COURSE DESCRIPTIONS
SPRING 2019

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 222901 - Magazine Writing – Janelle Nanos

What does it take to make a magazine? This course will introduce students to the creative process of magazine publishing. Students will learn what distinguishes lifestyle magazines from news, and how to pitch a story. They’ll write and edit short front-of-book features, develop elements in themed issue packages, and work on story development for features, profiles, and food and culture reviews. The class will provide instruction on blogging, and the rigors of research and fact-checking. Upon conclusion, students will be well prepared for an internship or entry-level position at a magazine.

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 223103 - Feature Writing – Don Aucoin

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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 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.


This course will introduce students to all aspects of the podcasting medium. What makes podcasting different from traditional journalism? What are the ingredients that make for great podcasts? We’ll be listening, learning the art of interviewing, and doing plenty of storytelling in order to develop personal voice and style. Finally, we’ll learn about the technical tools necessary to tell powerful stories in sound.

CRITICAL COURSES

JOUR 220201 – Narrative Journalism in Peace and War – Christopher Wilson

This course will engage with modern and contemporary examples of so-called “long form” journalistic narratives (essays, books and perhaps an example of graphic journalism) that, by applying literary techniques to nonfiction, tell us a story about contemporary social life. Discussing matters of literary form and technique as well as journalistic norms, we will cover nonfiction texts that address both social conditions on the home front (inequality, Wall Street Adventurism, street crime, race relations, police culture) and international conflicts (including war and terrorism), generally (but not always) involving the United States. Writers covered will include figures such as Michael Lewis, Joan Didion, George Packer, William Finnegan, Suki Kim, Isabel Wilkerson, Geraldine Brooks, Mike Davis, Alex Kotlowitz, John Hersey, Anne Fadiman and others.

JOUR 221001 – Business of Journalism –David Dahl

If you work in an editorial organization, or want to, you should understand what its business model is and what the financial, as well as journalistic, objectives are. This course will examine the economic changes underway in our profession, from an era when newspapers were heavily dependent on ads to one that is much more reliant on subscriptions, both in print and online. We will examine new business models brought by the digital revolution, as well as the missteps by mainstream media and digital newcomers. Later in the course, we will discuss some of the tycoons of the digital-media era, such as Ariana Huffington and Andrew Breitbart. It’s a golden age, to be sure, with lots of new money, new
platforms, and new ways of telling stories. We best seize the new opportunities by first understanding how and why these changes occurred.

**JOUR 224801 - Media and the New American Divide – David Daley**

Americans are having a difficult time talking to one another. This class will explore the roots of modern polarization and the rise of partisan media silos on the left and right alike, and the consequences for our politics. We will examine not only the challenges for reporting in an era of "fake news" and "alternative facts," but the pressure on opinion journalism at a time when social media has increased the pressure for writers and publications to stay in prescribed lines. In our reading, reporting projects, and writing assignments, we will seek to develop strategies that bridge our new American divide.