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JOUR 6998: Multimedia News Lab (Syllabus)

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Multimedia News Lab

JOUR 4998-001/6998-001

Spring 2021

Class Meeting: M 12:40-2:05 p.m. Online/Synchronous
W 12:40-2:05 p.m. On-campus lab, MJ 202,206
(Zoom to begin term)

Robby Byrd, Ph.D.

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Catalog description

Write, produce content for a personal beat-driven blog that will house multimedia stories on important, complex topics in the city of Memphis; course will mirror collaborative opportunities underway in industry and provide students with the strongest multimedia material possible for portfolios.

Prerequisites

JOUR 3526

Two advanced writing courses

Textbooks, Software and Required Materials

Associated Press Stylebook.

Recommended resources: These sites are a great source of inspiration for stories you could do in your beat. It's a great idea to be up-to-date on the best work being done in the industry. Look for ideas everywhere, but this is a great place to start.

National Press Photographers Association

(https://contests.nppa.org/monthly_multimedia_contest/winnergalleries.php)

Hearst Multimedia Journalism Winners (http://www.hearstfdn.org/hearst_journalism/competitions.php)

National Public Radio's *All Things Considered*

(<http://www.npr.org/programs/all-things-considered/>)

NPR's *Radiolab*

(<http://www.radiolab.org>)

Classroom format

The class will be run as a professional newsroom. Class sessions will consist of both lecture and laboratory time to be determined by the instructor. Class discussion will involve story coverage plans and training related to various writing and multimedia skills and multicultural considerations.

Participation is an important consideration in final grades.

Here's how attendance works: I'm not interested in hearing excuses. You get three free passes during the semester. After you cash in the passes, missed classes are reflected in your final grade. For example, if you miss one additional class, your final grade drops a letter grade. If you miss two more classes, your grade drops again. If you miss six classes, your final grade drops two letters.

Assignments will require students to use a variety of software (WordPress, Adobe Premiere Pro, GoogleMaps, Adobe Photoshop, etc.) to tell news stories through a variety of narrative and visual platforms.

We will have budget meetings every week, which means you will pitch each project and have it approved by your editor and the instructor. **Students/teams are required to come to the news budget meetings with a minimum of two viable story ideas that fit the overall mission of MemphisMirror.com.** So, begin consuming area newspapers, radio broadcasts, television, and websites. Students also should consider story ideas from their previous story interviews and from personal observation and experience. The editors and instructors will work to refine story ideas during the meeting to ensure each reporter has clear direction. Failure to pitch a story during the news budget meetings will result in a lower grade.

Accessing the course website

1. Go to the University of Memphis eLearn home page: <http://elearn.memphis.edu>
2. Log in using your University of Memphis username and password.
3. In the Term Year course list available to you, click on the link for JOUR 4998-001 to enter your course and read the instructions on the welcoming page

Course Requirements

During the semester each student will be required to complete multimedia projects, which will be posted to MemphisMirror.com. Stories and projects that do not meet editors' and instructors' approval will not be posted, which will affect the final grade. Further information will be given for each required assignment in class. Graduate students enrolled in JOUR 6998 must complete additional work to receive graduate-level credit for the class. Graduate students will complete two additional individual story packages during the semester.

- Four individual projects (six for graduate students)
- In-class assignments
- Reading assignments
- Final portfolio

Online portfolio: Students will create a professional online portfolio as a tool to promote themselves on the job market. The details and requirements of the portfolio will be discussed later in the semester.

Undergraduate Class point breakdown

Participation	50 points
Multimedia critique	50 points
First Portfolio Review	100 points
Four individual projects	400 points (100 each)
Online Portfolio	200 points
Total	800 points

Graduate Class point breakdown

Participation	50 points
Multimedia critique	50 points
First Portfolio Review	100 points
Six individual projects	600 points (100 each)
Online Portfolio	200 points
Total	1,000 points

Grading

Assignment categories and points or percentage weights.

A+ = 96.5-100%; A = 92.5-96.4%; A- = 89.5-92.4%

B+ = 86.5-89.4%; B = 82.5-86.4%; B- = 79.5-82.4%

C+ = 76.5-79.4%; C = 72.5-76.4%; C- = 69.5-72.4%

D+ = 66.5-69.4%; D = 59.5-66.4%

F 0-59.4%

Grading Philosophy: A=Professional quality work that could be use with little or no modification; B=Good to excellent work and exceeds requirement, but would require revision to be used professionally; C=Satisfactory work and adequately meets requirement, but would need significant revision; D=Barely satisfies minimum requirement and below average quality; F=Unsatisfactory work and does not meet minimum requirement. NOTE: Plusses and minuses may be given.

