

Journalism 415

Multimedia Reporting

Fall 2016

Instructors

Barbara Barnett
barnettb@ku.edu
Lab – Stauffer Flint 107

Jon Niccum
jniccum@ku.edu
Lab – Stauffer Flint 105

Class meeting times

Tuesdays, 4-5:15 p.m. (lecture)
Thursdays, 4-5:15 p.m. (labs)

Why you're here

This class will help you become a skilled reporter and storyteller. You'll learn to seek out credible sources, gather facts, analyze information, and present your stories using a variety of multimedia formats.

What you'll learn

In this class, you'll learn to:

- Develop sound news judgment.
- Conceptualize stories and how best to tell them using all media – text, images and sound.
- Understand story sourcing, emphasizing the inclusion of diverse voices.
- Practice pro-active reporting and improve interviewing techniques.
- Learn to recognize the unique needs of all audiences (people of color, religions, ethnic backgrounds, lifestyles, etc.) and meet those needs.
- Explore data acquisition and analysis.
- Expand critical thinking skills.
- Practice journalism ethically.

What you'll do

In this class, you'll:

- Create accurate, descriptive, publishable news reports based on your original, multi-source reporting.
- Use a variety of writing styles and multiple forms of media to tell stories in complementary ways.
- Demonstrate awareness of diversity of ideas as well as diversity of gender, race, ethnicity and orientation through inclusiveness in reporting and storytelling.
- Report and present your stories ethically.
- Think critically and creatively about how to present information.
- Learn to apply First Amendment principles to reporting and presenting news.

After successfully completing this course you will be able to:

- Generate story ideas, develop and interview sources, produce publishable work meeting common professional standards.
- Be effective in your use of multiple forms of media including text, images, audio, video and graphics.
- Produce accurate, balanced, concise, and compelling online storytelling
- Add to your professional portfolio.
- Start building your “personal brand,” thinking about what makes you unique and what special skills and knowledge you can bring to journalism.

How the course will work

We'll meet twice a week. On Tuesdays, we will meet for a group lecture. On Thursdays, we'll meet in a lab, where you'll work on stories, get one-on-one instruction, critique each others' work, and brainstorm ideas. You need to attend both since some of the information we discuss in lecture will be necessary for you to complete assignments. If you are sick and cannot attend class, you need to let your professor know in advance.

You'll be working on deadline, and that means you must turn in completed assignments on time. If you miss a deadline, you won't get a grade on that assignment. Broken computers or printers, lost thumb drives, problems with software, surprise visits from friends and family are not acceptable excuses.

In an extremely rare circumstance, you might be able to get a deadline extension. Your lab instructor is the only person to make the decision to grant an extension. Requests must be made well before the original deadline. Do not expect an extension to be granted at the time of the original deadline. Technical problems rarely constitute a valid reason for an extension.

Grades

You will complete assignments each week, and sometimes you will be working on multiple assignments at the same time. Some of your assignments will require a quick turn around. For others, you'll have a longer time to gather and present information.

Deadlines will be announced in advance.

The professors will make every effort to grade your projects quickly and give you constructive feedback to help you improve your work. Here's how your work will be evaluated.

General grading criteria

“A” range -- Outstanding

Professional quality work. The work demonstrates quality in content and presentation. The writing is clear and well-organized. Any videos, audios, or images are easy-to-understand and technically sound. The reporting is thorough and leaves no significant questions unanswered. The facts are accurate, and the student has used credible sources. This work shows exceptional creativity. There are no significant errors in grammar, punctuation, or writing style. This work is ready to be published or broadcast.

“B” range -- Good

Above average quality work. The project demonstrates quality in technique and content presentation. The project shows a good effort to approach the topic and presentation creatively. However, there's

room for improvement—a stronger topic or subject, a more creative presentation, better information, or improved writing. There may be a minor factual error. There may be minor errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation and style. However, there is nothing so significant, it prevents the reader/viewer from understanding the story. This story could be broadcast or published with a few revisions.

“C” range -- Adequate

This is acceptable, but the quality is average. The work shows little effort to approach the topic creatively or critically. There are significant factual errors. Sources are inadequate or not credible. There are numerous unanswered questions. The work needs significant revision in at least one major area. Writing has rough spots, and there are major grammar and style errors. Reporting may be incomplete. This work needs significant revision before publication or broadcast.

“D” range -- Unacceptable

Back to the drawing board. The reporting is incomplete. Sources are not credible. The writing is confused and ungrammatical. The reporting is flawed and contains major factual errors and/or omissions or shows little concept of basic news judgment. This project could not be published or broadcast without starting over.

