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| Fall Semester 2019 | Instructor: Nakho Kim |
| Class day/time: MWF 1:25-2:15p  Location: Olmsted E245 | nmk5360@psu.edu  Office: 1 717 948 4353 |
|  | Office hours: MW 2:30-4p, or by appointment  Office Location: Olmsted W005F (Comm Suite) |

**COMM 168**

**American Journalism: Values, Traditions, and Practices**

**Course Description**

This course is designed to give students a broad overview of American journalism, its past, present and future; its values, traditions and practices in context. This course will appeal to students with varying backgrounds who have an interest in professions involving communication of news. How and why news is gathered, presented, and marketed in specific ways; how those ways are influenced by changes in social norms, technology and industrial concerns; and how to rebuild trust in news through journalistic quality.

The first segment of the course focus on the historic development of the American “press” from the Colonial period to the present. The legal and constitutional framework under which the news media operate in the United States are also examined. The second segment will look at a news organization’s obligations to its community, and a journalist’s duty to uphold core values. The third segment will explore how those practices and values have been enhanced, challenged and thus transformed by the current social, economic and technological media landscape.

Over the course of the semester, students will be trained in understanding the requirements of quality news. How do we distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable journalism, by taking the contents, media channels and audience roles into consideration? Students will be required to do independent research in assessing how the news media covers issues, as well as taking part of a group presentation.

**Prerequisites**

None.

**Course Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this course, students will:

1. Understand the social contexts of how American journalism is shaped
2. Understand the professional values and social roles of journalism
3. Explore how quality journalism can be pursued today

**General Course Requirements**

*Follow current events and news*: While the readings provide knowledge and stimulate thoughts on how we can understand the workings of news media, actual media news provide us with real-time experience. Keeping track of how news is done with current events as they unfold is crucial for understanding the state of news-making. Current news events will be used as examples in lectures and any evaluation thereof. It is required to be updated on key stories on major national and local outlets, including the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Vox.com and The Burg.

*Class discussions*: Students should come to class prepared, having done the readings for the week meaning that the readings for any particular week should be completed beforehand, allowing us to engage and discuss their contents during class. Students should also be prepared to engage their classmates and the instructor with regard to the course material in a civil manner both in-class and online. Note that class participation is a part of the grading scheme. Electronic reserve readings will be available online in Canvas. Additional short media (online articles, videos, etc.) may be assigned during the semester. As such, students are required to check the online site regularly for vital class announcements.

**Attendance**

Class starts promptly. Please plan to arrive on time, and remain until the end of the class period, in order to avoid disrupting class discussions.

Please keep careful track of assignment deadlines. Late assignments will be accepted only with a penalty, except in case of genuine emergency - in which case you may be required to provide documentation or other acceptable proof of an emergency nature. When contacting the instructor via email, it is recommended to include the course number in the subject line for prompt retrieval.

Excused absences must be by PRIOR arrangement with the instructor, unless brought on by a genuine emergency as mentioned above. Unexcused absences will count negatively toward the final grade, and will not be granted make-up opportunities.

**Assessment and Grading**

Course grades will be based on the reading quizzes, discussion leadership (group presentation) and the final essay. Grades will be determined according to the following formula:

Quizzes (100 points ea \* 4 times) 400 points

In-class case presentation 150 points

Final essay 400 points

Participation 50 points

Total raw score 1000 points

The breakdown of grades will be as follows:

A = 93% and higher; A- = 90 - 92.99%; B+ = 87 - 89.99%; B= 83 - 86.99%; B- = 80 - 82.99%; C+ = 77 – 79.99%; c = 70 – 76.99%; D = 60 – 69.99%; F = 59.99% and below.

*Quizzes*: On week 4, 6, 8 and 10, students will be asked 10 questions online on the contents of the previous two weeks. The raw scores will be slightly weighted (“curved”) in the final grades to control for fluctuation in difficulty levels. Make-up opportunities are usually not granted unless in case of documented emergencies.

*Case presentation*: In the latter half of the semester, students will lead a 50-minute discussion session each week, selecting and analyzing great and questionable journalistic works on a given topic. This assignment aims to train students to practice case research and formulate meaningful debates that may contribute to their final essays. More details will be explained in-class.

*Essay*: The topic that should be addressed in the final essay is *“How I would do my awesome in-depth special report”*.

As such, the essay will use ideas developed in the course to propose your plan for an in-depth report. Imagine you are a junior journalist or any other communication specialist with a keen interest in a specific topic, asking your boss to provide you with the necessary funds and time to publish a special report. How would you organize topics, views and multimedia elements, and why? The proposal essay will be around 1500-words long and will be due on the first day of the final exam week. More details will be explained in-class.

*Participation*: You are required to take part in the discussions. The participation will be assessed not simply based on the frequency of talking, but on the relevance, collaborative manner and civility. Those who are uncomfortable speaking in class may submit written questions on the readings before they are to be discussed.

