

Spring Semester 2014

Comm. 3224 Principles of Civic Journalism

MWF 10:20-11:15 a.m., 0080 Derby

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services at 614-292-3307 in room 150 Pomerene Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Professor: Felecia G. Jones Ross

Office: 3110 Derby Hall

Office Hours: M, noon-2 p.m; T, 9- 11 a.m.

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COURSE DESCRIPTION: The role of traditional practices of journalism in contributing to citizen apathy and disengagement, as well as what can be done to enhance citizen understanding, learning and active participation in democratic society.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. Assess and evaluate the current news media landscape
2. Develop ways for the news media to better engage citizens in participating in the democratic society
3. Identify and understand the consumers and potential consumers of the news media and their overall relationship
4. Describe and evaluate current and past civic journalism efforts
5. Create a civic journalism project

TEXTS:

Kennedy, D. (2013). *The wired city: Reimagining journalism and civic life in the post-newspaper age*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press.

Rosenberry J. & S. I. Burton (Eds.) (2010), *Public journalism 2.0: The promise and reality of a citizen-engaged press*. New York: Routledge.

Spring Semester 2014

REQUIREMENTS AND CONDITIONS:

1. Attendance is mandatory.
2. Non-excused absences can jeopardize your grade
3. Cell phones and electronic devices not related to class must be turned off
4. The section below is taken from the Office of Academic Affairs' Committee on Academic Misconduct. Please read carefully and ask questions as needed.

Safe & Healthy

Keeping students healthy and preventing the spread of illness is important to The Ohio State University. Students are encouraged to stay home if they are sick and may be asked to leave class if they are coughing/sneezing. Students who are sick and cannot attend class must contact Dr. Ross *BEFORE* class to receive any materials and turn in assignments via the drop box or e-mail. If your illness is too severe to make contact BEFORE class, then notify Dr. Ross within a reasonable time period (seven days) and provide appropriate documentation. If you do not notify Dr. Ross, **your work will not be accepted.**

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY (ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT)

Academic integrity is essential to maintaining an environment that fosters excellence in teaching, research, and other educational and scholarly activities. Thus, The Ohio State University and the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) expect that all students have read and understand the University's *Code of Student Conduct*, and that all students will complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty. Students must recognize that failure to follow the rules and guidelines established in the University's *Code of Student Conduct* and this syllabus may constitute "Academic Misconduct."

The Ohio State University's *Code of Student Conduct* (Section 3335-23-04) defines academic misconduct as: "Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University, or subvert the educational process." Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Ignorance of the University's *Code of Student Conduct* is never considered an "excuse" for academic misconduct, so I recommend that you review the Code of Student Conduct and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct.

If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by University Rules to report my suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. If COAM determines that you have violated the University's *Code of Student Conduct* (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the University.

If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, please contact me.

Other sources of information on academic misconduct (integrity) to which you can refer include:

Spring Semester 2014

The Committee on Academic Misconduct web pages (oaa.osu.edu/coam/home.html)
Ten Suggestions for Preserving Academic Integrity
(oaa.osu.edu/coam/ten-suggestions.html)
Eight Cardinal Rules of Academic Integrity
(www.northwestern.edu/uacc/8cards.html)

Communication Outside of Class

The professor will e-mail the class or post on Carmen special announcements such as class cancellations and assignment changes. In such instances, the work will be made up online and/or in subsequent class meetings.

The professor encourages students to ask questions during class, as well as outside of class by e-mail or by visiting during office hours. If you cannot visit during office hours, the professor will be glad to schedule an appointment.

Course Requirements

Reflection Paper. This is a 2-3 page paper based on the reading material. You are to use the reflection questions located at the end of Public Journalism 2.0 book chapters and it must be written in a narrative format. The paper must address at least two of the questions. The paper must contain a bibliography using any scholarly style (Turabian, MLA, Chicago, APA) and in-text citations as needed. You may make reference to other sources, including lectures, the Wired City text to justify the position you take in the reflection. The paper must come from one of the following chapters in the Public Journalism 2.0 book: 3,4,5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. The deadlines for this assignment are staggered. There will be a sign up sheet.

Case Analysis. For more than 20 years news media professionals have advanced some form of civic or public journalism either through standalone publications or websites series of stories about a single issue, but all involved in engaging people in designated communities in the news process. This assignment requires you to select one of these efforts, describe it and critique it based on the extent to which it engaged the targeted community and the extent to which it addressed the concerns of the community. In addition to your own personal observation, you may use information from secondary sources (books, articles, blogs). These cases can serve as a guideline for the group project. The analysis should be 2-3 pages long with sources appropriately cited.

Civic Journalism Group Project. This is an assignment in which you and about four other classmates will work together to develop a project involving citizens or news consumers representing a community of your choice. The project can be based on a particular issue such as campus safety or on several issues that the community identifies. Your textbooks provide numerous examples of such projects. The project involves the following components: identification of Community (Geography, Demographics, Traditional Media, Non-Traditional Media), news needs survey, articles (one for each

Spring Semester 2014

WEEK 6: Civic Journalism With Traditional Journalism 1

Feb. 10-14

Rosenberry and St. John, Chapter 7

Group Project: Objectives based on Survey Results

WEEK 7: Civic Journalism With Traditional Journalism 2

Feb. 17-21

Rosenberry and St. John, Chapters 9-10

Group Project: Content and Media Planning

WEEK 8: A Hotbed of Experimentation

Feb. 24-28

Rosenberry and St. John, Chapter 8

Kennedy, Chapter 4

Group Project: Content and Media Planning

WEEK 9: Models of Online Journalism and Best Practices

March 3-7

Rosenberry and St. John Chapters 11-12

Group Project: Content and Media Planning

SPRING BREAK, NO CLASSES

March 10-14

WEEK 10: Connecting with the News Consumers

March 17-21

Kennedy, Chapters 7-8

Group Project: Content and Media Planning

WEEK 11: Tapping the Untapped Consumers

March 24-28

Kennedy Chapter 9

Group Project: Content and Media Planning

Case analysis due March 28, 11:55 p.m., Carmen drop box

WEEK 12: Project Finalization and Consultations

March 31-April 4

WEEK 13 Group Project Presentations

April 7-11

WEEK 14 Where Do We Go From Here?

April 14-18

Rosenberry and St. John, Conclusion

Kennedy: Epilogue

Group Project: Critique/Assessments

WEEK 15 Semester Wrap Up

April 21