NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

Course Descriptions

JRN—JOURNALISM

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

JRN U100 Journalism at Northeastern 1 SH
Intended for first-year students in the College of Arts and Sciences. Introduces students to liberal arts; familiarizes them with their major; develops the academic skills necessary to succeed (analytical ability and critical thinking); provides grounding in the culture and values of the University community; and helps to develop interpersonal skills—in short, familiarizes students with all skills needed to become a successful university student.

JRN U101 Journalism 1 4 SH
Covers foundations of news writing for print media including leads, story structure, objective tone, and attribution. Introduces fundamental reporting skills such as interviewing, researching, and observation.

JRN U150 Interpreting the Day’s News 4 SH
Considers the news of the day and the function of the newspaper, newsmagazine, and news broadcasts in American life. Topics include rights and responsibilities of the press, and how news is gathered, processed, and disseminated by the various media.

JRN U201 Journalism 2 4 SH
Continues JRN U101. This is the second writing course for undergraduate journalism students with an emphasis on learning how to report news stories. Offers students the opportunity to find sources and interview them, do background research, and use public records. Developing story ideas using computer-assisted reporting will be covered. Examines how to develop a story idea and then focus and organize it. Covers basic principles of online journalism including writing, design, and integration of visuals and text for the Web. Introduces elements of design and layout. Prereq. JRN U101 and with grade of C or better.

JRN U301 Journalism 3 4 SH
Continues JRN U201. Covers basic principles of journalistic storytelling with video, sound, and still images. Introduces students to the foundations of writing with audio and video, and explores the concept of “convergence,” preparing stories for presentation in different formats. Fulfills the Advanced Writing in the Disciplines requirement for journalism majors. Prereq. JRN U101, JRN U201, and with grade of C or better in both courses.

JRN U350 History of Journalism 4 SH
Traces the development of American journalism from its European and English beginnings. Topics include the colonial press, the great personal journalists of the nineteenth century, and the impact of major technological changes in mass communications media in the twentieth century.

JRN U410 Radio News Gathering and Reporting 4 SH
Covers writing and editing news for radio, with practice in interviewing, organizing news scripts, and integrating audio materials into broadcast. Prereq. JRN U101 and JRN U201.

JRN U425 Public Relations Principles 4 SH
Presents the principles, history, and methods of public relations; processes of influencing public opinion; responsibilities of the public relations practitioner; and analyses of public relations programs. Prereq. 64 SH toward degree, junior or senior standing, or permission of instructor.

JRN U430 Local Reporting 4 SH
Discusses coverage of town/city government, with emphasis on the “beat” approach to reporting public affairs. Focuses on practical, in-the-field experience with town meetings, meetings of boards of selectmen, and other governmental agencies. Prereq. JRN U101 and JRN U201.

JRN U435 Techniques of Journalism 4 SH
Provides practice in writing in-depth and multiple-source stories requiring significant research. Provides an introduction to investigative reporting, practice in feature writing, and a review of legal issues. Prereq. JRN U101 and JRN U201.

JRN U440 Editing 4 SH
Provides practice in copyediting, headline writing, and origination editing. Presents assignments in photo selection, cropping, and cutline writing. Introduces page layout and discusses the principles of online editing. Prereq. JRN U101 and JRN U201.

JRN U455 Sports Writing 4 SH
Provides practice in journalistic coverage of amateur and professional athletics. Focuses on the role of sports writing in the news media and examines such topics as game coverage, feature profiles, and opinion columns. Prereq. JRN U101 and JRN U201.

JRN U510 Photojournalism 4 SH
Covers camera procedures, cropping techniques, theory, and photo captions. Prereq. JRN U101 and JRN U201.

JRN U511 Television News Writing 4 SH
Covers writing for TV news as opposed to other news media; importance of the writer-reporter as field producer and writer-producer; and terms and language used in the TV news production. Prereq. JRN U101 and JRN U201.

JRN U512 Television News Production 1 4 SH
Demonstrates techniques used by the electronic journalist and TV news producer. Provides students the opportunity to build a TV news show and to do reporting with portable TV cameras and editing equipment. Prereq. JRN U101 and JRN U201.
JRN U513 Television News Production 2 4 SH
Continues JRN U512. Provides advanced study of video newsgathering including shooting, interviewing, writing, editing, and field producing. Prereq. JRN U512.

JRN U514 Newsroom Practices 4 SH
Designed to provide graduate and undergraduate journalism students with hands-on experience in creating and producing a newspaper. Students comprise the staff of the NEPA Bulletin, a monthly newspaper published by the New England Press Association and distributed to about 500 newspapers in New England. Offers students an opportunity to report and write news stories and briefs for the Bulletin; obtain photos from newspaper sources; on occasion, take photos; and, if trained in QuarkXpress and Photoshop, design, lay out, and produce the Bulletin. Prereq. JRN U101.

JRN U525 Online Journalism 4 SH
Provides students with the opportunity to learn new media skills including Web site production, online packaging of news content, and digital photography. Analyzes the history, ethics, law, economics, and future of online journalism. Includes an in-depth look at Weblogs, traditional news Web sites, and alternative Webzines. Prereq. JRN U101 and JRN U201.

