

Journalism J395
School of Journalism
College of Communication
University of Texas - Austin

PRO-SEMINAR IN JOURNALISM

Fall Semester 2013
MW 10:30 am – 12.00 pm
CMA 6.146
Graduate Course

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Off. Hours: F 2 - 3 pm or Any time by
appointment

Course description

The School of Journalism graduate faculty sought to develop this course as a common “proseminar” experience for our doctoral and academically-oriented master’s students. It aims to present a map of the field but to emphasize the development of individual students’ ability to conduct significant research over time. The course is offered in parallel with first-semester seminars in theory and methods. It is meant to provide a socialization function as the student takes what is learned in theory and method courses and integrates it into a viable plan of attack.

The sequence of readings and discussion follows a logical order, in that the new academic begins with a general sense of mission, becomes familiar with the historical roots and currents in the chosen field, considers what issues to investigate in his/her own work and learns the craft of doing it (beyond the method per se). Of course, in one semester you will presumably not be ready for employment, but this telescoping of steps will provide a feel for what we hope to emphasize in the doctoral program – your ability to join a conversation that has been going on for many years, familiarize yourself with it, and be prepared to meaningfully contribute to it through your own career.

At the end of the course you will have a curriculum vitae, bio, and made a conference-style paper presentation. You also will have submitted a paper to a conference or journal, or have a proposal for a research project you can carry out.

Course Objectives

- To orient students to the field of journalism education and its affiliated branch of communication research as a profession and career.
- To introduce students to selected professionals and major areas of research in this field as carried out within the School of Journalism, as well as kindred areas of the College of Communication and University.
- To help students cultivate scholarly skills, ethical norms, awareness of funding possibilities, the art of teaching and academic service – that is, academic craftsmanship.

Course requirements

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| (1) Personal bio (online presence) | 15% |
| (2) CV - Resume | 15% |
| (3) In-class Exercises | 20% |
| (4) Paper/research presentation | 30% |
| (5) Participation | 20% |

Personal bio:

You will work individually to create your personal bio (hard copy). This assignment will require that you begin to reflect on who you are as a researcher, and what kind of studies you pursue/will pursue. Additionally, you will have to create your digital academic presence (i.e., Twitter and Academia.edu). Due dates: Sept. 9th.

Personal CV - Resume:

Based on class discussions you will be responsible to generate your professional academic CV to be used from now on. Prepare a curriculum vita that includes all seminar and conference papers produced to date, teaching and professional experience, educational background and service (as applicable), and a professional biography that includes a projected program of research, including but not limited to your possible dissertation area. Due dates: Sept. 23rd.

In-class exercises:

There will be multiple exercises during the semester to be performed in class. They will be graded on a yes/no basis. The final grade will reflect both your effort in class but also your consistency in performing the tasks requested in class. Due dates: throughout the semester.

Final Paper/Presentation:

This is the main requirement for this class. The paper must be original and the topic will be discussed during the course of the seminar. The paper should grow out of one of the topical areas covered in the course and contain the following sections: (1) brief introduction; (2) literature review; (3) statement of hypothesis or research model; (4) methodology; (5) results; (6) concluding discussion. The goal of the paper is to contribute to research in the area of Communication. Please note I left it as open as possible to consider your topics in an individual basis. If possible, the paper should present findings based on the collection of original data or existing data sets. Whether or not you present data, your work should reflect an empirical orientation that relies on qualitative, quantitative or social network analytic techniques. Some of you may wish to extend projects you have developed elsewhere or to refine ideas toward completion of Master's or Doctoral theses; please consult with me if this is the case.

Your research paper should reflect an original extension of the ideas we have encountered in class, not a simple recapitulation of past work. You will present your paper (conference style) to the rest of the seminar participants. The final paper is due Dec. 2 and should be approximately 20 – 25 pages including cover, bibliography, tables, and figures. The expectation being that this paper constitutes the draft of a conference paper. Students are encouraged to submit their papers to AAPOR (November deadline), APSA (December deadline), etc. Due dates: Nov. 25th, Dec. 2nd.

Seminar Participation:

The final 20% of your class grade will be based on contributions to seminar discussion. Students are expected to go beyond opinion-giving and be able to

critically engage readings and explain (or explain away) their findings. At the same time, each student must contribute to a classroom environment in which ideas are debated in a respectful way. Due dates: Dec. 2nd.

Grades in the class will be based on the following components and percentage distribution:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| (1) Personal bio (online presence) | 15% |
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| (3) In-class Exercises | 20% |
| (4) Paper/research presentation | 30% |
| (5) Participation | 20% |

A = 94-100; A- = 90-93.9; B+ = 87-89.9; B = 84-86.9; B- = 80-83.9; C+ = 77-79.9; C = 74-76.9; C- = 70-73.9; D+ = 67-69.9; D = 64-66.9; D- = 60-63.9; F = 0-59.9

Semester Schedule

Week 1	(August 28)	Introduction and class overview
Week 2	(September 4)	Surviving PhD Program (Bio & CV) - Qualitative vs. Quantitative
Week 3	(September 9)	Research: Theory Building - Creativity - Paper sections.
Week 4	(September 16)	Research resources - Data - Grants - Citation indexes
Week 5	(September 23)	Ethics & IRB - References Software
Week 6	(September 30)	Presenting Conferences - Authorship order
Week 7	(October 7)	Academic Publication Journals - R&R
Week 8	(October 14)	Academic Service - Teaching
Week 9	(October 21)	Career paths in academia - Find jobs
Week 10	(October 28)	Job talks - Annual reports
Week 11	(November 4)	Tenure
Week 12	(November 11)	What's new?
Week 13	(November 18)	Final papers
Week 14	(November 25)	In-class Presentations
Week 15	(December 2)	In-class Presentations

Recommended Readings:

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th ed. (2009). Washington, DC: APA.

Alexander, Alison & Potter, W. James (2001). *How to publish your communication research: An insider's guide*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

University Policies

This class will follow University guidelines concerning scholastic misconduct and grievance procedures. Please be aware of the University's policy on plagiarism, copyright and intellectual property. Always bear in mind the University of Texas Honor Code:

"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." To learn more about the creation of the Honor Code, visit: http://www.utexas.edu/president/speeches/hc_042904.html.

In this class, any form of academic dishonesty – including plagiarism and making up quotes, sources, or any other information – will result in an automatic grade of F. For your own sake, don't even think about it.

The Institutional Rules on Student Services and Activities at the University of Texas at Austin defines plagiarism as follows " 'Plagiarism' includes but is not limited to, the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any other means another's work and the submission of it as one's own academic work offered for credit" [Section 11-802(d)].

In other words, don't steal other people's work and pass it off as your own.

Ways to avoid plagiarism:

1. Don't copy and paste stuff from the Web into your own work.
2. Attribute information that you get from others.
3. Use quotation marks and attribute when you are using the exact words of others.

Important point: As a journalist, you should be getting your own direct quotes through interviewing. Journalism means obtaining original materials. Taking quotations from the Web, even if you attribute them, is not really journalism. The Web is most useful to the journalist for verifying facts and spellings, getting background information on a current happening and gaining understanding of some complex topic (prior to an interview, for instance).

Everything on most Web pages is copyrighted through common law copyright, whether or not there is a copyright notice. Most information from government sources is not copyrighted, but still should be attributed.

Please be also aware of the University's policy on aiding people with any disability. Please come to see me the first week of class in case you need special requirements and I will try to accommodate you and help as much as possible.