**Syllabus for MEJO 801**

**Pro Seminar in Doctoral Studies**

**Fall 2019 5-6:15 p.m. Tue/Thu**

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

Rhonda Gibson, Ph.D. (Please call me Rhonda.)

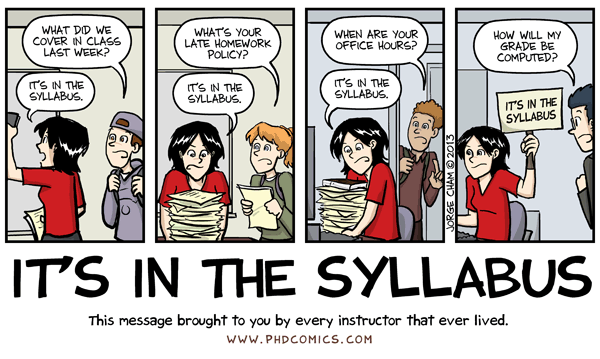
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(919) 699-6567 (cell)

Office Hours: Tuesday 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.; Wednesday 2:30 - 4 p.m.; also by appointment

[](http://www.google.com/url?sa=i&source=images&cd=&docid=2FEKeK7llATpyM&tbnid=A-XytkKefLDOfM:&ved=0CAgQjRw&url=http://www.phdcomics.com/comics.php?f=1583&ei=-KHBUtGILsbAkQek2oDgBA&psig=AFQjCNHYqmSvW0axVk04e1dewr7rwWlvOQ&ust=1388508024815181)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES**

This is a seminar course specifically for first-semester doctoral students in the School of Media and Journalism. It is a portal to doctoral education in which you learn about the role of doctoral studies in the academy; the expectations of someone studying for a Ph.D.; and the research, teaching, and service responsibilities of a university professor. This course will serve as an introduction to the practice of scholarship, and you will be expected to immerse yourself into the scholarly culture of the academy through attendance at research colloquia and interaction with visiting scholars.

Another significant portion of the course will be devoted to the science and art of teaching, and you’ll have the opportunity to hear from and observe award-winning teachers at UNC. You’ll create a syllabus and assignments for a course that you are likely to teach during your doctoral program and write a reflective essay about your strengths and challenges as a teacher.

Lastly, you’ll learn a lot about and be welcomed into the collaborative, innovative, and rigorous culture of the M-J School.

By the end of this course, you should…

1. Understand what is expected of a doctoral student in terms of coursework, fellowship duties, scholarly engagement, teaching, comprehensive exams, and production of a dissertation.

3. Understand the importance of a research agenda and have begun developing your own.

4. Have developed skills in course planning, classroom management, and grading/assessment.

5. Be familiar with different student learning styles and determine how to best tailor your instruction methods so as to help students of all learning styles.

6. Have a sense of your strengths as a teacher, as well as the areas you need to work on.

7. Have begun to consider how you will position yourself in the academic or industry job markets.

8. Know techniques for balancing the demands of research, teaching, and service, as well as balancing all of these with family and personal life.

9. Understand the tenure and promotion process.



**TEXTBOOKS**

1. Ken Bain, *What the Best College Teachers Do*
2. Barbara Walvoord & Virginia Anderson, *Effective Grading: A Tool for Learning and Assessment in College (2nd edition)*
3. Frank Furstenberg, *Behind the Academic Curtain: How to Find Success and Happiness with a Ph.D.*
4. Karen Kelsky, *The Professor Is In: The Essential Guide to Turning Your Ph.D. Into a Job*

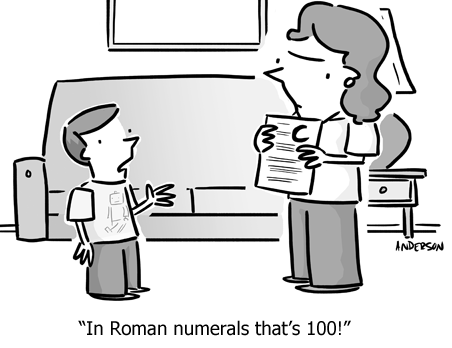
**ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADES**

Pass (P). The level of work and performance expected of a graduate student. All assignments are complete, thoroughly researched, well written, and logically organized. In-class participation is regular and informed, demonstrating that assignments have been read and understood. Attendance is regular and punctual, except for a valid excuse, in which case the instructor is notified in advance. The student demonstrates respect for the views and comments of others.

High Pass (H). Extraordinary and clearly superior performance in all or most of the areas mentioned above. H’s are given sparingly.

Low Pass (L). Barely acceptable performance, demonstrating a weak grasp of concepts and mastery of skills, significant writing problems, or other significant deficiencies. This grade may also be assigned if a student fails to meet deadlines, fails to participate in class, misses class without an acceptable excuse and/or regularly comes late to class.

Fail (F). Unacceptable performance, consisting of, but not limited to, excessive unexcused absences, failure to turn in assignments on time, coming to class unprepared, failure to participate in class discussions, poorly written assignments, and demonstrable failure to grasp concepts and master skills.



