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Comm 208

## Reporting II: Technology for Journalists

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Spring 2017

MWF 2:45-3:35

Corboy Room 710 (note that some classes will be held in SOC 003. Those dates are specified on the syllabus.)

OCCASIONAL WEDNESDAY AND FRIDAY CLASSES WILL BE HELD IN SOC 003. CHECK EMAIL REGULARLY.

Instructor: Patty Lamberti

E-Mail: [plamberti@luc.edu](mailto:plamberti@luc.edu)

Phone: 312-915-6860

Office: SOC ROOM 223

Office Hours: Mondays/Wednesdays 1-2pm

Stay up to dates with job announcements, event info, and more at the Loyola Multimedia Journalism page on [Facebook!](#)

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## Overview

Ten years ago, digital storytellers needed to know things like HTML and how to use a FTP.

Cameras were expensive. Video editing software was complicated. Today, technology is inexpensive, and user friendly.

But what good are these tools if we don't do anything smart and engaging with them?

This course is designed to teach you how to tell interesting and informative digital stories using words, images, video, interactivity and audio.

## Goals

- Learn to how use a content management system (CMS).
- Create an online portfolio to assist in branding yourself as a communication professional.
- Learn to tell stories through photos, audio and video.
- Learn to shoot and edit photos and video.
- Learn how to record and edit audio.
- Experiment with data visualization.

## Absences and Tardiness:

In order to learn, it is imperative that you attend class and arrive on time.

I'll do my best to make this class engaging. Your end of the bargain is to show up at every class (unless you're really sick or otherwise unable to attend), prepared and alert. If you fail to show up or show up late regularly, I will notice and react accordingly.

That said, stuff happens. If you need to miss a class due to an illness or emergency, and you don't want to be penalized for missing a class, you need to:

1. Notify me beforehand and explain your absence
2. Provide documentation that explains your absence

Acceptable documentation depends on the circumstance. If someone has passed away, I'll accept an obituary and/or memorial from the ceremony. If you were sick enough to visit a doctor, he/she will give you a note. If you weren't sick enough to visit a doctor, but were still ill, bring me receipt from a store for any medicine, soup or liquids you bought to treat your illness. Notes from parents are generally not acceptable, nor are notes from your friends/roommates.

It is up to my discretion to accept your excuse and documentation. If your excuse is acceptable and verified with documentation, I will allow you to make up whatever you missed. If it's not acceptable and verified, your absence will not be excused and you cannot make up the work.

Unexcused absences will result in lower scores in the areas of participation, professionalism and quizzes. Your grades in these areas start at zero (not 100), and you earn points as the semester progresses. I do not calculate these grades until the end of the semester.

## Materials

All readings for this class are free and linked to in this syllabus. You only need to purchase:

- An AP Stylebook
- Flash Drive/External Hard Drive (4g minimum)
- For photo, audio and video assignments you may use your own equipment (including the recorder or camera on your cell phone/tablet) or borrow equipment from Loyola. Audio recorders and digital video cameras (Kodak Zi8 and Zi12) for this course can be checked out from the Owl Lab in SOC 004 or Loyola's Digital Media Labs.

## Due dates

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**Monday, Feb 13 at 2:45 pm**

Portfolio/slideshow assignment

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**Friday, Feb 27 at 2:45 pm**

Data visualization assignment

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**Monday, March 27 at 3:35pm**

Audio assignment

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**Friday, May 5 at 6:45 pm**

Final video via email

This absence policy does not apply on days that a project is due.

## Due Dates:

I will be treating you like media professionals, which means deadlines MUST be met. You cannot negotiate or fib your way out of meeting a deadline.

Unfortunately, because of numerous problems in the past dealing with the issue of late assignments, this class has a very rigid late policy with harsh penalties. An assignment is considered late if you do not turn it in at the beginning of class (or email it to me per assignment sheet) on the day it is due. In other words, don't come into class 20 minutes late the day an assignment is due and think you can still turn it in without penalty.

Assignments not submitted by the given deadline will lose one letter grade every day (not class period) they are late. On the sixth day after the due date, your grade becomes an automatic zero.