Other issues

AP style and grammar: All written work in this class should follow the AP Stylebook and accepted rules of grammar and punctuation. If you don't know the style for a particular phrase, look it up or ask your classmates or the instructor.

Errors and penalties: Edit stories carefully. Your multimedia projects are graded for content minus mechanical errors. Spelling, grammar and style count for each activity. A fact error will result in the reduction of one letter grade for each error. Fact errors include inaccurate information, errors and typos in names, numbers, addresses, dates, quotes, and proper nouns. **Bottom line: reporters must self-edit.**

Read and re-read, and edit and re-edit your assignments.

Final comment: Sharpening multimedia, reporting, and editing skills is a journey best undertaken as a team, with open hearts, open minds and good humor. You can learn much from your peers as from your instructor. I encourage you to speak frequently and work together on stories/assignments with your classmates. We will critique our own work in class and I will accept rewrites and additional multimedia elements to stories.

If you want to talk about the class, feel free to come and see me. Don't worry if you don't have an appointment. My office door is often open. If my office hours are inconvenient for you, make a special appointment and I will work to accommodate you. I want to help you succeed.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1, Jan. 20: Introduction/Developing Project Ideas

Course Introduction; Memphis Mirror Discussion; Developing Project Ideas; Forming of editorial teams

Reading: *MemphisMirror.com* (Wednesday);

Assignments: Multimedia Critique: *MemphisMirror.com* (Monday, Jan. 25 at the start of class.)

Week 2, Jan. 25, First Portfolio Review/Memphis Mirror Training Week

Working in Multimedia; Review of Online Portfolio; Online portfolio feedback and revisions

Assignments:

- Discuss *MemphisMirror.com* critique on Monday, Jan. 25.
- First portfolio review: Due by Sunday at 11:59 p.m.

Week 3, Feb. 1: More Training/Planning

Editor training, reporter training; Introduction to *MemphisMirror.com* mechanics

Week 4, Feb. 8: Team 1

Team 1

Week 5, Feb. 15: Team 1

Team 1

Week 6, Feb. 22: Team 2

Team 2

Week 7, March 1: Team 2

Team 2

Week 8, March 8: No class this week

First Wellness Break

Week 9, March 15: Team 1

Team 1

Week 10, March 22: Team 1

Team 1

Week 11, March 29: Team 2

Team 2

Week 12, April 5: No class this week

Second Wellness Week

Week 13, April 12: Team 2

Team 2 finishes cycle

Week 14, April 19: Professional Development/Portfolio Work

Look for jobs; Talk about job related materials; Work on your final portfolio

Week 15, April 26: Professional Development/Portfolio Work

Look for jobs; Talk about job related materials; Work on your final portfolio

Final Portfolio

Final portfolio due on Wednesday, May 5 at 5 p.m. Central

ASSESSMENT AND OUTCOMES

Five Pillars in JOUR 4998

- *Critical Thinking:* Students explore options for creating and sourcing media content, researching news stories and making editorial decisions in the newsroom.
- *Media Literacy:* Students are exposed to the vocabulary and grammar of media production. Students learn how media are researched, sourced and prepared through multiple assignments in various media platforms.
- *Multimedia:* Students report news for multimedia platforms such as: photo, video, data visualization, audio and web.
- *Professionalism:* Students learn and develop the routines of news professionals in a multimedia setting.
- *Writing:* Students develop writing skills through reporting and evaluation of multimedia news stories and packages.

Professional Values and Competencies in JOUR 4998

- Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications,
- Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;
- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information.
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.
- Think critically, creatively and independently.
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve.
- Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.
- Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts

- Apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work, and to understand the digital world.

