



**LOYOLA
UNIVERSITY
CHICAGO**

Preparing people to lead extraordinary lives

COMM 362 - 201 Multimedia Journalism Research Methods
Spring 2023

School of COMM - Room 010

Time: MoWeFr 9:20AM - 10:10AM

Instructor Information:

Professor: Daniel Trielli

Campus Office: Lewis Tower 909

Email: dtrielli@luc.edu

Phone: 312-915-8536

Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description:

This course advances student knowledge of resources, methods, and credibility standards for gathering and reporting news stories. We will explore how to do those tasks that are essential for journalism in a variety of topics.

Course Learning Outcomes:

- How to conduct research that is both accurate and balanced.
- How to assess sources, data, and documents gathered by research.
- How to write reports based on those collections of information.

Required material:

- A membership with Investigative Reporters & Editors (ire.org). It costs \$25 and gives you access to a trove of resources, including the required readings for this class.
- Newspapers and news websites. The library offers access to a great selection of national news outlets. <https://libguides.luc.edu/news>

Course format:

Our week is divided into three meetings:

- Monday: Lecture and discussion about the topic of the week. Your participation in that discussion is essential.
- Wednesday: Discussion of your weekly journalistic research assignments, which will be due the following Wednesday. In some weeks, we will do exercises to help us refine and progress on your final report.
- Friday: Reading and discussion reading of an example of an award-winning news story that has used extensive research in the course of reporting.

Course Assignments & Assessments:

There are no tests or quizzes for this class. All assignments will be posted and turned in on Sakai. Late assignments will have an instant deduction of 0.5 point, plus another 0.5 point for every additional 24 hours of tardiness.

Weekly assignments (6, each worth 10 points)

There are a total of 6 weekly assignments, each with a specific theme, based on lectures and class discussions. The goal is to have you doing journalistic research on deadline. You will turn in a 300 to 500-word report on the research that you have done. A grading rubric is attached at the end of the syllabus, before the schedule.

Final assignment (1, worth 15 points)

The final assignment will be a 500 to 800-word research report of a topic of your choice. You will do in-class exercises to generate ideas, and you will use any techniques you learn in the other assignments.

Example presentation (1, worth 10 points)

Every Friday one student will lead a discussion about an award-winning reporting project that used extensive research. Before class, the presenter will post on Sakai a bullet point listing and summarizing the reading. In class, they will present it and lead discussion among the other students.

Participation and professionalism (15 points)

There are specific times for class discussion set aside on Monday and Friday. These discussions will not only help us understand the topics each week, but will also help to generate ideas. Therefore, your participation is essential. You will also be assessed on your professionalism during all classes.

Grading

| | Total points | Points per assignment |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| Weekly assignments | 60 | 10 |
| Final assignment | 15 | 15 |
| Example presentation | 10 | 10 |
| Participation and professionalism | 15 | 15 |
| Total | 100 | - |

Course Policies:

Academic Integrity: Loyola University Chicago takes seriously the issues of plagiarism and academic integrity. Below is an excerpt, quoted directly, of the university's statement on integrity.

"The faculty and administration of Loyola University Chicago wish to make it clear that the following acts are regarded as serious violations of personal honesty and the academic ideal that binds the university into a learning community:

Submitting as one's own:

1. Material copied from a published source: print, internet, CD-ROM, audio, video, etc.
2. Another person's unpublished work or examination material.
3. Allowing another or paying another to write or research a paper for one's own benefit.
4. Purchasing, acquiring, and using for course credit a pre-written paper.

The critical issue is to give proper recognition to other sources. To do so is both an act of personal, professional courtesy and of intellectual honesty."

(http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academ_integrity.shtml)

Accessibility: Loyola University Chicago provides reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Any student requesting accommodations related to a disability or other condition is required to register with the Student Accessibility Center (SAC). Professors will receive an accommodation notification from SAC, preferably within the first two weeks of class. Students are encouraged to meet with their professor individually in order to discuss their accommodations. All information will remain confidential. Please note that in this class, software may be used to audio record class lectures in order to provide equitable access to students with disabilities. Students approved for this accommodation use recordings for their personal study only and recordings may not be shared with other people or used in any way against the faculty member, other lecturers, or students whose classroom comments are recorded as part of the class activity. Recordings are deleted at the end of the semester. For more information about registering with SAC or questions about accommodations, please contact SAC at 773-508-3700 or SAC@luc.edu.