If you are not attending class on the day an assignment is due, you must notify me beforehand via email. You must have a legitimate, documented excuse to miss a deadline. You must provide me with advanced notice. Otherwise, you must accept the one-letter-grade-per-day penalty.

## Style and Spelling Policy:

To be a successful communication professional (or simply write a good cover letter), you must know proper grammar, punctuation and spelling.

If you make grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors, in a cover letter, your saying to a potential employer "hire me even though I can't pay attention to details, a skill most jobs require".

Hopefully, you caught the errors in the above sentence. If you didn't, here is the correct version:

If you make grammar, punctuation and spelling errors in a cover letter, you're saying to a potential employer, "Hire me, even though I can't pay attention to details, a skill most jobs require."

Read your AP Stylebook throughout the semester to master these skills.

As an incentive, and because clear writing is essential when writing for screens, I deduct points for all grammar, spelling and punctuation errors.

## Participation and Professionalism:

You will never be penalized for voicing your opinions, whatever they may be.

You will, however, be penalized for disrupting class. Talking on cell phones, texting, whispering with classmates, e-mailing, arriving late/leaving early, sleeping, closing your eyes and hoping I don't notice, doing Sudoku and using computer programs other than the ones we are working on in class will lead to a lowering of the participation/professionalism portion of your grade.

If you are someone who likes to use your laptop in class when I am talking or your classmates are speaking ask yourself why.

If you think it's because multitasking makes you more productive, you're wrong (forgive the bluntness). Studies have shown that multitasking doesn't make you more productive. It actually makes you perform worse than non-multitaskers in nearly every category, including critical

thinking skills and memory tests.

I'm not just some old fuddy-duddy. Studies, which you can read [here](#), have proved that multitasking makes you less productive, not more productive.

If you use your laptop excessively during class, the professionalism portion of your grade will be lowered.

You will also be penalized for not speaking at all. To be a successful media professional (or successful in any field), you must learn how to voice your opinions and contribute to conversations. Your participation and professionalism grades start at 0. It's up to you to work your way up the grade scale.

The grading scale for participation is as follows:

A: Frequent and meaningful contributions to class discussion that show insight and understanding of material.

B: Frequent and meaningful contribution to class discussion.

C: Occasional participation to class discussion.

D: Only participates when called upon.

F : No class participation

## Academic Dishonesty Policy:

Plagiarism of any form, of any kind and of any length, will be reported to the Dean of Students. Penalties range from failure of the assignment to failure of the course.

Cheating on in-class assignments or any other work associated with this class will receive a similar punishment.

In journalism, it is also considered equally dishonest to invent quotes, facts, scenarios and so on. I will occasionally check to verify that you have indeed interviewed the people you claim to have interviewed.

I also consider it an act of dishonesty to turn in work for an assignment in this class that you wrote for another class (any semester, any year). You must turn in original work for all class assignments.

## Special Needs:

If you have a special circumstance that may have some impact on your coursework and for which you may require accommodations, please contact me within the first two weeks of the semester so that arrangements can be made with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD). Additional information about the services available at Loyola, including eligibility for services, is on the SSWD website.

## Grading:

In the best-case scenario, grades motivate you to learn as much as you can.

In the worst-case scenario, grades make you feel bad about yourself, question your life goals and

hate school.

When thinking about grades, keep a few things in mind.

Grades don't always indicate how much you're getting out of a class, or school in general.

When you were in elementary school and high school, teachers and parents used grades to help keep you on task and unearth your talents.

But you are now an adult. It is your responsibility to learn as much as you can, keep yourself on task and uncover your passions. Grades may help you do this, but grades aren't your only guide on this road.

As an adult, you need to push yourself to learn – without the reward or punishment of a grade.

Getting As on assignments shouldn't be a reason to tell yourself, "I am a master at this. I don't need to try anymore. I'm checking out." You're not a master yet. An A means you're exceptional for storytellers at this stage of their careers.

Likewise, getting Cs shouldn't be a reason to give up. In fact, a C makes sense. That's an average grade, and you just started doing this. Telling stories using multimedia is an acquired skill. After all, there are no child prodigies when it comes to writing, shooting video or taking photos.

