
DIGITAL JOURNALISM in Spring 2019 (CM2012)

Course Code	CM2012	Professor(s)	Matthew Fraser
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	Grenelle 4th floor
Class Schedule	MR: 10:35-11:55 in PV-1	Office Hours	Wednesday 12 – 3 pm or by appointment
Credits	4	Email	mfraser@aup.edu
Semester	Spring 2019	Office Tel. Ext.	0689263247

Course Description

This course prepares students for careers in digital journalism, providing tools and training as well as a critical understanding of trends that have transformed the profession. Students acquire practical, career-driven experience in digital writing, website curation, and personal branding. Students also gain a critical understanding of digital media to prepare them professionally for careers in journalism, social media, branding, marketing, communications, advertising, public relations, and NGOs.

The course has three main components:

1. **Digital Curation:** Students will learn how to curate on their own Medium page, blog or website that will serve as a platform to develop a portfolio of work — articles, opinion pieces, gifs, graphics, photos, video and podcasts.
2. **Social Media:** Students will learn how to use social media strategically as journalism tools and for personal branding as digital journalists.
3. **Digital Trends:** Students will learn digital industry trends (SEO, engagement metrics, advertising, business models, etc.) so they possess a critical understanding of the dynamics transforming digital journalism.

Course Learning Outcomes

gaining critical understanding of the journalism profession in the digital sphere
building practical skills building online portfolios while using tools and techniques for
writing, editing, curation, and podcasting
using social media networks as journalism tools
learning metrics and search engine optimization as journalism tools
developing skills for entry-level positions in a professional newsroom

General Education

Course Outline

Please note: This is a tentative schedule which may be revisited as the course progresses.

Week I

Session I

TOPICS: Course Overview – Introduction to digital journalism.

READINGS: “Rethinking Journalism – Introduction” (on Blackboard); “State of the News Media 2018”, PEW Research; Articles on course blog: <https://journalism2aup.wordpress.com>;

Session II

TOPICS: Journalism history – partisan newspapers, muckraking, New Journalism, “high modernism”, digital disruption.

READINGS: Downie and Schudson, “The Reconstruction of American Journalism”; Eric Alterman, “Out of Print: the death and life of the American newspaper”, *The New Yorker*.

Week II

Session I

TOPICS – Social media and personal branding for digital journalists – how to use Twitter as a tool.

READINGS – “How journalists can start creating a personal brand online”, Journalism.co.uk; “Your Twitter bio is your calling card”; Course blog: <https://journalism2aup.wordpress.com>

Session II

TOPICS – First story pitches and discussion. Working on backend curation.

READINGS – Articles on course blog: <https://journalism2aup.wordpress.com>

Week III

Session I

TOPICS – Social media and digital journalism.

READINGS – “Journalists quote social media content more frequently”, European Journalism Observatory; “Distrust of social media is dragging journalism down”, *The Guardian*; articles on course blog: <https://journalism2aup.wordpress.com>

Session II

TOPICS – Researching a story – techniques and tools.

READINGS – “18 data sources for investigative journalists”; Journalist’s Toolbox on course blog: <https://journalism2aup.wordpress.com>

Week IV

Session I

TOPICS – Digital journalism in the “attention economy”. Click culture, analytics and metrics.

READINGS – “The battle for consumers’ attention”, *The Economist*; “Hacking the Attention Economy”, Dana Boyd; articles on course blog: <https://journalism2aup.wordpress.com>

Session II

TOPICS – Second story pitches and review.

READINGS - Course blog: <https://journalism2aup.wordpress.com>

Week V

Session I

TOPICS – Digital journalism and online advertising.

READINGS – “The media’s post-advertising future is also its past”, *The Atlantic*; Articles on course blog: <https://journalism2aup.wordpress.com>

Session II

TOPICS – Google and Facebook – threats to journalism?

READINGS – “Facebook is eating the world”, Emily Bell; Articles on course blog: <https://journalism2aup.wordpress.com>

Week VI

Session I

TOPICS – Native advertising and content marketing.

READINGS – “Should journalism worry about content marketing?” *Columbia Journalism Review*: “The native advertising deception”, European Journalism Observatory; articles on course blog: <https://journalism2aup.wordpress.com>

Session II

TOPICS – Third story pitches and review.

READINGS - Course blog: <https://journalism2aup.wordpress.com>

Week VII

TOPICS – Public relations and “spin” in the digital sphere.

READINGS – “Rise of the Image Men”, *The Economist*; articles on course blog: <https://journalism2aup.wordpress.com>

Session II

TOPICS – “Fake news”, misinformation and the “trust” crisis in journalism.