How professional values and competencies will be met

Cognitive objectives to be mastered (ability to explain, analyze, understand, think critically)

- Develop advanced understanding of newswriting for multiple applications and media platforms
- Establish a working knowledge of professional news routines in a multimedia setting
- Learn to cover diverse communities with consideration for race, gender, gender identity, ability, sexual orientation, class, and ethnicity
- Research and report stories with multimedia tools
- Expand knowledge of the resources available for communications professionals

Performance standards to be met (demonstrable skills, abilities, techniques, applied competencies)

- Understanding of grammar skills specific to journalism and mass communication
- Ability to plan and pitch a multimedia news project
- Ability to create multimedia news projects that incorporate multiple platforms and showcase many skills
- Understanding of many multimedia storytelling tools available to journalists

How assessment of student learning will be met

Awareness

- Become aware of the role new media plays in society and in the field of journalism.
- Become aware of the ethical treatment of subjects and issues through a multicultural and multimedia lens.

Understanding

- Develop an understanding of multimedia tools and platforms that are appropriate for news storytelling.

Application

- Gather information from sources and from extensive research for a project related to the mission of MemphisMirror.com.
- Develop multimedia projects that incorporate several media platforms including: writing, photography, audio, audio-visual, video, and data visualization.

JOURNALISM AND STRATEGIC MEDIA POLICIES

Portfolio requirement

All students in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media are required to develop and maintain an active portfolio of their work. Undergraduate students are to begin the portfolio in JRSM 3900 and graduate students are to begin in JRSM 7002. Students are to contribute to it in every skills course thereafter. The portfolio should contain samples of the student's work from courses and/or professional experiences and should develop as the student builds skills. Portfolios will undergo a final, external review while students are enrolled in their capstone courses.

Students may use any type of web hosting for their portfolios, but it must have an independent and

professional URL. Students may use any content management system, but students are encouraged to use WordPress, Wix or Squarespace. Students are encouraged to consider purchasing a URL and hosting if they plan to use the portfolio for a long term, but they must keep the portfolio active for six months following graduation from the University of Memphis.

Students should have a professional email address they plan to use throughout their professional lives, via a common email service, such as Gmail.

All portfolios must contain the following items:

- Samples of work from courses and/or professional activities. (Example: Broadcasting students must include a video reel)
- A current résumé
- A personal profile
- Contact information/means of contact
- Social media links

Students might wish to include a blog, video reels, photograph galleries, SoundSlides presentations, design PDFs, audio files and writing pieces as examples of professional work. The professional work should ultimately be tailored to the career the student seeks after graduation. Thus, each student's portfolio should show a unique blend of work.

Email

Students must have their UofM email accounts activated. Students using another provider, such as Google, are required to have all UofM email forwarded to that account. Students should go to the <http://iam.memphis.edu> website to implement forwarding of UofM email. Students are required to check their email daily. They are responsible for complying with any email sent to by professors or others in the University.

Electronic devices

Some classes require a tablet, laptop or a smartphone. Others do not. Instructors will set the policy for their specific classes.

Attendance

Class attendance is mandatory in Journalism and Strategic Media. Students may be assigned a failing grade for the semester for nonattendance or habitual late arrival. No late work will be accepted without prior arrangements with the class professor. Students may not be permitted to make up any missing work unless it is for an absence because of illness or other catastrophic emergency, such as a death in the family that can be documented (e.g. with a doctor's note or a copy of the newspaper obituary). Journalism and Strategic Media is a professional program, and students are expected to understand and comply with deadlines. Students who have some problem making it to class on time should make arrangements to correct the problem or consider taking another class. Students should consider this class as a "job" in the educational process and be on time just as they would elsewhere.

Course repetition

Majors and minors who fail to earn the minimum passing grade ("C-") in a class required by their program of study in Journalism and Strategic Media more than three times will be dropped from the program.

Students may not use or submit work from a previous course, even if it is the same course being repeated, to fulfill requirements for assignments in another course. If students wish to substantially rework the original submission, or to work with the same general idea, that may be permissible upon discussion with and written approval from the professor of the current course. All written work will be checked for policy adherence via TurnItIn.com. All creative work will be checked for policy adherence by the professor, and judged against previous submissions. The only exception to this policy is the student's online portfolio and its attendant pieces (for example, the résumé and logo).

Academic integrity

In addition to University-wide policies stated in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media considers making up quotes from sources, turning in substantially the same assignment for credit in two different courses or students receiving any assistance from others for work assigned to be done on their own, as acts of cheating punishable to the degree determined appropriate by the course instructor and department chair. Punishment may include grade reductions or seeking dismissal of the student from the University.

Further, as this is a journalism and strategic media class, students are expected to comply with copyright law and must have sufficient permission to use any copyrighted materials used in creative projects, unless otherwise informed in cases of exercises or reproduction.

