

Loyola University Chicago
Fall 2017
COMM 208- 201 Reporting Basics II, Room 015
Mondays 4:15-6:45 p.m.

Instructor: Jessica R. Brown

E-mail: jbrown7@luc.edu (Please allow up to 24 hours for a response to e-mail on weekdays; and limited responses on weekends. Remember to include your name and the course on your subject line. Please use your Loyola account when sending e-mails.)

Office: SOC 218 **Phone:** 312-915-7726 **Office Hours:** Thursdays 2-4 and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to teach students the fundamentals of basic technologies used in today's newsrooms to report events and tell stories. Students will learn to apply their news judgment to audio, video, visual technologies, apps and software in order to produce well-planned, well written, and well edited stories across platforms. Finally, students will use technology to brand themselves and their content as a legitimate source of journalism. The ultimate goal of this course is to give students a taste of different mediums and technologies to help them choose their adventure within the field of journalism.

TEXT AND OTHER MATERIALS

The Associated Press Stylebook, 2015 or later

Flash Drive/External Hard Drive (4g minimum)

Additional Readings will be provided over the semester: *See Sakai > Resources > Readings*

GRADING: It is your responsibility to keep track of your grades.

100-95	A	94-90	A-	89-87	B+	Projects (30%)	Exam (20%)
86-83	B	82-80	B-	79-77	C+	Participation/Professionalism (10%)	
76-74	C	73-70	C-	69-67	D+	Assignments/Exercises (10%)	
66-65	D	Below 65	F			Final Project (30%)	

NO absence will be excused unless it is because of the death of a loved one or serious illness or injury. You will be required to present proof for an excused absence. Proof **MUST** be given no later than your first day back. You must alert me at least 24 hours before class of any absence that you want excused.

Plagiarism Statement: Please see attached document.

SPECIAL NEEDS

Students are urged to contact me should they have questions concerning course materials and procedures. If you have a special circumstance that may have some impact on your course work and for which you may require accommodations, please contact me within the first 2 weeks of the semester so that arrangements can be made with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD). Additional information about the services available at Loyola, including eligibility for services, is on the SSWD website: [<http://www.luc.edu/sswd/index.shtml>](http://www.luc.edu/sswd/index.shtml)

IMPORTANT NOTE: While some of these technologies may be new to you, it is up to you as the student to troubleshoot your way through any difficulties. The SOC has many resources available to you, including your instructor, staff and online resources. If you need to rent equipment, please see Technology Coordinator Andi Pacheco (apacheco@luc.edu; X58830, Owl Lab 004).

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- 1.) **PROFESSIONALISM** will be assessed on these criteria: being on time for class; not leaving class before it has been adjourned; being disruptive or rude to others; texting; gaming; playing games; using social networks; using technology or devices for purposes other than our course work; being deceptive about absences, missed work, or other course issues. I will make note of any of these issues and adjust this grade accordingly.
- 2.) **PARTICIPATION:** You are expected to participate in class discussion, be present for training sessions, and complete exercises. You may also be asked to lead discussions on current events or topics/issues on your beat.
- 3.) I will make reasonable efforts to allow you to work on some projects in class, but you should not rely on this time to complete course work. You should manage your life around how much time you need to travel, interview, report, edit, etc. Technology will fail you at the worst time. Please back up everything and do not wait until the last minute to finalize your work. It is your responsibility to check out equipment in a timely fashion and follow OWL Lab rules.
- 4.) One of the goals of this course is to help you build your online brand as a professional, so make every effort to separate your social media presence from your professional one; and connect all of your professional activities.
- 5.) The technologies and software used in this course may not be ones you are familiar with, but do not avoid using them. This is how you learn. While at the end of the day, you have to meet deadlines, make every effort to learn things that are new or scary to you. When using Adobe products, be sure to **use Creative Cloud 2017**.
- 6.) Whenever possible you **ALWAYS EMBED** files from third party source onto your blog. This will help make sure you don't have broken links.
- 7.) Because you are covering a beat, I will expect you to be an authority on that beat and be able to educate the class about everything relevant to it. Choose a beat that will allow you to execute the assignments. Don't pick a beat that is too specific. For example, Divvy would be too specific.
- 8.) Your projects will be published online, and your sources should be aware of this. All work done for this course is designed for real-world application.
- 9.) Because projects have long lead times, it is rare that you would be given an extension for any reason. Since most projects are turned in electronically, you may not be excused from meeting deadlines, even on an excused absence. On-deadline work may not be made up later.

