MEJO 459.1

COMMUNITY JOURNALISM

Spring 2020: Tues. - Thurs., 12:30 - 1:45 p.m.,

Carroll Hall, Room 253

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**OVERVIEW**

***Despite losses, community newspapers still dominate the U.S. Market.***

*Closures and mergers resulted in a net loss of more than 1,800 newspapers from 2004 to 2015, the overwhelming majority of them weeklies. But community weeklies remain the most common (70 percent of all newspapers), and community dailies and weeklies account for 62 percent of overall print circulation. Less than 2 percent of newspapers are “metro dailies,” which account for less than 30 percent of overall print circulation.*

*Professor Bill Reader, Ohio U,. in Newspaper Research Journal, 2018*

Ours is a country dominated in numbers by small newspapers — papers that practice “community framing,” throwing much of their news and editorial weight behind local coverage and the local angle. However, many beginners suffer under the common misconception that the community paper is just a smaller version of the big-city daily. Nothing could be further from the truth. As you will learn in this course, the enlightened community paper plays a unique and vital role in the life of its community. Compared to the major metro dailies, most community newspapers have a fundamentally different approach to the factors of news judgment, and indeed, to every facet of the *philosophy of news.*

**METHODOLOGY AND FORMAT: Theory into Practice**

In practical terms, journalism theory doesn’t get into practice any more effectively than by putting your words and pictures online and in print. So, in this class we’ll talk the talk, AND walk the walk.

Our project-based learning will focus on *the* *VOICE of Northeast Central Durham*, a Fall ’09 online start-up that includes a monthly print version. We’ll produce five Web-based editions and three monthly print versions of the VOICE.

**ABOUT THE VOICE**

We have partnered with UNC’s Department of City and Regional Planning, the City of Durham, the journalism program at North Carolina Central University Durham high schools and the Durham youth development NGO, “Partners for Youth Opportunity,” to produce a neighborhood newspaper/web site for the Northeast Central Durham (NECD) neighborhood known to the police department as the “Bull’s Eye.”

*The VOICE* is produced by our class and NCCU’s reporting class. We also get content from Durham high school journalism classes. Additionally, we mentor a core staff of Durham urban teens to help them produce content of their own — sort of like a journalistic version of the Big Buddies program. We will take a Bus Tour to NECD on **Saturday morning, Jan. 18,** to help us better understand the dynamics at work in this community as it strives to lift itself up. Many people believe that an enlightened community newspaper devoted exclusively to this neighborhood can provide more than just news; it can be a way for kids to learn computer literacy as well as such life skills as writing, interviewing, photography, time management, professionally-appropriate behavior – all while working with others to produce something that can serve the greater good. Ultimately, *The VOICE* can help create *civic engagement*, that vital ingredient of a healthy democracy. It’s what Walter Lippmann meant when he said,

*“A free press is not a privilege,* *but an organic necessity in a great society...”*

As we produce web and print editions of *the VOICE*, we will be dealing with all the major issues facing the complete community journalist: the nature of the community being served, the role of the media in that community, the culture and character of each paper, as well as journalism ethics, news, features, editorials, sports, lifestyle, the interview, graphics and design, photojournalism, emerging technology, business, newsroom management and personnel.

This course meets the General Education diversity requirement: “Courses in U.S. diversity help students develop a greater understanding of diverse peoples and cultures within the United States and thereby enhance their ability to fulfill their obligations of United States citizenship.  These courses address in systematic fashion one or more aspects of diversity in the United States, whether arising from ethnic, generational, class, gender, sexual, regional, or religious differences” (p. 29).

**THE SPECS**

Over the course of the semester, each student journalist will produce six story/photo packages of 500-700 word count, (500 words min.) including a photo and caption. Your story/photo packages for *the Durham VOICE* and your involvement in the process will count as **60 percent** of the final grade. Every story MUST be accompanied by a photograph. I want each of you to have the experience of illustrating your own story. As to taking your own photos, you may use a smartphone so long it’s one of the newer generation models like the iPhone 6s or later. Otherwise, we will supply you with a camera.

**STORY/PHOTO DUE-DATES**

Here are the story/photo deadlines. As you can see, you have roughly two weeks to do each story/photo package.