*Extra credit opportunities*: Opportunities for extra credits can be announced during the semester, which typically take the form of written essays or participation in researches. One planned instance will involve contributing an article based on the course work to the communication program media outlet. Details will be discussed in class.

**Academic Integrity**

Academic dishonesty is not limited to simply cheating on an exam or assignment. The following is quoted directly from the "PSU Faculty Senate Policies for Students" regarding academic integrity and academic dishonesty: "Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity free from fraud and deception and is an educational objective of this institution. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating of information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students." Some definitions and thresholds of such offenses will be discussed in class.

All University and Penn State Harrisburg policies regarding academic integrity/academic dishonesty apply to this course and the students enrolled in this course. Refer to the following URL for further details on the academic integrity policy of Penn State Harrisburg: <http://harrisburg.psu.edu/academics/academic-guidelines-and-policies>.

Each student in this course is expected to work entirely on her/his own while taking any exam, to complete assignments on her/his own effort without the assistance of others unless directed otherwise by the instructor, and to abide by University and Penn State Harrisburg policies about academic integrity and academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty can result in an assignment of "F" or "XF" as the final grade for the student.

**Class Etiquette and Accommodation**

Use of cell phones and other personal computing devices in the classroom is basically allowed, although not encouraged. However, the use is limited to activities directly related to the class such as note taking, reference searching and in-class interactions (not permitted: Social media timeline browsing, Snapchatting, Fortnite, or other unique ways of distraction). Also, it should be noted that some forms of media use can be very distracting to other students, requiring discretion. If the disruption is severe, it will count as an offense and repeated offenses will affect your participation grades.

Food and drinks are officially prohibited in the classroom by university policy. I consider covered coffee or bottled water okay, but if you want to eat a three-course meal, please do so outside the classroom.

Penn State welcomes students with disabilities into the University’s educational programs. Every Penn State campus has a Student Disability Resources office. Student Disability Resources at Penn State Harrisburg is at SEC 205. The Disability Services Coordinator, Alan Babcock, can be reached via email at aub15@psu.edu or phone 717-948-6025.

To receive consideration for accommodations, you must contact Student Disability Resources (SDR), participate in an intake interview, provide documentation of your disability, and complete a Self-Assessment. Additional information is available on the Disability Services website (http://harrisburg.psu.edu/disability-services). If the documentation supports requests for reasonable accommodations, SDR will provide you with an accommodations letter, which you will give to your professors. You will receive accommodations after you give your accommodations letters to your professors. You should share your accommodations letters with your professors as early in the semester as possible. Professors do not provide accommodations retroactively.

**Weather Policy**

If we have bad weather, please listen to local radio and TV stations for announcements about Penn State Harrisburg or check the Penn State Harrisburg website for announcements of campus closures.

**General Tutoring: Learning Center General Tutoring Information**

The Russell E. Horn Sr. Learning Center may have a peer tutor who can assist you in this course. To make an in-person or online appointment, click the ONLINE SCHEDULER button from the Learning Center (harrisburg.psu.edu/learning-center) home page, go to psuh.mywconline.com, call 717.948.6475, or stop in at SEC 201. An appointment is recommended, but not required.

To inquire about appointments or for other questions, call 717.948.6475, or stop in at SEC 201. You can also request a tutor by emailing tutorrequest@psu.edu. We will do our best to find a tutor to match your schedule and course needs, although we can't guarantee one.

Like them at Facebook at PSHLearningCenter and follow us on Twitter @PSUHLC.

**Counseling: Counseling Center Information**

Students may face a variety of concerns over the course of their time at PSH- depressed mood, anxiety, stress, family concerns, body image, substance use, sexuality and many others- that may interfere with their ability to focus on their studies. Counseling Services provides FREE mental health and social support for all currently enrolled students. Staff follow strict legal and ethical guidelines concerning the confidentiality of counseling. Counseling services is located in SEC 205 and can be reached by phone at (717) 948-6025. You can find more information at the Counseling Services webpage, <http://harrisburg.psu.edu/counseling-services>

**Educational Equity**

Penn State takes great pride to foster a diverse and inclusive environment for students, faculty, and staff. Acts of intolerance, discrimination, harassment, and/or incivility due to age, ancestry, color, disability, gender, national origin, race, religious belief, sexual orientation, or veteran status are not tolerated and can be reported through Educational Equity at the Report Bias site: http://equity.psu.edu/reportbias/statement.

Direct all inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policy to our Penn State Harrisburg Office of Student Affairs at the following link https://harrisburg.psu.edu/webform/office-student-conduct-incident-report-form

**Changes to Syllabus**

To timely reflect current developments, the syllabus is subject to change at the instructor’s discretion. Any such alterations will be communicated to the class promptly.

