

CURRENT ISSUES IN JOURNALISM: MODULE GUIDE

JO2288: First semester 2011-12 @ 12-2pm in JG4010

Module leader: **Maurice Walsh** (Office: MB310 / Office hours: 3-4pm Thursdays / Email

Journalism administrator: **Michelle Lambert**

In this module we will explore the current state of journalism by examining a series of key issues and their history. You will learn about the political economy of modern journalism and the challenges it faces in the digital age when all the old models of how the news business works appear to be under threat and the future seems uncertain. We will examine the role of technology, proprietors, advertisers and political parties in the creation of newspapers and news websites. Among the questions we will ask are: How are newspapers adapting to revolutionary change in the industry? How is the economics of producing news and comment changing? How is journalism to be funded in the future? Is local news dead? Students will also examine what it means to be a modern journalist. What is tabloid journalism? Can the traditional role of reporter or notions of objectivity survive in the digital age?

AIMS

The aims of this module are:

- To provide a thorough grounding in the current state of journalism in the UK and abroad, particularly its economic and political aspects.
- To give insight into the business imperatives that drive the production of journalism in the digital age
- To reflect on the forces of cultural change influencing modern journalism
- To reflect on the role of the individual journalist in a rapidly changing media landscape

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

On successful completion of the module, students will be able to:

- Show familiarity with the forces driving the delivery of journalism in the UK and abroad and the major changes taking place in both content and delivery.

- Engage with arguments about the future of journalism and its role in society, reflecting on the nature of journalism as a vocation.
- Analyse, in an informed fashion, developments in multi media journalism.

DELIVERY

The module is delivered in weekly two-hour sessions which will be a combination of lectures and discussions. The core text will be an up to date reader on modern newspaper journalism supplemented by key articles on the major issues in the module which will be posted on StudySpace. You will be expected to keep yourselves informed of current developments by reading newspapers, both in print and online, journals and the specialist media sections of the major news organisations.

ASSESSMENT

The main category of assessment will be a 2,000-word essay based on the topics covered in the course. You will choose from a selection of essay questions and this assignment will account for 80% of the marks. **The deadline for submitting this essay is 11am January 23rd.**

In preparation for the essay students will be required to write, halfway through the course, a 500-word reflection on the issues covered thus far based on a set question. This assignment and your participation in class discussions will account for 20% of your final mark.

How the learning outcomes link with the assessment

Learning outcome	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show familiarity with the forces driving the delivery of journalism in the UK and abroad and the major changes taking place in both content and delivery. 	Classroom work Reflective piece Essay choice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with arguments about the future of journalism and its role in society, reflecting on the nature of journalism as a vocation. 	Classroom work Reflective piece Essay choice

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Core Text which everybody should buy:

Peter Cole and Tony Harcup, *Newspaper Journalism*, Sage (2010)

Recommended Reading:

Jack Fuller, *What is Happening to News: The Information Explosion and the Crisis in Journalism*, University of Chicago Press (2010)

Andrew Currah, *What's Happening to Our News: An Investigation into the likely impact of the digital revolution on the economics of news publishing in the UK*, Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, Oxford (2009)

Howard Tumber (ed), *Journalism*, Routledge (2008)

Andrew Marr, *My Trade: A Short History of British journalism*, Pan, London (2004)

Michael Bromley and Tom O' Malley (eds), *A Journalism Reader*, Routledge (1997)

Roy Greenslade, *Press Gang, How Newspapers Make Profits From Propaganda*, Pan, London (2003)

Bob Franklin, *Local Journalism and Local Media*, Routledge, London (2006)

Journals:

Journalism
Journalism Studies

Newspapers and Magazines:

Press Gazette

Guardian Media (Mondays)

Radio:

The Media Show, BBC Radio 4 (Wednesdays)

Websites and Blogs:

Roy Greenslade's blog: <http://blogs.guardian.co.uk/greenslade/>

<http://www.holdthefrontpage.co.uk/aboutus.shtml>

<http://www.journalism.co.uk/>

Newspaper Marketing Agency: <http://www.nmauk.co.uk/>

National Readership Survey: <http://www.nrs.co.uk/>

National Union of Journalists: <http://www.nuj.org.uk/>

Society of Editors: <http://www.societyofeditors.co.uk/>

PROGRAMME SCHEDULE [subject to change]

- **Week 1 - Introduction**
- **Week 2 - Film Screening: *Page One: Inside the New York Times***
- **Week 3 - What are Newspapers?**
- **Week 4 - Proprietors**
- **Week 5 - The Golden Age of the Reporter**
- **Week 6 - Dissecting the Tabloid**
- **Week 7 - The Future of News**
- **Week 8 - Is Local News Dead?**

- **Week 9 - Journalism in the Digital Age**
- **Week 10- Is Objectivity worth saving?**
- **Week 11 - Conclusion**

British Journalism Review

Assessment support

The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences runs a Centre for Academic Support and Employability (CASE) where students can receive one-to-one help with assessments. The Centre (formerly known as ASC) operates on an informal drop-in basis, providing specific help for students at all levels with their studies: presentation, referencing, structuring and editing traditional academic writing, as well as multimedia texts. Specialist workshops including careers activities are also offered each semester. All FASS students are encouraged to get as much help as possible with their academic work from CASE. No appointment is necessary, but at busy times consultations may be limited to 10-15 minutes. The Centre is located in specially designed accommodation in room 703 of the Tower on Penrhyn Road and opens **from week 4**, (19 October) 10am- 5pm Monday – Thursday and 10am – 3pm on Friday. The Centre is open during the inter-semester break and the summer assessment period until the end of May. Email: