Stewart - Doing a better job than the real journalists*, by Diana Lederman
 - *The Stewart-Colbert Factor*, by Daniel Lynch, Harvard Political Review
 - *Public journalism is a joke: The case for Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert*, by Joseph Faina

Week 3 – September 10 & 12

Becoming media literate. Where does news come from? Analyzing news. Knowing the differences between “fake news” – e.g. The Daily Show, Colbert Report, The Onion and others – and legitimate news organizations. Understanding the differences of propaganda v. facts.

READING ASSIGNMENT:

- Chapter Four, *Principles of American Journalism*, Craft & Davis
- Download from “Readings” Folder on Blackboard Learn:
 - Chapter Three, *The Story So Far, What We Know About the Business of Digital Journalism*, by Bill Grueskin, Ava Seave, Lucas Graves.
 - Columbia Journalism Review (CJR) – Who Owns What - <http://www.cjr.org/resources/index.php> Choose a media company. Be prepared to discuss what they own.

Week 4 – September 17 & 19

QUIZ #1 – September 19

The business of journalism. Corporate ownership. Evolution of media companies. Who are the major companies. How the industry has changed. How they’ve consolidated. Impact of USA Today, CNN, satellite, Internet, mobile, tablets.

READING ASSIGNMENTS (available on Blackboard Learn – “Readings” Folder:

- *Shifting boundaries: Objectivity, citizen journalism and tomorrow’s journalists*, by Bolette B. Blaagaard
- *Where Citizens and Journalists Intersect*, by Dan Gillmor
- *How Participatory Journalism Works*, by Steve Safran
- *Things I Wish I’d Known Before I Became a Citizen Journalist*, by Barry Parr
- *Vetting Citizen Journalism*, by Lila King, participation director, CNN Digital
- *How CNN’s iReport verifies its citizen content*, by Craig Sullivan

Week 5 – September 24 & 26

Citizen journalism: Distinguishing journalists v. bloggers. The role of “we media” and community journalists. Impact of iReporters. The blurring line between pundits and journalists. Understanding the basics of journalism ethics.

READING ASSIGNMENTS (available on Blackboard):

- *The 21st Century Journalists Creed*, by Michael Fancher
- *Gatekeeping and citizen journalism: The use of social media in the recent uprisings in Iran, Egypt and Libya*, by Sadaf R Ali and Shahira Fahmy
- *What is Journalism’s Place in Social Media*, by Geneva Overholser
- *Media Users, Media Creators – Principles of Active Engagement*, Dan Gillmor
- *Social Media and the Boston Bombings*, by Hong Qu
- *Blogs, Tweets, Social Media, and the News Business*, by Robert G. Picard
- Go online to look at:
 - Facebook for Journalists: <http://facebook.com/journalists>
 - Twitter for Newsrooms: <https://dev.twitter.com/media/newsrooms>

Week 6 – October 1 & 3

Social media and news. The role of Facebook, Twitter, Foursquare and other tools. Impact of social media as a tool for journalists and community.

READING ASSIGNMENTS (available on Blackboard):

- *Community: A New Business Model for News*, by Michael Skoler
- *Engaging Communities: Content and Conversation*, by Joy Mayer
- The Engagement Metric Full Report

Week 7 – October 8 & 10

Understanding audience/readership. Who is our audience. How do we engage them. What do we know about the communities we cover? How do we know what news they want. What are the elements of community. Community news and hyper-local, weekly newspapers.

READING ASSIGNMENT (available on Blackboard)

- Read State of the Media 2013 reports.
 - Newspapers: <http://stateofthemediamedia.org/2013/newspapers-stabilizing-but-still-threatened/>

- Magazines: <http://stateofthedia.org/2013/news-magazines-embracing-their-digital-future/>

Week 8 – October 15 & 17

QUIZ #2 – Oct. 17

Print: Newspapers/Magazines: past, present and future. Evolution of online journalism. How newspapers work. Types of news and reporting: Feature writing, business news, sports writing, business writing, lifestyles writing, opinion writing.

