

intro to visual Journalism

JOUR 346 (5 credits), M / W 10 a.m. – 11:50 a.m., CF 202

Instructor
Office
Contact

Prof. Sheila Webb
CF 269, Office Hours: Tuesdays / Thursdays 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
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Texts

The Newspaper Designer's Handbook, 7th edition, Tim Harrower and Julie Elman, McGrawHill, 2012.
The Non-Designer's Design Book, 3rd Edition, Robin Williams, Peach Pit Press, 2008.
"Seeing Photographs," Chap. 17 in *Photography*, 9th edition, Barbara London, Jim Stone, and John Upton, Prentice Hall, 2008. (On S Drive)

Description

Students will undertake an analytical exploration of the visual aspects of storytelling in print and online media, with emphasis on photographic images, infographics, and publication and web design. *Prerequisites:* J207, J305, J309.

Benefits

This course introduces you to the role of the construction and production of images in the media. The readings and exercises are designed to engage you in this practice. You will have the chance to both analyze and produce your own visuals, thus implementing what we study. The class builds on design work begun in JOUR 309 and provides the groundwork for the other courses in the visual journalism sequence in the department.

Method

This course will consist of lectures; readings; class discussions; assignments; in-class critiques; student presentations; quizzes; visits by working professionals.

Objectives

To understand and apply formal critique methodologies to visual imagery.
To understand the choices visual practitioners make and how those choices shape what we see in the media and how we interpret what we see.
To understand concepts in the use and presentation of images and information.
To help you become an intelligent and discriminating user of these tools and concepts by working with them and evaluating their effectiveness.
To critically evaluate you own work and that of others for accuracy, fairness, clarity, visual strength, hierarchy, point of view, message conveyed.

Grading

Participation, Critiques, Attendance:	10%
In-Class Exercises:	10%
Quizzes on Readings:	10%
5 Assignments	70%
Photo Critique	10%
Typography Spec Sheet	10%
Spec Sheet / Soundslides Component	10%
Alternative Story Form	15%
Website	15%

Your grade will be based on the **design process** – image generation; evaluation of ideas; development and refinement of a selected idea; **your work** – quality of ideas and writing; breadth of exploration and experimentation; craftsmanship and organization, both visually and in writing; **your approach** – punctual attendance; meeting deadlines; contributing at critiques; dealing constructively with criticism; exploring software; and exhibiting a sense of commitment to class and your work.

Success

This is a production course, which means that time will be spent working in class. I place a great deal of importance on our interaction during the process. Therefore, your attendance is required. This course requires a lot of interaction and it cannot succeed without you, nor can you succeed without regular attendance.

Assigned projects will vary in content, complexity, and duration. Projects will be assigned with specifications and deadlines clearly stated.

Meeting deadlines is a critical and necessary part of a journalist's job. As such, it is critical to your grade in this course. Missing a deadline will adversely affect your grade. To meet professional standards and to credit those who get their work done on time, late work will be marked down. There will be no incompletes.

Critiques

Critiques are a critical part of any design or production course, one of which I am a huge proponent. As such, we devote considerable time to this process. They develop your ability to objectively evaluate your work and that of your fellow classmates. They show you what's possible as well as various ways to approach the same topic. They help you verbalize your thoughts, learn a new vocabulary, and develop the ability to accept and give thoughtful and productive comments. They model the process you will encounter in your future careers as you present your work in progress. I expect you all to participate! Note: *critique time is showtime* – not the time to be finessing your own project; be ready to go at the beginning of class with your work loaded on your desktop in the proper display format.

Readings

The reading for each unit is due the day it is listed on the syllabus. For selected units, I will give you handouts and exercises to read and/or complete. The class will work most productively if we are all on the same page, and since doing the reading by the class day aids that, please come prepared. In addition to your texts, I encourage you to look at as many design examples as you can, including magazines, newspapers, newsletters, brochures, signs, billboards, websites, etc. Bring innovative examples to class.

Tools

Figure out a way to save your work early and often. You are responsible to have your work ready at critique-time.

Copy Preparation All copy should be in standard copy format and conform to news style.

Proofing

Always proof all your work before submitting it. It is your responsibility to check proper names, spelling, facts, grammar, and style. Papers that contain more than five typographic, spelling, or grammatical errors will be marked down a grade.

Software

To do the work required for this class it helps to know PowerPoint, InDesign, Excel, Soundslides, and Photoshop. We will introduce Illustrator and WordPress. As with all other classes in the Department, this class focuses on content, not software training. You will be rewarded for taking initiative in sorting out your specific needs. Help each other in class and during open labs. Explore beyond the class to gain knowledge and expertise. Labs on campus offer assistance. Take advantage of the workshops at the STC. To see the schedule go to: <http://www.wvu.edu/techcenter/pages/workshops.shtml>. As you begin to work on your projects, I suggest you schedule one-on-one tutorials. To schedule one, go to: <http://www.wvu.edu/techcenter/pages/tutoring.shtml>. You are also encouraged to learn on your own and I have resources to assist you – just ask!

Ethics

All work must be original for this class with information credited where appropriate. Integrity is essential to the work of a journalist. Trust is a critical part of the contract between the journalist and the reader. Plagiarism, unapproved collaboration, quoting without attribution, using uncredited information from

previously published sources, copying off the Internet, or falsifying a story violate ethical standards and will result in penalties. Do your own work and be able to substantiate it as such. WWU students are responsible for reading, understanding, and following the policy and procedures regarding academic dishonesty as set forth in the WWU Academic Dishonesty Policy and Procedure (see Appendix D of the University Bulletin).

Time Commitment Since this is a 5-credit class, you are expected to devote 10 hours per week outside of class to assigned readings, to completing the assignments, and to individual software training.

Respect We can all learn from one another when the classroom atmosphere is one of a learning community. We achieve that by showing respect for one another, especially when critiquing one another's work. The university setting is one in which new ideas and perspectives are openly explored.

Diversity: WWU is committed to equal opportunity and non-discrimination in all programs and activities.

Special Needs: We honor diversity in all of its many facets – in both the classroom atmosphere and in any need for assistance or accommodation, which should be addressed to Office of Student Life.

Electronic Sirens: When I lecture or explain things, and when others are presenting their work during critique, offer your *full attention*.

Again, *critique time is showtime* – not the time to be finessing your own project; be ready to go at the beginning of class with your work loaded on your desktop in the proper display format.

Keep your cell phone *turned off* during class; keep your computer *logged off* except when doing in-class assignments.

This section contributes to your participation grade, which constitutes a full letter grade.