

## **JRM 335 History of American Media**

**Fall 2013**

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*“It has long been a grave question whether any government not too strong for the liberties of its people can be strong enough to maintain its existence in great emergencies.”*

*Abraham Lincoln*

### **COURSE OVERVIEW**

The goal of the course is to make the history of American media come alive and **especially to teach you the history of press freedom**. You will learn how the free press developed, and about the significant First Amendment events, issues and court decisions. You will wrestle with root issues such as the clash of liberty and national security and take personal positions on them. I will distribute handouts on significant First Amendment developments. **Keep them.**

You will also meet the most important people in American journalism history, see how communications technology developed and learn how media history and American political and social history are intertwined.

### **TEXT AND READINGS**

The Press and America by Michael Emery and Edwin Emery is **optional**. Lectures are based on numerous sources and will be the primary source of quiz and test material along with videos shown in class and assigned readings. Copies of assigned readings are on two-hour reserve at Reinert Alumni Library.

### **ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING**

Assignments are distributed and announcements made at the beginning of class. You are responsible for obtaining information or assignments that you miss. Five three-page papers count 10 points each. One will be an analysis of a book that you will select from the attached list and also report on in class as part of a group “Book Talk.” There will be two five-point quizzes announced in advance. You must be present when the quiz starts to take it; there are no make-ups. A midterm and a final will each count 20 points.

Papers in this **certified writing** course will be graded on the quality of research and analysis, adherence to instructions and excellence of writing. Papers will be automatically downgraded for:

- Factual errors including name-spelling errors
- Writing errors such as sentence fragments, syntax errors, run-on sentences, and agreement errors.

- Failure to cite sources as instructed or to follow any of the written instructions

**Failure to turn in any paper will result in a maximum course grade of D.** There is a 10% penalty per day for late papers, including weekend days. **I reserve the right to**

**reject papers after points have expired, thus triggering the automatic maximum grade of D.**

### **EXTRA CREDIT**

You can receive up to four points in extra credit for writing a second book report on a book of your own choosing from the list and up to two points for watching a movie related to journalism from a list on this syllabus and critiquing it or attending Documentary Night. Total EC points possible: 4.

### **GRADES**

You will receive number grades that translate into letter grades on a 10-point scale as follows;

A += 9.8 for a paper that is highly superior in content and contains NO writing errors

A = 9.5 Outstanding content and virtually no writing errors

A- = 9.2 Outstanding content with minor writing errors

B+ = 8.8 Excellent content but downgraded for a maximum of writing or content errors such as a sentence fragment, a name spelling or date error, garbled syntax, failure to follow instructions in some respect etc.

B = 8.5 Good to excellent content and/or three to five writing errors

B- = 8.2 Good content and/or five to seven writing errors

C+ = 7.8 Adequate content but more numerous and/or serious writing or factual errors, significant failure to follow directions etc.

C = 7.5 Adequate content and/or more numerous and/or serious writing or factual errors, failure to follow directions etc.

C- = 7.2 Barely adequate content and a significant number of the problems noted above

D = 6.5 Barely adequate paper overall

### **BOOK REPORTS/BOOK TALKS**

Select a book from the attached list and present it to class in a three-minute oral report. Books are listed according to presentation dates. Written reports are due the date of oral presentations. **There is an automatic two-point downgrade for failure to deliver an oral report.**

### **CANCELLATIONS**

If class is unexpectedly cancelled, I will send you an email that morning and there will be a note on the classroom door.

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

The Department of JMC observes the academic honesty standards of Creighton's College of Arts and Sciences and the Arts & Sciences Student Senate. **Cheating will result in an automatic zero, thus triggering the maximum grade of D for the course.** Students are expected to be accountable for any attenuation or neglect of the conventions that define academic integrity. We will discuss the academic integrity ground rules that pertain to specific assignments.

## **CLASSROOM RULES**

- You **MAY NOT** leave the classroom once class has started. If you leave, you **MAY NOT** return and I will count you absent.
- If you work on anything else during class, I will ask you to leave and count you absent. See rules governing use of computers elsewhere in this syllabus.
- If I do not have a note explaining an absence **by the end of the calendar day of a class**, you are counted absent.
- If you use a cell phone, I will confiscate it.

