



Instructor

Doug Ward
Associate professor
dbward@ku.edu
108 Stauffer-Flint
135 Budig (M-W)
785-864-7637

Office hours

T-Th: 2:30 to 3:30
And by appointment
(I'll gladly meet at
other days or times.
Just let me know and
we can schedule an
appointment.)

Class meets

1 to 2:15 p.m.
Tues. and Thurs.
202 Stauffer-Flint

Online

Blackboard will be
the central location
for course materials.
We will use other
tools during the
semester, but the
schedule,
assignments and
other important
information will be
on Blackboard.

What is this course?

The short version: A research-intensive course in which you'll hone your ability to solve problems and answer questions using information and digital tools.

The longer version:

So you want to be a journalist. And why not? People rave about your writing. You amaze them with your computer skills and your knowledge of Facebook. You dream of sitting in your cozy cabin and writing pithy essays about important events. You look at advertisements and say, "I could do better than that." You aspire to become the Next Big Thing in marketing or play-by-play sports or event planning or movie reviewing.

Whatever you dream about in journalism, this is where you start. It's a course in finding, gathering and using information. That sounds so dry and boring, though. Really, this is a course in honing your curiosity, stoking your enthusiasm for finding answers and building your confidence as a researcher, a writer and whatever else you aspire to be. It's about figuring out where to go when you have questions and then figuring out what to do with all that information once you've filled your recorder with interviews, your spreadsheet with data and your notebook with doodles. (Actually, we hope you'll fill your notebook with great ideas, but we also know how journalism students procrastinate. Hence, the doodles.)



This is a class about questions. Only by crafting good questions can you expect to find good answers. Only by using high-quality sources can you expect to find high-quality information. With that in mind, we want you to be able to

formulate questions that will help you think better, help you research better and help you analyze information better. So we'll approach this semester with broad questions we want you to help us answer. This isn't an exercise in philosophy, although we hope you'll formulate a philosophy about information this semester. It is a pursuit of knowledge, of better preparing yourself for a world awash in information both good and bad, in media both trusted and shady, in resources of all kinds that you must scrutinize if you hope to learn and act as a citizen, a worker and a scholar.

Course goals

By the end of this course, you should be able to do following:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the scope, forms and purposes of information.
- Ask pertinent questions that allow you to find and interpret information, and explain it clearly.
- Critically evaluate information sources, research data and your own work for credibility, accuracy, completeness, and diversity.
- Develop focused plans for research projects.
- Use a variety of digital and non-digital tools to find and evaluate information.
- Use information and digital tools to solve problems and answer questions.

Achieving the course goals

We will work toward those goals in several ways:

- Completing online modules that contain readings, video, audio and interactive components.
- Participating in discussions, workshops and guest lectures.
- Completing research projects in teams and on your own.
- Completing written or multimedia assignments over readings, concepts and other facets of the course.

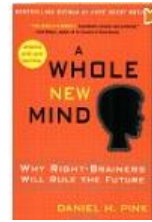
Class format

This is a hybrid class, so your work will be both online and in-person. You will have assignments to work through online *before* class meets each week. These assignments will include a combination of videos, readings, discussions, and self-assessments. If you don't complete the online assignments, you will not only be lost when we meet in the classroom, but your grade will suffer. So please keep up.

This isn't a class where you will come into the room and sit back in your seat. You will work in teams to discuss material, plan projects and give presentations. The class is structured to promote active learning. The idea is to give students freedom to explore areas that interest them, and to create an open atmosphere that makes it fun to learn. That works only if everyone is willing to participate, though, so come to class with the right mindset.

Required book:

- Daniel H. Pink, *A Whole New Mind: Why Right-Brainers Will Rule the Future*. (Any edition.)

**Required materials:**

- Access to Blackboard.
- OneNote (a free download). We will share OneNote class files through Blackboard. You will need to create a free Office 365 account to use it.
- A planner and calendar (either digital or physical).
- An open mind and a willingness to think broadly about the future.

