

JOR 115 – Foundations of American Journalism

Spring 2010 • MW 3-4:15 p.m. • Swan Hall 204

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Office (Chafee 227) Hours: MW 1:30-2:30 p.m. and by appointment

The course This course is restricted to journalism majors. It is designed to provide an introduction to journalism (as opposed to the survey of all mass media provided by JOR 110). It also is designed to introduce you to the history, philosophy and issues that are at the core of the study of journalism as well as help you begin to understand the range of journalistic activity. By the end of the semester, you should understand that although you may have chosen to major in journalism because you like to write or aspire to be a TV reporter, there is much more to being a journalist than mastering skills.

Course goals (See Sakai Resources for a link to a chart detailing these goals.) Upon completion of the course, you should:

- Be able to describe what journalists do -- and why -- and be able to discuss the roles of journalism and journalists in American society
- Be able to recognize the similarities and differences between the practice of journalism in the United States and in other countries
- Be able to identify major eras, individuals, concepts and philosophies related to the First Amendment and the development of American journalism
- Be familiar with the resources available to journalism scholars, including books, journals and trade publications, and use them for research
- Be able to discuss and write about issues facing contemporary journalists in a critical manner

Required texts

- The Elements of Journalism by Kovach and Rosenstiel (referred to as EJ).
- What Good Is Journalism? ed. George Kennedy and Daryl Moen (referred to as WG).

Both books are worth keeping for your personal library.

Sakai To the extent possible, resources and assignments for this course will be provided using Sakai, which you access via your eCampus page. You should plan to check the course site daily. If you are not familiar with this online learning tool, you need to explore it asap.

Taking notes You need to take notes during lectures and class discussions!

Class format I expect you to assume responsibility for some of each class period's activity. So come to each class prepared. Read -- critically — all of what you are assigned. Be prepared to be frustrated. Ask questions. Find the answers you need. Don't believe everything you read or are told (take heed of the old editor who cautioned a new reporter: "If your mother tells you she loves you, check it out."). Practice patience. Take charge of your own education.

Follow the news daily: read a newspaper! Think that is asking too much? Consider what Jane Pauley, former co-anchor of The Today Show and Dateline NBC, once told a group of journalism educators:

"We had an intern several years ago . . . who once said to me: 'I've been so busy this summer I haven't had time to look at a newspaper.' And the lecture I gave him is . . . If you're not absorbed by the daily newspaper, if that's not the first thing you want to see [in the morning], if you don't subscribe to a weekly news magazine and really love reading it, why are you in this industry? What do you think you're studying?"

Time required The number of credits you receive for a course is determined by the time/effort required by the course. The "formula" is that for every one hour you spend in class, you should spend a minimum of two hours preparing for class. Thus, because you spend three hours a week in class, you should plan to spend at least six hours a week outside of class on JOR 115 reading and assignments. Putting in less time is your choice, but understand that grades reflect performance (not potential, not effort, not good intentions).

Academic integrity I will adhere to the university's policies on plagiarism and cheating, which means that any student who plagiarizes written material and/or cheats on a test will fail that assignment and could fail the course. Consult your URI Student Handbook for complete details. If you have any questions about what meets the definition of cheating and/or plagiarism, please ask.

Attendance and participation I expect you to attend every class. Equally as important, I expect you to be engaged by the course and to participate appropriately.

I do not connect your course grade to your attendance (if I am doing my job, you will not be able to do well in the course without being in class), but I may occasionally take attendance and award participation points for the day.

I seldom accept late work or allow make-up assignments or exams – unless your absence is for university-sanctioned activities, or you can document your own illness or the death of someone close to you. Although Sakai may be set to allow me to accept assignments submitted after the deadline, it shows me that a submission is late.

Illness due to flu: The H1N1 Flu Pandemic may impact classes this semester. If any of us develop flu-like symptoms, we are being advised to stay home until the fever has subsided for 24 hours. So, if you exhibit such symptoms, please do not come to class. Notify me with a phone call or e-mail. We will work together to ensure that course instruction and work are completed for the semester.

Students with disabilities Any student with a documented disability should contact me immediately so that we can work out reasonable accommodations to support your success in this course. Such students should also contact Disability Services, 330 Memorial Union, 874-2098.

Professional behavior The classroom is our “office.” Begin now to develop the habits that will serve you best in the “real world.” Be prepared for me to challenge you personally if you are not professional.

- Be here on time.
- Use the bathroom before class. It is rude to leave the room once class has begun.
- Turn off cell phone, iPod, pager, Blackberry etc.
- Come prepared with notebook, pen, etc. Computers can be used for note-taking only.
- No food or drinks in the classroom. No exceptions!
- Discuss / debate respectfully. Challenge ideas; don't attack people.
- It is rude to talk when someone else is talking, whether that someone is me or a classmate. So don't!
- Think about what you are wearing. Hats, PJs and slippers – for example -- are unprofessional and unacceptable.

Course grade Your grade for the course will be determined by your performance on a variety of assignments and exams, and your participation. You will be able to track your progress using the Gradebook on Sakai. Grades will be recorded in points, with the course totaling 1,000 points. Corresponding letter-grade-ranges are 90% A's, 80% B's, 70% C's, 60% D's and 0-59% F.