## **OFFICE HOURS**

I am usually in my office between 8:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. daily when I am not in class or at a meeting. You can drop in to my office at 210CA any time or email for an appointment.

## **JM&C Department Professionalism Policies**

The Department of Journalism, Media & Computing offers pre-professional education to prepare students to succeed in communications careers. Professional attitudes and conduct are often almost as important as talent in our fields. Accordingly, students in all JM&C classes are expected to conduct themselves as cited below; faculty and staff will enforce consequences:

**1. Students will attend all classes unless there is a valid reason to be absent and to arrive on time just as they would at work. Students who arrive after class has begun are considered late and subject to grade penalties as imposed by each instructor.**

- Valid reasons for absences include illness, participation in an official university function (debate, varsity athletic absences etc), family emergency etc. **All excused absences require notification by email the day of the class.**

- Absences of two classes in a row due to illness require a doctor's note.

- Absences due to non-emergency medical/dental appointments are unexcused absences. The same goes for picking up a friend, taking a car to be repaired or other circumstances that can be avoided.

- More than **two** unexcused absences per semester (in a T/Th class) **will result in course grade being lowered three course points per additional absence up to D.**

Students with six unexcused absences in this course will receive an A/F.

**2. Use of electronic devices during class is prohibited unless specifically permitted.**

**3. No food and drink are allowed in the labs. If caught, you will be expected to leave class and dispose of the items.**

**3. Students are expected to participate in class. Inappropriate behavior such as reading non-course materials, checking email, instant or text messaging, studying for other classes or sleeping will result in dismissal from that day's class and count as an unexcused absence.**

**4. Students are accountable for turning in all work on time. Faculty will either penalize late assignments or refuse to accept them.**

**5. Working in groups is part of all communications work. Students who fail to do their share of work on team projects or are unwilling to participate in group problem solving will be dismissed from the teams and lose credit for projects.**

### **Professionalism**

Professionalism also involves:

- Accepting criticism gracefully
- Resolving problems with professors, staff and colleagues in a mature fashion

Students are always welcome to seek more information about why they received a particular grade on a test or assignment, obtain guidance for how to improve work and ask for suggestions on solving problems. They are encouraged to go above and beyond the minimum work assigned and to demonstrate enthusiasm for work in their fields. In the JM&C Department C work is minimal work. A and B work goes beyond the minimum.

### **Reality 101**

**Often employers hire people with great attitudes over those with more talent.**

### **My Additional Expectations**

Here are my expectations from you this semester.

#### **Coming Late**

Class starts on time. Late shuttles and parking difficulties are NOT valid excuses for being late unless the weather is *extremely* bad. You cannot take a quiz if you arrive while it is in progress. There are no make-ups on quizzes.

#### **Lectures**

This class is mostly lecture because you don't have to buy a book. I write the major points on the board and you are accountable for this information. Ask me to explain anything you don't understand or can't decipher.

#### **Videos**

This class heavily integrates video to teach major points. I normally explain what I want you to absorb from particular videos so don't try to take notes during them. **If you miss class, you will miss the video segments and can't just get them from notes.**

#### **Writing Papers**

Avoid these common writing errors because they trigger my automatic downgrades:

- Sentence fragments are an automatic .5 deduction. So are sentences that "don't track" (don't make sense). Read your papers aloud to catch fragments, run-on sentences, garbled syntax and other problems.

- Semi-colons separate independent clauses and should not be confused with commas. See the AP Stylebook punctuation section for a detailed explanation.
  - Subjects and verbs must agree in number. Collective nouns require singular verbs.
  - Pronouns must modify a specific noun. You can't use a pronoun to refer to a noun when intervening sentences separate the pronoun and the noun it replaces. This will provoke a comment such as "Who is *he*?" Even when I know who you mean, you are charged with a writing error.
  - Pronouns must agree with the nouns to which they refer in gender and number. You cannot replace a singular noun with "they" or "them" even if we talk that way.
- If your first paper is downgraded significantly for writing/proofreading errors, see me for help. I teach writing and I don't want poor writing to rob you of a good grade when you understand the material.
- I will review drafts of any papers submitted at least 48 hours before a paper is due.** You may email me your draft.