Suggested materials:

- Laptop computer. If you have one, bring it to class each week. If you don't have one, you can check one out from the Resource Center in Stauffer-Flint.

Assignments

WE will experiment with many approaches to learning in this class, individually and in teams. These will include web projects, library projects, online journals, team research projects, class discussions, and reports in class about your findings and your ideas.

Each student will be part of a learning team that will discuss readings, videos and other material each week, lead class discussions and work on other projects. These teams are an important part of the learning process in this class. It's important that you remain involved in the teams, take part in discussions, and do your share of the work. If you don't, your learning and your grade will suffer.

Watch for changes

The **requirements for this course are very likely to change** to accommodate unscheduled events, visitors or unanticipated developments, or to provide an opportunity to re-emphasize certain skills. **Check the schedule often.**

Grading

This is a projects-based class. You will have no quizzes or tests. Rather, your grade depends on the work you do before class (primarily writing about the readings, videos and other materials), in class (discussions and presentations), and outside class (research projects). This is not a class where you can slack off at the beginning of the semester and hope to make up for lost ground at midterm or in the second half of the semester. You must remain engaged week to week if you hope to succeed. **There is no extra credit**, so focus on producing consistent high-quality work.

Here's a brief breakdown of the grading. You will find detailed information in the pages that follow. Read it. If you don't understand something, ask questions.

Grade breakdown

- Journal entries and assignments, learning goals, and self-evaluations: 30 percent
- Guided research project: 20 percent
- Final research project: 30 percent
- Final group presentation: 5 percent
- Google course: 5 percent
- Attendance and participation: 10 percent

Important note: Journalism majors must receive a grade of C or better in this class to advance to other courses in the school. A grade of C- or lower means the student must retake the course.

Key deadlines

This is only a partial list of deadlines. Please see Blackboard for the weekly assignments and other deadlines.

Every Monday night: OneNote journal entries

Feb. 1: Learning goals due

Feb. 5: Entries from Google course due

Feb. 15: Draft of research project due

March 11: Guided research project, midterm self-evaluation

April 18: Draft of final research project due

May 6: Final research project, final self-evaluation

May 11: Final presentations

Grading (the more detailed version)

1. Weekly OneNote post over readings and videos (30 percent)

You will create a notebook in OneNote (through Blackboard) and use that space to analyze and synthesize the readings, and to reflect on your work in the class. Those entries will take one of three forms: a 3-2-1 assignment that involves key observations and questions, synthesis entries in which you write broader essays about the course materials, and goals and self-evaluations. I'll provide examples and rubrics for each of those entries.

Deadline: Your weekly journal entries are **due no later than midnight Monday each week.**

2. Guided research project (20 percent)

You and a partner will create a proposal (six-page minimum, plus bibliography) for a story or a project on one of the topics below. It's called "guided research" because a librarian and I will guide you through a series of potential resources in class once a

week. Those resources will cover these areas: audiences, people, government, academic articles, social media, data, images, and historical information.

You should use those resources to explore sources and resources for your project, focus on an appropriate area, and make a case for a particular story or project. These are the topics to choose from:

- Gwen Ifill
- Student movements
- Millennials
- Student debt
- Presidential candidates or process

I will provide a separate handout (see the FAQs on Blackboard) for the assignment, but it should include these elements:

1. **Introduction.** A few paragraphs to introduce your topic and explain what it's about and why it needs to be done.
2. **Background, context and relevant research.** Create a narrative to explain why the subject area is important, what others have done similar to your project, and how your project will be different. What secondary research helps us understand the needs of your audience, explains the subject matter, or helps justify your approach. Think of this area as a funnel: Start with broad information and continue to narrow the focus. At the end of this section, you essentially want to explain why similar projects are lacking and how yours will fill in a gap. This is not something you do off the top of your head. Rather, it should reflect substantial research about the topic, the audience and the format.
3. **Form.** Explain the format of your project in more detail. For instance, will it be a website? An app? A documentary? A social media strategy? Why this form? What elements will it include? Who is the audience? Again, provide background information and justification.
4. **Annotated bibliography.** What secondary and primary sources have you found related to your project? This should include at least 25 sources, all of them annotated.

