REQUIRED COURSES

JOUR 200001 - Introduction to Journalism – Jon Marcus

Organized like a professional newsroom, this course will give students interested in journalism a taste of its various facets, including topic-generation, reporting, interviewing, and editing, for print, broadcast, and online media. It will cover basic newswriting, beat reporting, investigative journalism, feature writing, and writing for the web, and provide an introduction to media law and ethics and the business and history of journalism. Students will produce a feature-length final project and will also work in teams to formulate, report, and write investigative stories. Student should expect to meet deadlines and high standards of grammar, style, punctuation, and factual accuracy.

CRAFT COURSES

JOUR 222301 – Sports/News Broadcasting – Jon Meterparel

This course provides students with a comprehensive forum about what it takes to prepare and succeed in a professional broadcast setting. They’ll work on interviewing techniques, practice writing sports and news anchor scripts, practice on-air presentation, learn what it takes to put together a sports and news broadcast and play by play event, and be visited by guest speakers, who work in both industries.

JOUR 222501 - Journalism & New Media – Maura Johnston

The rise of the internet as a news delivery system has changed the face of the news business, for better or worse, in the 21st century. This one semester seminar will trace the history of new media’s relationship with journalism while preparing students for the leaner online world. Students will learn about practical matters (storytelling for the web, condensing complex narratives into 140-character missives) while grappling with larger concerns affecting the industry and readers (traffic-based journalism, slippery sourcing) as they report and write on the world around them.

JOUR 222601 - Music Writing – Maura Johnston

This course will include reading and analyzing well-written newspaper and magazine articles. Students will learn to apply the techniques of drama and fiction to writing objective, factual stories that entertain as well as inform. The course focuses on newspaper features and magazine articles, but the techniques are also applicable to writing nonfiction books.

JOUR 222701 - Broadcast Writing - Christine Caswell

This course introduces the student to a broad sampling of broadcast writing styles. Areas of focus will include news, sports, documentaries, commercials and public service announcements, educational television, and writing for specialized audiences.
JOUR 223102 - Feature Writing – Jon Marcus

This is a course on contemporary feature writing—literary nonfiction journalistic writing based on solid reporting. The emphasis is on writing stories editors will want to print and readers will want to read. The course will include reading and analyzing well-written newspaper magazine articles. Students will learn to apply the techniques of drama and fiction to writing objective, factual stories that entertain as well as inform. The course focuses on newspaper features and magazine articles, but the techniques are also applicable to writing nonfiction books.

JOUR 223104 - Feature Writing – Don Aucoin

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JOUR 223201 - Investigative Journalism – Joe Bergantino

Investigative reporting holds the powerful accountable in government, business and large institutions. This course will provide you with an opportunity to both learn about investigative journalism and do in-depth investigative reporting that has the potential to make a difference. Students will learn a variety of reporting techniques while working on semester-long investigative projects that could end up in several major newspapers across Massachusetts. Story subjects will focus on holding government agencies and powerful institutions accountable for a wide-range of problems and systemic failures.

JOUR 223401 - News Ethics – Joe Bergantino

Will journalism survive the age of Trump? Is it possible to restore confidence in the news media and, if so, how? Is objectivity dead or was it always impossible to achieve? These and other crucial questions of our time will be the focus of this discussion-driven class that deconstructs 21st journalism and its challenges, defines its core elements and seeks to pinpoint ways the profession can fulfill its truth-telling responsibility without doing harm.

JOUR 223501 - Sports Writing – Jimmy Golen

Why is the sports section so often the best-written part of the newspaper? You will find out why in this course that examines the art of sports writing, from game and beat coverage to in-depth interviews and other long features. Discussions will cover current events in sports journalism and review some of the classic works of sports non-fiction.
JOUR 223701 - The Art of Editing – Toby Lester

Writers get all the attention. But where would they be without discerning editors to recognize their talents, provide perspective on their ideas, help shape their work, and, ultimately, publish it? This discussion-based class will focus primarily on editing as it’s practiced at magazines such as The New Yorker and The Atlantic. We’ll think big and small, about whole publications, individual articles, and critical matters of style; we’ll read and discuss published works; we’ll invite top editors and writers in to share their secrets with us; and we’ll write and edit our own articles.

