COMM 215
Fundamentals of Journalism
Fall 2015
MWF 8:00-8:50 a.m., Taylor 104

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Office Hours MWF 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
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FSU Policy on Electronic Mail: Fayetteville State University provides to each student, free of charge, an electronic mail account (username@uncfsu.edu) that is easily accessible via the Internet. The university has established FSU email as the primary mode of correspondence between university officials and enrolled students. Inquiries and requests from students pertaining to academic records, grades, bills, financial aid, and other matters of a confidential nature must be submitted via FSU email. Inquiries or requests from personal email accounts are not assured a response. The university maintains open-use computer laboratories throughout the campus that can be used to access electronic mail. Rules and regulations governing the use of FSU email may be found at http://www.uncfsu.edu/PDFs/EmailPolicyFinal.pdf

Visiting me during my office hours or scheduling an appointment offers the best and most immediate way for me to answer your questions or address your concerns. The easiest way for you to contact me, other than my office hours, is by email. I will respond to your email within 24 hours (unless I receive your message after 5:00 p.m. on Friday or during a university holiday or break). If you email me after 6:00 p.m. the night before an assignment is due with a question about that assignment, I cannot guarantee to answer that question. Plan accordingly. Your e-mail correspondence to me should be more formal rather than less formal. The text of your e-mail should state who you are, which course you are enrolled in, and why you are writing. You may call me on my cell during business hours (9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.) with questions as well. Do not text me. I will not respond.

Required Materials

Recommended Materials
A news habit.


I will also post additional resources online throughout the semester.

Course Description - This course presents the history and development of American journalism from colonial times to the present while focusing on its relationship to technical, political, social, and technological changes in America. Specific attention will be paid to events resulting in constraints to the media, attitudes of government toward the media, changes influenced by journalists and trends in journalism.

Rationale: This course is intended to give a broad background in the profession of journalism. It is intended to give students an understanding of the industry, the basic tools to research and report the news, and the ability to critically evaluate the news they consume. The course will blend history, theory, media criticism, and journalistic application to give students a full picture of both media criticism and producing news.

Student Learning Outcomes: As a result of taking this course, the student will:
1. Understand the basic history and social function of journalism and news.
2. Begin to develop journalistic skills such as writing, editing, and research.
3. Learn to use critical thinking skills in evaluating both the news and news-producing practices.
4. Locate, evaluate and use credible, reputable sources for writing and research.
5. Demonstrate improved written skills for print and new media, including awareness of spelling, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and word usage.

**Attendance and Participation:**

Up to one week of unexcused absences are permitted with no penalty for final grade. **Beyond one week of classes, each absence will lower your final grade by one percentage point.** Students are responsible for ALL work covered during any missed classes.

In this course, learning is enhanced significantly when students attend class regularly and prepare for and participate in class discussions.

Attendance will be taken at every class meeting.

Excused absences can only be granted by the instructor and will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Excused absences are generally only granted for documented illness or a death in the family. Documentation, such as a physician’s note or death announcement, will be required for an absence to be excused. **Documentation must be provided to the instructor the class period following an unexcused absence.** Any assignment that is missed during an unexcused absence will result in a score of zero.

If you have a valid medical or other reason to miss multiple classes, I ask that you maintain communication with me either by email or in person regarding whether certain absences are a result of those reasons. If you don’t talk to me, I don’t know.

Tardiness is unprofessional. Being late will negatively impact your participation grade. If you are late to class, it is your responsibility to enter the classroom in an appropriate manner and time that is not disruptive. If you are late to class, you are responsible for informing the instructor at the end of class period that you are in attendance. I do monitor incidents of lateness as well as attendance. Habitual lateness will be penalized in your participation grade because it is extremely disruptive to the class and impolite to come in late.

Your participation grade for the semester will be based on: your participation in class discussions, paying attention to presentations/lecture, arriving to class on time, and/or not disrupting class.

**Assignment:**

**History Paper/Presentation:** In the first half of the semester, you will write a paper about one major figure in journalism history (I will provide a list for you to pick a person). You will need to provide a brief biographical essay, including why the person was important to the history of journalism. You will also need to connect that essay to theoretical concepts from class. You will also give a brief, informal presentation to the class of your paper.

