Course Number: JRNL 4417

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: 2.3 gpa, Memberships in Honors College


Course Description: Issues facing the American press, from colonial times to the present, with emphasis on regional and state issues.

Course Overview: “Who we are is who we were.” These words, spoken by John Quincy Adams before the U.S. Supreme Court, emphasize our connection with our past. They can be applied to any social group, including professionals such as journalists. In our case, it is crucial for the next generation of professional journalists to understand who came before – the individuals who did the “heavy lifting” of setting professional standards, building the audience, and fighting the battles. Today’s journalists owe a heavy debt to the past; this class helps you understand and appreciate that past, especially as it applies to the present.

Course Competencies: After taking this course, a student should be able to:

1. Identify the major personalities and events of journalism history;

2. Describe how the development of other media has affected newspapers;

3. Understand the emergence of journalism as a profession; and

4. Apply the historical method in researching primary and secondary sources to produce a conference-level journalism history paper.
Course Procedures: This course incorporates three teaching methods:

1. Lecture-discussion. You will be assigned readings that prepare you for that day’s discussions and will be expected to actively and effectively participate in classroom discussions. In most cases, readings that are not in the textbook will be given to you at least one class session in advance. Where Web sites are available, you will be responsible to locate those readings on your own. **Warning:** You will be asked about these readings in class; lack of preparation will result in pop quizzes.

2. Writing. You will write an essay looking at how a newspaper covered its news over a given week. You will also gain experience in academic investigation and writing through the preparation of a major paper.

3. Group presentations. Each class member will participate in a group that will present a 30-minute presentation related to the historical period being studied that week in class.

Attendance Policy: The Tiger Cub gives the basics of the Auburn University attendance policy. As such, students in any class are responsible for being aware of it. This professor’s highlights:

**Please be on time.** Beyond attendance issues, lateness is disruptive and a bad professional ethic to tolerate.

**Assignments.** If work is due on a day you are absent, you are responsible to make sure the work is turned in on time. If work is assigned on the day you are absent, you are responsible for picking up a copy of the assignment.

**Unexcused absences.** If you have more than six unexcused absences, you will be assigned an FA.

**Doctor’s excuses.** Auburn University recognizes doctor’s excuses for excused absences. Doctor’s excuses must be turned in within one week of the last class session missed. Students are responsible for turning in work that is due during excused absences, as listed in the syllabus.

Plagiarism: Academic dishonesty is an offense that will be reported to the Academic Dishonesty Committee. The Auburn University Student Academic Honesty Code has this to say about plagiarism:
“Violations . . . [include] the submission of themes, essays, term papers, design projects, these and dissertations, similar requirements or parts thereof that are not the work of the student submitting them. . . . When direct quotations are used, they must be indicated, and when the ideas of another are incorporated into a paper, they must be appropriately acknowledged. Plagiarism is a violation. In starkest terms, plagiarism is stealing – using the words or ideas of another as if they were one’s own. For example, if another person’s complete sentence, syntax, key words, or the specific or unique ideas and information are used, one must give that person credit through proper documentation or recognition, as through the use of footnotes.”

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** I am open to working with all students. Students needing accommodations should arrange a meeting the first week of class. Come during office hours or e-mail for an alternate time. Bring the Accommodation Memo and Instructor Verification Form to the meeting. Discuss items needed in this class. If you do not have an Accommodation Memo but need special accommodations, make an appointment with The Program for Students with Disabilities, 1244 Haley Center, 844-2096 (V/TT).

**Students may withdraw (although with a W on their transcript) until midsemester.**

**Student emails** will be answered within 48 hours of receipt.

**Cell phones:** The major new source of rudeness in the classroom today. Whether you turn it off and stow it, or don’t bring it at all, follow these two rules: They never appear and they never ring.

**Grading:** Grading is based on the student’s performance in completing assignments. Please note: As is the case with newspaper reporting, the instructor does not accept late work. The only exception to this is instructor error. Late assignments will be critiqued, but you will receive a “0” for a grade. Please note, too, that misspellings and style errors are not acceptable in completing assignments and will be graded down aggressively.

**RESEARCH PAPER**

Honors students will be required to produce a 15-page conference-level paper on a topic relating to journalism history. The paper will incorporate primary sources (actual newspapers and magazines) and secondary sources (other research).
Both the final exam and midterm will be worth 25 percent of the grade. All exams for this class will incorporate 2-4 short essays and one long essay on the mid-term and final. The mid-term will be cumulative to the first half of the semester, the final exam to the second half. Exams can be made up with proper excused absences. The final exam will be given at the University set time and date.

Exams will be 10 percent each and will be given the fifth and thirteenth week of the semester.

The class will be broken down into 11 groups of 4-5 students each and will produce a creative, interesting presentation relating to some historical event or trend discussed in that week’s chapter. The groups will be responsible for researching the topic (finding information not in the textbook) and presenting it to the class. A handout will be required, as well. Excellent presentations will generate not only good grades, but also exam questions.

TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1
Aug. 20: Chapter 1. ASSIGN: Group presentations
Aug. 22: Chapter 1.
Aug. 24: Chapter 2. Presentation groups announced.

Week 2
Aug. 27-29: Chapter 3
Aug. 31: Chapter 4 (Group 1)

Week 3
Sept. 3: No class (Labor Day)
Sept. 5: Chapter 5  
Sept. 7: Chapter 6 (Group 2)  

**Week 4**  
Sept. 10: Chapter 6, exam review  
Sept. 12: EXAM 1  
Sept. 14: Chapter 7 (Group 3)  

**Week 5**  
Sept. 17: Chapter 7  
Sept. 19: Chapter 8  
Sept. 21: Chapter 8 (Group 4)  

**Week 6**  
Sept. 24-26: Chapter 9  
Sept. 28: Chapter 10 (Group 5)  

**Week 7**  
Oct. 1: Chapter 10  
Oct. 3: Chapter 11 (Group 6)  
Oct. 5: Guest speaker  

**Week 8**  
Oct. 8: Chapter 11, mid-term review  
Oct. 10: Mid-term exam.  

**Week 09**  
Oct. 15: Chapter 12  
Oct. 17: Chapter 13  
Oct. 19: Chapter 13 (Group 7)  

**Week 10**  
Oct. 22-24: Chapter 14  
Oct. 26: Chapter 15 (Group 8) DUE: Coverage essay.  

**Week 11**  
Oct. 29: Chapter 15  
Oct. 31: Chapter 16  
Nov. 2: Chapter 16 (Group 9)  

**Week 12**  
Nov. 5: Chapter 17, exam review
Nov. 7: EXAM 2
Nov. 9: Chapter 17 (Group 10)

**Week 13**
Nov. 12-14: Chapter 18
Nov. 16: Chapter 19

**Week 14**
Nov. 26: Chapter 19
Nov. 28: Chapter 20
Nov. 30: Chapter 20 (Group 10)

**Week 15**
Dec. 3: Honors section paper presentations
Dec. 5: Final exam review