**Investigative Reporting Seminar, Fall 2014 (453.1)**

**Wednesday: 12:30-3:15, Carroll 340**

**Office Hours: 1 hour prior to class, 1 hour after class (phone, email as needed)**

**Objective**: To examine investigative (aka enterprise or project) reporting through both study and practice.

**Course Overview:** The seminar’s structure includes a 45-50 minute analytic discussion of the weekly assigned readings and the balance will center on developing a longer form investigative reporting article.

A word of caution: From a time management perspective, this seminar will require your personal investment to be several times that of a standard, upper-level journalism course.

**Course Requirements**:

1. Students are expected to read the assigned investigative stories each week for discussion. Emphasis is to be placed on discerning the reporter’s approach to subject and source, and your assessment of their strength or weakness in marshaling data, documents & sources.
2. Within the seminar-wide investigative team, each student will have reporting, data design (graphs and visual design) and editing responsibility.
3. On a weekly basis be prepared to discuss, publicly and with detail, your team and individual progress on the independent investigative report.
4. Strict adherence to “Investigative Conduct” standards (see attached)

**Grading:** The grading scheme is designed to make it impossible to ignore weekly article study and discussion.

1. 30%Weekly Discussion, including command of the article(s), breadth of insight, and independence and clarity of thought.
2. 70% Project Team Article.

Your grade will center on my **semester long** interpretation of your individual efforts in reporting, writing and editing. Each member is expected to contribute substantively to the framing, reporting and editing of the group project article. Within this context, acting solely as a reporter, editor or writer is not acceptable. The **subject** of the group project is NEVER to be discussed out of the classroom.

**A**: Performed professional level enterprise work & contributed materially to the weekly class discussion.

**B**: Solidly within the upper strata of collegiate journalism. Possible concerns: thoroughness, subject matter presentation/spelling/organization/command, smaller errors of fact.

**C:** Trouble consistently contributing as a member of a project team in reporting/writing/editing areas; larger errors of presentation/command.

**D**: Track record of weak effort/engagement over the course; widespread and uncorrected problems.

**F**: Did not attend or engage in class and projects; violations of investigative code of conduct.

**Honor Code**: In addition to the Investigative Code of Conduct, students are expected to adhere to the University Honor Code, specifically as it pertains to lying, cheating and plagiarism.

Aug. 20: Intro. discussion of goals and expectations, how to marshal data, importance of being “document-driven,” rejecting “process journalism” (publishing first, check as you go). Presentation of topic.

Aug. 27: Reading/Discussion- <http://projects.washingtonpost.com/top-secret-america/articles/a-hidden-world-growing-beyond-control/> (including graphs, visuals & follow on articles), walk thru of desired documents & sources, establishing baseline knowledge (the investigative reporter lives in “unfamiliar territory”--like a covert operator--s/he has to develop an ability to get familiar with the complex & foreign in a hurry.)

Sept. 3: Reading/Discussion-<http://projects.propublica.org/docdollars/> and <http://sports.yahoo.com/investigations/news?slug=cr-renegade_miami_booster_details_illicit_benefits_081611> Document and data walk through.

Sept.10: <http://www.spjvideo.org/sdx/sdx10/inv-reporting-101.pdf> (and follow ups on LAT.com) and <http://www.heraldtribune.com/article/20111204/article/111209980>

Individual “roll call” on status; baseline knowledge and document discussion as needed.

Sept.17: <http://www.propublica.org/series/prescribers> Discussion group project status to follow.

Sept. 24: Very important class: ***The Dark Side of Investigative Reporting***. Reportorial mistakes, omissions and frauds. Attendance and participation is essential. <http://www.techdirt.com/blog/?tag=investigative+reporting>, <http://www.uncp.edu/home/canada/work/markport/lit/litjour/spg2002/cooke.htm>, <http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/press_box/2007/12/the_lessons_of_tnrs_baghdad_diarist.html>, <http://www.forbes.com/1998/05/11/otw3.html>, <http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/flame_posies/1998/05/glass_houses.html>, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/17/business/media/17times.html>, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/07/opinion/07pubed.html>, <http://www.miaminewtimes.com/2010-04-01/news/gerald-posner-plagiarized-new-times-pbs-and-many-others/>

October 1: <http://htcreative.com/bankProject/banks.aspx>

Working draft discussion.

October 8: <http://www.reuters.com/investigates/adoption/#article/part1> “**Group Project Halftime Report”**

October 15: <http://www.opensecrets.org/news/2014/04/opensecrets-blog-receives-society-o/>

October 22: <http://cironline.org/veterans>

October 29: <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-11-28/secret-fed-loans-undisclosed-to-congress-gave-banks-13-billion-in-income.html> Group project updates

November 5: <http://cw.ua.edu/article/2013/09/the-final-barrier-50-years-later-segregation-still-exists> **Story goes to Editor**

November 12: <http://observer.com/2010/04/bloombergs-offshore-millions/> Legal Meeting at Brooks,Pierce

November 19:<http://www.fox8live.com/category/257852/body-of-evidence> Story Posted (at one point in the week)

November 26: LAST CLASS [http://www.sandiegomagazine.com/San-Diego-Magazine/April-2009/Blood-of-Their-Brothers-The-Border-Trilogy-Part-I/](http://www.sandiegomagazine.com/san-diego-magazine/april-2009/blood-of-their-brothers-the-border-trilogy-part-i/) (read the trilogy)

December 4: TBD

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) requires that, irrespective of their particular specialization, all graduates should be aware of certain core values and competencies and be able to:

* Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;
* Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
* Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications;
* Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;
* Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
* Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
* Think critically, creatively and independently;
* Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
* Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
* Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
* Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
* Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

Units requesting evaluation of a graduate program must also demonstrate how their master’s graduates attain this additional core competency:

* Contribute to knowledge appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.