HU3621 Introduction to Journalism

Room: Walker 134
Time: 9:35-11:50 TTh; except weeks during which labs are scheduled (see below); during these weeks, class meets from 9:35-10:25
Semester: Fall 2013
Instructor: Associate Prof. Craig Waddell
Office: Room 302 Walker
Office Hours: 2-3 TTh; other times by appointment
Phone: 487-3261 (office)
E-mail: cwaddell@mtu.edu
Class List: hu3621-r01-fa13-l@mtu.edu (This list is set for postings restricted to the owner.)

(HU3621 Introduction to Journalism is included on the HASS Distribution List.)

Policy on Multitasking

Extensive research has shown that multitasking simply doesn’t work and that the people who are most confident about their ability to multitask are, in general, the worst at multitasking successfully. The most dramatic evidence we have for this is with respect to using a cell phone (for either talking or texting) while driving. Hence, if you use an mp3 player, cell phone, laptop, tablet, or other electronic device in class, I will count you absent for that day. If you want to test your multitasking potential, visit http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ahg6qcg0ay4 (This test is only valid if you haven’t seen this or a similar test previously.)

Required Texts

Waddell, Craig. Introduction to Journalism, 10th edition. Houghton, MI: 2010. (I'll provide you with a .pdf file of this document. Please print a copy, put it in a three-ring binder, and bring it to class regularly.) Pages 12-64 are basically lecture notes.


Michigan Tech University Identity Standards and Editorial Guide
http://www.mtu.edu/idstandards/ This includes some useful information for stories about Michigan Tech. For example, under “Miscellany” in the “Editorial Guide” section, you will find a list of the official names and short-form names for Michigan Tech buildings.
You will also need an Ampad Reporter’s Notebook (available in the Campus Store) and a voice recorder. You can borrow a recorder from Dr. Erin Smith in 120E Walker.

**Course Description**

From its beginnings as a college of mines, Michigan Tech has a long commitment to a hands-on, learning-by-doing approach to higher education. Hence, a significant component of this course involves producing publication-ready journalistic articles.

Critical assessment of news media is essential to a healthy, fully functioning democracy. Hence, in addition to requiring several publication-ready journalistic articles, HU3625 Introduction to Journalism also provides an introduction to the history and practice of journalism, including legal and ethical issues in journalism and critical analysis of news media. Your work producing publication-ready journalistic articles should provide valuable insight into media criticism, and the last two of your four written pieces will focus on critical analysis of media.

Class time each week will be spent discussing assigned readings, viewing and discussing videos about journalism, and completing various journalism exercises.

The course also includes a laboratory section, which includes (1) one-on-one meetings to brainstorm for topics, sources, and research and interview questions for each of your two journalistic articles and two media-criticism essays; (2) one-on-one meetings to review drafts of your two journalistic articles; and (3) interviewing sources and otherwise researching these two articles. Meetings are scheduled for weeks 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, and 11 (see schedule below).

**Course Goals**

In addition to providing a general introduction to journalism, course goals include the following:

1. To help you to prepare for the journalistic aspects of your chosen profession. For example, interviewing—a skill that will be developed in this course—is primary means of gathering information in any context. In scientific and technical communication, you may be required to interview subject matter experts [SMEs]; and in anthropology, you may be required to conduct ethnographic interviews.

2. To help you to become a more critical consumer of news media. Lord Acton (John Emerich Edward Acton, 1834-1902) famously said, “Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.” For this reason, the Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics obliges journalists to “Be vigilant and courageous about holding those with power accountable.”

Our Founding Fathers probably had this in mind when drafting the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which reads as follows: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to
petition the Government for a redress of grievances.” This makes the press the only profession protected by the Constitution.

Journalists have a sacred obligation to hold those in power accountable, and citizens have a sacred obligation to ensure that journalists live up to this task.

3. To prepare for a career in journalism. No single course can prepare anyone for a career; however, some students who have taken Introduction to Journalism and have then gone on to complete our Minor in Journalism have gone on to begin successful careers in journalism.

4. To help you improve your writing skills (e.g., through the one-on-one workshops on drafts).

Your Two Journalistic Articles

Your two journalistic articles must be nonbreaking news, for which interviews are essential. You cannot receive a passing grade on any article that does not include multiple interviews.

