JRN

Journalism

JRN 500: Introduction to News Media Concepts and Institutions
In any age when scientific, medical and environmental issues often make news, this course is designed to familiarize students with how the U.S. news media work. Students will learn how the industry is organized, and why it is undergoing fundamental change; how decisions are made about which stories to cover and how prominently to cover them; how the press weighs such values as freedom, privacy and national security; how the press attempts to deal with issues of scientific uncertainty and conflicting information. In exploring the culture and practices of American journalism, the course will focus on recent coverage of science, health and environmental developments. This course is intended for graduate students in health and science who seek a better understanding of the media context in which they will work, as well as for journalism M.S. students who do not have a background in journalism.
Offered
Fall, Spring, and Summer, 3 credits, Letter graded (A, A-, B+, etc.)

JRN 501: Communicating Science: Distilling Your Message
Current and future scientists and health professionals will learn to communicate clearly and engagingly with different kinds of audiences, at different levels of complexity, using different forms. We’ll examine the basics of clear, two-way communication, including knowing and being responsive to your audience, overcoming “the curse of knowledge,” having a point, avoiding jargon, using storytelling techniques, being personal, asking questions, and introducing complexity in stages. Students will start by crafting a short, controversial statement about their work and why it matters. We’ll expand that to a longer statement, convert it into a brief piece of writing, such as a letter to the editor or a blog post, practice answering questions about it from the public and from the media, or a blog post, practice answering questions, and introducing complexity gradually, helping current and future scientists and health professionals connect with their audiences.
Offered
Fall, Spring, and Summer, 3 credits, Letter graded (A, A-, B+, etc.)

JRN 502: Communicating Science: Writing for the Public
Students will practice writing about specific and health material clearly and vividly, in ways not-scientists can understand. They will learn to use analogies, examples and metaphors to illuminate unfamiliar concepts, practice using numbers clearly and translating statistics into conversational English, learn about scientific terms and concepts that are commonly misunderstood by the public. They will learn to introduce complexity gradually, to avoid overwhelming the reader while not “dumbing down” their material. Students will learn to write for different formats, including blogs, letters to the editor or to funders, and op-edits or commentary pieces.

JRN501, JRN502, and JRN503 are 1-credit modules, each lasting four or five weeks. Students may take all three consecutively in one semester or may take only one or two.
Fall, Spring, and Summer, 1 credit, Letter graded (A, A-, B+, etc.)

JRN 503: Communicating Science: Improvisation for Scientists.
This innovative course uses improvisational theater techniques to help students speak more spontaneously and connect more directly and responsively with their audience and with each other. After warm-up exercises, emphasizing physical freedom and verbal spontaneity, students take part in two-person and three-person exercises and situational improvisations that focus on paying attention to your listeners, and altering your approach to meet their needs. At the beginning and end of this course, students will deliver a short oral statement about their research or a scientific topic that interests them, so they can measure their progress. This course is not about acting; it's about helping current and future scientists and health professionals connect with their audiences. Science graduate students who have taken JRN 502, Communicating Science: Writing To Be Understood, and want to continue developing and practicing their ability to write about science clearly and vividly for non-expert readers.

Offered
Fall, Spring, and Summer, 1 credit, Letter graded (A, A-, B+, etc.)
May be repeated 2 times FOR credit.

JRN 504: Communicating Science: Using Digital Media
Science and health information increasingly travels by digital media, as new ways emerge for scientists to communicate directly with the public, without the intermediaries of press or public relations. Students will learn how to use blogs, podcasts, Twitter and other forms of social media for two-way communication with different segments of the public, including colleagues in other disciplines. The course will include hands-on instruction in working with digital media, tailored to students' interests and levels of experience.

Offered
Fall, Spring, and Summer, 1 credit, S/U grading
May be repeated 2 times FOR credit.