Copy and photos are due no later than **11 a.m**. on deadline days! (That gives me 90 minutes to get organized before class.)

**Jan. 28, Tues. VOICE # 1**

**Feb. 11, Tues. V2**

**Feb. 25, Tues. V3**

**March 24, Tues. V4**

**April 7, Tues. V5**

**The Local Reporter:** A single story-photo package for the start-up newspaper of Chapel Hill-Carrboro; due before the last day of class. (Details to follow.)

**TEXT**

**COMMUNITY JOURNALISM: *Relentlessly Local***

by Jock Lauterer

UNC Press, 3nd. ed., 2006. $41.95.

**ASSIGNED READING**

For all assignments, you must have a clear understanding of the relevant materials in the textbook. Everything we discuss in class has ties to the textbook, although we may not always specifically cite chapters and page numbers during our discussions. For each reading assignment, you will send me an e-reflection (a big, hefty paragraph) via SAKAI’S *forums* (reading responses), explaining what you learned from the reading and how the reading relates to your prior experience and/or your experiences with the *VOICE.*

**Each of 15 reflections is due by 11 a.m. before class on the date listed in the class schedule (so I have time to read them).** *For late* ***reading*** *assignments, the instructor will dock late work one letter grade for every day that it is late. Hence, one day late is a B, two days late is a C, and three days late is a D. After four days, the late assignment turns into a zero.*

We will draw our class discussions from these reading responses. This component is worth 20 percent of the final grade. The 15 reading due-dates are listed below:

1. Foreword, Preface and Introduction, Ch. 1 & 2 Jan. 14, Tues.

2. Ch. 3 & 4 Framing community Jan. 16, Thurs.

3. Ch. 16 Ethics Jan. 21, Tues.

4. Ch. 5 & 6 Newspaper ownership Jan. 23, Thurs.

5. Ch. 7 News Feb. 4, Tues.

6. Ch. 8 Features Feb. 6, Thurs.

7. Ch. 14 Photojournalism Feb. 18. Tues.

8. Ch. 9 Editorials/Commentary Feb. 20, Thurs.

9. Ch. 15 Technology and “Reality Check” March 3, Tues.

10. Ch. 10 Interviewing and Writing March 5, Thurs.

11. Ch. 17 & 18 Business/Personnel March 17, Tues.

12. Ch. 13 Graphics March 19, Thurs.

13. Ch. 19 Hablamos Espanol? April 2, Thurs.

14. Ch. 12 Sports April 16, Thurs.

15. Ch. 23 Two Case Studies of Start-Ups April 21, Thurs.

**GUEST SPEAKERS**

Over the course of four months, we will several guest speakers from the state’s community journalism industry. I may ask for a “Hey Jock” reflection response due by the following class,. Also, you’ll need to take notes for your final project.

**THE REPORTER’S FINAL PROJECT PORTFOLIO**

Due at our **Final Exam period, 12 noon, Friday, May 1,** in a three-ring binder you will turn in a final portfolio containing:

• Original hard copy of all five stories, with my marks showing.

• Print-outs of all your photos.

• Clips you have made from screenshots of your online work or in print.

• A 10-page minimum reflection and self-evaluation of your reporting experiences, your photography experiences, and your thoughts about our guest speakers and the public service/mentoring work you’ve done.

• A listing of your contacts and sources: name, title, company or organization, address, phone and email.

The portfolio will be graded at semester’s end as the Final Project in this class, worth 10 percent of the total grade. Note: at best, this is an incremental project, not something to be knocked out on an all-nighter before the due date. You need to be building this as the semester goes along. Yes, you can make this as creative and fun as you like, decorating it with drawings, designs, photos, quotes…etc.

**PUBLIC SERVICE**

JOMC 459 is an Apples class, so your public service contribution counts 10 percent of your final grade. As concerned community journalists, we have an obligation to Pay It Forward. This semester we will mentor Durham inner-city youth at Partners for Youth Opportunity and at Hillside High School.

Five sessions = 95/A

Four sessions = 85/B

Three sessions = 75/C

Two sessions = 65/D

No sessions = 50/F

**ATTENDANCE; DEADLINES**

This is a professional level class. Stories and/or photos for the VOICE **not making deadline will receive an automatic F/zero.** No exceptions. No excuses. Zero tolerance. Consider yourself forewarned and thus, forearmed.