We will discuss sources more thoroughly in class in conjunction, for example, with the booklet Introduction to Journalism. In brief, however, you should consider three broad categories of sources: (1) direct observation; (2) interviews; and (3) documentary evidence. The category interviews might also be divided into three (sub)categories: (1) experts; (2) participants; and (3) “the man (person?) on the street” (MOTS) or vox poluli (“voice of the people”). For example, in the case of a fire at a rental property, you might (1) directly observe the fire; (2) interview the fire chief (expert), interview a tenant (participant), and interview a passerby (person on the street); and (3) search public records for relevant information about the fire (When was the last time the property was subjected to a fire inspection? Had the landlord been cited for fire-code violations in this or other properties? Etc.). If the subject of your story is controversial, you need to interview sources representing the diverse positions on the subject.

Non-breaking pieces are pieces that do not lose their relevance in a matter of days; hence, they can be published even weeks after they have been submitted. The general length guideline for these pieces is 350-700 words.

Format of Your Two Journalistic Articles: Please read carefully: Points will be lost for failing to follow these instructions

For each of your drafts and for each of your final pieces, submit to me one double-spaced hard copy. I encourage you to wait until you’ve received my comments on your final draft before submitting a revised copy of this draft for publication (see below).

After revising your final draft, submit it to the editor (and simultaneously to me) via e-mail as a Word attachment. Please give your attachment a filename that indicate the topic of your article and the version of your draft (e.g., “CrimeRate2”).
Your work should be word processed and printed on 8.5” x 11” white paper in a 12-point font with one-inch margins on all four sides. Include at the top of the first page the following information (single-spaced): your name, the course title, the date, your article number (1-4), your draft number (1 or 2), the word count, and the proposed outlet (and section if appropriate), headline, and pull quote. **Hence, the top of your first page should look something like this:**

**Julie Smith**
**Introduction to Journalism**
**Oct. 3, 2013**
**Article #1**
**Draft #2**
**Word Count: 578**
**Proposed Outlet: Lode**
**Proposed Headline: Litter threatens environment**
**Proposed Pull Quote: “Randomly discarded trash, even items as small as cigarette butts, endangers our environment, our wildlife and our economy.” Joe Brown, Houghton City Manager**
**Proposed Photo Caption: “Houghton Mayor Jane Doe leads volunteers in annual litter patrol.”**

**Submitting Your Articles to the Michigan Tech Lode**

You’ll do a much better job on your two journalistic articles if you have a real sense of audience and if you know that your work will actually be published and read by an interested audience. In addition, potential sources will be much more willing to give you their time if they know that a story on a subject of significant interest to them will actually be published and read. Hence, please communicate with Michigan Tech Lode Editor in Chief Krysten Cooper kekooper@mtu.edu about submitting your work to the Lode (you can visit the Lode online at http://www.mtulode.com/). I’ve asked Krysten to visit our class to talk about the Lode and about submitting work to the paper.

(Work submitted to the Lode is subject to editing for length, grammar, spelling, factual accuracy, libelous content, and consistency with AP Style.)

**Your Two Media-Criticism Essays**

Your two, media-criticism essays (750-1000 words each) will be in response to questions that develop from our common readings and class discussion.

Your work should be word processed and printed on 8.5” x 11” white paper in a 12-point font with one-inch margins on all four sides. Include at the top of the first page the following information (single-spaced): your name, the course title, the date, your essay number (1 or 2), the word count. **Hence, the top of your first page should look something like this:**
Julie Smith  
Introduction to Journalism  
November 14, 2013  
Essay #1  
Word Count: 954

Required Lists of Discussion Questions

Over the course of the semester, you will be required to submit seven lists of discussion questions with 3 questions on each list. (As indicated in the below Schedule of Assignments, lists are due during weeks 3, 6, 9, 10, 12, and 13.) These lists must be typed/word processed (no last-minute, hand scrawled lists). Since a key purpose of these lists is to help ensure that you are well prepared for class discussion, each list must be submitted on the day it is due. I will not accept late lists.

Since the purpose of these lists is not to quiz the class but to facilitate class discussion, please do not include more than one factual question on any given list. Instead, please focus on questions of interpretation. Ideally, these would be questions (a) that you yourself find intriguing and (b) to which you don’t yet have a clear answer and, hence, (c) that you are genuinely interested in discussing/exploring with the class.

Please consider how you might develop one or more of your discussion questions and the related class discussion into one or more of your essays.

Evaluation

Your final grade will be determined approximately as follows:

- Up to 210 points for participation in class (7.5 points per class)  
- Up to 25 points for each of 4 brainstorming conferences  
- Up to 25 points for each of 2 drafts & draft-review conferences  
- Up to 100 points for each of 4 final pieces  
- Up to 50 points for each of 3 quizzes  
- Up to 15 points for each of 6 lists of discussion questions  
- Total 1,000 points

Extra credit

25 points for bringing to class before the end of week 3 the required texts with your name permanently marked in or on them.

