**490.8-Doyle-Fall 2019**

**Fall 2019**

**Wall Street Meets the Feds: Covering the Intersection of Business and Government**

**142 Carroll Hall**

**Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:30 to 1:45**

**Instructor:** Peter Doyle

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**Office Hours:**   Tuesdays and Thursdays by Appointment. Always available by email.

**Objectives:**Government actions have a profound effect on businesses and the economy. Those effects became so pronounced after the Great Recession that many now see Washington as the de facto financial capital of the world. Many newsrooms were unprepared for this new reality. They had political reporters and business reporters, but it was a rare individual who knew how to cover both areas. Political reporters understood Senate hearings but not corporate balance sheets. Business reporters could decipher an earnings report but got lost in the halls of Congress.

In a class unique to UNC, students would learn to bridge the gap between the two fields of coverage. The focus of this class is to understand how government and industry interact, for students to become proficient at researching data, critically thinking about the implications of government actions and industry practices and to mold engaging stories written and produced for the general public.

**Course requirements:** Students are expected to attend class, arrive on time, and actively participate in class discussions. All class activities and assignments must be completed and completed on time. Any problems meeting these deadlines must be discussed with your instructor at least a week in advance. Failure to meet deadlines without prior discussion with the instructor will result in a reduction in point deductions. **Any student not completing all assignments will receive an incomplete for the course.**

**Hard Copy:** All work must be given to me in hard copy on or before the deadline as posted on Sakai. In the event of an emergency, I will accept the paper via email so that you are not penalized for a late paper. However, NO GRADE will be given without a hard copy.

**Class Participation:** Class participation is graded more heavily than either your midterm or final. You must actively participate in course discussions. Professionals can’t be afraid to speak up in public and the same holds true for this class. That said, having email discussions with me or visiting me after class and/or during office hours would also earn participation points. Your participation and thoughtful responses are paramount to success in this class. Attendance is included in class participation.

**Sakai:** We will have a Sakai page for this class. All class materials, the schedule, and grades will be posted on Sakai. Please watch Sakai for resources for use in class. **The calendar on Sakai is the final word on when things are due.** Whenever there is a change to the Sakai schedule, I will send an email alert so be on the look out for these as your grade could depend on it.

**Attendance:** If you missed work without telling your boss you would be fired. That same philosophy will hold in MEJO 490.8. AS LONG AS YOU TELL ME YOU ARE MISSING CLASS, YOU ARE EXCUSED, no points are taken off your grade. Missing a class without prior notification will result in point deductions to your grade per incident. More than 4 excused or unexcused absences will result in point deductions. Chronic lateness will also result in additional point deductions. Attendance will be taken most days, but I reserve the right to take intermittent classroom attendance.

**Tent Cards:** You will be given a tent card on the first day of class. You will put your name on the tent card in letters BOLD enough to be seen from the front of the room. Have the tent card in front of you during every class. At the end of every class you will turn in your tent card. You will pick up your tent card at the beginning of every class. Tent cards will be part of how we keep track of attendance.

**Cell phones:** Cell phones must be turned off during class.

**Guest Speakers: No cell phones or laptops will be allowed when we have guest speakers.** Please look up all guest speakers before they give their presentations and come to class prepared with three questions to ask them. Those that ask questions with guest speakers get extra participation points. Please represent UNC in a professional manner with guest speakers by being attentive and inquisitive. Many of these speakers are in a position to provide internships and jobs.

**Grading:**

20% -- Class participation

10% -- Midterm

10% -- Final

15%-- News story 1

15%-- News story 2

5%--- Movie Review

15% -- Video

10%-- Story Pitch

Grading Scale:

100-95=A

94-90=A-

89-87=B+

86-83=B

83-80=B-

79-77=C+

76-73=C

72-70=C-

69-67=D+

66-63=D

59-00= F

Books:

There is no official textbook for this class. It is critical that students read either the Wall Street Journal, Barrons, Marketwatch, The Street, The Financial Times, The New York Times Business Section and other financial publications to keep abreast of current business stories. Students are encouraged to read the following books. They are available at the student bookstore, on Amazon, and other online sources. **A written review of the Big Short will be required.**

*“Bailout: How Washington Abandoned Main Street While Rescuing Wall Street.” By Neil Barofsky.*

*“Captured Agency: How the Federal Communications Commission is Dominated by the Industries it Presumably Regulates” By Norm Lister. E-book only. Edmond J. Safra Center for Ethics, Harvard.*

*“An American Sickness: How Healthcare Became Big Business and How You Can Take It Back.” By Elisabeth Rosenthal. Penguin Books: 2018*

*Movie: The Big Short: Inside the Doomsday Machine.” By Michael Lewis. W.W. Norton: 2010.*

