

Digital Journalism II – Fall 2020
Department of Journalism, Rowan University

Digital Journalism II – Fall 2020 Remote Version

JRN 02325

CRN 44674

Section 1

Sept. 1, 2020 to Dec. 18, 2020

Tues./Thurs. 11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

NOTE: This course will be conducted remotely with synchronous classes via Zoom for the entire semester regardless of the state of university re-opening.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Digital Journalism II explores how online and mobile news stories are reported, produced and distributed on various digital platforms. Students will learn what it takes to create high-quality, innovative, multi-platform stories while adhering to the traditional standards of news judgment, accuracy, fairness and truth.

Prerequisites: News Reporting I and Digital Journalism I

Recommended: Photojournalism, Publication Layout and Design, On-Camera Field Reporting, Introduction to New Media

INSTRUCTOR:

Mark Berkey-Gerard

Email: berkey-gerard@rowan.edu

Office: 6 High Street

Office Hours: Tues/Thurs 12:30-2:00pm. Other times be request.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

This course builds upon the basic skills and knowledge presented in News Reporting I and Digital Journalism I. As a result of learning in this course, students will be able to:

- Study and analyze award-winning online news stories in order to gain insight into reporting and storytelling techniques.
- Learn how to generate enterprising story ideas through original reporting.
- Gain an understanding of the unique characteristics of text, photos, audio, video and graphics and when to use each to present a story in the most compelling manner.
- Explore innovative ways to adapt traditional news story formats for online and mobile audiences.
- Improve multimedia reporting and production skills.
- Complete several portfolio-worthy or publishable news stories. In the past, student work from this course has been published in The Whit, NJ.com, WHYY.org, South Jersey Times and South Jersey Magazine.

TEACHING METHODS:

This is a fast-paced, advanced level digital journalism workshop. There will be a lot of discussion, back-and-forth, and, as is the case in any newsroom, a fair amount of chaos. The success of the course and the finished products will depend on your energy, entrepreneurial spirit, work ethic, and ability to work together. It requires that students practice high journalistic standards. I will conduct the course as a group facilitator and editor.

TEXTS:

The Associated Press Stylebook by Norm Goldstein (editor)

All writing for this course must follow AP style. Every journalism student needs this book. Buy it. New and used copies are available in the Rowan bookstore, Amazon.com, and other locations. You should be able to find a copy for between \$10-\$20.

Because the field of digital journalism changes rapidly, there is no traditional “textbook” for this course. To keep the course as current as possible, students will explore examples of high-quality, award-winning digital news packages and read articles by online journalists. Students will explore examples from the list of finalists for the Online Journalism Awards at <http://journalists.org/awards/>. Launched in 2000, the OJAs are the only comprehensive set of journalism prizes honoring excellence in digital journalism. In addition, students will be assigned online articles and tutorials. Students are expected to complete an intense study and analysis of the assigned news packages and articles and come to class ready to discuss them.

OFFICE HOURS:

I welcome conversations outside of class. My dedicated office hours are on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 12:30-2:00pm via phone or Zoom. You can also generally set up a time to meet with me before or after class. I can also set up other times to meet. Email is the best way to contact me.

PLATFORMS:

Students will use the following platforms for remote learning and producing digital news stories:

- Rowan email - Please check your Rowan email several times a week. Each Friday I will send out an email with upcoming assignments and reminders. Email is also the best way to reach me.
- Canvas - For course materials, discussions, turning in assignments, and grades
- <http://ruoj2.wordpress.com> - Word Press site with video lectures, assignment details, resources, etc.
- Zoom - For synchronous remote class time on Tues/Thurs 11:00am-12:15pm
- Google Drive - For storing your multimedia files (photos, audio, video)
- Google Slides - Template for building your mobile assignment story
- Google Sheets – For spreadsheets
- Flourish - A free data visualization tool.
- You may use other online platforms of your choosing to host and post or Digital Explanatory Feature.

EQUIPMENT:

Students are required to have their own equipment to gather audio, photos and video. This equipment is essential for any journalist working today and is increasingly used in other journalism courses as well.