25 points for each verified submission for publication if these are submitted before the end of week 10. When you submit your work electronically to the editor, copy the email message to
me, and **use Submission as the first word in your subject line.** Please wait to submit your work until you have received the final draft back from me and have responded to my comments.

A: 930-1000 points  
AB: 880-929 points  
B: 830-879 points  
BC: 780-829 points  
C: 730-779 points  
CD: 680-729 points  
D: 600-679 points  
F: 599 or fewer points

**Course Portfolios**

Please keep a portfolio of all of the work you have completed for the course: the hard copies of your articles as I’ve marked and returned them to you, and copies of everything you have had published. You may need these portfolios later in the semester.

**Tips on Doing Well**

- For each of your four brainstorming conferences, (1) mark your calendar; (2) arrive on time; and (3) bring a pen and paper, and be prepared to take notes, just as you would during an interview with a source. **These things—among others—will affect your grade** (up top 25 points for each conference).

- For each of your two draft-review conferences, (1) mark your calendar; (2) arrive on time; (3) bring a hard copy of a complete, double-spaced, word-processed draft. **These things—among others—will affect your grade** (up top 25 points for each conference and up to 25 points for each draft).

- See “Some Key Features of Quality Journalistic Writing” on pages 23-24 of *Introduction to Journalism*, and use this as a checklist, both while writing and before submitting your articles.

- I use a sliding scale of excellence; hence, you must do better on each assignment to justify the same grade. If I instead used an absolute scale of excellence, you would be penalized on the early assignments for not doing well what you have not yet learned, and your final grade would suffer as a consequence.

- Finish your last assignment (and the semester) with a bang, not a whimper. Don’t assume in week 12 or 13 that your final grade is already locked in.
The Michigan Tech Multiliteracies Center

Michigan Tech has an excellent Multiliteracies Center, which is located in Walker 107. I encourage you to schedule, regular weekly appointments with a writing coach. Establish a schedule early in the semester, because appointed times (as opposed to drop-in times) tend to get booked quickly. For more information, call 487-2007 or check the Center’s Web page at http://www.mtu.edu/humanities/resources/mtmc/what-we-offer/

Late Assignments

In the real world of journalism—except under the most extraordinary circumstances—the presses don’t wait for late submissions. As a beginning journalist, if you fail to complete your assignment on time more than a few times, you’ll probably find yourself looking for a new job.

If you do not submit your work on time, you will lose 10 points for every day that it is late. I will not accept any work that is submitted after the due date for the first draft of the next assignment.

Policy on Missed Conferences

Class policy on missed conferences is similar to the policies on absences and late assignments:

1. If you must miss a conference for a reason that would be covered by Michigan Tech’s policy on excused absences (illness, death in the family, etc.), that will count as an excused absence from your conference. Please try to notify me in advance, and make arrangements to make up this conference; initiating this rescheduling is your responsibility. On the first such incident, I will take your word for the reason for missing the conference. On subsequent absences, I may require verification from the Dean of Students Office or from a medical professional.

2. If you miss a conference for a reason not covered by Michigan Tech’s policy on excused absences, on the first such occurrence, I will penalize you 10 percent if you submit notification in advance of the conference and 20 percent if you do not submit notification in advance of the conference. You should then attempt to reschedule the conference; initiating this attempt is your responsibility. **On subsequent unexcused absences, there will be no rescheduled conference.**

Attendance Policy

“Eighty percent of success is just showing up.” Woody Allen

According to the Michigan Tech Attendance policy, an absence is excused under the following conditions:

- A student is participating in off-campus, University-sponsored activities, such as field
trips, fine arts performances, intercollegiate athletics, judging teams, job fairs, etc. The faculty or staff members supervising the off-campus activity will send a notice to all academic departments and the Office of Student Affairs before the activity takes place. The notice will include the name and date of the activity, the name of the supervising person, a list of all participating students, and their classes.

- The instructor is assured that a student’s absence from class was due to circumstances beyond the student’s control. The student must provide verification of the special circumstance if the instructor requests it. Excuses are usually given in the following circumstances: illness, funeral of any relative or close friend, military duty, court appearance, and personal emergencies.

- The instructor deems it excusable. Some examples might include professional and graduate school interviews, plant trips, job interviews requiring travel, and professional society meetings.

A full description of the University’s attendance policy is available at http://www.mtu.edu/dean/conduct/policy/attendance/

I keep a record of attendance for two reasons:

1. Because if you’re doing poorly in class, these records can help me to determine if poor attendance is part of the problem.

