

**University of North Texas
Mayborn School of Journalism
Online Journalism - JOUR 3340**

Instructor: Neil Foote, Senior Lecturer, GAB 109
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Office hours: By appointment.

Semester: Fall 2010
**Class Sessions: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 11:00 am
– 12:20 pm**
Meeting Place: GAB 319

Text: DOWNLOAD (free): “Journalism 2.0 How to Survive and Thrive”, reported by Mark Briggs, edited by Jan Schaffer. (http://www.kcnn.org/resources/journalism_20/)

Recommended Reading:

JournalismNext, A Practical Guide to Digital Reporting and Editor, Mark Briggs, (CQ Press, 251 pp)

Convergent Journalism: An Introduction--Writing and Producing Across Media (Paperback) by Stephen Quinn (Editor), Vincent Filak (Editor)

“We the Media, Grassroots Journalism for the People, By the People”, Dan Gilmour (O’Reilly Media, 334 pp)

Additional readings will be made available online.

Recommended “tools”:

* Min. 2 GB flash drive is required, ideally 4GB or more, to store images and/or video files

Course Objectives

By the end of this class you will:

- Learn how traditional media has transformed from analog to digital
- Learn how to write for the web and understand the fundamentals of multimedia storytelling
- Understand basic concepts of how news media websites function, including understanding how to identify the elements of website design and critique functionality
- Learn how to post content – text, video and audio – on the web
- Maintain your own blog
- Publish a final website project showcasing your reporting, writing and multimedia storytelling skills

This class will combine lectures, discussion, in class assignments and reading assignments. This will be a hands on class where you will be using your basic journalism skills as well as learn the basics of integrating audio, photographs, graphics and video to enhance your articles. There will be regular and timely assignments where you will analyze critique and discuss current practices of interactive tools on media websites.

Additionally, this course addresses nine of the ACEJMC core competencies (#1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11):

1. Understand and apply First Amendment principles and the law appropriate to professional practice;
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of groups in a global society in relationship to communications;
4. Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
5. Work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
6. Think critically, creatively and independently;

7. Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
8. Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
9. Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
10. Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
11. Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

Getting the Most Out of This Class

- ✓ Since the goal of this class is to prepare you to become a multimedia journalist, you will be expected to become as knowledgeable as possible about the current media trends and issues. At the beginning of the course, each of you will be assigned to find a multimedia story or some other interactive element from a NEWS website tied to one of the day's top stories. You will prepare a memo – as if you were analyzing the story and/or website for the media outlet's editor or producer – present your findings to the class, and write a 300 – 400 word post for your blog.
- ✓ **Do not check your email, use your cell phone or text during class. You will be asked to leave the class immediately.**

You may draw from any number of the recommended sites below:

- Local/regional media sites, e.g. dallasnews.com, startelegram.com, dentronrc.com, NTDaily.com, KRLD.com, KNTU.com.
- National/international sites: cnn.com, nytimes.com, msnbc.com, BBC (bbc.co.uk), washingtonpost.com
- CyberJournalist.net: <http://cyberjournalist.net>
- News Voyager: <http://newsvoyager.com>
- PaidContent.org: <http://paidcontent.org>
- AssignmentEditor: <http://assignmenteditor.com>
- Poynter Institute: <http://poynter.org>
- Broadcasting & Cable: <http://broadcastingandcable.com>
- MediaPost.com: <http://mediapost.com>
- PBS's MediaShift (<http://www.pbs.org/mediashift>)

University Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism, in a nutshell, is using other people's written words as your own. Some people consider the use of seven to ten 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 journalism. It's a firing offense in the professional world. In the School of Journalism and Mayborn Graduate Institute of Journalism at UNT, students face a range of penalties for plagiarism (depending on the importance of the assignment):

- A grade of 'F' on a minor assignment;
- A request that the student drop the class;
- Withdrawal of the student from class, initiated by the professor;
- An 'F' for the course;
- A referral to the UNT Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities;
- A notation on the student's transcript; and,
- Expulsion from the university.

A combination of these penalties may also be used. If you need more information or have questions about plagiarism, ask your nearest journalism professor or visit the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities.

Acceptable Student Behavior:

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.unt.edu/csrr

DISABILITIES. The School of Journalism, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, makes reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you require any such accommodation, please contact the instructor within the first three weeks of class.

GRADING:

There are several components of this class that contribute to your grade:

- WRITING ASSIGNMENTS – 20%
- BLOG ENTRIES – 20%
- QUIZZES – 20%
- FINAL PROJECT – 30%
- TEACHER EVALUATION – 10%
- TOTAL POSSIBLE100%

FINAL GRADE SCALE:

- 100 – 90 = A
- 89 – 80 = B
- 79 – 70 = C
- 69 – 60 = D
- 59 – Below = F

NOTE: The work you do in this class must be original and may not be turned in for any other class.