**Provided Story Assignments:** During the last part of the semester, you will write three stories composed completely of information you receive in class. Media critique requires a deep knowledge, including the experiential experience of producing news. The purpose of these assignments is to get students accustomed to news writing and style outside of information gathering.

**Original Story Assignment:** The final step in the media producing stage is to produce one original journalism article about the campus. The article should illustrate your knowledge of journalism practices and news values.

**Exams:** There will be a midterm and a final based primarily on the history and theory portions of the course.

**Publication Extra Credit:** Journalistic work you do outside class this semester may qualify for extra credit. You can publish through student media, such as The Voice, or outside the campus community, such as through an internship. Online publication will qualify, but personal blogs do not. If you provide evidence of substantial participation in broadcast media, it may qualify pending approval by the instructor.

**Miscellaneous:** The course instructor has the right to assign additional homework, administer planned or "pop" quizzes, and/or graded in-class activities. I have many of these assignments already listed on the schedule; however, I will use this
category as I gauge the pace and needs of the class. Any homework, in-class assignments or non-“pop” quizzes not already listed in the schedule will be announced in class and on Blackboard with at least a week’s notice.

**Assessment (based on 540 points maximum score):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and Participation</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provided Stories</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original Story</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History Paper/Presentation</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>150</td>
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</table>

**Written Work:**
Each written assignment should be neatly typed and be in an appropriate format. Errors in grammar and style will count against you in written assignments. You should always keep a back up copy of your written work.

**Grading and Evaluation:**
The Fayetteville State University grading policy is as follows:

- A – “Exceptionally High”
- B – “Good”
- C – “Satisfactory”
- D – “Marginally Passing”
- F – “Failing”

For each assignment, students are expected to fulfill the requirements of the assignment. These requirements, as well as detailed criteria for each assignment will be provided. Assignments that simply meet the stated criteria will be evaluated in the “C” range (average to fair), “B” range (good) means work meets all of the requirements/criteria and exceeds in several areas, and “A” range (excellent) work excels expectations in all areas. “D” work (below average) work exhibits failure to meet expectations in one or more areas, and failing work is deficient in multiple areas.

In my class, A grades result from truly exceptional work. C is average work, meaning much work will fall into this category. I do not consider a C to be a “bad” grade. Grades are a teaching tool. They are meant to check your progress and inspire you to work harder and reward work that reflects both effort and knowledge from class.

*All of your grades will be posted on Blackboard. It is important that you frequently check your grades.*

Questions regarding individual grades will not be entertained during class time or via email. If you have a question about a specific grade, a meeting with the instructor during her/his office hours should be arranged. Students should wait 24 hours after receiving a grade and thoroughly read the comments/evaluation prior to scheduling a meeting. Concerns or questions regarding a specific grade should be brought to the instructor’s attention within one week of receiving the grade.

**Course Policies and Procedures:**

**Due Dates:**
One of the most important jobs for a journalist is getting the story done by **deadline**. In the real world, missing deadlines can result in being fired. As a result, I adhere to a strict due date policy.

Assignments are due at the start of class and by hard copy unless otherwise specified.

Late work will be accepted the following class period with a 20% penalty. Any work turned in after that will receive a zero. Late work resulting from excused absences will be treated on a case-by-case basis.

The instructor reserves the right to modify the course schedule during the semester. Students will be made aware of those changes as the course progresses.
Ethical Student Conduct:
“Acts of dishonesty in any work constitute academic misconduct. Such acts include cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation, fabrication of information, and abetting any of the above. Plagiarism in particular presents pitfalls to be avoided: failure to document any words, ideas, or other contributions that do not originate with the author constitutes plagiarism. Widespread use of the World Wide Web (Internet) requires particular attention to proper documentation practices. Individual course syllabi offer additional clarification about requirements for proper documentation. Actions outlined in the Fayetteville State University Student Handbook under Disciplinary System and Procedures will be followed for incidents of academic misconduct. The handbook may be obtained from the Office of Student Affairs located in the Collins Administration Building. Non-disclosure or misrepresentation on applications and other university records will make students liable for disciplinary action, including possible expulsion from the university.”