2. Every professor at Michigan Tech is required to submit attendance-verification rosters. These rosters are used for two purposes:

   a. To identify before it’s too late to make the appropriate corrections students who

      • think they are registered for a course, attend all semester and complete the work, but receive no grade at the end of the semester because they were never registered;

      • have never attended a class because they mistakenly think they have dropped the course and, hence, wind up receiving a failing grade at the end of the semester;

      • attend an incorrect section of a course and receive a failing grade at the end of the semester from the section for which they are registered but which they never attended.

   b. To comply with federal law that stipulates that universities must verify that students who receive Title IV financial aid are attending the classes in which they are enrolled. (Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 as amended in 1998 establishes general rules that apply to student financial assistance programs, including Pell Grants, Academic Competitive Grants, National SMART Grants, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, Federal Direct Loans, Federal Perkins Loans, and Federal PLUS Loans. Approximately 85 percent of Michigan Tech students receive some form of financial aid.)
Policy on Accountability for Excused Absences

I can allow up to two excused absences without documentation. However, if you want credit for more than two such absences, you must provide the appropriate documentation from the Dean of Students Office, from a medical professional, or from some other appropriate source.

Policy on Religious Observance (also from attendance policy at http://www.mtu.edu/dean/conduct/policy/attendance/):

“Michigan Tech permits students to be excused from class on holidays observed by their religious faith. Students who wish to be absent for a religious holiday are responsible for making arrangements in advance with their instructors to make up class work and exams. Instructors may expect a reasonable limit to the number of absences requested.”

Michigan Tech's Academic Integrity Policy

See http://www.mtu.edu/dean/conduct/policy/academic-integrity/

“Academic integrity and honesty are central components of a student's education, and ethical conduct fostered in an academic context will be carried into a student's professional career. Academic integrity is essential in a community of scholars searching and learning to search for truth. Anything less than total commitment to integrity undermines the efforts of the academic community. Both students and faculty are responsible for insuring the academic integrity of the University.

This policy applies to the academic conduct of all persons at Michigan Technological University who have ever matriculated at the University, whether or not the person is enrolled at the time an allegation of academic misconduct is made.

This policy addresses academic misconduct in course work. Allegations of misconduct in research or publication are addressed under the Misconduct in Research, Scholarly and Creative Endeavors and its associated procedures.

Procedures to ensure fairness and due process for all parties involved in any apparent violation of the Academic Integrity Policy will be developed, and periodically reviewed, by the Dean of Students Office in consultation with the Dean of the Graduate School and members of the Academic Integrity Committee appointed by the University Senate.”

Academic Integrity Policy—Definition of Academic Misconduct
http://www.mtu.edu/dean/conduct/policy/academic-integrity/definition.html

“Plagiarism
Knowingly copying another’s work or ideas and calling them one’s own or not giving proper credit or citation. This includes but is not limited to reading or hearing another’s work or ideas and using them as one’s own; quoting, paraphrasing, or condensing another’s work without
giving proper credit; purchasing or receiving another’s work and using, handling, or submitting it as one’s own work.

**Cheating**

Intentional, unauthorized use of any study aids, equipment, or another’s work during an academic exercise. This includes but is not limited to unauthorized use of notes, study aids, electronic or other equipment during an examination; copying or looking at another individual’s examination; taking or passing information to another individual during an examination; taking an examination for another individual; allowing another individual to take one’s examination; stealing examinations. Cheating also includes unauthorized collaboration. All graded academic exercises are expected to be performed on an individual basis unless otherwise stated by the instructor. An academic exercise may not be submitted by a student for course credit in more than one course without the permission of all instructors. [Note: This is also known as self-plagiarism.]

**Fabrication**

Intentional and/or unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation during an academic exercise. This includes but is not limited to changing or adding an answer on an examination and resubmitting it to change the grade; inventing data for a laboratory exercise or report.

**Facilitating Academic Misconduct**

Knowingly or recklessly allowing or helping another individual to plagiarize, cheat, or fabricate information.”

**Sanctions for academic dishonesty range from warnings to expulsion from Michigan Tech. For more information, visit [http://www.mtu.edu/dean/conduct/policy/academic-integrity/sanctions.html](http://www.mtu.edu/dean/conduct/policy/academic-integrity/sanctions.html)**

**The Americans with Disabilities Act**

MTU complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). If you have a disability and need a reasonable accommodation for equal access to education or services at MTU, please call Dr. Bonnie Gorman, Dean of Students (7-2212). For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, your department head, or the Affirmative Action Office (7-3310).
DRAFT Schedule of Assignments and Class Activities

Dates indicate when reading and writing assignments are due, not when they are given. I’ve used the following abbreviations for our texts: IJ = Introduction to Journalism; EJ = The Elements of Journalism. The Associated Press Stylebook is for reference. Please bring to class each day the book we are currently reading.

Week 1:
TU 9/3: Overview of course and syllabus; self-introductions; brainstorm for story ideas; discuss IJ “Story Ideas” and “Researching and Composing the Story” (pp. 12-18)
TH 9/5: EJ Ch. 1: “What is Journalism For?”

Week 2: Meet this week to brainstorm for topics, sources, and research and interview questions for journalistic article #1; hence, class meets from 9:35-10:25
TU 9/10: “Some Key Features of Quality Journalistic Writing” (IJ pp. 23-24)
TH 9/12: EJ Ch 2: “Truth: The First and Most Confusing Principle”

Week 3:
TH 9/19: “Style” (IJ pp. 51-53); Video: “News Writing Language and Style”; general style and Associated Press style pre-quiz; class discussion of EJ; list of discussion questions due

Week 4: Meet this week to discuss drafts of journalistic article #1; hence, class meets from 9:35-10:25
TU 9/24: EJ Ch 4: “Journalism of Verification”; IJ “Interviewing” (pp. 18-23)
TH 9/26: IJ “Media Law” and “Photojournalism Law” (pp. 25-34)

Week 5: Meet this week to brainstorm for topics, sources, and research and interview questions for journalistic article #2; hence, class meets from 9:35-10:25
TU 10/1: EJ Ch. 5 “Independence from Faction”; IJ “Invasion of Privacy Law” (pp. 35-37); reading and discussion quiz #1
TH 10/3: Final version of journalistic article #1 due; IJ “Media Ethics,” “SPJ Code of Ethics,” “Guideline on Gifts, Free Meals, and Other Favors” (pp. 38-43)

Week 6:
TU 10/8: EJ Ch. 6: “Monitor Power and Offer Voice to the Voiceless”; IJ “Photojournalism Law and Ethics”; film: “Tell the Truth and Run”
TH 10/10: IJ “Access to Busy People” and “Unavailable for Comment, Did Not Respond, Declined Comment”; film: “Tell the Truth and Run”; review Wednesday’s Lode; class discussion of EJ; list of discussion questions due
Week 7: Meet this week to discuss drafts of journalistic article #2; hence, class meets from 9:35-10:25

   TU 10/15: EJ Ch. 7: “Journalism as a Public Forum”; video: “Media Law”
   TH 10/17: Review Wednesday’s Lode or Gazette

Week 8: Meet this week to brainstorm for critical essay #1; hence, class meets from 9:35-10:25

   TU 10/22: EJ Ch. 8: “Engagement and Relevance”; video: “Journalism Ethics”; final version of journalistic article #2 due
   TH 10/24: Reading and discussion quiz #2

Week 9:
   TH 10/31: Film: excerpts from “All the President’s Men”; class discussion of EJ; list of discussion questions due

Week 10:
   TU 11/5: EJ Ch 10: “Journalists Have a Responsibility to Conscience”
   TH 11/7: Film: excerpts from “Absence of Malice”; class discussion of EJ; list of discussion questions due

Week 11: Meet this week to brainstorm for critical essay #2; hence, class meets from 9:35-10:25

   TU 11/12: IJ “In-Depth Reporting: Investigative, Explanatory, and Beat Reporting” (pp. 44-46)
   TH 11/14: Final version of critical essay #1 due; in-class prose style exercises; EJ Ch. 11 “The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizens”

Week 12:
   TU 11/19: IJ “Beyond the Summary Lead: Story Telling” (pp. 47-50); in-class exercises based on IJ reading
   TH 11/21: IJ “Generative Rhetoric of the Sentence” (pp. 53-58; in-class exercises based on IJ reading; review Wednesday’s Lode; class discussion of EJ; list of discussion questions due

11/22-12/02 Thanksgiving Break

Week 13: Course evaluations on a day during last two weeks when time permits

   TU 12/3: Style exercises
TH 12/5: Review Wednesday’s *Lode*; class discussion of EJ; list of discussion questions due

**Week 14:**
- **TU 12/10:** Reading and discussion quiz #3
- **TH 12/12:** Final version of critical essay #2 due; summary

**New language required to be included in all syllabuses as of 19 November 2012:**

“Student work products (exams, essays, projects, etc.) may be used for purposes of university, program, or course assessment. All work used for assessment purposes will not include any individual student identification.”