Students are required to own or purchase the following equipment:

- Headphones or headset for remote classes
- Smartphone and/or a camera and digital audio recorder
- Computer with access to Rowan online platforms - Email, Canvas, Zoom, Google Drive

If you have questions about equipment or do not have the means to purchase these items, please talk to me.

JOURNALISM DEPARTMENT EQUIPMENT CHECKOUT:

Students will be able to complete all of their assignments using a smartphone and computer.

Depending on university re-opening timelines and procedures, students on campus may be able check out some equipment (DSLRs, video cameras, microphones, tripods, chords, and other items) from the Journalism Department from the equipment room in Bozorth Hall.

Students must reserve and check-out equipment using the online CCCA Equipment Booking system <https://connect2.rowan.edu/connect2/>

I will update you with details on equipment pick-up and return times and procedures when they are available.

ROWAN UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC POLICIES:

Students are expected to read and abide by all [Rowan University policies](#) for attendance, classroom conduct, use of devices, inclement weather, and academic integrity. For updated policies for Fall 2020 semester, see the Canvas shell for this course.

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION:

Rowan affords equal opportunity to all and does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, age, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or any other protected class in its educational programs, activities, or employment policies and practices.

RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS:

If you are in crisis, call 856-256-4911 to speak to a counselor on call. You can also find assistance at the following:

- Wellness Center <https://sites.rowan.edu/wellness/index.html>
- Counseling & Psychological Services <https://sites.rowan.edu/wellness/counseling/index.html>
- The SHOP – Student food pantry and resource center <https://sites.rowan.edu/theshop/index.html>
- Philabundance Program (for fresh fruits and
- vegetables): https://sites.rowan.edu/theshop/helpful_resources.html

ACCOMMODATION POLICY:

Your academic success is important. If you have a documented disability that may have an impact upon your work in this class, please contact me at the beginning of the semester. Students must provide documentation of their disability to the Academic Success Center in order to receive official University services and accommodations. The Academic Success Center can be reached at 856-256-4234. The Center is located on the 3rd floor of Savitz Hall. The staff is available to answer questions regarding accommodations or assist you in your pursuit of accommodations.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY:

This class will be conducted remotely so inclement weather should not pose an issue to attendance. If it does, the university has made it a practice to hold classes during inclement weather whenever possible. As the Attendance Policy states, it is the student's decision, based on his or her assessment of the situation, whether or not to attend class. Students will not be penalized for missing classes because of inclement weather; however, they must contact their professors prior to class and make up any work assigned.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING:

For consistency, all assignments will be due on **Sundays at midnight** unless otherwise specified. All work must be turned in on time or a late penalty will be assessed.

Students must earn at least a C- for the course to count toward Journalism major or minor requirements.

Students will produce a series of digital reporting assignments. Specific instructions and guidelines will be provided prior to each assignment.

Digital Reporting/Production Assignments – Worth 80 points

1. Mobile Swipe Story - 25 points (First Draft 5 points and Final 20 points)
2. Data Visualizations - 25 points (Practice 5 points and Final 20 points)
3. Multimedia Explanatory Feature - 30 points (First Draft 10 points and Final 20 points)

Online Journalism Award class presentation – Worth 5 Points

Each week during remote class, a student will make a presentation and lead a discussion of a finalist for the Online Journalism Award.

Attendance/Participation/Peer Review– Worth 15 points

Attendance at remote classes and participation in discussions and activities is recorded. Students who miss class are responsible for all material covered and must meet all deadlines related to that material. Students will also conduct peer review of each other's first drafts of assignments and are expected to offer thoughtful critiques.

GRADING SCALE:

Total 100 points

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	60-66
F	0-59

JOURNALISM DEPARTMENT CODE OF CONDUCT:

The Department of Journalism Code of Conduct was created to serve as a practical guide for students as they advance in their academic careers. These policies are meant to encourage students to meet the high standards in the news industry and earn the privilege of becoming a journalist with ethical standards. It is a compliment to Rowan University's Academic Integrity Policy, which students are required to read and follow.

