

# J415: Multimedia Reporting

Spring 2020



**Lecture:** 3-4:15 Mondays in Dole 2092

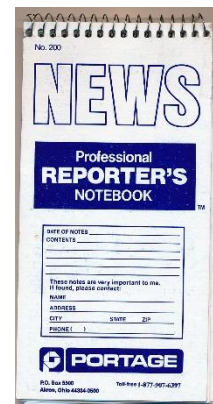
**Lab:** 3-4:15 Wednesdays in Dole 2092 (Wolgast) and SF 206 (Finneman)

Welcome to our newsroom! The goal of this class is to prepare you for how the real world of daily journalism works so that you feel prepared for an internship and learn the foundation of what a career in this industry involves.

In this class, you will learn how a newsroom functions and will need to pitch ideas, report on deadline, work in a team, think critically, revise copy and create multimedia like real reporters. This is a working class with the goal to improve your writing, your news judgment and your multimedia skills by the end of the semester. We will bring in multiple guest speakers who are potential future employers and wish for you to take advantage of the opportunities the class offers to build your resume and make you a strong job candidate.

**By the end of the semester, you should be able to ...**

- Collect information ethically and accurately.
- Analyze and synthesize information from multiple sources.
- Construct informative stories.
- Tell stories using text, images and sound.
- Generate ideas for stories that are newsworthy, informative, clear and concise.
- Develop stories that present information accurately and fairly, including multiple perspectives from diverse audiences.
- Report and prepare materials on deadline.



## Coursework

- Twitter scavenger hunt: 30 points
- Observation assignment: 30 points
- Interview assignment: 50 points
- Newsroom visits paper: 30 points
- News & social media critiques: 80 points
- AP Quizzes: 60 points
- AP Test: 40 points
- Seven pitches: 70 points
- Five stories: 500 points
- Video package: 40 points
- Job call: 30 points
- Final portfolio & learned paper: 40 points
- Total: 1,000 points

## Your Professors

*Steve Wolgast*  
[wolgast@ku.edu](mailto:wolgast@ku.edu)

Office: SF 207C  
Office hours: TH 11-12:30  
Weds 1-2 or by appt.



*Teri Finneman*  
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Office: SF 209D  
Office: 1-3 M 11-1 W or by appt.

Professor Wolgast, the Knight Chair in Audience and Community Engagement for News and professor of the practice of journalism, has two decades of professional experience. He started his career as a photographer at the Topeka Capital-Journal, worked as a reporter at The Baltic Independent in Tallinn, Estonia, and as an editor at the Casper (Wyo.) Star-Tribune and The Times-Picayune in New Orleans. He became a newsroom manager at the Akron Beacon Journal, a Knight-Ridder newspaper, and from there worked as an editor at The New York Times for nine years.

Dr. Finneman has worked as a reporter, multimedia correspondent and social media editor. She spent most of her career working for the Fargo Forum. She was a multimedia Capitol correspondent for Forum Communications' four North Dakota daily newspapers and two TV stations. She has worked for more than a dozen newspapers and four TV stations, as well as for ABC News and the Center for Public Integrity in D.C. She is executive producer and co-host of the Journalism History podcast and produced a journalism documentary.

## How to succeed in the course:

- Attend class and ask questions. This course is training you how to be a professional and is, therefore, the equivalent of reporting to work. You are permitted one unexcused absence of any kind. After one, you will receive a 10-point grade deduction per absence to your total points at the end of the semester. If you are absent, you may not make up what you missed and must ask a classmate for notes. Excused exceptions include a doctor's note, funeral program or authorized university activity.
- Take notes in class. Consult these notes as you do your assignments. Class notes will be handwritten since journalists must be able to take notes. Electronics are not permitted in class unless specific accommodations are required or unless there are in-class assignments.
- Attend your instructors' editing advice office hours to help you improve on future assignments.