JRN 505: Communicating Science: Connecting with the Community
Students will learn how to use communication techniques, cultural competency, and health literacy concepts to reach and mobilize the community and key stakeholders on health- and science-related issues related to their research, outreach or community education objectives. The course will incorporate role-playing and community networking skills to help students make connections with key people and groups relevant to their current interests and work. This will require contact with the instructor before the start of the course to discuss students' projects, plans or interests.

Offered
Fall, Spring, and Summer, 1 credit, Letter graded (A, A-, B+, etc.)
May be repeated 2 times FOR credit.

JRN 506: Communicating Science: Advanced Writing for the Public
This course is for graduate students in the sciences who have taken JRN 502, Communicating Science: Writing To Be Understood, and want to continue developing and practicing their ability to write about science clearly and vividly for non-expert readers.

Offered
Spring, 1 credit, S/U grading
May be repeated for credit.

JRN 507: Introduction to Science and Health Concepts and Institutions
In this course, aspiring journalists without a background in science will be introduced to the values, culture, practices and language of the fields they are learning to cover. The course will explore scientific methods in theory and practice; the structure of scientific and medical
education, research and funding in the United States, including the role of business and entrepreneurship; the conventions of scientific publication and conferences; ethical issues, including conflict of interest, transparency and access to information. This course is intended primarily for journalism graduate students.

Offered
Fall, Spring, and Summer, 3 credits, Letter graded (A, A-, B+, etc.)

JRN 508: Communicating Science: Engaging Key Audiences
This course is for graduate students in the sciences who have taken either JRN 501, Communicating Science: Distilling Your Message, or JRN 503, Communicating Science: Improvisation For Scientists, and want to build on the skills introduced in those courses. Through role-playing and other exercises, students will practice connecting with, and communicating with, key people who are not specialists in their field, such as potential employers, students, journalists and public officials. New course. 1 credit. Prerequisite: JRN 501 or JRN 503. Offered Fall semester.

1 credit, S/U grading
May be repeated 1 times FOR credit.

JRN 509: Communicating Science: Science Unplugged
This course is for students who have taken JRN 501 and JRN 503, and want the full experience of working in front of a live audience. Through group meeting and private coaching, students will hone science presentations into short talks for a lay audience. Students must begin the class with a prepared talk ready for coaching and a clear and vivid short description of their presentation. Each student will participate as a peer coach for once other student and will be required to attend at least one other talk off campus. The presentations may be videotaped and posted on the Alda Center website. Sample from our pilot workshops can be seen here: www.aldacenter.org/science-unplugged/ 1-2 credits, Letter graded (A, A-, B+, etc.)
May be repeated for credit.

JRN 510: Basic Reporting and Writing for Journalism
This course, for students without a journalism background, aims to help students master the basic elements of reporting and writing news and feature stories that are clear, accurate and fair. Students will gain practical experience through reporting on campus and community events, with frequent writing and rewriting assignments. Coverage will begin with breaking-news reports, such as coverage of speeches or crimes, and move on to news features, profiles and in-depth news stories. Students will learn the basic skills of journalism, such as developing story ideas; finding, assessing and interviewing sources; researching topics; identifying the important elements in a story; explaining information clearly, concisely, and fairly.

Offered
Fall, Spring, and Summer, 3 credits, Letter graded (A, A-, B+, etc.)

JRN 512: Creating a Video Abstract
This course is for students who have taken JRN 501, Distilling Your Message, or JRN 503, Improvisation For Scientists, and wish to develop the skills needed to produce a Video Abstract of their work. Video Abstracts are becoming an increasingly popular way for scientists to amplify the impact of a publication, with many journals now encouraging the submission of Video Abstracts to accompany a paper in the online versions of their publications. In addition, many journals as well as research institutions have YouTube channels devoted to Video Abstracts. This course will teach the fundamental skills needed to plan, storyboard, shoot and edit a Video Abstract, all using only an iPhone or similar smartphone.