**Schedule**

**\* Required textbooks:**

PAJ: Craft, Stephanie and Charles, David, Principles of American Journalism 2nd Ed (Routledge, 2016)

EJ: Kovach, Bill and Rosenstiel, Tom, *The Elements of Journalism* 3rd Ed (Three Rivers Press, 2014)

\* Other readings will be either publicly available online (address on the syllabus) or stored on the class site.

**Week1 (Aug 26, 28, 30)  
Introduction: The State of News Media**

Pew Center (2019), *State of the News Media 2019* <http://www.pewresearch.org/topics/state-of-the-news-media/2019/>

Benkler et al. (2017), Study: Breitbart-led right-wing media ecosystem altered broader media agenda, *Columbia Journalism Review*. <https://www.cjr.org/analysis/breitbart-media-trump-harvard-study.php>

**Week2 (Sep 04, 06) (No Class on Sep 02 Labor Day)  
Birth of American journalism and democracy**

PAJ Ch. 1 The Mirror, Watchdog and Marketplace

**Week3 (Sep 09, 11, 13)   
Historical changes in the news industry so far**

Stephens, Mitchell (2017). Goodbye Nonpartisan Journalism. And Good Riddance. *Politico*. <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2017/06/26/goodbye-nonpartisan-journalism-and-good-riddance-215305>

PAJ Ch 5 New Voices, New Models

**Week4 (Sep 16, 18, 20)  
Making News**

PAJ Ch 3

**Week5 (Sep 23, 25, 27)  
Journalistic Principles: Truth-seeking**

EJ Ch 2, Ch 4

**Week6 (Sep 30, Oct 02, 04)  
Journalistic Principles: Independently working for the public**

EJ Ch 3, Ch 5, Ch 6, Ch 7

**Week7 (Oct 07, 09, 11) (\* students observing Yom Kippur need to notify instructor beforehand)  
Journalistic Principles: Responsible relevancy**

EJ Ch 8, Ch 9, Ch 10, Ch 11

**Week8 (Oct 14, 16, 18)  
Freedom of Expression Arguments**

PAJ Ch 7. The Foundations of Free Expression

**Week9 (Oct 21, 23, 25)  
Polarization and Misinformation**

Tufekci, Z. (2018). It's the (Democracy-Poisoning) Golden Age of Free Speech. *Wired*. <https://www.wired.com/story/free-speech-issue-tech-turmoil-new-censorship/>

Steinmetz (2018). How Your Brain Tricks You Into Believing Fake News. *Time*. <http://time.com/5362183/the-real-fake-news-crisis/>

Wenzel, A. (2018). Red state, purple town: Polarized communities and local journalism in rural and small-town Kentucky. *Journalism.* <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1464884918783949>

**Week10 (Oct 28, 30, Nov 01)  
Civic and Citizen Journalism**

Splichal & Dahlgren (2016), Journalism between de-professionalisation and democratization. *European Journal of Communication*, Vol 31(1). <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0267323115614196>

Wall, M. (2015). Citizen Journalism: A retrospective on what we know, an agenda for what we don’t. *Digital Journalism*, 3(6). <https://www-tandfonline-com/doi/abs/10.1080/21670811.2014.1002513>

**Week11 (Nov 04, 06, 08)  
Incorporating technology: how and how much?**

Knight Foundation (2016), *Viewing the Future: Virtual Reality in Journalism*. <https://medium.com/viewing-the-future-virtual-reality-in-journalism>

Washington Post: The Freddie Gray Case <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/local/freddie-gray-augmented-reality/?tid=a_inl>

New York Times (2015) The Best and Worst Places to Grow Up: How Your Area Compares. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/05/03/upshot/the-best-and-worst-places-to-grow-up-how-your-area-compares.html>

**Week12 (Nov 11, 13, 15)   
Debating non-market funding models for journalism**

PAJ Ch 4. Who Pays for Journalism?

Nichols & McChesney (2010). How to Save Journalism. *The Nation*. <https://www.thenation.com/article/how-save-journalism-0/>

Meyer (2015), Will More Newspapers Go Nonprofit? *The Atlantic*. <http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2016/01/newspapers-philadelphia-inquirer-daily-news-nonprofit-lol-taxes/423960/>

Pew Center (2016), Crowdfunded Journalism. <http://www.journalism.org/2016/01/20/crowdfunded-journalism/>

**Week13 (Nov 18, 20, 22)  
Journalism as social involvement**

Dyer (2015) Is Solutions Journalism the Solution? *Nieman Reports*. <http://niemanreports.org/articles/is-solutions-journalism-the-solution/>

Solutions Journalism Network, <http://solutionsjournalism.org/>

**== Thanksgiving Break == (Nov 25-29)**

**Week14 (Dec 02, 04, 06)  
Summary: Possible roads ahead for quality journalism  
AMA**

**Week15 (Dec 09, 11, 13)**In-class presentation of final essay outlines

**Finals Week:** Final essay due on Dec 16 (Mon) 11:59p, submitted online at CANVAS