- Class participation (including activities) & Reflections = 200 points
- International journalism assignment = 50 points
- Interview with a journalist = 50 points
- Film analysis = 50 points
- Exam 1 = 100 points
- Exam 2 = 150 points
- Exam 3 = 150 points
- Research assignment = 250 points

NOTE: Missing any of the Exams or failing to do the Research assignment will result in an F for the course!

Reading notes You might find it useful to prepare Reading Notes for each reading assignment. Guidelines are available via Sakai Resources.

Participation & activities Participation means contributing meaningfully to class discussions.

I anticipate a variety of in- and out-of-class activities.

International journalism assignment Assignment will be available on Sakai.

Interview a journalist You will conduct a brief interview with someone who is doing or has done any type of professional journalism. Assignment will be available on Sakai.

Film analysis You will watch one of the films from the list provided (Sakai Resources) and write an analysis of it following the instructions provided (Sakai Assignment). You can do a second film analysis for extra credit. NOTE: Many films are available from the URI Library.

Exams There will be three exams designed to see how well you understand the course material and how well you can apply it. Exam formats will vary; I will talk about each at an appropriate time.

Reflections You should keep all the work you do for this class. I suggest you use a binder with several pockets or an "accordion" folder. At the end of the semester, you will be required to reflect on your work using a set of guidelines I will provide.

Senior portfolio Beginning with students entering URI in Fall '09, journalism majors have a required 1-credit Senior Portfolio course, which will be taken concurrently with JOR 410. I will provide more information on this during the semester. Complete details also are available on the department web site; see Sakai Resources for a link.

Research assignment Research is a vital component of journalism. Indeed, isn't that what reporting is? So an important component of this course is the Research Assignment. The assignment will be available on Sakai.

Extra credit I am always on the lookout for extra credit opportunities; feel free to make suggestions. Assignment details for each will be on Sakai. For now, here is one:

- 2nd Film Analysis (10 points)

Class calendar The course schedule follows. Some readings are to be determined. The schedule is subject to change, with notice, depending on our progress.

Exam dates will not be changed. Note, especially, the third exam, which will be given during our University-assigned final exam period.

For class on	Topic	Read/Do
27 Jan	What is Journalism For?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EJ: Preface, Introduction, Chapter 1 • WG: Introduction, pp. 5-17 • Be sure you have printed a copy of the syllabus for yourself. Bring it to each class.
1 Feb	Truth or truth?	EJ: Chapter 2
3 Feb	Our roots: Who do journalists work for?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Amendment: http://www.firstamendmentcenter.org/about.aspx?item=about_firstamd • EJ: Chapter 3 • WG: pp. 18-33
8 Feb	Our roots contd.	WG: pp. 79-97
10 Feb	Our deep roots	<p>John Milton's Areopagitica:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.stlawrenceinstitute.org/vol14mit.html • http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Areopagitica
15 Feb	Our deep roots contd.	<p>John Stuart Mill's On Liberty:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.serendipity.li/jsmill/jsmill.htm • http://www.bartelby.com/130/1.html • http://www.bartelby.com/130/2.html <p>Interview With a Journalist assignment is due</p>
17 Feb	No class; Dr. Luebke away on business	Use time to work on International Journalism assignment
22 Feb	Introduction to journalism around the world	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WG: pp. 98-112 • http://arabia.reporters-sans-frontieres.org/rubrique.php3?id_rubrique=280 • http://arabia.reporters-sans-frontieres.org/article.php3?id_article=29031
24 Feb	Journalism around the world contd.	Bring copy of completed International Journalism assignment
1 Mar	Exam 1	In preparation for the 8 March class, between today and 7 March listen to at least one hour of “All Things Considered” on WGBH or WRNI (it's on Mon-Fri late afternoon; time varies by station). See Sakai Resources for links for online-listening.
3 Mar	Introduction to researching journalism	Review the Research Assignment Overview in the Sakai Resources
8 Mar	Public radio	WG pp. 34-78
10 Mar	Journalism of verification	EJ chapt. 4
15 Mar	Independence from faction	EJ chapt. 5
17 Mar	Monitor power, offer	EJ chapt. 6

	voice to voiceless	
22 Mar	NO CLASS	Spring Break
24 Mar	NO CLASS	Spring Break
29 Mar	Journalism as a public forum	EJ chapt. 7
31 Mar	Engagement and relevance	EJ chapt. 8
5 Apr	Make news comprehensive, proportional	EJ chapt. 9
7 Apr	Responsibility to conscience	EJ chapt. 10
12 Apr		WG pp. 113-147
14 Apr	Catch-up Day	Film Analysis Due
19 Apr	Exam 2	
21 Apr	Today and tomorrow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WG pp. 148-160 • EJ chapt. 11
26 Apr	Today and tomorrow contd.	Readings TBA
28 Apr	Today and tomorrow contd.	Readings TBA
3 May	NO CLASS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last Step of Research Assignment Due • Last day to submit Extra Credit film analysis
Thursday 6 May 3-4:15	Exam 3	