Required Texts


Course Description
Jay Street, a student-run publication last put out in 2010, was once the university’s only student-run publication that focused on entrepreneurship. Now in 2015, students in this class will redesign the magazine to fit changing readership needs – looking to expand its content to cover research, technology and design. The first portion of this course will teach basic journalistic writing and interviewing techniques. You will learn to pitch, write and edit a variety of stories types, from basic news pieces, to profiles, features and reviews. Later in the semester, you will look at contemporary models for online journalism with a view toward redesigning Jay Street’s content and focus. You will publish your work in a new version of the magazine at the end of the semester.

ABET Requirements
- Understanding of professional and ethical responsibility (f).
- Ability to communicate effectively (g).
- The broad education necessary to understand the impact of engineering solutions in a global and societal context (h).
- Recognition of the need for and an ability to engage in life-long learning (i).
- Knowledge of contemporary issues (j).

Grading Breakdown
Article #1 10%
Interview 10%
Article #2 10%
Final Feature Article 35%
Presentation 20%
Class Participation 15%

Class Participation

I firmly believe that communications classes, when taken seriously, are some of the hardest classes a student can take at this university. It takes guts to put yourself out there during class – whether in a presentation or in contributions to class discussions – but at the same time it is one of the most important experiences a young student can have. I want the atmosphere in this classroom to foster lively and productive discussion of design theory and student work. To do this, it is important that both students and faculty maintain a sense of mutual respect. There are a lot of elements that foster this sense of mutual respect that are easy to lose track of as we become enmeshed in the chaos of the semester. To clarify (lest we forget later on – and I sincerely hope I do not have to return to these points later in the semester) my expectations for class participation will include the following:

- You will arrive on time. Note the attendance policy below. Punctuality and regular attendance are non-negotiable.
- You will arrive prepared for class. You will need to have the texts for that day on hand and all assignments completed. You will also need to be alert. I understand that many of you have heavy workloads and will staying up late studying, but we cannot accomplish anything without your full participation, which means you need to be awake. Bring a large cup of coffee to class, or take a power nap right before – whatever it takes!
- On days when we use computers in the classroom – and this will be nearly every single class – you will not go on Facebook, or check your email, or succumb to any of the other temptations that the internet has created for us of late.
- You will turn off your cell phone before class. I don't want to hear any ringers go off in the middle of our discussions, and I certainly don't want to see you texting.
- You will clear any visitors you want to invite into the classroom with me first.
- You won't gossip or comment about what it took for certain students to finish their assignments on time – or why certain students are late or absent on any particular day. Let's keep all discussion focused on course material (rather than students' personal lives), please!
- **You will respect each student’s right to express themselves in the classroom.** When someone else is talking, don't interrupt – and for goodness sake, obviously, don't yell. Listen to him or her and try and think about what they are saying. It will help your case when it is your turn to speak.
- On the flip side, you won't hold back because you feel that your idea may be unpopular or incorrect. Keep in mind that the study of communication can be a subjective thing at times. The strength of all classroom discussion comes from the diversity of opinions within the group.
If you do not adhere to the above-mentioned policies, I reserve the right to kick you out of class for the day. We will discuss any impact this may or may not have on your attendance record (and your participation grade) after the fact.

Class Attendance Policy
Attendance is required. You get one unexcused absence over the course of the semester – you should reserve them almost exclusively for situations of serious illness or other true personal emergencies. Please note that a late arrival to class (7 minutes) counts as half an absence. Each absence after #1 will result in a 10 point deduction from your final grade. On rare occasion, I will excuse a student’s absence with a doctor’s note (but we’re talking the kind of note you get from the hospital – not Health Services, because they don’t give notes). The only other way to get an excused absence is to go through the Dean of Students or Counseling Services (generally for religious observances, extreme personal illness, or a death in the family). That said, if you’re having a really bad semester and have a truly legitimate excuse, please come talk to me!

If you know that you will be absent on a particular day, it is your responsibility to notify the instructor in advance and to obtain class notes and assignments from your peers.

If work was due on that day, you still need to send it to me – by email before class.

Late/incomplete work

More than most other professions, journalists need to be able to meet deadlines. Late news is old news and it goes unread. For that reason, reporters that consistently submit late work get fired pretty quickly. And so, it will be my policy in this class to penalize your grade if you do not submit your work on time. Accordingly:

I will deduct five points from your final assignment grade for every day a draft comes to me late.

If you do not submit a first draft of the assignment, I will deduct twenty points from your final assignment grade.

I will deduct ten points for every day a final draft comes to me late.

Ethics
The strength of the university depends on academic and personal integrity. In this course, you must be honest and truthful. Ethical violations include cheating on exams, plagiarism, reuse of assignments, improper use of the Internet and electronic devices, unauthorized collaboration, alteration of graded assignments, forgery and falsification, lying, facilitating academic dishonesty, and unfair competition.

