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Community Reporting Project

What is the Community Reporting Project?

The purpose of the community reporting project is to use the theory, skills and content that you learn in this class to illuminate media diversity-related issues and stories that are either under-covered or poorly understood. In past semesters, students have done two types of projects: they either produce multimedia journalism or academic research projects. Examples of past topics have included features on the lives of low income workers on campus, oral histories of journalists of color, ra[e culture and the college party scene, and research on the lack of diversity at college newspapers. More recently we have built projects around strategies for community engagement, including online conversations about such issues as the lead crisis in Trenton.

Spring 2020: The Civic Story project

According to its mission statement ↗ , Civic Story "seeks to advance solutions-based news about citizens transforming communities." in the belief that " that daily news has the potential to foster learning, innovation, and problem solving in America and throughout the world. Increasing this capacity is a matter of significance and urgency. " Its founder, Susan Haig, has spoken of their desire to challenge negative media narratives about struggling communities. To that end, Civic Story has created dozens of short news stories that have been distributed and run by local news partners. They also host and participate in forums on the state of journalism, and host audio and video of these sessions on their site. Recently, they have taken a leading role in a statewide initiative, The Sustainability Reporting Hub ↗

We will collaborate with Civic Story on two projects:

- We will support the work of Prof. John DeGood's Database Systems class to redesign the database undergirding their website. This work is important for Civic Story because they want to position themselves for growth. Our part of this project is to ensure that the needs of all of the relevant stakeholders are considered in the design of this database.
- Civic Story is anxious to understand how their stakeholders feel about the work they do, and they want to deepen their relationships with communities that they feel are underrepresented or misrepresented in news stories. Using the research that we will do to support the database project, we will either:
  - **Design an audience engagement project that Civic Story can execute.** These recommendations will include feedback from stakeholders, scholarship on media representation, and research on solutions sought by other news organizations. **OR**
  - **Design and execute a reporting project that is consistent with Civic Story's editorial priorities, and that uses audience engagement strategies in its reporting.**

Timetable

(items in green represent joint activity with CS. Linked items represent RGN deliverables or project resources.)

Date	Milestone	Deliverables	Relevant resources
January 30	Initial brainstorming	Community Reporting Project: Initial questions discussion	Project Resources
February 3	**Form teams across classes**	Complete Collaborative Meeting 1 sheet	
February 6	**CS Project pitch proposal and discussion (joint class)**		
February 20	CS project proposals and specifications (use cases)		
March 2	Idea for Community Engagement Proposal	Idea for community engagement proposal guidelines	Annotated bibliography template ↗
March 9	**Midterm presentations (invite Civic Story via Google Meet or zoom) VERY SHORT, TIGHT PRESENTATIONS with 1 page handout**	Presentation with computer science students. Your group handout should include a short description of your stakeholder research.	
March 13	**RGN students' research proposals**	Full Community Engagement Research or story Proposal	
week of April 30	**User tests of CS modules (arrange out of class meeting)**		
May 4	**Presentation of database module with one page handout on audience engagement research (joint meeting)**		
May 7	Draft community reporting project	Draft CR project for feedback	
Date of final	Final Community Reporting Project	Final CR project	