Plagiarism is a serious matter for journalists. Countless numbers of talented and intelligent reporters have had their careers ruined for “cutting corners.” It’s not worth it. Don’t do it.

All graded assignments, quizzes, and tests are to be completed individually unless otherwise noted in writing in the syllabus. Any violation of FSU’s policy on academic dishonesty will be handled through the University’s resolution policy. For more information on this policy, refer to the FSU Student Handbook: http://www.uncfsu.edu/handbook

Class Cancellation:
In case of inclement weather, be sure to check the Fayetteville State University website and your university email for closings or cancellations. As I commute, if the University does not close and I cannot make it in, I will notify the class via email at least 2 hours prior to class.

Religious Holidays:
If you will be observing any religious holidays this semester which will prevent you from attending a regularly scheduled class or interfere with fulfilling any course requirement, your instructor will offer you an opportunity to make up the class or course requirement if you make arrangements by informing your instructor of the dates of your religious holidays within two weeks of the beginning of the semester (or three days before any holidays which fall within the first two weeks of class).

Disabled Student Services:
In accordance with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ACA) of 1990, if you have a disability or think you have a disability to please contact the Center for Personal Development in the Spaulding Building, Room 155 (1st Floor); 910-672-1203.

Title IX – Sexual Misconduct:
Fayetteville State University (University) is committed to fostering a safe campus environment where sexual misconduct — including sexual harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking - is unacceptable and is not tolerated. The University encourages students who may have experienced sexual misconduct to speak with someone at the University so that the University can provide the support that is needed and respond appropriately. The Sexual Misconduct policy can be found at the following link: http://www.uncfsu.edu/Documents/Policy/students/SexualMisconduct.pdf

Consulting with a Health Care Professional - A student who wishes to confidentially speak about an incident of sexual misconduct should contact either of the following individuals who are required to maintain confidentiality:

Ms. Dionne Hall
Licensed Professional Counselor
Spaulding Building, Room 167
(910) 672-2167
dhall9@uncfsu.edu

Ms. Linda Melvin
Director, Student Health Services
Spaulding Building, Room 121
(910) 672-1454
lmelvin@uncfsu.edu

Reporting an Incident of Sexual Misconduct - The University encourages students to report incidents of sexual misconduct. A student who wishes to report sexual misconduct or has questions about University policies and procedures regarding sexual misconduct should contact the following individual:

Title IX Coordinator
Barber Building, Room 242
(910) 672-1141
Unlike the Licensed Professional Counselor or the Director of Student Health Services, the Deputy Title IX Coordinator is legally obligated to investigate reports of sexual misconduct, and therefore cannot guarantee confidentiality, but a request for confidentiality will be considered and respected to the extent possible.

Students are also encouraged to report incidents of sexual misconduct to the University’s Police and Public Safety Department at (910) 672-1911.
Student Agreement and Information Sheet

Name (please print): __________________________________________

I agree that I have read and understand the policies for COMM 215, including:

- The attendance policy that I am allowed three unexcused absences and every absence after that will result in a percentage point off my final grade
- The late work policy that late work will be accepted the class after it is due for a 20% penalty and not at all after that class.
- The plagiarism policy that any form of use of another’s intellectual property without proper citation constitutes plagiarism and will result in a meeting with the chair of the communication, languages, and cultures department, a possible automatic zero for the assignment, zero for the course, and referral to Academic Integrity Board.