I take a lot of time to make my grading policy transparent. You will receive a rubric for each assignment, along with an explanation of potential point deductions.

I will always evaluate your work and provide you with an explanation of why you've earned your grade.

Please remember that I do not grade based on effort alone. I will not give you an A on one of the assignments simply because you tried your best.

Quizzes on the readings will occur nearly every week. You are expected to read your assignments before Monday's class.

#### **Grade disputes:**

You may not agree with a grade I give you. If you think you deserve a better grade, you must write one to two paragraphs explaining why and visit me in my office to discuss the matter.

You have a one-week window after I return an assignment to dispute a grade. After that, I will not change a grade for any reason.

#### **Rewrite Policy:**

The best way to become a better content producer is to revise your work based on feedback. You have until the last day of class to redo any piece of content you produce for this class. However, the redo must be significantly different than the first version.

You may only redo an assignment once. Your final grade on the piece will be an average of the two grades.

#### **Final grade breakdown:**

News/pop quizzes: 100 points

Professionalism/Professionalism: 100 points

Portfolio with slideshow: 200 points

Data visualization: 150 points

Audio assignment: 200 points

Final video project: 250 points

## Grade Scales:

Individual assignments (scores will be adjusted based on points):

A: 100-94

A-: 93-90

B+: 89-88

B: 87-83

B-: 82-80

C+ 79-78

C: 77-73

C-: 72-70

D+: 69-68

D: 67-63

D-: 62-60

F: 59-0

### **Total Semester Grade Point Scale:**

A: 1000-940

A-: 939-900

B+: 899-880

B: 879-830

B-: 829-800

C+ 799-780

C: 779-730

C-: 729-700

D+: 699-680

D: 679-630

D-: 629-600

F: 599-0

## Schedule (subject to change – check Sakai for latest version):

### Week One – January 18-20

Readings due Friday:

1. Read the syllabus
2. Read “Structuring a news story”

<http://journalism.about.com/od/writing/a/storystructure.htm>

3. Read “The Nut Graf”

<http://www.poynter.org/2003/the-nut-graf-part-i/11371/>

4. Read “Idea Generators for Journalists”

<http://www.poynter.org/2003/idea-generators-creativity-tools-for-journalists/5842/>

### Week Two – January 23-27

Readings due Monday:

1. Read “Mobile Reporting Apps for Journalists”

<http://valhoepner.com/mobile-reporting-apps-for-journalists-2016/>

2. Read “Writing Style for Print Vs. the Web”

<http://www.nngroup.com/articles/writing-style-for-print-vs-web/>

3. Read “Writing for the Web”

<http://www.usability.gov/how-to-and-tools/methods/writing-for-the-web.html>

4. Read “Make Text Scannable”

<http://www.webwritingthatworks.com/CGuide2Scan.htm>

Be sure to read all of the pages linked to from the left hand side of the page (2a-2d)

5. Read “Trim that Text”

<http://www.webwritingthatworks.com/CGuide1Trim.htm>

Be sure to read the main page and all of the pages that are hyperlinked to from the left hand side of the web page (1a – 1h)

**Week Three – Jan 30 – Feb 3**

Readings due Monday:

1. Read “Create a Top Notch Web Site”

<http://tech.journalism.cuny.edu/2011/01/11/create-a-top-notch-journalist-portfolio-website/>

2. Read “Top Ten Mistakes in Web Design”

<http://www.useit.com/alertbox/9605.html>

3. 5 Steps that help you build your personal brand as a journalist

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/20140717165701-144740304-5-steps-that-help-you-build-your-personal-brand-as-a-journalist>

4. Personal Web Sites for Journalists

<https://www.poynter.org/2002/personal-websites-for-journalists/1367/>

**Week Four – Feb 6-Feb 10**

Readings due Monday:

1. Read “10 Rules of Photo Composition and Why They Work”

<http://www.techradar.com/how-to/photography-video-capture/cameras/10-rules-of-photo-composition-and-why-they-work->