- Dress professionally while out on assignment. Do background research and be prepared for your interviews. No emailed interviews are allowed without instructor permission.
- Turn in assignments on time. Assignments are due by 3 p.m. sharp Wednesdays. Late work (starting at 3:01 p.m.) will not be accepted. Deadlines in this field are strict for a reason: to get the news product out on time. The broadcast starts at 6 p.m., not 6:01.
- Turn in original work. You may not use anyone else's material in your assignments, i.e. you cannot use others' photography, interviews, video footage, etc. All of your work must be created by you. All work must be original to this class. You can submit it to student media/other media after you hand in your material for class. If you have questions, please ask your instructor.

## Grading

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.

**NOTE:** Revisions – 5 more points will be added to your story grade if you complete the revisions from your instructor and hand the revised story back in within one week.

**NOTE:** Any questions/complaints/etc. about grades must be made within one week of receiving the grade. After that, the grade is final.

**NOTE:** There are two extra credit opportunities in this class. One is to attend the Career F air March 5. The second is to attend Kansas City media tours on Friday, March 27. Each is worth 15 points of extra credit, or 30 potential points total.

## Story Accuracy Rubric

Fact/accuracy errors: (e.g. wrong city, person, or address; misuse of facts or other important fact; attributing wrong person to information or quotes, either direct or indirect).

Before spring break -5 percent

After spring break -10 percent

Misspelled name of person or city or organization, etc.:

Before spring break -15 percent

After spring break -30 percent

Misspelled words:

Before spring break - 2 percent per word

After spring break - 5 percent

AP Style, grammar and punctuation errors: (also quotation style errors)

Before spring break - 2 percent per error

After spring break - 5 percent

## Assignment Schedule

Week	Assignment	Deadline
1		
2	News Critique/Twitter hunt/Interview Pitch	3 p.m. Wednesday
3	NC/Observation/Story Pitch 1/AP Quiz	3 p.m. Wednesday
4	NC/Interview Due	3 p.m. Wednesday
5	NC/Story1/Story Pitch2/AP Quiz	3 p.m. Wednesday
6	NC	3 p.m. Wednesday
7	NC/Story2/Story Pitch3	3 p.m. Wednesday
8	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>
9	Story Pitch 4/AP Quiz/ Newsroom Paper	3 p.m. Wednesday
10	Social Media Critique/ Story 3/AP Quiz	3 p.m. Wednesday
11	SMC/Pkg Pitch	3 p.m. Wednesday
12	Story Pitch 5/Story4/ AP Quiz	3 p.m. Wednesday
13	Video Pkg	3 p.m. Wednesday
14	Story 5	3 p.m. Wednesday
15	AP Test/Job Call	3 p.m. Wednesday
16	Final portfolio/paper	3 p.m. Wednesday

**\*\*Please note we are visiting newsrooms in Lawrence and Topeka Feb. 12 and March 4 that will extend normal lab time. Adjust your work schedule accordingly. Visit with your instructor if there is an issue.**

# Course Schedule

Below is a breakdown of the course schedule, which is subject to change:

## **Week 1**

Wednesday, Jan. 22

Class Introduction/What is News?/Weeks 2&3 Items Assigned/Media Ethics Briefing/Intro Paper

## **Week 2**

Monday, Jan. 27

Covering a Beat: Interviewing

Wednesday, Jan. 29

Story Idea Brainstorming, Pitching, AP Style Review

## **Week 3**

Monday, Feb. 3

Covering a Beat: Speeches, Meetings & Events

Wednesday, Feb. 5

Covering a Beat: Business. AP Quiz. Observation Sharing.

## **Week 4**

Monday, Feb. 10

Covering a Beat: Social Media & Photography Basics

Wednesday, Feb. 12

Lawrence Journal-World newsroom tour

## **Week 5**

Monday, Feb. 17

Covering a Beat: Broadcast Fundamentals

Wednesday, Feb. 19  
Newsroom Planning/Equipment Practice/AP Quiz

**Week 6**

Monday, Feb. 24  
Covering a Beat: Feature Writing

Wednesday, Feb. 26  
Premiere Training (Clarkson)

**Week 7**

Monday, March 2  
Covering a Beat: Enterprise Stories, Government & Schools

Wednesday, March 4  
Topeka KSNT TV station tour

**Week 8**  
SPRING BREAK

**Week 9**  
Monday, March 16  
Podcasting/Broadcast Review

Wednesday, March 18  
Professor Wild Card Day. AP Quiz.