Journalism is by its nature a public act. As stated in the Society of Professional Journalists' Code of Ethics, journalists must recognize that the work of "gathering and reporting information may cause harm or discomfort" to others and must do all they can to "minimize harm" and ensure their work is "accurate, fair and thorough." Therefore, student journalists must always be clear, upfront and honest about who

they are and what they are doing. They are expected to abide by the Society of Professional Journalists' Code of Ethics. Students must take full responsibility for their conduct and work.

The policy below is not all-inclusive, but identifies situations that frequently arise among Journalism students.

Plagiarism and fabrication are serious offenses. Do not use words, photos, or other kinds of content without proper attribution and copyright permission. This includes copying content from the Internet. Plagiarism also includes passing off another's work as your own or giving your work to another student.

Fabrication is deliberately inventing or altering information with the intent to deceive. Anyone caught plagiarizing or fabricating could receive an F for the course.

All assignments must be completed for this class only. Submitting work from another class, in part or in full, is considered academic dishonesty.

Essentially, plagiarism means trying to pass someone else's work off as your own. It does not necessarily mean copying an entire paper, although that would clearly be plagiarism.

For example, you plagiarize if you:

Use an interview someone else did or use a quote someone else obtained and don't credit the source.

Cut and paste a variety of sources and cobble them together without proper citation and with no evident thought on your part as to the thrust of the piece.

Lift a segment verbatim without citation. You must be very clear about the source of words that are not yours, put quotes around verbatim usage, and cite the source in the text of your paper or article. Remember, if you take a direct quote from another source, word-for-word, you must not only cite but you must put it in quotation marks. Failing to put quotation marks around something you have appropriated is a serious issue and could result in lowering of your grade or a formal referral for academic discipline.

Use facts and figures that are not common knowledge without citing the source, creating the impression you gathered the information yourself.

Use your own work from another context without citing that it was used previously. If you are researching or reporting on a topic that you have written on before, you must clear it with the professor beforehand.

In addition, under the Journalism Department's Code of Conduct, students may not:

- Fabricate – Deliberately invent or alter information with the intent to deceive.
- Cheat – Misrepresent one's mastery of material on an academic exercise or help someone else do so.
- Misrepresent oneself or work.
- Submit late work without penalty.
- Use others' words or media without proper attribution and copyright permission; it is always best to use third-party content that is licensed under Creative Commons.
- Use friends or relatives as sources for stories.
- Submit work, in part or in full, from another class.
- Turn in same story or assignment in multiple classes.
- Conduct interviews via email without prior approval from instructor.
- Submit assignments in alternate form than required

- Act unprofessionally to the instructor or other students in the classroom.
- Use cell phones or electronic devices in class for non-class activity.

SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT JOURNALISTS REPORTING DURING PANDEMIC

During the pandemic, journalism students need to carefully consider their safety and the safety of others while reporting. As always, we encourage students to pursue their reporting with dedication and determination. We also expect our students to use best practices and do all they can to remain safe while reporting. While these guidelines are not exhaustive, they represent common-sense practices for asserting your rights as a journalist and staying safe while reporting. The following guidelines were compiled after reviewing the practices of other universities and news organizations around the country. These guidelines are relevant whether you're taking remote classes on campus or from home. They are designed to allow students to get their reporting done while also remaining safe.

- Remember: No story assignment is worth sacrificing your health or the health of others.
- You have options beyond face-to-face interviews. Interviews can be conducted via phone, Skype, Zoom, FaceTime -- pick your platform. Most journalists agree that email interviews are not a good idea, especially when dealing with public officials. But coordinate with your individual instructor, who may make exceptions, especially when conducting follow-ups.
- All face-to-face interviews must be conducted outdoors at least six feet away from the interview subject (10 feet is suggested.)
- Wear a mask or face shield at all times during the interview process – before, during and after. Practice speaking loudly and clearly when asking questions, so the interview subject can hear you.
- When possible, keep face-to-face interviews short. Think in terms of getting your key questions answered. You can always follow up by phone. Make these guidelines clear to your interview subjects during the pre-interview so they understand that you're not being rude.
- Stay away from crowded locations when conducting interviews (this will involve some planning).
- For video and broadcast: Use a shotgun mic mounted on camera to record audio if you can check one out.
- Photography students should follow the same basic rules as reporting students - work outdoors as much as possible, maintain at least six feet of distance and use telephoto lenses whenever possible.