### **Instruction Sheets**

I hand out instructions for each paper and **deduct heavily for failure to follow them.** If you don't understand something, ask me to clarify.

### **Class Participation**

I do not award points for class participation but I weigh it in borderline grade situations. Attending every class, answering and asking questions, and generally acting interested can tip the balance.

### **Study Guides**

I will give you study guides before the midterm and final. They will include lists of names for which you are responsible for the objective portions of both exams.

## **Offers of Help**

**I will give you as much time as you need outside of class. Feel welcome to question your grade on a paper or lost points on an exam.**

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

### **Unit 1: Journalism in Early America (Aug. 21-28)**

- Birth of journalism
- Social requirements for a free press
- Journalism in colonial America – James Franklin and John Peter Zenger
- The media and the Revolution
- The Constitution and the First Amendment
- The Sedition Act of 1798

### **Readings**

- Moyers on America by Bill Moyers, p. 123-149

- Founding Brothers by Joseph J. Ellis, p. 190-201
- Perilous Times by Geoffrey Stone, p. 16-76
- War and the American Presidency by Arthur Schlesinger, p. 69-82

**Freedom of the Press Handout 1:** Seditious Libel

**Freedom of the Press Handout 2:** The First Amendment; Sedition Act of 1798

**Paper:** Compare the Sedition Act of 1798 with NSA monitoring controversy following the instructions distributed in class. **Due Sept 9.**

**Unit 2: The Press and the Nation Grow Up (Sept. 2-Oct. 7)**

- The press moves west – why the U.S. has a local press
- The Penny Press
- Penny Press editors and the birth of the Associated Press
- The abolitionist movement/ censorship issues and measures
- The Civil War: Lincoln and free press issues
- Reconstruction and the “New South:” northern press abandons freed slaves
- Frontier journalism; Nebraska/Omaha journalism history
- The “New Journalism”: Joseph Pulitzer, Adolph Ochs, William Randolph Hearst and E.W. Scripps
- The Muckrakers: birth of investigative reporting and famous muckrakers
- Women and the media: early reporters, muckrakers, women’s pages
- Birth of advertising, public relations and movies (“Sell and Spin” video)
- Victorian era censorship of sexual material, the Comstock Commission
- World War I: Creel Committee propaganda program (“The Moving Picture Boys in the Great War” video), the Espionage Act of 1917, the Sedition Act of 1918 and the Alien Act of 1918; *Schenk vs. the U.S.*, *Meyer vs. Nebraska*; birth of the civil liberties movement
- Graphic evolution of American newspapers (visual presentation)

**Freedom of the Press Handout 3:** Freedom of the Press and Abolition; Press Freedom during the Civil War

**Freedom of the Press Handout 4:** Press Freedom during World War I

**Paper:** Compare the *New York Times* coverage of Lincoln’s assassination with its coverage of 9-11. Follow detailed instructions distributed in class, **due Sept. 18.**

**Book Talk 1: Sept. 11**

**Book Talk 2: Sept. 25**

**Midterm: Oct. 9**

**Unit 3: Birth of Radio – Korean War (Oct. 21-Nov. 6)**

- Birth of radio and the creation of a mass culture
- Birth of radio news: impact on national and international politics; segments from “We Interrupt This Broadcast” and “The Democrat and the Dictator” video
- Federal regulation of radio – First Amendment implications
- World War II – media partnership with the government, voluntary censorship, failures to investigate Japanese-American relocation, FDR’s press freedom record
- Birth of television; “Omaha Television the Early Years” (video)

- Social impact to television and noted early TV programs
- Impact of federal regulation of TV on news and entertainment programming
- Edward R. Murrow: “This Reporter” video biography and the McCarthy era
- Media during the Cold War; press freedom implications of the relationship with the government

