

Multimedia Journalism – JO540
Syllabus for section C1, Spring 2009

Instructor: Rima Chaddha Mycynek

Contact Info: E-mail: mycynek@bu.edu

Office Hours: By appointment in room #220D. (I also keep virtual/e-mail office hours Mon.-Thurs. evenings until 10 p.m. Responses to weekend e-mails will take longer.)

Class Pages: <http://www.news-geek.com/jo540> - course materials and useful links
<http://sites.google.com> - This is where you will create your first Web site.
<http://bustudentshowcase.ning.com> - a good resource with past students' work—
The best pieces from our class will end up here.

Class Hours: Mondays, 8:30-11:00 a.m. in room COM 206*

Discussion: Mondays, 11:00-12 noon in room COM 101*

(*Note some exceptions in this document regarding class/discussion dates/times.)

Course Description:

The course introduces students to reporting, writing and creating multimedia journalism for the Internet. Students will view and critique online journalism and learn how to create stories using various media. They will learn which elements—text, links, stills, audio, video, and interactivity—are best for delivering a story and engaging an Internet news audience. Students will learn the *basics* of the tools needed to create multimedia journalism projects during the semester and practice using them to report and tell news stories throughout the term on sites and blogs set up specifically for this purpose.

Learning Objectives:

- * Understand how consumers access news on the Internet so you will be able to produce effective multi-platform and multimedia stories;
- * Understand key industry trends, influences, pressures and directions;
- * Understand and master the *basics* of the *current* standard tools used to produce multimedia journalism;
- * Understand how to develop interactive news stories;
- * Gain necessary skills for working in a professional Web newsroom, with skills in online story development and baseline technological understanding of Web publishing and journalism.

Daily/Weekly:

Every day you should compare the coverage in a daily local or national paper and local TV station and national TV network with the stories and coverage on that organization's news Web site. Doing this will keep you up to date on the news of the day as well as help you understand the differences in print, TV and Internet news writing and delivery. Links to useful sites will also be provided and updated for class use on my [Web site](#), Sasha Norkin's [blog](#) and [Steve Garfield's presentations page](#). We will also have a [BU Student Showcase ning site](#) to feature the best of the work in the class.

Course objectives:

January 26 – Overview of Internet Reporting & Multimedia Storytelling

Why are you here? How can you report effectively in a multimedia setting?

- Introductions and informative video
- NewsU's Five Steps to Multimedia Storytelling plus examples
- Writing for the Web
- Assignments:
 - o In class: Create a Web site using Google sites.
 - o For next week: Report on an issue of interest to you and post the article on your site, keeping in mind the guidance on format and content discussed in class. Bring a printout (you will hand it in) and be prepared to discuss the articles in class.

11am-12pm Focus Presentation on Blogs by Steve Garfield

Blogging 1:

- The beginning of blogs.
- How blogs are being used.
- How to subscribe / subscriptions via RSS, iTunes / setting up blog readers
- Tools: Bloglines, Google Reader, myYahoo, FriendFeed
- Assignment:
 - o Read 10 blogs on a subject of interest to you and subscribe to them. Come back with two favorites and be ready to tell the class why you believe these blogs are best.

February 2 – Writing for the Internet

- In-class review of your news stories: We will go over how those stories can be improved and enhanced for Web.
- In-depth: How mapping information can be used in reporting. (Examples: Homicide maps, tornado aftermath, etc.)
- In class: Use [Google Maps](#) to tell your own story.
- Assignments for next week:
 - o Cover an event: write one **news story** and one **blog** about the event. (Steve will show you how to make a blog.) Make sure to cover the story "straight" with a "just the facts" perspective for the Web site, and add a "personal view" for the blog. Bring print outs of your story and blog to hand in.
 - o Watch Channel 5's evening newscast and visit [TheBostonChannel.com](#) one or more nights this week. Compare how both cover the news in preparation for our guest speaker: Maria Buckley of [TheBostonChannel.com](#).

Focus Presentation: Steve Garfield

Blogging 2: Setting up a blog

Review of student blog favorites

Creating a blog and Things to consider when doing it:

- Theme, design, comments
- Creative Commons
- RSS
- Feedburner

- Tools: Blogger, Wordpress, Facebook, MySpace
- How to make your blog, what content, what should be in it?
- Make a blog post on the event you've covered.