Your written work may be submitted to Turnitin.com, or a similar electronic detection method, for rating originality of your ideas. Also to evaluate proper use and assignment of sources. As part of this process, you may require to submit electronic as well as hard copies of your work. Other instructions to follow may also be given. By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process. The assignment may be included as a source document in Turnitin.com's restricted access database. It is solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Assignments not submitted according to the instructor's procedures may be penalized or may not be accepted at all. (*Office of Legal Counsel, October 11, 2018*)

Online SETEs

Students are urged to complete the SETEs evaluation of this course. Once the instructor has posted grades, student can immediately see that grade, provided they have completed a the SETE for that class. To access evaluation forms, students should log in to MyMemphis using their UUIDs and email passwords; click on the gray "Student" tab; complete an evaluation for each course listed and hit the "Submit" button at the bottom of the form. Completing the SETE will only take a few minutes. Faculty take the evaluations very seriously and use them to improve courses and instructional quality. Student feedback is essential and is appreciated.

Deadlines

All deadlines are firm. This is journalism and strategic media. Students needing an extension on an assignment must receive approval from the instructor. Exceptions will be made for reasonable circumstances if the student notifies the instructor prior to the due date.

AP Style and grammar

All written work in this class must follow the AP Stylebook and accepted rules of grammar and punctuation. Students are responsible for learning these rules and checking their work for errors.

Disability and accommodations

Students who need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office for Disability Resources for Students at 901-678-2880 in 110 Wilder Tower Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Diversity and inclusivity

Students are required to respect the differences of others and treat all persons with respect. Discriminatory, derogatory and threatening language or behavior will not be tolerated. Further, students are expected to consider their work through a diverse mind. Media reach a mass audience, and students should be aware of how those messages are received by a diverse audience.

Weather policy

Always check with local media and the University of Memphis website regarding inclement weather. If the University is closed or classes are canceled, this course will not meet. However, students will still be responsible for that day's work.

Student support

Student who are experiencing personal or academic challenges including, but not limited to food or housing issues, family needs, or other stressors, should visit the Office of Student Accountability, Outreach & Support page to learn about resources that can help: <https://www.memphis.edu/saos/sos/crisis-resources.php>. Any student who faces personal challenges including, but not limited to securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Office of Student Accountability, Outreach & Support (901-678-2187) located in the University Center, Suite 359 for assistance. Students may also talk with course instructors about the challenges they are experiencing. Instructors may be able to assist in connecting with campus or community support.

COVID-19 protocols for this course

COVID-19 Health and Safety Policy - Masks and Social Distancing

All students, faculty and staff will wear masks in all public spaces, including our classroom (lab) per the COVID-19 policy. The first time a student enters a classroom without wearing a face covering, the student will be asked to leave the class until they return a covering. Further violations will be referred to the Office of Student Accountability. Students who repeatedly or flagrantly violate these community expectations may be referred for discipline under the Student Code and, if appropriate, immediately removed from campus by the Dean of Students.

Student Health

Students who are experiencing symptoms such as sneezing, coughing or a higher than normal temperature should inform me by email so they can be excused from class and should stay home. Students should contact their health care provider or the Student Health Center at <https://www.memphis.edu/health/>.

Students who have a positive COVID-19 test should contact the Dean of Students at deanofstudents@memphis.edu.

Student Accommodations

If and when we return to class, students seeking to remain remote for health or other serious reasons should discuss their options with me. Students with accessibility issues or with other learning accommodation needs due to a disability should contact Disability Resources for Students (DRS) to submit an official request for course accommodations. Contact DRS at 901.678.2880 or at drs@memphis.edu. (<https://www.memphis.edu/drs/index.php>)

Student Resources

Students who need additional resources can contact the Dean of Students Office at <https://www.memphis.edu/deanofstudents/crisis/index.php>.

Guidelines for classes, labs and equipment in Meeman Journalism Building in Spring 2021

- Anyone feeling sick should stay home and join class virtually.
- Social distance from all others at least 6 feet.
- Wear a mask at all times when in University buildings and on campus.
- Wash hands or use hand sanitizer regularly.
- No more than one person in the elevator at a time.
- Disinfect your workstation before and after use, including desks, keyboards, mice and screens. Wash your hands after cleaning.
- Have phone or Zoom meetings with professors and classmates. Do not meet face to face, if possible.