1 credit, S/U grading

JRN 515: Television Reporting and Editing
This course, for students who have no background in broadcast reporting, introduces students to the basics of reporting, writing and editing news stories for television. Students will begin learning how to develop ideas for television, to use sounds and visuals properly, to do live reporting and to do basic video editing. Both on- and off-camera skills will be emphasized.

Offered
Fall, Spring, and Summer, 3 credits, Letter graded (A, A-, B+, etc.)

JRN 525: Health, Environment, Science and Technology Reporting
The core course of the journalism master's program, this will introduce students to the range of science, health and environmental coverage while providing intensive instruction and practice in reporting and writing in journalistic formats. The goal is for students to learn how to think critically about scientific claims and controversies and how to write clear, accurate and vivid stories for print or online media. Students will practice such skills as developing sources, interviewing experts, finding stories, doing online research, organizing material, using statistics correctly, and presenting technical information in lay terms. Field trips will introduce students to work being done at Brookhaven National Laboratory and Stony Brook University Medical Center. A variety of written forms will be explored including news and trend stories, explanatory or human interest features, profiles, blogging, and first-person essays. This is an intensive course that meets six hours a week and requires at least 12 hours a week of work outside class. Offered Fall, 6 credits, Letter graded (A, A-, B+, etc.)

JRN 530: The Big Story: Science Issues Seminar
Students will be exposed to selected current issues in health, science, environment and technology, providing the context reporters need to provide sophisticated coverage. The course will be built around a series of visits by scientists and medical professionals who will discuss topics in which they are expert. Students will prepare for these encounters, question the experts, participate in the discussions, and produce journalistic reports. Topic areas will vary but may include climate change, energy research, food and drug safety, stem cell research, racial and economic health disparities, health care funding, ocean pollution, computer privacy, nanotechnology, and space exploration.

Offered
Fall, 3 credits, Letter graded (A, A-, B+, etc.)

JRN 537: Introduction to Narrative Journalism
Building on students' experiences in newswriting, this course examines the reporting and writing of longer stories and more textured feature stories. There will be an emphasis on focus, structure, and storytelling,
including the rudiments of developing style and a narrative voice. Students will be expected to write several original enterprise stories. They will also explore the similarities and differences in telling stories in print, online, and in broadcast formats.

JRN 550: Investigative Reporting Techniques
Students will develop skills in investigative and in-depth reporting, with a focus on how these approaches can be used to produce deeper, more illuminating coverage of science, health, the environment and technology. Use of documents, human sources and computer-assisted reporting will be included.

Spring, 3 credits, Letter graded (A, A-, B+, etc.)

JRN 555: Ethics, Law and Journalistic Judgment
Students will explore the rights and responsibilities of the U.S. press, with a focus on issues of law, ethics and editorial judgment that that arise in science, health and environmental reporting. Case studies will be used to illuminate ethical dilemmas, from various points of view, including that of reporters, researchers, health care professionals, subjects and patients.

Offered Spring, 3 credits, Letter graded (A, A-, B+, etc.)

JRN 565: Communicating Your Science
This course is for graduate students in science, biomedical, engineering, and health disciplines who want to communicate effectively and responsively with multiple audiences, from peers and professors to potential employers, policymakers and the lay public. Students will focus on speaking about science clearly and vividly in ways that can engage varied audiences, especially those outside their own field. The class will include instruction and practice in connecting and finding coming ground with an audience, defining goals, identifying main points, speaking without jargon, explaining meaning and context, using storytelling techniques, and using multimedia elements. The class will include improvisational theater exercises that help speakers pay close and dynamic attention to others, reading nonverbal cues, and responding freely without self-consciousness. As a culminating activity, students will develop and deliver an engaging short oral presentation on a scientific topic.

3 credits, Letter graded (A, A-, B+, etc.)

JRN 570: Advanced Reporting, Writing and Production for Broadcast
This course, for students who have learned the basics of broadcast reporting, writing and production, is offered in a workshop/production environment. It focuses on mastering the reporting of breaking news, live reporting and developing story ideas. Emphasis also is placed on shooting techniques. Students will produce longer-form reports. Co-listed with JRN 370.