You can find more information about university misconduct policies on the web at these sites:
   • For undergraduates: http://e-catalog.jhu.edu/undergrad-students/student-life-policies/
   • For graduate students: http://e-catalog.jhu.edu/grad-students/graduate-specific-policies/
Students with Disabilities
Any student with a disability who may need accommodations in this class must obtain an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services, 385 Garland, (410) 516-4720, studentdisabilityservices@jhu.edu.

Extensions
Available on request. You need to give me more than just a few days notice (I prefer 72 hours notice).

Email Policy
Though I am happy to answer any course-related questions you might have, please keep in mind that I am not tethered to my computer – and I don’t check email on my phone regularly. My personal email address is listed at the top of this syllabus. I usually respond to student emails within 48 hours.

Also, please know that I don’t send out emails to confirm that I’ve received student work. It’s your responsibility to check your inbox/spam folder to make sure that your communication has gone through. (I check my spam folder all the time to make sure I’m receiving what you’re sending…)

Special Needs and Learning Disabilities: If you need an accommodation due to a documented disability, please come visit me during office hours the first week of class or at your earliest convenience. I am fully committed to helping you succeed in this class. If you have no documentation, please register first with the Director for Disability Services. More information can be found here: http://jhuaa.org/DSS/index.html
Tentative Course Schedule

M 1/26  Course Intro / What Is Journalism and Why Is It Important?
- **IN CLASS:** Dissecting the Media Exercise
- **IN CLASS:** Watch video!
- **AS SOON AS YOU LEAVE HERE:** Begin reading Elements of Journalism!!

M 2/2  Principles of Journalism / Considering Audience / Story Basics
- **PREP:** Read the introduction and chapters 1, 2 and 3 of Elements of Journalism
- **PREP:** Go on a 24 hour media blackout and come to class prepared to talk about it
- **PREP:** Keep a media journal for the rest of your week and come to class prepared to talk about it – in particular, I’d like you to be attuned to the best and worst journalism you read this week. What made those pieces "good" or "bad" in your mind?
- **IN CLASS:** Reportage Exercise

M 2/9  Raw Materials / Interviewing Techniques / Attribution
- **PREP:** Read chapters 4 and 5 of Elements of Journalism
- **PREP:** Read chapter 1 of The Art and Craft of Feature Writing
- **PREP:** Come to class with 10 suggested names for our publication
- **PREP:** Come to class with 10 magazine issue themes pulled from your assigned publications
- **IN CLASS:** Interview Exercise

M 2/16  News Briefs / Feuilletons / and Other Short, News-y Magazine Stuff
- **PREP:** Read chapters 9, 10 and 11 of Elements of Journalism
- **PREP:** Come to class prepared to talk about your ideas for the three pieces you’ll write for this class
- **IN CLASS:** Finding Stories Exercise

M 2/23  Deep Research / Investigative Reporting / Media Law
- **PREP:** Read chapters 6, 7 and 8 of Elements of Journalism
- **IN CLASS:** TBA

(please note that the first draft of Article #1 is due to the group by Friday night)

M 3/2  Long Form Interviews / Workshop Article #1
- **PREP:** Read chapters 2, 3 and 4 of The Art and Craft of Feature Writing
- **PREP:** Come to class prepared to talk about your peers’ work
- **IN CLASS:** The Artful Questions Exercise
**M 3/9**  Profiles / Editorials and Reviews / Story Check-ins

- **PREP:** Read chapters 5 and 6 of The Art and Craft of Feature Writing
- **PREP:** Final draft of Article #1 due

**NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK**

**M 3/23**  Features

- **PREP:** Read chapters 7, 8 and 9 of The Art and Craft of Feature Writing
- **PREP:** Student-led discussion on current articles of choosing
- **PREP:** Interview due – please note that you only submit one draft of this piece

**M 3/30**  Visual Engagement: Photo-stories, Data visualizations and the Power of Publication Design

- **PREP:** Student-led discussion on current articles of choosing
- **PREP:** Article #2 due – please note that you only submit one draft of this piece
- **IN CLASS:** TBA

**M 4/6**  Pitching Your Articles as a Freelancer / Using Journalism skills in PR and Marketing

- **PREP:** Student-led discussion on current articles of choosing
- **IN CLASS:** TBA

**M 4/13**  No Class / Individual Conferences with Your Professor

- **PREP:** Make sure you signed up for a meeting slot with me!
- **PREP:** Come to the meeting with a detailed outline of your piece – indexed à la Wall Street Journal Method

(please note that the first draft of Feature Article is due to the group by Friday night)

**M 4/20**  Campus Publication Panel / Workshop Feature Articles

- **PREP:** Come to class having read and commented on your peers’ drafts
- **PREP:** Come to class with five questions to ask the panel about the current state of campus media
Student Presentations

- PREP: Come to class prepared to present your vision for the new publication

Exam Day Final Feature Article Due