**Paper:** Impact of radio on American life – interview an older person about his/her memories of radio, **due Oct. 30.**

**Book Talk 3: Oct. 23**

**Book Talk 4: Nov. 6**

**Unit 4: American Media in the Modern World (Nov. 11-Dec. 4)**

- The media and the Civil Rights Movement, “The Century” video
- The TV election of 1960; JFK and the media, the Kennedy Assassination – 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary video
- TV covers the social revolution of the 1960’s-70’s, the Vietnam anti-war movement, “The Century” video
- The election of Richard Nixon and the rebirth of investigative journalism; the Pentagon Papers case, Watergate, free speech cases: *O’Brien vs. the U.S.*, *Brandenburg vs. Hayes*, the Flag Cases, “The Century” video
- Roone Arledge and his TV news revolution; birth of cable TV/implications for TV news; CNN, ESPN, Fox News
- Al Neuharth, Gannett and the *USA Today* revolution; impact of growth of newspaper chains on society; the decline of newspaper competition and creation of new forms of print media
- U.S. media in a global society, impact of American TV on global politics, “The Century” video
- The Internet and its impact on U.S. and international journalism

**Freedom of the Press Handout 5:** The Pentagon Papers Case

**Freedom of the Press Handout 6:** Vietnam Issues/Cases Expand First Amendment Freedoms

**Paper:** Comparative Media Coverage – Instructions given in class, **due Nov. 25.**

**Book Talk 5: Nov. 18**

**Book Talk 6: Dec. 4**

**Final Exam: 1 p.m. Dec. 9**

**Documentary Night (EC)** *The Most Dangerous Man in America*

**Journalism Movies (EC):** *Pete Seeger the Power of Song*, *Anchorman*, *Shattered Glass*, *Goodnight and Good Luck*

## **Book List**

### **Book Talk 1(Sept. 11)**

1. Freedom for the Thought We Hate by Anthony Lewis
2. The Victorian Internet by Tom Standage
3. Flash! The Associated Press Covers the World
4. Breaking Barriers by Carl Rowan
5. The Race Beat by Gene Roberts and Hank Klibanoff

### **Book Talk 2 (Sept. 25)**

6. Nothing Like It In the World by Stephen Ambrose
7. The Girls on the Balcony by Nan Robertson
8. Mightier than the Sword by Rodger Streitmatter
9. From Society Page to Front Page by Eileen Wirth
10. The Trust by Susan Tift and Alex Jones Coffey
11. The Art of Ill Will by Donald Dewey

### **Book Talk 3 (Oct. 23)**

12. World War II on the Air by Mark Bernstein and Alex Lubertozzi
13. Sunday Nights at 7 by Jack Benny and Joan Minardi
14. Raised on Radio by Gerald Nachman
15. Up Front by Bill Mauldin
16. Brave Men by Ernie Pyle
17. Common Valor, Uncommon virtue by Hal Buell

### **Book Talk 4 (Nov. 6)**

18. When Television Was Young by Ed McMahon
19. Tell Me a Story by Don Hewitt
20. K Blows Top by Peter Carlson
21. A Voice in the Box by Bob Edwards
22. The Beatles Come to America by Martin Goldsmith
23. Mad Women by Jane Maas

### **Book Talk 5 (Nov. 18)**

24. Never in My Wildest Dreams by Belva Davis
24. In My Place by Charlayne Hunter-Gault
25. Son of the Rough South by Karl Fleming
26. The Thunder of Angels by Donnie Williams and Wayne Greenshaw
27. A Good Life by Ben Bradlee
28. This Just In by Bob Schieffer
29. Arab and Jew by David Shippler

### **Book Talk 6 (Dec. 4)**

30. Roone by Roone Arledge
31. Confessions of an S.O.B. by Al Neuharth
32. Den of Lions by Terry Anderson
33. ESPN the Uncensored History by Michael Freeman
34. Adland by James Othmer
35. We're All Journalists Now by Scott Gant
36. Exit Interview by David Westin
37. Bloggers on the Bus by Eric Boehlert ; The Center Holds by Jonathan Alter