JOUR 223801 - Food Writing – John O’Connor

This class takes a close look at the practice and tradition of food journalism, introducing students to narrative techniques, elements of reporting, and works that have shaped the genre. Students will learn how to avoid the clichés and traps of food writing and to develop original, persuasive, surprising ideas about food and the culture of eating. Issues of voice, scene, social observation, and dramatic structure are addressed, with additional attention paid to crafting and pitching articles. Readings will include works from early practitioners like A. J. Liebling and M.F.K. Fisher and contemporary writings by Gabrielle Hamilton, Frank Bruni, David Foster Wallace, and others.

JOUR 223901 - Travel Writing – John O’Connor

Traveling can be one of life’s more rewarding experiences, and for writers it can supply an inexhaustible trove of material. But the appeal of the genre: who wouldn’t want to take an all-expenses-paid trip to Fiji’s finest eco-resorts: can also be its biggest crutch. With few exceptions, travel stories today merely recast the excruciating details of five-star hotels, hairy-chested masseurs, and the salutary effects of jalapeño margaritas. This class aims to show students ways to write about travel deeply and intelligently, with the hope of developing clear, informed opinions on the subject they’re writing about (and not merely “covering”). Readings will include works by Hunter S. Thompson, Geoff Dyer, Sloane Crosley, and others.

JOUR 224701 - Covering Elections – David Daley

Theodore White reinvented campaign coverage when he embedded with John F. Kennedy and chronicled his 1960 victory in “The Making of the President.” Only eight years later, Joe McGinniss introduced America to a young conservative TV mastermind, Roger Ailes, in “The Selling of the President,” and a very different era began. We will trace campaign coverage from White’s time through “The Boys on the Bus,” Hunter Thompson, Michael Lewis and the new journalism, Richard Ben Cramer’s masterwork “What It Takes” all the way through modern Game Changers – and may hit the campaign trail ourselves during these consequential midterm elections -- to understand how the media has changed and why it matters.
JOUR 225001 - Adv Nonfiction Workshop: Writing for Magazines – Carlo Rotella

Students in this course will be selected on the basis of manuscript submission. Please submit up to 10 double-spaced pages of writing, which can be an entire piece, part of a longer piece, or a compilation of shorter ones. You can explain the nature of what you have submitted in an accompanying note. Be sure to include your name and email address. Materials should be submitted to Carlo Rotella via email (rotellca@bc.edu) as soon as possible. Students will be notified by email as to whether they have been admitted to the course.

CRITICAL COURSES

JOUR 201601 - Reporting Civil Rights – Angela Ards

This course explores first-hand accounts from the front lines of movements to advance social justice, from the abolitionist and anti-lynching campaigns of the 19th century and those that toppled Jim Crow, to broader issues such as prisons and poverty, immigration and education. Students will develop their knowledge of civil rights reporting history in the U.S, gain skills and practices, and learn how to apply all three in reporting and writing in core beat areas.

JOUR 225201 - News Media & Democracy Michael Serazio

The press plays an essential role in America and the world. This course aims to equip students to become critical news consumers with both a skilled understanding of how journalism works and political literacy about the big issues of our time. Through classic scholarly reflections as well as contemporary punditry examples, we will tackle the news media critically across three dimensions: learning about its indispensable function in mediating politics and democracy throughout history and today; studying and practicing the craft of opining writing and social advocacy; and evaluating and critiquing the performance of the press across these fronts.

JOUR 229001 - From Page to Pod – Joe Nugent

In this practical, collaborative, and project-driven course, we’ll celebrate the Irish novelist, journalist, playwright, and tv-scriptwriter, Flann O’Brien. Exploring O’Brien’s extensive archives here at BC, we’ll research, document, and curate those works for a Spring '19 exhibition in the Burns Special Collection Library. In addition: scripting and recording our own series of podcasts, we’ll carry O’Brien’s satirical bite to a broader public. O’Brien is as contemporary as The Onion, as absurd as Beckett, as smart as...well...you. Along the way, we’ll map out the innovative future of literary studies (and your own role in the Public Humanities). A challenging, but fun and creative, seminar that welcomes all disciplines and majors.