You are allowed to use equipment assigned to this class and, with approval from the professor, other equipment as long as it is similar to the equipment accessible from the University.

You must follow all rules and guidelines related to checking out any audio/visual equipment. Any violation of those guidelines will limit or completely restrict your usage of the equipment. You also are responsible for all costs related to any damage to the equipment.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Your in-class and homework assignments include writing from wire copy, newspaper/magazine/e-zine articles, notes, tapes/CDs, lectures, your own interviews and textbooks. Since this class is preparing you for a real-life journalism experience, you must follow the rules accuracy, clarity, conciseness, spelling, usage, and grammar. You are expected to know and understand AP Style for print or broadcast. You must meet all deadlines. You cannot make up in-class writing assignments.

BLOG ENTRIES

Part of your experience of becoming a journalist of the 21st Century is that you constantly practice the craft. During the first week of class, we will set up your course-related blog at WordPress.com. On this site, you must write a weekly item that discusses any issue related to electronic media, which may discuss and/or analyze topics we discuss in class or items you find in the news or on media websites. You will be given a specific assignment that will be tied to a certain aspect we are currently studying in class. **Your weekly posting must be made BEFORE the Thursday class at 11am.**

At least once during the class, you will be responsible for posting an analysis of an interactive tool based on daily news. **This posting will be due BEFORE the class you are making the presentation.**

QUIZZES

These quizzes will include questions directly related to the lectures, notes, speakers, writing assignments, exercises, handouts, speakers, and class discussions.

FINAL PROJECT

This project is going to reflect a culmination of all your coursework. Your final project is designed to: (1) Take our class readings, discussions and analysis and put them into practice; (2) Tap into your skill as a journalist and novice at understanding how the internet works, particularly how content can be presented on the Internet; and (3) Allow you to create a blog that could serve as an important component of your portfolio. Your final grade for this project will be based on your thoroughness in reporting and writing; use of interactivity (e.g. use of related links, photos, slideshows, audio and video), your creativity and your 10-minute in-class presentation. You are not expected or required to hire a web designer or a programmer. All the tools you need are readily available for free on the web, and do not require any sophisticated technical knowledge.

TEACHER EVALUATION:

You will be judged throughout the semester on your attendance participation, creativity, energy, ideas and overall improvement.

(SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

Course Outline

Course Meets Tuesday & Thursday	TOPIC	Assignment
Week 1	Introduction: Review syllabus, grading, class format. Course goals.	
Week 2	Overview: Discuss evolution, role and importance of online journalism. The "Daily News" Website Analysis. Writing for the Web.	
Week 3	How news organizations have changed. Types of Convergence/Characteristics of Online News Components of the Online News Story; Basic HTML; Story Forms; Writing for the Web – Part II: Headlines, AP Style	DUE: Assigned Reading Blog Post #1
Week 4	News v. Blogs: Defining the Difference. Are blogs journalism? Analysis of media blogs v. pundits. What are the elements of a blog? What makes a good blog?	DUE: Assigned Reading QUIZ
Week 5	Reporting for Web: New roles, new responsibilities.	DUE: Assigned Reading

	Social Media. Crowdsourcing, Twitter.	Blog Post #2
Week 6	More on new models for news. Role of the e-Reader and online news. Writing/reporting for the web.	DUE: Assigned Reading
Week 7	Planning Online stories / Storyboarding/Story Structure/	DUE: Assigned Reading Blog Post #3
Week 8	What makes a good audio/visual Slide Show. Creating slide shows. Discussing Final Project	DUE: Assigned Reading
Week 9	Defining/Discussing Digital Storytelling; Tools of the Digital Journalist;	DUE: Assigned Reading Blog Post #3
Week 10	Backpack Journalism. Tools of a Mobile Journalist	Final Project Overview Due
Week 11	Interactive Graphics. Geotargeting News. Hyperlocalism.	DUE: Assigned Reading Blog Post #4 QUIZ #2
Week 12	Nontraditional News Websites. Politics & the Web: Role of news websites and the covering government.	DUE: Assigned Reading
Week 13	Ethics: Doing the Right Thing Legal/Copyright: Knowing What's Right	DUE: Assigned Reading Blog Post #5
Week 14	Job Search: Using the Web Future Trends: What's New, What's Next Innovation & Ideas – Mobile Technology	DUE: Assigned Reading
Week 15	Final Project Presentations	