“F” range – Fail

There are major problems with technique, content, creativity. Don't. Do. This.

Your final grade for this class will be a letter grade. Here's the grading scale.

93 – 100 = A	90 – 92 = A-
87 – 89 = B+	83 – 86 = B
80 – 82 = B-	77 – 79 = C+
73 – 76 = C	70 – 72 = C-
67 – 69 = D+	63 – 66 = D
60 – 62 = D-	59 or below = F

News/Information majors must have a C or better in this class before they can move on to upper-level skills courses. A grade of C- or lower means you must retake the course.

Required books and materials

- Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual, online or bound
- Digital recorder (if you don't have one, speak to your professor)
- Access to Dictionary.com www.dictionary.com
- SD card for video cameras

Recommended books

- The Digital Journalist's Handbook, by Mark S. Luckie, ISBN 1450565603

Daily readings

One of the best ways to become a good reporter is read, watch what other reporters are doing. In addition to any assigned readings, we suggest you read The Lawrence Journal-World (<http://www.ljworld.com/>), The University Daily Kansan (www.kansan.com), Kansas City Star (<http://www.kansascity.com/>), and The New York Times (www.nytimes.com). We don't expect you to read each paper in-depth each day, but we do expect you to keep up with important news stories. In addition to keeping you informed, this will help you generate story ideas and will help you see the types of storytelling we expect.

Professionalism and class behavior

In this class, and in all journalism classes, honesty and integrity are crucial. Any work you do must be original, and reflect your own ideas, thoughts, and research. In a work setting, if you choose to violate professional standards, you will be fired. In this class, if you choose to violate the standards for academic integrity, you will fail the course, and you might be expelled from or denied admission to the School of Journalism.

Please be aware that the William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications does not tolerate plagiarism, fabrication of evidence and falsification of evidence. Penalties for plagiarism, fabrication or falsification can include a failing grade for this course and expulsion from the School of Journalism and Mass Communications. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, please consult the professor(s) of this course, but here are some clarifications.

Plagiarism

Knowingly presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgement of the source). The sole exception to the requirement of acknowledging sources is when the information or ideas are common knowledge.

Fabrication and falsification

Unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

Also, to make the class run smoothly:

- When you're in lecture and lab, turn off cell phones and computers unless the professor asks you to use them.
- Don't wander in and out of class. Once you get here, be prepared to stay unless there's an emergency.
- Keep personal conversations to a minimum.

Special needs?

The KU Office of Student Access Services coordinates accommodations and services for all students who are eligible. You will need to provide documentation to the office, and a staff member will contact me. If you have a disability for which you wish to request accommodations and have not contacted this office, please do so as soon as possible. Information about services can be found at: <https://access.ku.edu/> Or you can visit the office at 22 Strong Hall. The phone number is: 785-864-4064 or email: achieve@ku.edu. Please contact me privately regarding your needs in this course.

Diversity

In this class, it is important that you feel comfortable expressing ideas and opinions. We welcome and encourage you to share differing perspectives and diverse experiences and to be respectful of others whose viewpoints and experiences may not be the same as your own.

Copying or recording classroom lectures

Video and audio recording of lectures without instructor consent is prohibited. However, there may be times when the professors ask you to record a class, a lecture, or a speech. Unless the instructor gives explicit permission, recordings of lectures may not be modified and must not be transferred or transmitted to any other person, whether or not that individual is enrolled in the course.

How to contact the professors

We are happy to talk with you to give advice and feedback. The best way to contact us is by email.

How we'll contact you

We'll communicate with you using your KU email. Check your emails often. We won't text or call you.

Using Blackboard

The course Blackboard site is: <http://courseware.ku.edu>

We'll post grades there (only you will be able to see them). We'll post assignment directions on Blackboard, and we may post course readings from time to time.

Check Blackboard frequently.

Some last words

- Be careful.
- Be skeptical.
- Be accurate.
- Be thorough.
- Have fun!

Draft Schedule

Here's our tentative schedule for the semester. We may change some topics/assignments, but we'll announce that in advance in class and through Blackboard. Also, please be aware that the two labs may decide to pursue different projects as the semester goes on, depending on student needs and interests. Only your lab instructor can make a change for your lab. Don't assume a change in one lab means a change in both labs.

Week 1

Aug. 23 – Lecture. Introduction to class and what's expected? Why study reporting? What is news? Why do people need journalism?

Aug. 25 – Lab. Interviews. Writing accurately, making it interesting.