**Week 10**

Monday, March 23  
Covering a Beat: Sports  
Wednesday, March 25  
Story Pitch Newsroom Time/Finding Journalism Jobs/AP Quiz

**Week 11**

Monday, March 30  
Covering a Beat: Investigative & Data Journalism

Wednesday, April 1  
Open Records Panel

## **Week 12**

Monday, April 6

Covering a Beat: Reporting with Numbers

Wednesday, April 8

Newsroom Planning/AP Quiz

## **Week 13**

Monday, April 13

Election/Political Reporting

Wednesday, April 15

Professor Wild Card Day

## **Week 14**

Monday, April 20

Covering Trauma: Obits, Funerals & Shootings

Wednesday, April 22

Covering Trauma: Obits, Funerals & Shootings

## **Week 15**

Monday, April 27

Breaking News

Wednesday, May 29

AP Test/Job Call Sharing/Portfolio Work Time

## **Week 16**

Monday, May 4

Young Journalists Crossfire

Wednesday, May 6

Portfolio Sharing/Wrap

# Assignment Instructions

\*\*Below, you will find basic guidelines for your various assignments to help you. However, many instructions will be provided verbally in class and require you to take notes on what is expected. News editors give story assignments verbally, not via assignment sheets.

## News Critiques

Find a story. Type a paragraph (4-6 sentences) analyzing the story. This may include addressing: A.) What writing tips you picked up from how the story was written; B.) What you liked or didn't like about how the story was written; C.) What you would change about how it was written, or D) What questions weren't answered in the story? **DO NOT SUMMARIZE THE ARTICLE.** Include web link to story. Turn in via hard copy.

## Twitter Scavenger Hunt

It is important to get to know the community you are covering and where some of the major newsworthy places are. You are going to go to EACH of the 10 places on the below list and take a photo of yourself in front of all of the buildings (preferably next to the sign of the building). You do NOT need to go inside any of these places. Shoot from outside the building. You can either do a selfie or bring a friend along to take the photo of you. YOU MUST BE IN EVERY PHOTO as evidence that you were at each of these places. You will not receive points if you are not featured in each photo and if it is not clear where you are.

\*\*\*\*\*Make sure your Twitter account is public and use #J415 if you are a Wolgast student and #J415A if you are a Finneman student. Do not delete any of the photos (if you wish) until you receive a grade.\*\*\*\*\*

This assignment is not being graded on photo quality, filters, etc., just that you did the assignment. Include a brief caption of where you are even though it should be clear in the photo. Here are the 10 places you must go to in order to receive all of the points:

1. City Hall
2. The Lawrence Police Department (headquarters)
3. Chamber of Commerce
4. Free State High School
5. LMH Health
6. Lawrence School District Office
7. Lawrence High School
8. Douglas County Sheriff's Office
9. Lawrence Convention & Visitors Bureau
10. Douglas County Courthouse



## **Observation Assignment**

Reporters must frequently go out of their comfort zones to get good stories and serve a broad audience. The goal of this assignment is to make you go someplace you wouldn't usually go to learn more about someplace new and observe what's around you. Examples include: a place of worship different than your own, a nursing home, a senior center, an ethnic store, veterans' center, jail waiting area, social services, animal shelter, a local nonprofit, etc. You may NOT go to anywhere on campus, a bar, a restaurant, a gym, or a mall or will receive an automatic 50-percent grade deduction. The goal is to go someplace unique. I suggest spending at least 30 minutes at your post and observing: Who comes here? What signs/bulletins are on the wall? What can I learn about the community from this place? What stories might I do about this place? How could the people at these places be useful as sources in the future? Also describe your observation post, why you chose it, when you went there and whom you talked to. Two-page, double-spaced paper.

## **Newsroom Visits Paper**

We will visit a TV station and a newspaper this semester. TAKE NOTES DURING YOUR VISITS AND ASK QUESTIONS.