Prerequisite: JRN 515 or permission of the department
Fall and Spring, 3 credits, Letter graded (A, A-, B+, etc.)

JRN 571: Television Production
This course is designed to introduce students to planning, assembling, producing and performing the elements of a newscast. Students will be exposed to the roles of key members of a newscast team, including producers, assistant producers, reporters, writers, anchors and video photographers and editors. There will be emphasis on developing decision-making and on-air skills, as students complete mini-newscasts and segments for broadcast. Students will be expected to meet strict deadlines and manage critical air time. Newscast segments will be showcased on JRN Web sites. Co-listed with JRN 371.

Fall and Spring, 3 credits, Letter graded (A, A-, B+, etc.)

JRN 580: Advanced Editing and Presentation for the Web
This course, designed for students interested in specializing in online news, will focus on content management and the presentation of news on the Web. Students will have the opportunity to manage a news Web site in real time, with emphasis on around-the-clock news judgment and presentation. Students will learn how to enhance online news through multi-media integration and reader/viewer interactivity. Students also will study information architecture, eye-tracking studies and different ways of making the Web more accessible for readers, including layering information. New course. ABCF grading. 3 credits.

3 credits, Letter graded (A, A-, B+, etc.)

JRN 581: Advanced Digital Storytelling
Students will combine their journalistic skills in reporting, writing and producing with advanced multimedia techniques to create an online "microsite" devoted to one major story, combining text with video, photos, blogs and interactive features. This course builds on skills acquired in JRN 520 and 580. Significant computer use will be required outside of class time.

3 credits, Letter graded (A, A-, B+, etc.)

JRN 587: Independent Study
Intensive study of a special topic or intensive work on a reporting project undertaken with close faculty supervision. May be repeated.

0-6 credits, S/U grading
May be repeated for credit.

JRN 588: Graduate Internship
Students participate in an appropriate internship in a journalism outlet or an institution devoted to the master’s program content themes of science, health, environment and technology. The work must involve journalistic skills related to the educational goals of the program. Student interns will report regularly to a faculty member and will complete an internship project, including a portfolio of work done.

0-6 credits, S/U grading
May be repeated for credit.

JRN 591: Journalism Workshops
This 1-credit workshop course is designed to assist students in developing skills that will be useful in various journalism courses. Topics will rotate. Anticipated topics include On-Air Presentation, Audio Journalism, Databases, FOIL and Sunshine Laws, Editing Software. Co-listed with JRN 391.

Fall and Spring, 1 credit, Letter graded (A, A-, B+, etc.)

May be repeated for credit.

JRN 592: Journalism Without Walls Prep
This course will prepare students to take JRN 635, Journalism Without Walls, which features a reporting trip to an international or domestic locale. Students will learn about the politics, culture and social issues of the planned destination. Past destinations have included China, Russia and the U.S. Gulf Coast. In spring 2012, JRN 592 will prepare students to report from China in summer, 2012. Co-listed with JRN 392.

Fall and Spring, 1 credit, Letter graded (A, A-, B+, etc.)

May be repeated for credit.

JRN 596: Master’s Project in Journalism
In this capstone course, students will produce a long-form story of professional quality, in print, video or multimedia. Students attend a weekly seminar and work independently under the supervision of a faculty sponsor.
Prerequisites: JRN 525, 530, 550, 555 and permission of department.

4 credits, Letter graded (A, A-, B+, etc.)

JRN 612: Communicating Health Sciences

This course offers a series of six three-hour workshops for health professionals who want to communicate more effectively about health sciences with the public, including patients, public officials, the media, potential funders and employers, as well as colleagues in other disciplines. Sessions deal with oral and written communication, including the use of social media. Teaching techniques include improvisational theater exercises to encourage more direct and responsive communication, and role-playing to help eliminate jargon.

1 credit, Letter graded (A, A-, B+, etc.)