Grading rubric

| | Excellent (2) | Satisfactory (1) | Unsatisfactory (0) |
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| Thoroughness and relevance | All main questions are answered and relevance is clear | More than one of the main questions are not answered; tangential relevance | More than two of the main questions are not answered; relevance not clear |
| Factual correctness | All information is correct | Minor incorrections | Incorrect even in most important info (Names, ages, and jobs) |
| Sourcing | Every piece of information has clear source attribution | Some pieces of information are not sourced | Most pieces of informations do not have clear sources |
| Structural clarity and grammar | Structure of the piece is clear and focused and there are few typos or grammatical mistakes | Some issues with structure and/or occasional typos | Massive structural issues and/or frequent mistakes; difficult to understand at times |
| Length | 300 to 500 words (500 to 800 for final project) | 270 to 550 words (450 to 880 for final project) | Fewer than 270 or more than 550 words (fewer than 450 and more than 880 for final project) |

Late assignments will have an instant deduction of 0.5 point, plus another 0.5 point for every additional 24 hours of tardiness.

Schedule - Subject to change (updates will be announced on Sakai)

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| Week 1 (Jan 18-20) | |
| Wednesday (Jan 18) | Intro |
| Friday (Jan 20) | Finding good sources |

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| Week 2 (Jan 23-27) | |
| Monday (Jan 23) | Lecture and discussion: Open data portals |
| Wednesday (Jan 25) | New assignment: open data and basic analysis |
| Friday (Jan 27) | Example presentation + discussion |

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| Week 3 (Jan 30-Feb 3) | |
| Monday (Jan 30) | Lecture and discussion: Public information requests (FOIAs etc) |
| Wednesday (Feb 1) | New assignment: FOIA |
| Friday (Feb 3) | Example presentation + discussion |

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| Week 4 (Feb 6-10) | |
| Monday (Feb 6) | Lecture and discussion: Digital traces (search and social media) |
| Wednesday (Feb 8) | New assignment: Digital traces |
| Friday (Feb 10) | Example presentation + discussion |

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| Week 5 (Feb 13-17) | |
| Monday (Feb 13) | Lecture and discussion: Elections |
| Wednesday (Feb 15) | New assignment: Elections |
| Friday (Feb 17) | Example presentation + discussion |

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| Week 6 (Feb 20-24) | |
| Monday (Feb 20) | Lecture and discussion: Local and state government |
| Wednesday (Feb 22) | New assignment: Government |
| Friday (Feb 24) | Example presentation + discussion |

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| Week 7 (Feb 27-Mar 3) | |
| Monday (Feb 27) | Lecture and discussion: How to get ideas for projects |
| Wednesday (Mar 1) | Exercise: generating ideas |
| Friday (Mar 3) | Example presentation + discussion |

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| Week 8 (Mar 6-10) - SPRING BREAK - NO CLASS | |
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| Week 9 (Mar 13-17) | |
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| Monday (Mar 13) | Lecture and discussion: Business |
| Wednesday (Mar 15) | New assignment: Final |
| Friday (Mar 17) | Example presentation + discussion |

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| Week 10 (Mar 20-24) | |
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| Monday (Mar 20) | Lecture and discussion: Nonprofits |
| Wednesday (Mar 22) | Exercise: refining ideas |
| Friday (Mar 24) | Example presentation + discussion |

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| Week 11 (Mar 27-31) | |
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| Monday (Mar 27) | Lecture and discussion: Real-estate |
| Wednesday (Mar 29) | New assignment: Real-estate, business or non-profit |
| Friday (Mar 31) | Example presentation + discussion |

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| Week 12 (Apr 3-7) | |
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| Monday (Apr 3) | Lecture and discussion: Police and courts |
| Wednesday (Apr 5) | Exercise: TBD |
| Friday (Apr 7) | NO CLASS (EASTER) |

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| Week 13 (Apr 10-14) | |
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| Monday (Apr 10) | NO CLASS (EASTER) |
| Wednesday (Apr 12) | Lecture and discussion: Scientific studies |
| Friday (Apr 14) | Example presentation + discussion |

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| Week 14 (Apr 17-21) | |
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| Monday (Apr 17) | Recap |
| Wednesday (Apr 19) | Exercise: outlining and writing |
| Friday (Apr 21) | Example presentation + discussion |

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| Week 15 (Apr 24-28) | |
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| Monday (Apr 24) | Back to FOIAs |
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| Wednesday (Apr 26) | Office hours |
| Friday (Apr 28) | Final assignment office hours |

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| Week 16 (May 1-5) - Finals week | |
| Wednesday (May 3) | Final due |