JRN U550 Law of the Press 4 SH
Examines legal problems of libel, invasion of privacy, and access to government information; discusses the balance between private rights and the public’s “need to know.” Prereq. Upperclass standing.

JRN U606 Beat Reporting 4 SH
Covers advanced reporting in specific topic areas. Topics change from semester to semester. Prereq. JRN U101 and JRN U201.

JRN U609 Documentary Production 4 SH
Provides students with an opportunity to research, write, and produce short video documentaries, and acquaints students with a range of professional documentary work through screenings and discussions. Prereq. JRN U512.

JRN U611 Design and Graphics 4 SH
Introduces graphic design terminology and principles using computer-based desktop publishing programs. Provides students with the opportunity to learn how to plan a publication based on audience and budget. Includes design assignments such as newspapers, magazines, online publications, brochures, advertisements, and corporate identity programs. Emphasizes deadlines and quality of the printed publication. Prereq. 64 SH toward degree, junior or senior standing, or permission of instructor.

JRN U625 Public Relations Practice 4 SH
Demonstrates practices and techniques employed in the field including organization of events and functions. Studies campaign planning, research, and media relationships. Prereq. JRN U425.

JRN U627 Critical Thinking about Public Relations Strategies 4 SH
Designed to bring together upper-level students from multiple disciplines who are interested in taking a microscopic view of how issues are purposefully driven by professionals interested in promoting causes, political candidates, public policy, and corporate image. How did Megan’s Law pass? Why did Johnson & Johnson Co. successfully emerge from the Tylenol crisis of the 1980s and Firestone/Bridgestone nearly collapse after the tire recall a few years ago? Is it a candidate’s stance on issues or public image that wins an election? Public relations professionals plan campaigns that have important social, political, and legal implications and consequences. Requires students to follow current issues and dissect significant past campaigns. Knowledge of public relations tactics is helpful but not necessary. Prereq. Junior or senior standing.

JRN U630 Magazine Writing 4 SH
Covers writing and freelancing magazine articles; analyzing magazines as markets; and selecting the best feature format—how-to-do-it, profile, personal experience, human interest, interpretive pieces, and others. Prereq. JRN U101 and JRN U201.

JRN U640 Reinventing the News: The Journalism of the Web 4 SH
Examines how technology and a changing media culture are revolutionizing the news business. Newspapers transform themselves into online information centers. Mobile “backpack journalists” upload text, photos, audio, and video to the Web. Databases and maps “mash up” into new forms of journalism. News morphs into a conversation between professional journalists and what some call “the former audience.” And citizen journalists challenge the mainstream media on their own turf. Considers how blogging and other forms of Web journalism are affecting what the traditional media choose to cover and how they present it. Offers an opportunity to meet leading experts and consider what career opportunities are likely to emerge for the next generation of journalists. Prereq. JRN U201.

JRN U650 Journalism Ethics and Issues 4 SH
Discusses the responsibilities of news media, ethical problems confronting decision makers in various journalistic fields, and the principles found in codes of various professional societies. Students fulfill the experiential education requirement by writing a ten- to twelve-page paper on an ethical problem they faced while working in the media. Prereq. Junior or senior standing.
JRN U680 Advanced Reporting  4 SH
Offers students an opportunity to learn and apply advanced reporting techniques of the kind that newspaper editors expect of their best reporters, especially those who cover demanding beats such as politics, government, health care, education, science, and business. Provides students with an opportunity to learn how to find, develop, and interview sources; locate and decipher public records; and identify and conceptualize important stories. An assignment to do substantial enterprise stories for publication in a major newspaper is part of the course.  
Prereq. JRN U514 or permission of instructor.

JRN U699 Advanced Television Production  4 SH
Designed to provide students with guidance in the development and implementation of special projects in television and video production. Includes studies and creative experiential practices in advanced directing (both in the studio and in the field), lighting, scriptwriting, editing, graphics, and postproduction technology.  
Same as ART U699, CMN U699, HST U699, INT U699, and MUS U699.  
Prereq. Permission of instructor.

JRN U921 Directed Study  1 SH
JRN U922 Directed Study  2 SH
JRN U923 Directed Study  3 SH
JRN U924 Directed Study  4 SH
Offers independent work under the direction of members of the department on a chosen topic. Course content depends on instructor.  
Prereq. Permission of instructor.

JRN U941 Internship  1 SH
JRN U942 Internship  2 SH
JRN U943 Internship  3 SH
JRN U944 Internship  4 SH
Comprises academic credit for internship work in journalism.

JRN U970 Junior/Senior Honors Project 1  4 SH
Focuses on in-depth project in which a student conducts research or produces a product related to the student’s major field. Culminating experience in the University Honors Program. Combined with Junior/Senior Project 2 or college-defined equivalent for 8-credit honors project.  
Prereq. Honors program participation.

JRN U971 Junior/Senior Honors Project 2  4 SH
Focuses on second semester of in-depth project in which a student conducts research or produces a product related to the student’s major field. Culminating experience in the University Honors Program.  
Prereq. JRN U970 and honors program participation.