Week 2

Aug. 30 – Lecture. Constructing a story. What is the difference between an advance and reaction story? Between news and features? How do you evaluate sources? Where do you find primary and secondary sources?

Sept. 1 – Lab. Lead slam. Writing good intros for print, broadcast, and audio.

Week 3

Sept. 6 – Lecture. Covering a speech.

Sept. 8 – Lab. Reporting and writing about a speech.

Week 4

Sept. 13 – Lecture. How to cover a press conference.

Sept. 15 – Lab. Reporting and writing about the press conference.

Week 5

Sept. 20 – Lecture. How to cover a live event.

Sept. 22 – Lab. Writing about a live event, getting reaction.

Week 6

Sept. 27 – Lecture. Infographics. How to transform your reporting into a visual.

Sept. 29 – Lab. How to make infographics tell a story that's simple, accurate, and interesting.

Week 7

Oct. 4 – Lecture. Podcasts. How to tell a story with audio.

Oct. 6 – Lab. Work on podcasts—scripts and audio.

Week 8

Oct. 11 – Fall break.

Oct. 13 – No class, one-on-one meetings with professors to start brainstorming about final projects. Profs. Barnett and Niccum will arrange.

Week 9

Oct. 18 – Lecture. One story, many sides. How do you cover multiple aspects of one story? How do you tell that story with photos?

Oct. 20 – Lab. Plan, work on photo essays about KU homecoming.

Week 10

Oct. 25 – Lecture. How do we tell a story with video (and audio)? How do we report with a camera? How do we write to video? How do we incorporate natural sound and sound bites?

Oct. 27 – Lab. Work in teams of two or three to prepare a three- to five-minute video.

Week 11

Nov. 1 – Lecture. Reporting on the elections. How to cover chaos.

Nov. 3 – Lab. Work on an advance story about local, state, or presidential elections.

Week 12

Nov. 8 – No lecture. Students will turn in a breaking news election story, with three photos, by midnight.

Nov. 10 – Lab. Election dissection. What did we learn about covering the elections?

Week 13

Nov. 15 – Lecture. How do you cover a complex story? How do you write it simply?

Nov. 17 – Lab. Students will report on a health-science topic, then write about it simply. Students will prepare and include an infographic.

Week 14

Nov. 22 – No class.

Nov. 24 – Thanksgiving.

Week 15

Nov. 29 – Lecture. TBA.

Dec. 1 – Lab. TBA.

Week 16

Dec. 6 – Lecture. Getting ready for the final project. In lecture we discuss what makes a good final project.

Dec. 8 – Last lab; students discuss ideas for final projects.

Final projects are due **Dec. 13 by 5 p.m.**

Assignments, Deadlines, and Points

This is a tentative schedule. Any changes will be announced well in advance.

Assignment	What's due	Assigned On...	Deadline	Points
Interview	Written article	Aug. 22	Aug. 25 in lab	25
Covering a speech	Written article	Sept. 6	Sept. 8 in lab	50
Covering a press conference	Written article	Sept. 13	Sept. 15 in lab	50
Covering a live event	Written article	Sept. 20	Sept. 27 by 4 p.m.	50
Preparing an infographic	Infographic	Sept. 27	Oct. 4 by 4 p.m.	50
Preparing a podcast	1-minute audio	Oct. 4	Oct. 7 (By 5 p.m. Friday before fall break)	50
Covering homecoming	Photo essay with five to seven photos and detailed captions	Oct. 18	Oct. 25 by 4 p.m.	75
Preparing video	Three- to five-minute video package. Turn in script and video.	Oct. 25	Nov. 1 by 4 p.m.	100
Election advance story	Written article	Nov. 1	Nov. 7 by 4 p.m.	100
Election breaking news	Written article, plus three photos	Nov. 1	Nov. 8 by midnight	150
Complex story	Written article, plus infographic	Nov. 15	Nov. 29 by 4 p.m.	150
TBA assignment	Written article	Nov. 29	Dec. 1 in lab	150
Final project	Written article, video package, infographic		Dec. 13 by 5 p.m.	300
Attendance				100
Total points				1,400

Calculating final grades

To determine your final grade, we will divide the total number of points for the class by the total number of points you have earned. For example, if you earned 1,200 points in the class, your grade would be 85.7. If you earned 1,000 points, your class grade would be 71.4. If your grade ends in .5 or higher, it will be rounded up to the next number. This means, if you earned an 85.7, your grade will be rounded up to 86. If your grade was 71.4, it remains 71.