Signature: ________________________________________________________

Previous Experience in Journalism:

What I hope to get out of this course:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Assignment/Readings Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week One</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, August 19&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Class introduction and syllabus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, August 21&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>What is news?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>History and Theory</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week Two</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, August 24&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Newspapers from Colonial to the Penny Press Read Campbell, Martin, and Fabos Ch. 3 (on BB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, August 26&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Newspapers from Colonial to the Penny Press Read “The End of Objectivity” (link on BB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, August, 28&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Objectivity Read Excerpt from Croteau and Hoynes Ch. 2 (pp. 59-70, on BB)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week Three</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, August 31&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Advertising and the News Read Excerpt from Croteau and Hoynes Ch. 2 (pp. 59-70, on BB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, September 2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Rise of Broadcast News and Reign of Broadcast News Read “The Transformation of Network News” (link on BB)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, September 4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Rise of Broadcast News and Reign of Broadcast News Read “Covering Watergate” (on BB)</td>
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<td><strong>Week Four</strong></td>
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<td>Wednesday, September 9&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Investigative Journalism and the Watchdog Function Read “Covering Watergate” (on BB)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, September 11&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Agenda Setting Read “Covering Watergate” (on BB)</td>
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*Labor Day Break – Sept. 7*
Week Five
Monday, September 14th
News Images
_AHA: Reading Response_
Read “Martin Luther King Jr.’s 1963 Campaign as an Image Event” (on BB)

Wednesday, September 16th
News Images
Read Response due
Read “Of Pixels and Paradox” (on BB)

Friday, September 18th
Image Manipulation
Read “Why I Left News”

Week Six
Monday, September 21st
24 Hour News Cycle
_AHA: Cable News Analysis_
Read “Of Pixels and Paradox” (on BB)

Wednesday, September 23rd
24 Hour News Cycle
_AHA: Cable News Analysis due_

Friday, September 25th
Infotainment

Week Seven
Monday, September 28th
The Internet Age
Read Ch. 3

Wednesday, September 30th
Media Fragmentation and Consolidation
Read Ch. 2

Friday, October 2nd
Social Media and News
Read “The Twitter Explosion” (link on BB)

Week Eight
Monday, October 5th
Citizen Journalism
ICE: Comparing Citizen Journalism
Read “Who’s Reporting the Protests” (on BB)

Wednesday, October 7th
History Paper Discussion
History Paper due

Friday, October 9th
Cultivation

Week Nine
Monday, October 12th
Gender and the news
Read “Voicing Women’s Experience,” “Making a Place in Spite of Obstacles,” and “Stunt Reporters and Sob Sisters” (on BB)

Wednesday, October 14th
Midterm Exam

Week Ten
Monday, October 19th
Race and the news
Read “Race and Poverty in America” (on BB)

Fall Break – Oct. 15-16
**Producing News**

Wednesday, October 21st

News values

**ICE: Evaluating news articles**

AHA: Bring in News Article

Friday, October 23rd

Mechanics of Journalism

**ICE: Mapping news articles**

Read Ch. 9

**Week Eleven**

Monday, October 26th

Lead Writing

AHA: Lead Writing

Wednesday, October 28th

Principles of Writing

**ICE: Evaluating Leads**

AHA: Lead Writing Due

Friday, October 30th

Interviewing

*Provided Story 1 (In Class Interview)*

Read Ch. 4

**Week Twelve**

Monday, November 2nd

Sources and Attribution

Read Ch. 5

Wednesday, November 4th

Information Gathering and Sources

AHA: Research Scavenger Hunt

Friday, November 6th

**Provided Story 1 Discussion**

**Week Thirteen**

Monday, November 9th

Veterans’ Day Holiday

Wednesday, November 11th

Meetings, News Conferences and Speeches

*Provided Story 2*

AHA: Research Scavenger Hunt Due

Friday, November 13th

News Value in Meetings and Speeches

**ICE: Finding an Angle**

**Week Fourteen**

Monday, November 16th

**Provided Story 2 Discussion**

Wednesday, November 18th

Accident Stories

*Provided Story 3*

Read Ch. 16

Friday, November 20th

Crime and Court Stories

**ICE: Legal Language and News**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday, November 23rd</td>
<td>Provided Story 3 Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Original Story</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, November 25th</td>
<td>Law</td>
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<td><em>Read Ch. 21</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Thanksgiving Break Nov. 26-27</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week Sixteen</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, November 30th</td>
<td><em>Original Story Discussion</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Ethics</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>ICE: Ethical Dilemmas</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, December 2nd</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Final Exam TBD</td>
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