THE COURSE (Subject to change): Project details follow course schedule

Aug. 28: Introductions; Review; Ethics; Beats

Sakai > Resources > Readings > Issues in Journalism

Course overview, equipment and paperwork; Journalism Blogs & AP Style; Covering Beats; Multimedia journalism ethics overview; Writing practice

Designing across platforms: http://www.newsu.org/courses/designing-beyond-print/watch?cache_b=7c2c57d64a24cb84b6f64a7403d9f979

ASSIGNMENT Sept. 11: Beat selection; Multimedia Evaluation

Sept. 4: Labor Day, No class

Sept. 11: Content Management Systems (CMS); Photography

Sakai > Resources > Readings > Project 1: Blog

Online blog style; Picture-taking Techniques & Caption Writing;

DUE: Beat selection & Multimedia Evaluation (Upload to Sakai)

PROJECT 1: Blogs (ongoing); first post due Sept. 18 by end of class*

ASSIGNMENT: Sources and story ideas due Sept. 18; Published blog

Sept. 18: Photography and Photoshop

Readings > Project 2: Photo Essay

Introduction to Photoshop; EXERCISE: Photoshop panoramic, toning and editing; GIFs

DUE: Sources and story ideas; Published blog with first post

*ASSIGNMENT (In-class): *Refine blog template, title, about section, maps & polls, first post*

PROJECT 2: Photo Essay due Oct. 2

Sept. 25: Shooting video; Person-on-the-Street

How to shoot video; Interviewing

Guest Speaker: *EXERCISE: Person-on-the-Street practice (save files to hard drive or Cloud)*

Oct. 2: Photo essay; Video news story; “Public Speaking”

Readings > Project 3: Video Package

Producing and writing a video package; Stand-up practice

PROJECT 3: Video package due Oct. 23

DUE: PROJECT 2 (uploaded to blog)

Oct. 9: Fall Break, No Class

Oct 16: Video editing

Editing with Premiere Pro (use files from Person-on-the-Street exercise)

EXERCISE: Video editing practice

PROJECT 4: Commentary; Meet in studio Oct. 30: Scripts/Photos due by 3 p.m. Friday Oct. 28

Oct. 23: Reporting for the Ear; Graphics I

Audio news stories; Graphics and Alternative Storytelling Forms (static)

ASSIGNMENT: Practice building a graphic

DUE: PROJECT 3 (uploaded to blog)

PROJECT 5: Audio package due Nov. 13

***** OCT. 27: DUE PHOTOS AND SCRIPTS FOR PROJECT 4: by 12 p.m. to my luc.box.com*****

Oct. 30: In-studio work

DUE: PROJECT 4: Meet in the studio and go directly to your stations. No food, no drink, no green.

FINAL PROJECT: Multi-media feature, due Dec. 11/ budget due Nov. 13/draft due Dec. 4

Nov. 6: Audio Editing & Virtual Reality

Audio editing w/ Audacity: http://manual.audacityteam.org/man/tutorial_editing_an_existing_file.html

EXERCISE: Fundamentals of VR

Nov. 13: Coding 101

HTML 5 and CSS basics: *ASSIGNMENT due Nov. 20*

DUE: PROJECT 5 (uploaded to blog)

DUE: final project budget/plan;

Nov. 20: Graphics II

Graphics and Alternative Storytelling Forms (moving)

ASSIGNMENT: Practice building a graphic

DUE: Coding 101 basics

Nov. 27: Exam

See Sakai for details – due at end of class

Dec. 4: Final project draft

DUE: Final project draft

Dec. 11: Finals 4:15-6:15 p.m.

FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATIONS DUE

PROJECTS AND ASSIGNMENTS: Details and Due dates (subject to change)

ALL projects MUST be posted to your blog and may count as your blog post for that week.

Ongoing - PROJECT 1 (12 weeks): NEWS BLOG: 120 points

You will be required to create a blog, using either WordPress, Wix (recommended) or Weebly. You will post all of your content, both written and multimedia to the site. You **MUST** update your site with content by **4 p.m. each Monday, except for your first post, which is due by the end of class on Sept. 18.** The final post is your final project and is due at the start of class Dec. 11. You must provide me with the link to your site. Remember this site will be public, so you should treat it professionally and eventually use it as part of your digital portfolio. The best blog posts will have:

- SEO headlines
- Links within the body of the posts
- Photo or video
- Proper credits and captions for images/graphics
- Posts can be just an image or video, but you must have a lead or brief of 100-150 words.
- Text-based posts should be short: 200-300 words (but should include some visual)
- Follow AP style, grammar, spelling and punctuation in body copy

*** I recommend that you create a **Twitter** account associated with your blog. One of your goals in this course is to brand yourself and your work professionally online. You should consider your blog part of your portfolio and layer as much social media to it as you can.*

You should post **Sept. 18-Dec. 11 (excluding fall break). Posts are due by 4 p.m. each Monday.**

Sept. 11 – Multimedia Evaluation: 100 points

For this assignment, you are being asked to locate a multimedia story from a reputable news outlet and evaluate it based on the criteria below. The story must have been published within the last 6 months. Your write-up should be in Q & A format (Times New Roman, 12 pt., double spaced). A multimedia story must include at least 3 types of narrative forms (written, photography, graphics, video, podcast/audio, interactivity). You may begin on my [Online Storytelling Pinterest board](#) for your search.

1. Identify the publication and provide the URL (a permalink if possible) to the story.
2. Briefly summarize what the story is about and what types of media are used.
3. Take each media separately and explain how it contributes to telling the story. What is the value-add for the user/visitor? What different types of learning styles does the media cater to?
4. Why is the story newsworthy? (Impact, Timeliness, Proximity, Prominence, Conflict, Novelty, Emotions, Trend)
5. Is there anything about the reporting or media that you think could be improved?
6. Do you see any ethical issues with either the content of the story, or its presentation?
7. How, if all, does the multimedia story inspire you to approach your own reporting?

Sept. 18 – Source list, events and Story ideas: 100 points

For this assignment, you must provide me with a list of **six people** you can use as sources on your beat, **four events**, and **four story ideas** from your beat. Your sources **MUST** include the person's full name, title and contact information; the story ideas **MUST** be written as news leads, including the 5Ws. Events **MAY NOT** also be story ideas. These are two separate items. For events, you need to provide a fact box with Who, What, When, Where, (and cost if applicable). **You do not need to actually speak to sources; just list them.**

Please follow the format provided to you in class (Times New Roman, 12 pt.)

Oct. 2 -PROJECT 2: PHOTO ESSAY; 100 points

You will be required to complete a documentary slide show with exactly 10 photographs that you take specifically for this course and the specific assignment. If you violate this rule you will at best fail this project and at worst fail the course. Your essay may highlight an event or issue on your beat; it should **NOT** profile a person, but it can profile a place or business. You should use either your CMS slide show feature **OR** create an [Adobe Spark page](#). If you use Spark you must include an image from your story and lead with your post, and of course a link out to the Spark page.

Oct. 23 - PROJECT 3: VIDEO NEWS STORY; 100 points

You will be required to complete a **90 second OR 2-minute** news story on an event happening on your beat. Your news story must have at least two interviews. See Sakai for more details.

Oct. 27 and Oct. 30 - PROJECT 4: ON-SCREEN COMMENTARY; 100 points

You will be required to complete a **3-4 minute** on-camera commentary based on an issue on your beat. You should strive for some level of humor, cleverness or wittiness in your delivery. You will have to provide 3-4 over-the-shoulder (OTS) images for your commentary as well as select a moving background from videoblocks.com. Your background should be neutral so as to not compete with, or distract from your OTS. Also, do not wear green on this day as we will be using the green screen.

Nov. 13 - PROJECT 5: AUDIO NEWS STORY; 100 points

You will be required to complete a **2-to-3-minute** news or feature story for the ear. Your piece will have to include at least two sound bites from interviews, and 'nat' sounds. You may cover an event or feature a person or place as your story. Use <https://soundcloud.com> to upload your audio file.

Nov. 27 - Exam: ON-DEADLINE REPORTING; 100 points

You will have to complete a multi-layered reporting assignment that will be given at the start of class. See Sakai for details.

Dec. 11 - FINAL PROJECT: MULTI-MEDIA PACKAGE; points TBD

You will be required to complete a multi-media package. This project will combine much of the technology you have learned over the semester, including photography and/or video, and a short print component and graphics. You should consider this an in-depth feature story. Details TBD.

ALWAYS READ THE ASSIGNMENT INFORMATION ON SAKAI AS THERE MAY BE MORE DETAILS OR ADJUSTMENTS TO REQUIREMENTS. GRADES WILL BE POSTED TO THE ASSIGNMENT ON SAKAI (EVEN IF WE DON'T USE SAKAI TO TURN IN THE ASSIGNMENT)