*For late* ***reading*** *assignments, the instructor will dock late work one letter grade for every day that it is late. Hence, one day late is a B, two days late is a C, and three days late is a D. After four days, the late work turns into a zero.*

**AP/UNC/CC STYLE**

Your *VOICE* stories will be graded for spelling, grammar and AP Style. The */VOICE Handbook and Style Guides are* our bibles for style and formatting issues. If you don’t own an *AP Stylebook*, get one. The new online UNC Stylebook is also very handy.

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### GRADING

Your final grade will be the result of the following formula:

*VOICE* stories (plus, The Local Reporter) 60 percent

Text reading reaction papers 20 percent

Public Service  10 percent

The Reporter’s Portfolio/Final Project 10 percent

**GRADING SCALE**

Grades will be determined according to the following break-out.

92-100 A

90-91 A-

88-89 B+

82-87 B

80-81 B-

78-79 C+

72-77 C

70-71 C-

60-69 D

Below 60 F

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**CLASS SCHEDULE**

*Insofar as it’s possible, here is the classroom/newsroom schedule for this semester. It would be smart to mark these DEADLINES in your calendar now***.**

Jan. 9, Thurs. First class, org’ing, assigning staff roles, etc.,

the book, readings, class structure and format,

notecards, the Northeast Central Durham Community VOICE, the NECD Bus Tour, MLK Day, MEJO collaboration, name game and class photos.

Show: CJ 101 and VOICE history.

*Assign: Go Hang Out and MLK Day in Durham and Chapel Hill.* “Hey Jock!” in Sakai.

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**Jan. 14 Tues. Hang Out assignment due; class discussion.**

**Reading 1 due: Foreword, Preface and Introduction, and Ch. 1 & 2.**

Jan. 16, Thurs. More basics of CJ, story assignments, more org’ing.

staff roles, cameras, etc.

Guest Lecture: Mai Nguyen, Associate Professor of City and Regional Planning, UNC, on Northeast

Central Durham.

Partners for Youth Opportunity: Carlton Koonce and Julie Wells.

**Reading 2 due: Ch. 3 & 4, Framing community.**

Jan. 18, Sat. **NECD Bus Tour**. (10 a.m.-2 p.m.)

Meet JL outside Carroll by 9:30 a.m.

Lunch is provided.

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Jan. 19 Sun. MLK SUNDAY: attend Antioch Baptist Church service; Durham, 10:30 a.m. (Extra Credit)

Jan. 20, Mon. MLK Day: attend an event in your community.

Chapel Hill-Carrboro MLK rally, the annual Durham MLK rally, march and service. TBA.

**Reading 3 due: Ethics, Chapter 16.**

Jan. 21, Tues. Reflection: Bus Tour/ MLK Day experiences

**Reading 4 due: Ch. 5 & 6, Newspaper ownership.**

Brainstorm more story ideas for V1.

Jan. 23 Thurs. Show: Point-and-Shoot 101 (bring cameras to class!)

Option: Woody’s Wonderful Ways.

Final arrangements for V1 stories and photos, due no later than **noon sharp Mon., Jan. 38.**

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**Jan. 28, Tues. First stories/photos due for VOICE by 11 a.m.. File in PROJECTS or email jock@email.unc.edu**

**lastname\_slugV1.doc**

**lastname\_slugV1.jpg**

**Show option: “Writing My Own Happy Ending.”**

Show:Ethics and Community Journalism, ppt.

Guest lecture option:Megan Ward, *the High Point Enterprise; o*r Bill Horner III*, the Chatham News+Record.*

Jan. 30, Thurs. In-class editing and launch of V1.

Brainstorming story ideas V2.

Reflection: What Have We Learned? (WHWL?)

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Feb. 4, Tues. Guest speaker: Peter Vankevich, Connie Leinbach, the

Ocracoke Observer; or Bill Horner III, Eric Millsaps.

**Show option: “Writing My Own Happy Ending.”**

Option: Show: Making Features Relevant.

**Reading 5 due: Ch. 7, News.**

Feb. 6, Thurs. Guest speaker option. Bill Horner III, etc.

