

COMM 328. Community Journalism. 3 Credits.

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Office Hours: Wed 9-Noon (or when door is open) and by appointment.

Considers the role that news media can play in enhancing community life.

A portfolio of stories will be produced by the student.

Every Tuesday will be a budget meeting. Students will be expected to bring a list of what stories they are working on and their progress.

Stories will be published in real time on a Facebook page. Red River North.

Learning objectives

- * Learn how to cover a total community.
- * Introduce a journalistic process that carries a story from concept to publication.
- * Produce a digital video.
- * Evaluate the importance of context, focus and sources of soundly reported stories.

Text:

We will look at stories posted on a “Flipboard” magazine.

The easiest way to access Flipboard is via a smart phone or tablet.

Tests:

There are no tests in this course so it’s absolutely essential that students keep up with the writing assignments.

Tentative Schedule.

This is a journalism class so the schedule will always change based on news events.

Week 1 (Aug. 24)

Introducing Mark Trahan.

Media landscape. What's news today? A look at how people consume news and information in the digital age.

Week 2 (Aug. 29)

What is community journalism and & what makes a good story?

Demographics, changing nature of community.

Week 3: (Sept. 5)

North Dakota & Minnesota rural communities. What does the data say?

Communities of interest. How is that different from a geographical community? What are potential stories, readers?

No class on Sept. 7

Week 4: (Sept 12)

Students report about their community via a mapping project (a spreadsheet).

No class on Sept. 14

Week 5: (Sept. 19)

People profiles. What works. Everybody has a story.

Profile a person from your community.

Week 6: (Sept 26)

Basics: How do you cover a meeting? A speech?

Trends. Actions. Reports. Making the story more interesting.

Week 7: (Oct. 6)

Millennials and community

No class on Oct. 5

Week 8: (Oct. 10)

Building an effective social media strategy for community coverage.

North Dakota newspaper meeting. Coverage plans.

Week 9: (Oct. 17)

Writing with style.

Graphics, photography and video reports.

Week 10 (Oct. 24)

Playing with data - Where to find it? How to showcase your work

Week 11 (Oct. 31)

Incorporating data into stories

Planning for election day

Week 12 (Nov. 7)

Native American media

Ethnic media

Week 13, 14 and 15

Community journalism projects

Requirements and grading percentages:

1. **Community coverage portfolio** (50 percent) Six stories and graphics, including a map, a crime story, a sports story, an interview or profile, a breaking story, and a story of your choice.
2. **Class participation** (10 percent)
3. **Final story** (40 percent). Due at the beginning of finals week. The goal here is a packaged story that is portfolio quality. This is something you would show a prospective employer.