February 9 – Writing Workshop

- In-class review of the news stories and blog posts—you will discuss how content in the news story differs from that in the blog.
- Explore how the story content could be delivered via email or mobile.

Maria Buckley of TheBostonChannel.com will join us at 9:30.

- Assignments for next week:
 - o Come to class with three picture story ideas written up for discussion.
 - o Check out a digital camera to be used in class on **Tuesday**. (Or bring your own if you have one.)

Focus Presentation: Steve Garfield: Blogs

- Reviewing/critiquing individual blogs.

TUESDAY Feb 17 – Digital Photography

- Elements of taking a good picture, what kinds of photos win photo contests
- In class shooting and reporting assignment.
- Discussion and approval of your picture story.
- Assignment for next week:
 - o Shoot your approved picture story using a digital camera and post to Flickr. Create a slideshow on Flickr. Embed your slideshow in a post to your Web site. (**Note:** If you're checking out a school camera, please work in pairs.)

Focus Presentation: Steve Garfield: Reporting with Your Cell Phone

What if you were at an event or a breaking news story? How would/could you use your cell phone to report?

- Capturing, editing, posting

- Recording with a cell phone and posting a news story

Tools: Flickr, [Utterli](#), sharing, community

Report and post a story from your cell phone to Utterli.

Feb 23 – Picture Stories and Photoshop

- Review of your picture stories with class discussion of shots and story flow.
- Learn *basics* of using Photoshop to create and edit images for use on the web and in Soundslide and video projects.
 - o In-class workshop
- Assignments for next week:
 - o Transfer, title, organize and post your revised picture story on Flickr.
 - o Bring three audio/still news story ideas to class. You will need to turn in an audio story on **March 16** and an audio/stills version of the story on **March 23**.

Focus Presentation: Steve Garfield: Live Video

Examples: NH and Mass Primary, the UpTake, Jeff Pulver, iJustine, Pop 17,
<http://www.daytonabeach-live.com/> (personal broadcasting)

Teaching: When to go live, set up account on live streaming site

[UStream](#) How to embed UStream in your blog

March 2 – Audio Reporting & Capture/Editing

- Review audio/stills ideas in class
- How to capture good audio, conduct interviews through audio, and them to tell a story
- How to edit using Audacity
- Assignment for March 16:
 - o Report on your approved news story using audio, edit the story using Audacity, and post the story on your Web site.
 - o Shoot still pictures to accompany your story, and we will use those stills to create Soundslide story using your edited audio report and stills. (If you're checking out school cameras, work in teams of two.)

Focus Presentation: Steve Garfield: Audio & Podcasting

- What is a podcast? How you can easily have your own Internet radio talk show and podcast: Examples: PRX, [BlogTalkRadio](#) Presentation: Live talk show

March 16 – Soundslides

- Review of audio reports—how can audio change when pictures are added?
- Learn how to use soundslides to add visuals and craft audio/still picture reports.
- Play with adding stills to your audio report (just to get the hang of the software).
- Assignment for next week.
 - o **Re-edit** your audio with a Soundslides presentation in mind. **Create** that presentation, save it and transfer it to BU server using FTP.
 - o Bring in two story ideas for a video story. You will need to have a **mini dv** tape to shoot your video story and your hard drive for class next week.
 - o **Pair up** with someone else in the class—cameras are limited, and you'll have to share when you check one out to bring to class next week.

Focus Presentation: Steve Garfield: Audio Production

Demonstration of how to create an audio report for podcasting/posting on the class Web site

March 23 – Soundslides /Video Camera

- Present and review your Soundslide news reports, and make any changes or adjustments that are needed to improve the reports. (Upload final to the server and embed to your Web site.)
- Review your video story ideas. Go over use of video camera and uploading video.
- Discussion of final project
- Assignment for next week:
 - o Write up and bring in three ideas for your final project. You need to have a proposal to report on a subject **using three multimedia elements** and a storyboard outlining how the elements work together. (You will turn in both the proposal and storyboard.)
 - o Get into pairs, check out a camera, shoot raw footage/interviews, import into iMovie. Save the iMovie project to your drive and bring it to class.

Focus Presentation: Steve Garfield: Community and Conversation

- Examples: [Twitter](#), [Seismic](#); Join a community; engage in a conversation.
- How information can be gathered and shared and how this can be used to report
- [New Media Tools for Journalism: Community And Conversation](#)
- View SlideShare [presentation](#) or [Upload](#) your own. (tags: [twitter](#) [facebook](#))

March 30 – Uploading Video &Video Editing.

- In-class showing of raw footage - class discussion on what works and what to improve
- Instruction on how to edit video
- Review of final project ideas
- Assignment for next week:
 - o Shoot and edit a video report, and bring a rough cut to class. (Check out of

cameras in teams of two, but remember that each student is responsible for his or her own piece.)

Focus Presentation: Steve Garfield: Video & Video Blogging

- Examples: Rocketboom, The UpTake, Sacramento Bee, Nashua Telegraph
- Teaching: Recording with a cell phone, video camera, and posting Tools: Video Camera, Webcam, Cell phone, YouTube, BlipTV, iMovie, Final Cut, Premiere

April 6 Video Reporting In class

- In-class review and discussion of rough cuts, along with suggestions for fine-tuning (This is your chance to practice editing/ask remaining questions before turning in the final video.)
- Assignment for next week:
 - o Turn in final video—upload to video site of your choosing and embed to your Web site.
 - o Start thinking about Dreamweaver. I will provide useful links/tutorials on my Web site sometime this week.

Focus Presentation: Steve Garfield:

Political Reporting

April 13 Dreamweaver/Website creation

- Use of Dreamweaver for creating Web sites
- You're covering the Boston Marathon next week. We'll dish out specific assignments in class today.
- Assignments:
 - o Think about your marathon coverage.
 - o Start work on creating pages that map to your webflow story boards/graphics/etc. Think about how you want your site to look for your final presentation.

Focus Presentation: Steve Garfield: Crowd Sourcing

- Examples: [WBUR-Listener Photo Project](#) , [NowPublic](#), [GasBuddy](#), [Accident Watch](#) , istockphoto, stockphotopro

MONDAY April 20 LIVE REPORTING ON THE BOSTON MARATHON

- Class reporting project on the Boston Marathon.
 - o Students will have assignments for coverage of this live event, and we will post throughout the event on a ning site, similar to what was done for the [presidential election](#).

THURSDAY April 23 – Review of progress on final projects

- There will be no lecture. Just meet with me during class time to go over your progress. Also use this time to work.

No focus presentation at 11 a.m.

April 27 - Final Projects Presentation

The project will contain original news reporting and content that will provide a compelling multimedia look at a story. The project must include 12-15 paragraphs of text and three multimedia elements—for example, slideshow, video, blog, detailed map, etc. You will present the project to the class, outlining successes, challenges, and what you learned.

GRADING

You will be graded on your performance on projects, class participation and teamwork. You will be graded each week.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

I expect you to be **in class and on time**. If you cannot be there for some reason, please let me know via email ahead of time. If you arrive late, you will be considered absent. Being absent can result in a reduction in your final grade (an A becomes an A-, etc). There are no “unexcused absences.” If you miss two classes, your overall grade will be lowered 10 points. Missing three or more classes will result in a failing grade.

With each class lasting four hours, missing a class is a significant percentage of the course. Since this course is based on progressive learning, if you miss a class, you won’t gain the information that will allow you to be successful in the next class and project, and your work and grade will suffer.

DEADLINES

All assignments are due at the beginning of the next class. Assignments turned in one day late will get 10 points deducted from the grade. Assignments turned in more than one day late get a **zero**.

EXPECTATIONS

Be sure to read and understand clearly the COM College policy on plagiarism (see below). In particular, for electronic news students, this means you **CANNOT** use video or audio other than

what you or your partner captured, without express permission. Even if you have permission from me to use a small amount of video from another source, you need to give it proper attribution. Additionally, it is a violation of copyright law to “copy and paste” from the Internet. You are not allowed to “double dip”, submitting an assignment produced for another class or media outlet. Your work should be your own, produced for this course.

PLAGIARISM-The College of Communication rules on plagiarism are applicable to this course. Warning on plagiarism:

"Plagiarism is the act of representing another person's creative and/or academic work as your own, in full, or in part. It can be an act of commission, in which one intentionally appropriates the words, pictures, or ideas of another, or it can be an act of omission, in which one fails to acknowledge/document/give credit to the source, creator and/or the copyright owner of those words, pictures, or ideas. Any fabrication of materials, quotes or sources other than those created in a work of fiction is also plagiarism. Plagiarism is the most serious academic offense that you can commit and can result in probation, suspension, or expulsion."

This syllabus may be revised during the course of the semester. (Don't worry—I'll let you know.)