

**Fall 2014**  
The University of Texas at Austin  
School of Journalism

**Course Title: J351F Journalism, Society and the Citizen Journalist (08095)**

A course originally developed by Paula Poindexter for the Carnegie-Knight Initiative on the *Future of Journalism Education*

**TTh 11-12:30 p.m.; CMA 5.190**

**Instructor:** Dr. Paula Poindexter  
**Office:** BMC 3.310  
**Phone & Text:** (512) 695-6879  
**E-Mail:** [paula.poindexter@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:paula.poindexter@austin.utexas.edu)  
**Office Hours:** TTh 2-3:30 p.m. or by Appointment

**Course Description and Learning Objectives:**

Designed as a seminar for journalism majors, the Fall 2014 Journalism, Society, and the Citizen Journalist course has three objectives. First this course will lay the foundation for journalism's role in society, reinforce what students of journalism are expected to know, and answer such questions as: What is the purpose of journalism? What are the principles of journalism? What is the process of journalism? Who is a journalist? These questions will be explored through films, readings, and the context of journalism's history.

The second objective is to examine the audience's engagement with news with special attention paid to the Millennial Generation. The third objective is to participate in the first-ever National News Engagement Day and explore ways to increase engagement with news in today's media landscape.

**After completing this course, students will be able to:**

1. Describe the purpose, principles, process, and historical underpinnings of journalism.
2. Analyze the role of journalism in society and the challenges it faces in a news media landscape that has been transformed by digital, social, and mobile media as well as declines in news consumption and a broken business model.
3. Compare audience news consumption trends with special attention devoted to the Millennial Generation, the generation born between the early 1980s and late 1990s.
4. Evaluate barriers to Millennial engagement with news and approaches to overcoming the barriers.
5. Become a more informed news consumer and critical thinker about how news is reported and delivered especially as it relates to the Millennial Generation.

**Required Text, Materials, and Resources:** *Millennials, News, and Social Media: Is News Engagement a Thing of the Past?* by Paula M. Poindexter (NY: Peter Lang Publishing; ISBN: 978-1-4331-1497-7)

*Millennials and News* on Facebook at <http://on.fb.me/Nlejee>. Other class materials will be posted, emailed, or distributed during class.

**Grading.** Plus and minus will be used in calculating course grades. The final course grade will be based on the following formula:

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|---|-----|
| 1. Attendance   | 25% |
| 2. Paper on <i>Millennials, News, and Social Media: Is News Engagement a Thing of the Past?</i>                         | 25% |
| 3. Final Project will be related to National News Engagement Day  | 20% |
| 4. Completion Assignments:  | 30% |
| a. "Like" <i>Millennials and News</i> on Facebook   |     |
| b. Questionnaire about the press  |     |
| c. Written responses to questions following viewing of films and panels   |     |
| d. Weekly <i>Millennials and News</i> activities  |     |
| e. National News Engagement Day activities: <a href="http://www.newsengagement.org/">http://www.newsengagement.org/</a> |     |

#### **Expectations of Students.**

1. Always come to class ready to learn and prepared to participate.
2. Listen, take notes and participate during class discussions.
3. Attend all classes and oral presentations.
4. Meet all assignment deadlines. Late completion assignments will not be accepted.
5. If an emergency prevents a student from meeting the deadline of an assignment, the student must notify the instructor prior to the deadline.
6. Always turn in professional-level written work. Points will be deducted for spelling, grammatical, punctuation, and capitalization errors.

#### **7. Abide by the University of Texas at Austin Honor Code, which reads:**

"The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community."

#### **8. Abide by the University of Texas at Austin Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty, which reads:**

The University defines academic dishonesty as cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to avoid participating honestly in the learning process. Scholastic dishonesty also includes, but is not limited to, providing false or misleading information to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment, and submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructor. By accepting this syllabus, you have agreed to these guidelines and must adhere to them. Scholastic dishonesty damages both the student's learning experience and readiness for the future demands of a work-career.

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University.

See: [http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint\\_student.php](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php).

9. Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259.

## Fall 2014 Calendar of Assignments and Activities

### 1. Week of August 25:

**First Day of Class, Thursday, August 28; Introductions, Course Goals, Learning Objectives, Expectations.**

- a. Poll on Attitudes about the Press
- b. Introduction to *Millennials and News* on Facebook.

### 2. Week of September 1:

**Purpose, Principles, and Process of Journalism**

- a. Organize groups; Group rules; Brainstorm National News Engagement Day plans.
- b. View: *All the President's Men*
- c. Written Completion Assignment on film.
- d. Group-led discussion on film.