CLASS AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE – Fall 2020

The following schedule is a guide for the semester. It is subject to change. Check Canvas and the <http://www.ruoj2.wordpress.com> website each week for updates. Major assignment due dates are marked in bold.

Week 1 - Tues., Sept. 1 and Thurs., Sept. 3

- Introductions
 - Remote Tech and Etiquette
 - Syllabus and [Course Overview](#)
 - [Platforms](#)
 - [Online Journalism Awards](#) and Presentations
 - [Equipment](#) and [Tutorials and Resources](#)
 - [Suggested Reporting Guidelines for Student Journalists Reporting](#)
- Assignments:
- Review Syllabus, Canvas and <https://ruoj2.wordpress.com/>
 - Check out [Online Journalism Awards](#)

- Read [How a digital-first workflow guides a reporter's work](#) by Steve Buttry
- Read [10 ways to think like a digital journalist](#) by Steve Buttry

Week 2 - Tues., Sept. 8 and Thurs., Sept. 9

- OJA presentation – Mark demo
- Digital Workflow
- Making the most of your smartphone
- Which media elements are best for your story?
- Mobile Swipe Story Overview
- Pitching stories

Assignment:

- Read through Mobile Journalism Manual resources and practice with your device
- Review NYTimes mobile swipe stories

Week 3 - Tues., Sept. 15 and Thurs., Sept. 17

- OJA presentation
- Unpacking NYTimes mobile swipe stories
- Tips for shooting mobile video
- Pitch Mobile Swipe Story
- Mobile Swipe Story work

Assignment:

- Mobile Swipe Story first draft due Sun., Sept 20 at midnight**

Week 4 - Tues., Sept. 22 and Thurs., Sept. 24

- OJA presentation
- Mobile Swipe Story peer review

Assignment:

- Mobile Swipe Story peer review
- Mobile Swipe Story final draft due Sun., Sept. 27 at midnight**

Week 5 - Tues., Sept. 29 and Thurs., Oct. 1

- OJA presentation
- Intro to Data Visualizations

Week 6 - Tues., Oct. 6 and Thurs., Oct. 8

- OJA presentation
- Data Visualizations (cont.)
- Google Sheets tips and tutorials

Week 7 - Tues., Oct. 13 and Thurs., Oct. 15

- OJA presentation
- Google Sheets tips and tutorials (cont.)
- Intro to Flourish visualization tool

Week 8 - Tues., Oct. 20 and Thurs., Oct. 22

- OJA presentation
- Data visualization work

Assignment:

-Data Visualization Practice (worth 5 points) due Sun., Oct 25

Week 9 - Tues., Oct. 27 and Thurs., Oct. 29

-OJA presentation

-Data Visualization assignment final draft overview

Week 10 - Tues., Nov. 3 and Thurs., Nov. 5

-OJA presentation

-Data Visualization assignment final draft work

Assignment:

-Final Data Visualization due Sun., Nov. 8

Week 11 - Tues., Nov. 10 and Thurs., Nov. 12

-OJA presentation

-Digital Explanatory Feature assignment overview

Week 12 - Tues., Nov. 17 and Thurs., Nov. 19

-OJA presentation

-Digital Explanatory Feature assignment work

Assignment:

-Digital Explanatory Feature outline and plan due Sun., Nov. 22

Week 13 - Tues., Nov. 24

-Digital Explanatory Feature work

-Thanksgiving Break

Week 14 - Week 10 - Tues., Dec. 1 and Thurs., Dec. 3

-Digital Explanatory Feature work

Assignment:

-Digital Explanatory Feature first draft due Sun., Dec. 6

Week 15 - Tues., Dec. 8

-Explanatory Feature peer review

-Digital Explanatory Feature work

-Thurs., Dec. 10 – No Class – Reading Day

Finals Week - TBA

-Explanatory Feature final draft due TBA