**Reading 6 due: Ch. 8, Features.**

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**Feb. 11, Tues.**  **Stories/photos due for V2 due by 11 a.m..**

Feb. 13, Thurs. In-class editing; launch.

Brainstorming for V3.

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Feb. 18, Tues. **Reading 7 due: Ch. 14, Photojournalism.**

Lecture/demo: Community Photojournalism.

Guest lecturer: Alicia Stemper or Jon Gardiner.

Feb. 20, Thurs., Guest lecturer: Ken Ripley.

**Reading 8 due: Ch. 9, Editorials/Commentary.**

Final arrangements: V3.

Feb. 21-22 Thurs-Fri. VOICE print #1 rolls off the presses!

**Delivery: Saturday morning, Feb. 22**

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**Feb. 25, Tues. Stories/photos due for V3 by 11 a.m. sharp.**

Show: Photojournalism History.

Or…Ann Atwater, An Unlikely Friendship.

Feb. 27, Thurs. In-class editing; launch!

Brainstorming for V4

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March 3, Tues. **Reading 9 due: Reality Check, handout.**

**Lightly skim Ch. 15.**

Guest Lecture: Ryan Thornburg @ the Reese News Lab and Media Hub.

March 5, Thurs., Guest lecturer: Megan Ward, High Point Enterprise;

or Wilson Times.

**Reading 10 due: Ch. 10, Writing and Interviewing.**

**SPRINGBREAKSPRINGBREAKSPRINGBREAKGOAWAYANDCHILL**

March 17 Tues. Individual conferences, 1:1 with the coach.

Bring all your edited stories from the VOICE.

**Reading 11 due: Ch. 17 & 18, Business/Personnel.**

March 19 Thurs. More 1:1 sessions with the coach.

**Reading 12 due: Ch. 13, Graphics**

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**March 24, Tues.**   **Stories/photos due for V4, 11 a.m. sharp!**

Option: Guest speakers, Chrissy and Allison

Show: History of American Newspaper Graphics

Or, China community journalism update.

March 26, Thurs., Editing and launch V4.

Wrap-up and reflection. WHWL.

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March 31, Tues. Show: “An Unlikely Friendship.”

Or: The Black Press: “Soldiers without Swords”

Option: Charles Kuralt: “On the Road.”

Option: Nancy Wykle, guest lecture.

April 2 Thurs. **Reading 13 due: Ch. 19, Hablamos Espanol?**

Guest lecturer: Paul Cuadros. Option 2

March 3 Fri. Option: Print VOICE #2 rolls off the press!

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**April 7 Tues. Stories/photos due for V5, 11 a.m.!**

Option: “The Sun Never Sets.”

Option: The History of Photojournalism.”

April 9 Thurs. Editing and launch in class, V5.

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April 14 Tues. Guest speaker option: James Taylor, Winston-Salem Chronicle, or Barry Saunders, former N&O columnist.

… or Nancy Wykle*, the Henderson Daily Dispatch*

April 16 Thurs.Guest Lecturer: David Woronoff, The Pilot of Southern Pines.

**Reading 14 due: Ch. 12, Sports.**

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April 21, Thurs. JL portfolio/China media update

Class Evals.

**Reading 15due: Ch. 23, Two Case Studies of Start-Ups.**

April 24 Weds. Last class; celebration and debriefing.

PRINT VOICE #3, scheduled to be printed Fri., May 1; delivery, Sat., May 2.

**May 1 Fri. Final projects due (our final exam period)**

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**Honor Code:**

I expect that each student will conduct himself or herself within the guidelines of the University honor system ([http://honor.unc.edu](http://honor.unc.edu/)). All academic work should be done with the high levels of honesty and integrity that this University demands. You are expected to produce your own work in this class. Using a set-up sound bite is a violation of the honor code.  If you have any questions about your responsibility or your instructor’s responsibility as a faculty member under the Honor Code, please see the course instructor or Senior Associate Dean Charlie Tuggle, or you may speak with a representative of the Student Attorney Office or the Office of the Dean of Students.

**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.

**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](mailto: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>

No single course could possibly give you all of these values and competencies; but collectively, our classes are designed to build your abilities in each of these areas.  In this class, we will address a number of the values and competencies, with special emphasis on the last six bullet dots under "Professional values and competencies" in the link above.