3. Final group project (30 percent)

This is much like the guided research project but will focus on a topic of your choosing. The project should relate in some way to information, research, digital tools, journalism or the digital humanities. The idea is to start with a question or problem you can address with digital tools and information. The idea is to give you the freedom to explore ideas that interest you and to use digital tools to research and to create material in ways that help us all better understand the digital world. Here are examples from previous semesters:

- An interactive guide for finding study spaces
- An e-book on KU traditions

- A digital survival guide for freshmen
- A prototype website for creating portfolios of creative work and bartering with others for their creative work
- A website and interactive timeline explaining the significant role female athletes have played at KU
- A prototype app for basketball campers
- A series of videos and a social media plan for reaching out to new journalism students
- A website for matching KU students with volunteer opportunities

These are just examples. Group members should discuss ideas and come to a consensus on a project. We will work on this in class.

I'll post a rubric on Blackboard with the criteria I'll use for grading the final project.

Group participation and membership

Group work is a vital component of the modern workplace. That doesn't make it easy, though. I have yet to find a perfect method of evaluating everyone in a group. To help make sure that all members do their part to make each project a success, here's what we'll try this semester.

- **Group grades.** You will grade yourself and others on your guided research project and your final project. I will provide a rubric, of sorts, to help, but the process will work like this: Each of you will have an imaginary \$10,000 to "pay" group members for the work they have done. You will also pay yourself from this fund. You should distribute this imaginary money in a way that compensates each person fairly. If one person does more work than others, that person should earn more. If someone fails to contribute a fair share to the group project, that person should earn less. Using those reports, I will calculate a percentage of the project grade that each person will receive. I'll provide a separate handout providing more details about how this will work.
- **Option to fire a group member.** If a majority of group members feel that another member is not contributing his or her fair share of the work, they may vote to remove that person from the group. This is like firing an employee. If that happens, the remaining group members should notify me and give the reasons for the firing. The member who has been removed from the group will then have two choices: Ask to be admitted to another group or complete the project alone. Other groups are not obligated to take on new members. If the person cannot find another group to join, he or she must complete the group project alone. The evaluation criteria will remain the same.

Note: Firing a group member should be a last resort. If you are having problems with another group member, talk with me first and we'll try to resolve the issues.

4. Participation and attendance (10 percent)

This includes completing all readings and online assignments; participating in class and in online discussions; completing the Google course, the group project and the curation project *on time*; and completing any other work the instructor assigns.

The time you spend in class is an important part of your learning. If you miss class or fail to do assignments, your entire group will suffer. So come to class prepared to participate and discuss. You are responsible for budgeting your time and meeting deadlines for assignments.

Attendance is mandatory. You will have only **one unexcused absence**. A second unexcused absence will result in your grade dropping a half-point, from A to A-, for instance, or B to B-. It will drop another half-point if you have three unexcused absences and another half-point if you miss four, and so on. This deduction is independent of your coursework. That means that even if you complete all the work successfully, the top grade you can achieve will decline with each absence after the first.

If you are sick and cannot attend class, or if you are going to be late, contact me, preferably **before** class. If you do so, you may be excused from that day's assignment. If you do not contact me, **you will receive an unexcused absence**.

5. Completion of Google course (5 percent)

All students must complete a self-paced online course called Power Searching With Google. It contains a combination of readings, videos and assignments. I'll grade your work based on a journal entry you create on OneNote. You don't need to list answers to self-tests from the course or to list every detail. Rather, summarize and make notes about the material you want to remember. Do this for each of the six units. All work in the Google course **must be completed by Feb. 5**.