READINGS – “Bias, bullshit and lies”, Reuters Institute; “Fake news and bots are worrisome, but their political power is overblown”, *New York Times*; “Yes, there’s a crisis in trust in journalism – but it’s inside newsrooms too”, *Columbia Journalism Review*; Reading on course blog: <https://journalism2aup.wordpress.com>

Week VIII

TOPICS – Digital cauldron: Gossip, lies slander.

READINGS – “The Oxygen of Amplification”, Whitney Phillips, Date & Society; “A honey pot for assholes: inside Twitter’s 10 years of failing to stop harassment”, BuzzFeed; Course blog: <https://journalism2aup.wordpress.com>

Session II

TOPICS – Fourth story pitches and review.

READINGS – Articles on course blog: <https://journalism2aup.wordpress.com>

Week IX

Session I

TOPICS – Midterm exam review.

READINGS – Articles for study on Blackboard course blog:
<https://journalism2aup.wordpress.com>

Session II

TOPICS – Midterm exam.

READINGS – Articles for study on Blackboard and course blog:
<https://journalism2aup.wordpress.com>

Week X

Session I

TOPICS – Networking and job searching in digital journalism.

READINGS – “Becoming a marketable media grad”; Articles on course blog: <https://journalism2aup.wordpress.com>

Session II

TOPICS – Mid-term social media audit review.

READINGS – Articles on course blog: <https://journalism2aup.wordpress.com>

Week XI

Session I

TOPICS – #Hashtag campaigns and digital activism — objectivity vs advocacy.

READINGS – “Advocates are becoming journalists, is that a good thing?”, Matthew Ingram, *Columbia Journalism Review*; Articles on course blog: <https://journalism2aup.wordpress.com>

Session II

TOPICS – Student presentations.

READINGS Articles on course blog: <https://journalism2aup.wordpress.com>

Week XII

Session I

TOPICS – Digital journalism, politics and propaganda. The *New York Times* and the “Trump bump”.

READINGS – “How America’s largest TV owners turned its anchors into soldiers in Trump’s war on the media”; Articles on course blog: <https://journalism2aup.wordpress.com>

Session II

TOPICS –. Student presentations.

READINGS – Articles on course blog: <https://journalism2aup.wordpress.com>

Week XIII

Session I

TOPICS – Donald Trump and “post truth” and democracy.

READINGS – “No, Twitter shouldn’t ban Donald Trump”, *Columbia Journalism Review*; “All the President’s Lies”, Reuters Institute, 2017; “Do social media threaten democracy?”, *The Economist*; Articles on course blog: <https://journalism2aup.wordpress.com>

Session II

TOPICS - Student presentations.

READINGS - Course blog: <https://journalism2aup.wordpress.com>

Week XIV

Session I

TOPICS – The future of digital journalism.

READINGS – John Micklethwait, “The Future of News”; “Digital news outlets are in for a reckoning”, *The Economist*; articles on course blog: <https://journalism2aup.wordpress.com>

Session II

TOPICS – Social media profile audits.

READINGS - Course blog: <https://journalism2aup.wordpress.com>

Textbooks

Title	Author	Publisher	ISBN	Required
NO BOOKS				No

Attendance Policy

Students studying at The American University of Paris are expected to attend ALL scheduled

classes, and in case of absence, should contact their professors to explain the situation. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that a faculty member might have set in the course syllabus. The French Department, for example, has its own attendance policy, and students are responsible for compliance. Academic Affairs will excuse an absence for students' participation in study trips related to their courses.

Attendance at all exams is mandatory.

IN ALL CASES OF MISSED COURSE MEETINGS, THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMMUNICATION WITH THE PROFESSOR, AND FOR ARRANGING TO MAKE UP MISSED WORK, RESTS SOLELY WITH THE STUDENT.

Whether an absence is excused or not is ALWAYS up to the discretion of the professor or the department. Unexcused absences can result in a low or failing participation grade. In the case of excessive absences, it is up to the professor or the department to decide if the student will receive an "F" for the course. An instructor may recommend that a student withdraw, if absences have made it impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level.

Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and especially during the Drop/Add and Exam Periods.

Grading Policy

- **50% -- Digital Portfolio & Social Media**

Half of the final grade will be based on evaluation of work produced and curated on a personal Medium page, blog or personal website, **plus engagement on social media networks**. Students will be evaluated on their capacity to edit articles, write sharp headlines, and find relevant photos, GIFs, audio and video for their articles. A minimum of **four** stories are expected by the end of the term.

- **25% -- Midterm Exam**

Midterm exam will cover lectures on industry issues and trends till term mid-point.

- **25% -- Group Presentation**

Students work in groups of 2 or 3 to "unpack" a digital journalism case study: digital news site, brand, fake news, advertising model, #hashtag campaign, etc. Presentations should be tightly focused, 20-30 minutes maximum.

Other