**Feb. 12:** Meet at 3:30 p.m. in the newsroom of the Lawrence Journal-World, 1035 N. Third Street, Suite 101-B. Students should arrange to carpool.

**March 4:** Arrive at 4:30 p.m. at KSNT, 6835 N.W. Highway 24. Carpool.

Be on time! It's disruptive to these newsrooms to be late.

\*\*Two-page paper due Wednesday, March 18 outlining what you learned from the newsroom visits that you didn't know before and how the newsrooms differ in how they gather and present the news.

## **Interview Assignment**

You are required to do one interview (audio only) and will be graded on your interviewing skills and your audio quality. (Rubric pending). The interview must be 20 to 30 minutes with a single source. You may check out an audio recorder from the Resource Center but must supply your own SD card (a smaller one, not a large one). The audio (.wav or mp4 file) and a transcript must be turned in. We will discuss this more as a class.

## **Story Pitches**

Seven pitches are required: one interview, five print stories with related content and one video story. The written pitch must be approx. 1 page and include: A.) A clear description of what your pitch is and what background research you have conducted about the topic. B.) A list of potential sources to interview and/or read C.) Suggestions for visuals and which social media strategy you're choosing from the bingo card. D.) Estimated length. Hard copy.

## Story Assignments

Instruction and guidelines for how to do the story assignments will be provided throughout class lectures. For each story assignment, you will:

1. Select one story type from the first row
2. Select one visual component from the second row.
3. Select one social media component from the third row.

## *STORY CARD BINGO BLACKOUT*

<b>B</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>O</b>
Print business story  80 points	Print feature story  80 pts	Print meeting story  80 pts	Print event story  80 pts	Print enterprise story  80 points
1 photo  10 points	45-50-second VO/SOT/VO 10 points	30 seconds B roll  10 points	2 photos  10 points	1 infographic  10 points
1 Facebook post  10 points	1 Insta story (6-8 frames)  10 points	8 Live Twitter posts #J415 10 points	1 Insta story (6-8 frames) 10 points	1 Facebook engagement post 10 points

You may do the print stories in whatever order you wish. Choose multimedia items from rows 2 and 3 that work best to complement your story. You will do each item on the card one time for a bingo blackout so you have training in all of these areas by the end of the semester.

**SOURCE SHEETS:** For every story you do, you will turn in a source sheet with the name of the source and his/her phone number so your professors can do accuracy checks. If a source sheet is not turned in, there will be an automatic 20-percent deduction to the assignment grade.

## **B**

The business story should be approximately 500-750 words with at least three human sources and at least one data source.

# I

The feature story should be approximately 500-750 words with at least three human sources and at least one data source.

# N

The meeting story should be approximately 350-500 words with three human sources.

# G

The event story should be approximately 350-450 words with three human sources.

# O

The enterprise story should be approximately 750-1,000 words with four human sources and at least two data sources.

## **Video Package**

You must produce one package this semester (TRT between 1:10 and 1:20 minutes). You will turn in the script of your package as well as a link to the video. More instructions to come in class.

## **Social Media Critiques**

You will turn in a ½-page (double-spaced) typed social critique. Analyze how a news organization or specific reporter is using social media. You are encouraged to mix up what you focus on each week (both source and platform type).

Your analysis should include:

- What is the company/organization OR Who is the reporter? What social platform did you analyze?
- What strategies do they use in their posts that you find effective?
- Are there any strategies they use that you don't think are effective, and why?
- How often do they post?
- What kind of engagement are they getting, i.e. reader comments, likes, etc.?  
(not applicable with Snapchat)
- Anything else you may want to mention.

## **Job Call**

Students will think about what kind of future career they want and call someone who does that job. Ask them for advice, what they do, anything you want to know. Write a one- to two-page paper (double-spaced) about who you called and what you learned.

## **Final Portfolio/Learned Paper**

You will assemble your content into a final portfolio to present to the class and write a two-page paper (double spaced) about what you learned this semester, how you think you improved and what more you want to improve on going forward.