The skills you gain from this Google course are crucial to your success in the class. I'd suggest you start immediately. It's not something you can rush through at the last minute.

Course link: <http://www.powersearchingwithgoogle.com/course/ps/course.html>

Note: Be honest as you work through this course. Do your own work. Failure to do your own work will be considered an act of academic misconduct and may result in your expulsion from the class. (See the syllabus for more details.) If you are thinking about cheating, don't. The penalty is simply too high.

We will not have a final exam in this class, but we will meet during the final exam period for group presentations. **Our scheduled time is Wednesday, May 11, from 1:30 to 4 p.m.**

Academic Misconduct

In this class, and in all journalism classes, honesty and integrity are critical. 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 assignment and possibly the course. You may be expelled from or denied admission to the School of Journalism.

We strictly follow the code of Academic Misconduct detailed in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities. University policies covering academic misconduct are spelled out in the current Student Handbook, which is available free in 213 Strong Hall.

Here's some clarification:

If you use or attempt to use any unauthorized materials during a test, or if you give any unauthorized materials to someone else during a test, this is cheating. Unauthorized materials include written materials, such as notes on paper or on electronic devices. Unauthorized materials include any forms of nonverbal communication (one cough, the answer is A; two coughs, the answer is B, etc.). Copying an answer from someone else's work is also cheating.

Plagiarism is stealing. You take someone else's ideas, thoughts, or words, and you present them as your own original work. This includes taking ideas from written sources, such as books, as well as materials on the Internet. Cutting and pasting materials from the Internet and presenting that work as if it was your own is plagiarism. There may be times when you want to incorporate another person's ideas, opinions and words into the papers you write, to make a point or to provide background. If you do, it is essential that you attribute that information—that you explain where the information came from and give credit where credit is due.

Fabrication and falsification mean that you made it up. This can include making up an entire interview or embellishing a fact, quote, or statistic to make it sound better. Don't do it.

Policy on Plagiarism and Fabrication or Falsification

The School of Journalism **does not** tolerate plagiarism, fabrication of evidence or falsification of evidence.

Penalties for engaging in such behavior can include a failing grade for this course and expulsion from the school.

If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, please consult the instructors.

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.

Inclement weather

In the event of inclement weather, the decision to cancel classes is made by KU officials. To determine whether snow or icy conditions have canceled classes, call 864-7669 (864-SNOW).

Missing class

Students who miss three or more consecutive days because of illness or injury can request a *Documentation of Illness/Injury* statement from Student Health Services or another medical provider. Students who have illnesses or injuries of shorter duration and who schedule appointments at Student Health Services can obtain a copy of their medical records containing information about their visit by submitting an Authorization for Use/Disclosure form to the Student Health Services Records and Registration Department.

University assistance

If an emergency or crisis causes you to miss three or more days of class, the **Academic Achievement and Access Center** can help contact your professors.

Office: 22 Strong
Phone: 785-864-4064.
Fax: 785-864-2817.

Special needs

The Academic Achievement & Access Center coordinates accommodations and services for all KU students who are eligible. If you have a disability for which you wish to request accommodations and have not contacted the AAAC, please do so as soon as possible. That office is located in 22 Strong Hall; the phone number is 785-864-4064 (V/TTY).

Information about the center's services can be found at <http://disability.ku.edu>. Please contact me privately in regard to your needs in this course.

Copying or Recording

Course materials prepared by the instructors, together with the content of all lectures and review sessions presented by the instructors are the property of the instructors. Video and audio recording of lectures and review sessions without the consent of the instructors is prohibited. On request, the instructors will usually grant permission for students to audio tape lectures, on the condition that these audio tapes are only used as a study aid by the individual making the recording. Unless explicit permission is obtained from the instructors, recordings of lectures and review sessions 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.

Adding and Dropping

Here is School of Journalism policy, by which you must abide:

“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.

“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.”