2. Read “Caption Writing for Photo Slideshows”

<http://www.digitalnewsjournalist.com/2008/09/22/caption-writing-for-web-photo-slideshows>

3. Read “Photos as Web Content”

<http://www.useit.com/alertbox/photo-content.html>

4. 25 Best Examples of About Me Page

<http://www.twelveskip.com/showcase/website-design/853/25-best-examples-of-about-me-pages>

## **Week Five – Feb 13-Feb 17**

### ***Portfolio and slideshow due Monday***

Readings due Wednesday:

1. Read “What is Data Journalism?”

[http://datajournalismhandbook.org/1.0/en/introduction\\_0.html](http://datajournalismhandbook.org/1.0/en/introduction_0.html)

2. Read “Why is Data Journalism important?”

[http://datajournalismhandbook.org/1.0/en/introduction\\_2.html](http://datajournalismhandbook.org/1.0/en/introduction_2.html)

## **Week Six – Feb 20-24**

Readings due Monday:

1. Read/Watch/Interact with “Coal: A Love Story”

<http://www.poweringnation.org/coal/>

2. Read and closely study all of the maps linked to from this article “15 Awesome Interactive Maps from the New York Times”

NOTE: GOOGLE THE HEADLINES OF THE MAPS IF YOU HIT

## THE NY TIMES PAY WALL

[http://www.mediabistro.com/10000words/15-interactive-maps-from-new-york-times\\_b407](http://www.mediabistro.com/10000words/15-interactive-maps-from-new-york-times_b407)

### **Week Seven – Feb 27-March 3**

#### *Data visualization due Friday*

Readings due Monday:

1. Read Data Visualization DIY

[http://datajournalismhandbook.org/1.0/en/delivering\\_data\\_7.html](http://datajournalismhandbook.org/1.0/en/delivering_data_7.html)

2. Read “Ten Free Tools for Creating Infographics”

<http://www.creativebloq.com/infographic/tools-2131971>

### **Week Eight – No Class Spring Break**

### **Week Nine – March 13-March 17**

Readings Due Monday:

1. Read “Broadcast vs. Print”

<http://web.stanford.edu/~jonahw/PWR2-F07/BroadvsPrint.html>

2. Read “Tips for Writing Radio News Scripts”

<http://www.mediahelpingmedia.org/training-resources/journalism-basics/646-tips-for-writing-radio-news-scripts>

3. Read “How to Plan your Podcast”

<https://www.voices.com/resources/articles/podcasting/plan-your-podcast>

## **Week Ten – March 20-24**

Readings due Monday:

1. The Best Free Audio Editing Software

<http://www.techradar.com/news/the-best-free-audio-editor>

2. Listen to “How to Record and Edit a Podcast with Audacity”

<https://theaudacitytopodcast.com/tap060-how-to-record-and-edit-a-podcast-with-audacity/>

## **Week 11- March 27-31**

*Audio assignment due Monday*

Readings due Wednesday:

1. Read “The Basics of Video Storytelling”

<http://www.socialmediatoday.com/content/basics-video-storytelling>

2. Read “9 Key Elements in Video Storytelling”

<http://www.poynter.org/news/media-innovation/163352/9-key-elements-that-can-help-journalists-be-better-video-storytellers/>

## **Week 12 – April 3-7**

1. Watch “Video Journalism: Basic Video Shooting Skills”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2tQSmQJtvXI>

2. Read “The Five Shot Sequence”

<http://www.mulinblog.com/five-shot-sequence-tutorial-and-example/>

## **Week 13 – April 10-14**

Readings Due Monday:

1. Read “Video Editing: A skill worth fine-tuning”

<https://journalists.org/2012/01/30/video-editing-a-skill-worth-fine-tuning/>

2. Read “Journos Can Create Video News Reports With These Free Editing Programs”

<http://journalism.about.com/od/TechTalk/a/Free-And-Easy-To-Use-Video-Editing-Software-Programs.htm>

## **Week 14 – April 17-21**

Work on final

## **Week 15 – April 24-28**

Work on final

Final project due by email end of finals time: **Friday, May 5 at 6:45 pm**