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# **Policies and Procedures**

## **Disabilities**

The University of Kansas is committed to helping all students learn. If you have a special need that may affect your learning, please contact the instructor as soon as possible. Please be aware that the KU Office of Disability Resources coordinates accommodations and services for all students who are eligible. 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 <http://www.disability.ku.edu/~disability/>. Or you can visit the office on the first floor of Strong Hall. The phone numbers are: 785-864-2620. Please contact me privately regarding your needs in this course.

## **Journalism School Policy on Classroom Attendance**

No student may add a journalism class after the 20th day of a semester.

Students must attend their classes and laboratory periods. Instructors may take attendance into account in assessing a student's performance and may require a certain level of attendance for passing a course. Instructors may choose to drop students from a course, based on attendance, without consent.

The School of Journalism reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of students who fail to attend the first class or laboratory meeting.

In the event of inclement weather, KU officials make the decision to cancel classes. Call 785-864-SNOW (7669) to find out if classes have been canceled.

## **Financial Aid Policy**

The KU Office of Student Financial Aid is required by federal law to determine whether students who receive aid are attending each class in which they are enrolled. Instructors are required to report to that office absences of students who have stopped attending and names of those who have enrolled but never have attended. Students who do not attend classes may be required to repay federal and/or state financial aid.”

Students who receive any form of financial aid should learn all requirements including minimum hours of enrollment and grades to qualify for and retain that aid.

## **Misconduct**

You are bound by the university rules on academic misconduct. If you have any questions about what constitutes cheating, please ask BEFORE your endeavor.

Course materials and lectures are property of the instructor or School of Journalism. You must obtain permission to record lectures electronically or use course materials outside this course.

### **Policy on Plagiarism and Fabrication/Falsification**

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 the 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 of the course.

The following definitions are from Article II, Section 6, of the University Senate Rules and Regulations, revised FY98.

**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.

### **Content “recycling”**

The expectation in this class is that you’ve come to learn, to be creative, to stretch your imagination and expand your skills. Therefore, all the work you do in this class must be original. That means no “recycling” of your previous interviews, assignments, stories or work from other classes. The Journalism School regards any efforts to recycle material as academic dishonesty.

### **Some other information to know**

Watkins Health Center. KU wants to be healthy while you’re here. You can visit Watkins for confidential preventive care or treatment—everything from prescription medicines, to flu shots, to broken bones. Here’s the website: <http://studenthealth.ku.edu/> Here’s the phone number: 785- 864-9500. Here’s the email: [health@ku.edu](mailto:health@ku.edu)

KU Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS). CAPS provides confidential counseling services to help you stay mentally health here at school. Here’s the website: <https://caps.ku.edu/> Here’s the phone number: 785-864-2277.

Food banks. The Campus Cupboard, operated by the Center for Community Outreach, can help if you need food. You can find the organization on Facebook. Here’s the website: <http://www.cco.ku.edu/campus-cupboard-2/> Here’s the email: [cco@ku.edu](mailto:cco@ku.edu). Here’s the phone: (785) 864-4073.

## **Diversity**

Think about the relationship between media and audiences and learn how to meet the needs of diverse audiences. 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.

## **Commercial Note Taking**

Pursuant to the University of Kansas' [Policy on Commercial Note-Taking Ventures](#), commercial note-taking is not permitted in [*insert course name and number*]. Lecture notes and course materials may be taken for personal use, for the purpose of mastering the course material, and may not be sold to any person or entity in any form. Any student engaged in or contributing to the commercial exchange of notes or course materials will be subject to discipline, including academic misconduct charges, in accordance with University policy. **Please note:** note-taking provided by a student volunteer for a student with a disability, as a reasonable accommodation under the ADA, is not the same as commercial note-taking and is not covered under this policy.

**The Career and Outreach Office** at Stauffer-Flint, Room 120, provides services for all students. Schedule an appointment with Steve Rottinghaus at [steve\\_rottinghaus@ku.edu](mailto:steve_rottinghaus@ku.edu). Make sure to follow job and internship postings on Twitter at @Rhaus90.