**Course work and Assignments:**

**Written Assignments**

The Course work will require the student to produce two written well researched stories of at least 1700 words each on a **current** business topic. Examples would be; the crisis of the Boeing 737 Max and the role played by the FAA before and after, The Tariff War between China and the US, The Cost of Prescription Drugs and Policies offered by each party in Government. Critical to completing these assignments is researching journals, newspapers and government documents. Prior to starting a topic, we will discuss in class using critical thinking skills important questions to be explored, for example why was the software on the sensors outsourced to India, why did the FAA miss a faulty design, how does the FAA work to approve aircraft for service? Sources used will be suffixed with a number in the text such as: **the budget for that year** 1 with the corresponding number either in footnotes at the end of the page or as a list at the end. The format of sources is like this:

Morgenson, Gretchen. Secrets of The Bailout, New York Times, 12/3/2011

Congressional Budget Office, Trends In Distribution of Household Incomes between 1979 and 2007, <http://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/124xx/doc12485/WebSummary.pdf>

This is important as factual accuracy is crucial to becoming a good journalist or PR professional.

**Video Production**

As small groups you will be required to produce an infographic on a business or government topic. For example; how a promising drug goes from the benchtop to the bedside. The length should be about two minutes, it can be live video images or graphics or stills, with text and music. It can have a narration track, or just music. Most importantly, the major points should be in text.

Here are a few examples

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iJsq5YDInRY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j1yQzqR9cu0>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SUU8cZ-W8w4>

I will guide you on how to get this produced, using simple cameras like your I-Phone, videos or images available on the web, graphics created using apps and how to edit it all together. Video Production is time consuming so this **will require** team work

**Story Pitch:**

When you go to work in media you will be required to have editorial meetings. At these meeting you and your fellow journalists or PR professional will be asked to pitch stories. An example would be

“How much would making cannabis legal be worth to North Carolina (or any other States’ economy in taxes) and who are the opposition, such as health professionals.” Suggest experts you would have in your article, is there a business you would like to build the story around, would this help a town that is in decline. The pitch could be about some company trying to buy water rights and the fight to stop it, the effect on the local farmers etc., it could be about the challenges faced by electric cars, whatever you think would make an interesting story that shows the intersection of government and business.

You do not have to get the businesses, experts to agree (you would in real life) but the story has to have conflicting views, current interest and viable interviewees you would approach if you were commissioned to do this story. What will help you in coming up with a story is reading the business journals, newspapers and websites listed above.

**Midterm and Final:** The midterm will be take home. You will be graded on the thoughtfulness of your responses. The final exam date for this class is December 12 in room 142.

**Class Calendar: The final word on assignments, guest speakers, and due dates can be found on the Sakai Calendar. The dates on they syllabus are subject to change. This calendar will be the final say on what is happening and when in our class. Please refer to it frequently. Major assignment due dates will likely not change, however guest speakers and assignments other than those directly involved in grades may change.**

**Due Dates for Graded Assignments**

**September 19-** First Written Assignment

**October 11 –** Second Written Assignment

**Oct 21 –** Big Short movie review due

**Oct 25 –** Story board outline due for video

**November 21**- Video presentations due

**November 26/December 3**- Story Pitch

**Honor Code:** It shall be the responsibility of every student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to obey and to support the enforcement of the Honor Code, which prohibits lying, cheating or stealing when these actions involve academic processes or University, student or academic personnel acting in an official capacity. We all are expected to adhere to the Honor Code at all times. This prohibits plagiarism.

**Seeking Help:**

If you need individual assistance, it’s your responsibility to meet with the instructor. If you are serious about wanting to improve your performance in the course, the time to seek help is as soon as you are aware of the problem – whether the problem is difficulty with course material, a disability, or an illness. I am here to help.

**Diversity:**

The University’s policy on Prohibiting Harassment and Discrimination is outlined in the 2011- 2012 Undergraduate Bulletin *http://www.unc.edu/ugradbulletin/.* UNC is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and does not discriminate in offering access to its educational programs and activities on the basis of age, gender, race, color, national origin, religion, creed, disability, veteran’s status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

**Special needs:** If you have any disability or other special situation that might make it difficult to meet the requirements described above, please discuss it with me as soon as possible. If you have not done so already, you should also contact the Department of Accessibility Resources & Service (AR&S) at 919-962-8300 or accessibility@unc.edu.

**ACCREDITATION**

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication’s accrediting body outlines a number of values you should be aware of and competencies you should be able to demonstrate by the time you graduate from our program. Learn more about them here:

http://www2.ku.edu/~acejmc/PROGRAM/PRINCIPLES.SHTML#vals&comps