### Due Tuesday, September 2:

- a. *Millennials and News* Completion Assignment: Before class on Tuesday, “like” the *Millennials and News* page, then “like” a story that gets your attention.

### 3. Week of September 8:

**Purpose, Principles, and Process of Journalism cont.**

- a. View: Shattered Glass
- b. b. Written Completion Assignment due at conclusion of film.
- c. Group-led discussion on film.
- d. *Millennials and News* Completion Assignment: Before class on Thursday, comment on a story on *Millennials and News* that was posted between Mon. and Thurs.

### 4. Week of September 15:

**Purpose, Principles, and Process of Journalism cont.**

- a. View: *Bill Moyers*’ “Buying the War”
- b. Written Completion Assignment due at conclusion of film.
- c. Group-led discussion on “Buying the War”
- d. *Millennials and News* Completion Assignment: Before class on Thursday, comment on a story that was posted on *Millennials and News* between Mon. and Thurs.

### 5. Week of September 22:

**Purpose, Principles, and Process of Journalism cont.**

Planning and Promotion for first-ever National News Engagement Day  
*Millennials and News* Completion Assignment: Before class on Thursday, comment on a story on *Millennials and News* that was posted between Mon. and Thurs.

## **6. Week of September 29:**

### **Purpose, Principles, and Process of Journalism cont.**

- a. View: *Page One: Inside The New York Times*
- b. Written Completion Assignment due at conclusion of film.
- c. Group-led discussion on film.
- d. *Millennials and News* Completion Assignment: Before class on Thursday, comment on a story posted on *Millennials and News* between Mon. and Thurs.

## **7. Week of October 6:**

### **Tues., Oct 7. National News Engagement Day**

### **Purpose, Principles, and Process of Journalism and Twitter**

- a. View: *#Twitter Revolution*, a CNBC original documentary
- b. Written Completion Assignment due at conclusion of film.
- c. Class Discussion on Film.
- d. Read: David Carr's "View of #Ferguson Thrust Michael Brown Shooting to National Attention," <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/18/business/media/view-of-ferguson-thrust-michael-brown-shooting-to-national-attention.html>
- e. *Millennials and News* Completion Assignment: Before class on Thursday, comment on a story posted on *Millennials and News* between Mon. and Thurs.

## **8. Week of October 13:**

### **Purpose, Principles, and Process of Journalism cont.**

Journalism and Ethics Timeline; Definitions of News; Elements of Journalism; Credibility of Journalism and News in Society; Citizen Journalists; ONA Ethics Project; AEJMC Presidential Panel [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BtJ1aitCnPs&list=UUPZZJ0\\_P-ghIVsLEg8JI-NQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BtJ1aitCnPs&list=UUPZZJ0_P-ghIVsLEg8JI-NQ)

*Millennials and News* Completion Assignment. Before class on Thursday, comment on a story posted on *Millennials and News* between Mon. and Thurs.

## **9. Week of October 20:**

### **Journalism and Society.**

Journalism and Ethics Timeline; Definitions of News; Elements of Journalism; Credibility of Journalism and News in Society; Citizen Journalists; ONA Ethics Project; AEJMC Presidential Panel cont.

*Millennials and News* Completion Assignment. Before class on Thursday, comment on a story posted on *Millennials and News* between Mon. and Thurs.

## **10. Week of October 27:**

### **The Audience for News**

- a. Due at the beginning of class: Paper with answers to discussion questions on *Millennials, News, and Social Media: Is News Engagement a Thing of the Past*.  
Class discussion on *Millennials, News, and Social Media: Is News Engagement a Thing of the Past?*
- b. *Millennials and News* Completion Assignment. Before class on Thursday, comment on a story posted on *Millennials and News* between Mon. and Thurs.

## **11. Week of November 3:**

*Millennials and News* Completion Assignment. Before class on Thursday, comment on a story posted on *Millennials and News* between Mon. and Thurs.

**12. Week of November 10:**

**Begin Work on Final Project**

*Millennials and News* Completion Assignment. Before class on Thursday, comment on a story posted on Millennials and News between Mon. and Thurs.

**13. Week of November 17:**

**Continue Work on Final Project**

Millennials and News Completion Assignment. Before class on Thursday, comment on a story posted on Millennials and News between Mon. and Thurs.

**14. Week of November 24**

**Continue Work on Final Project.**

**Holiday: Thanksgiving, November 27**

**15. Week of December 1:**

**Final Project Presentations**

Evaluations

**Last Day of Class: Thursday, December 4**