READING ASSIGNMENTS (available on Blackboard):

- Read State of Media 2013 reports for
 - Network TV: <http://stateofthedia.org/2013/network-news-a-year-of-change-and-challenge-at-nbc/>
 - LOCAL TV: <http://stateofthedia.org/2013/local-tv-audience-declines-as-revenue-bounces-back/>
 - CABLE TV: <http://stateofthedia.org/2013/cable-a-growing-medium-reaching-its-ceiling/>

Week 9 – October 22 & 24

Broadcast Journalism: Fundamentals. Job roles. Differences between local, national and cable news. Radio v. TV. Niche broadcast news: sports, business and entertainment.

READING ASSIGNMENT (available on Blackboard or via link):

- *Steps Learned Along the Way: Redefining Photojournalism's Power*, by Wendy Watriss
<http://www.nieman.harvard.edu/reports/article/102074/Steps-Learned-Along-the-Way-Redefining-Photojournalisms-Power.aspx>
- *Photojournalism in the Age of New Media*, *The Atlantic*, by Jared Keller,
<http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2011/04/photojournalism-in-the-age-of-new-media/73083/>
- *Photojournalism in the New Media Economy*, by David Campbell,
<http://www.nieman.harvard.edu/reports/article/102097/Photojournalism-in-the-New-Media-Economy.aspx>
- *A Different Approach to Story Telling*, Q&A with Brian Storm,
<http://www.nieman.harvard.edu/reports/article/102095/A-Different-Approach-to-Storytelling.aspx>
- The Image Deconstructed – Why do you do what you do?
- Take a look at the site: <http://www.imagedeconstructed.com/>

Week 10 – October 29 & 31

Photojournalism: e.g. Basic tools. Breaking news photography, sports photography, war photography, portraits, immersion photography.

READING ASSIGNMENT:

- *The Transformation to Digital Media*, by Paul Brabowicz, Jane Stevens, Jeremy Rue and Jerry Monti

Week 11 – November 5 & 7

Convergence. Multimedia (audio and video) storytelling. Elements of effective audio/visual stories.

READING ASSIGNMENT:

- Chapter 5, New Voices, New Models, Principles of American Journalism, Craft & Davis

Week 12 – November 12 & 14

Non profit journalism organizations. Paywalls. Aggregators.

READING ASSIGNMENT:

- Read the 2013 Press Freedom Report (available on Blackboard)
- Watch: Sami Mahdi, “*Can Afghanistan Maintain a Free Press?*”, <http://www.icfj.org/videos> Press Freedom Index: <http://en.rsrf.org/press-freedom-index-2013,1054.html>

Week 13 – November 19 & 21

QUIZ # 3 – November 21

The Free Press & Journalism Abroad

READING ASSIGNMENT:

- Chapter 7, The Foundations of Free Expression, Principles of American Journalism, Craft & Davis

Week 14 – November 26 & 28

Fundamentals of news ethics, media law, broadcast regulation and the Internet.

NOTE: No class on November 28 – Thanksgiving Holiday

READING ASSIGNMENT available online:

- Maynard Institute for Journalism – “Faultlines”
 - Chapter I: <http://www.maynardije.org/part-i-what-diversity>
 - *Diversity in Newsrooms: Fresh Strategies*, New Goals, by Milton Coleman:
<http://www.nieman.harvard.edu/reports/article/102673/Diversity-in-Newsrooms-Fresh-Strategies-New-Goals.aspx>
 - Newsroom Diversity: A Casualty of Journalism’s Financial Crisis, by Riva Gold, The Atlantic,
<http://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2013/07/newsroom-diversity-a-casualty-of-journalisms-financial-crisis/277622/>

Week 15 – December 3 & 5

Diversity in the media and social responsibility. The ‘Digital Divide, covering race and gender. Monitoring the media.

Week 16 - December 10

Wrap up/ Final