***Your course grade will be based on the following items:***

*(Detailed instructions for each assignment will be provided under the Syllabus & Assignments section of the course Sakai site.)*

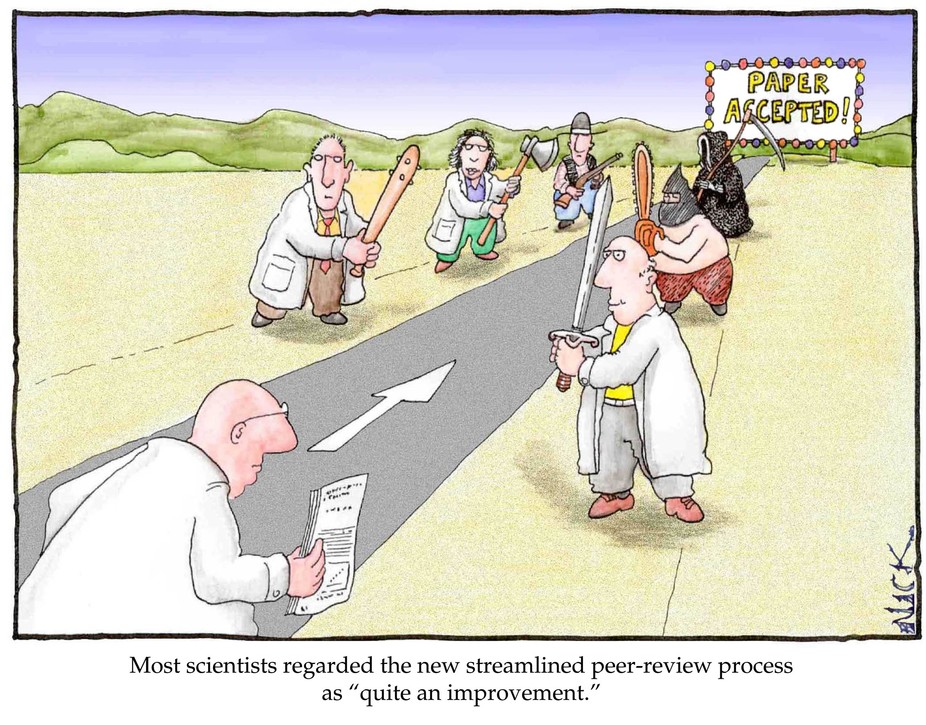
1. A detailed statement of your research interests and a description of one national conference and two peer reviewed journals that would be appropriate outlets for this research. This counts for 10 percent of your course grade and is due by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 15.
2. A teaching presentation on a topic appropriate for a course that you will likely teach during your doctoral program. You will produce a detailed lesson plan and deliver a 50-minute class session using the lesson plan. Your teaching session will be recorded, and you are responsible for checking out and setting up the necessary equipment. This assignment counts for 20 percent of your course grade, and it must be completed by Thursday, Nov. 14.
3. A reflection paper about your strengths and challenges as a college instructor. You will draw from class readings and discussions, your past experiences as a student and instructor, and the teaching you have observed this semester. To help you with this assignment and to expose you to various teaching styles, you will be required to attend four undergraduate class sessions of courses you will likely (or possibly) teach during your doctoral program. You must attend classes taught by at least two different instructors, only one of which can be a doctoral student. Your reflection paper should focus on what you consider to be your strongest teaching-related skills, the areas you are most concerned about and that need the most work, and strategies for becoming stronger in those areas. This assignment counts for 15 percent of the course grade and is due by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 19.
4. A syllabus and series of assignments/assessments for a course you will likely teach during your doctoral program. The assignments will include a group exercise, a writing-based assessment, an examination, and a presentation-based assessment. Together these items count for 35 percent of your course grade. They are due by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 3.
5. A 15-minute class presentation about a peer-reviewed journal that is focused on communication/media-related research. Explain the history of the journal, the type of research it accepts, its acceptance rate and impact factor, and any other relevant information. This counts for 10 percent of your course grade, and due dates vary.
6. Participation. This involves in-class participation, Discussion Board posts, and attendance at M-J School research colloquia. It is not enough to simply read the material and complete the written assignments. You are expected to be active participants in class, interacting with the instructor and your classmates, challenging ideas, and contributing new ideas based on your professional and personal experiences. Participation counts for 10 percent of your course grade. Please understand that you have to earn your participation points; simply coming to class is not sufficient to pass this component of the course. Multiple absences will lower your class participation grade.

**THE HONOR CODE**

The Honor Code and the Campus Code, embodying the ideals of academic honesty, integrity and responsible citizenship, have for more than 100 years governed the performance of all academic work and student conduct at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Acceptance by a student enrolled in the University presupposes a commitment to the principles embodied in those codes and a respect for this most significant University tradition.

Your participation in this course comes with my expectation that your work will be completed in full observance of the Honor Code. Academic dishonesty in any form is unacceptable because any breach in academic integrity, however small, strikes destructively at the University’s life and work. Much learning is collaborative, and we all learn through the process of sharing. I encourage you to discuss issues and concerns about teaching and research inside and outside this class, but the work you submit is to be exclusively your own. You must be careful to give attribution wherever appropriate.

If you have any questions about your responsibility as a student or my responsibility as a faculty member under the Honor Code, please bring them to me or discuss them with someone in either the Office of the Graduate Student Attorney General or the Office of the Dean of Students.



**COURSE SCHEDULE**

A detailed explanation of each day’s topic, readings, and activities can be found in the Day-by-Day section of the class Sakai Site. PLEASE refer to this prior to attending class each day.

**ATTENDANCE/FINAL EXAM PERIOD**

You are expected to be in class for the entirety of each class period. If something important prevents you from attending class, please notify the instructor in advance. Our final exam period will be **Tuesday, Dec. 10 from 4-7 p.m**. We will meet during this time, and attendance is required.