

Cover Sheet: Request 14578

JOU 4xxx Science Journalism

Info

Process	Course New Ugrad/Pro
Status	Pending at PV - University Curriculum Committee (UCC)
Submitter	Theodore Spiker tspiker@jou.ufl.edu
Created	1/2/2020 3:17:44 PM
Updated	1/2/2020 5:40:05 PM
Description of request	Request for a permanent course number for Science Journalism, which has been taught as a JOu 4930 Special Topics course.

Actions

Step	Status	Group	User	Comment	Updated
Department	Approved	JOU - Journalism 012304000	Theodore Spiker		1/2/2020
No document changes					
College	Approved	JOU - College of Journalism and Communications	James Babanikos		1/2/2020
No document changes					
University Curriculum Committee	Pending	PV - University Curriculum Committee (UCC)			1/2/2020
No document changes					
Statewide Course Numbering System					
No document changes					
Office of the Registrar					
No document changes					
Student Academic Support System					
No document changes					
Catalog					
No document changes					
College Notified					
No document changes					

Course|New for request 14578

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Request: JOU 4xxx Science Journalism

Description of request: Request for a permanent course number for Science Journalism, which has been taught as a JOU 4930 Special Topics course.

Submitter: Theodore Spiker tspiker@jou.ufl.edu

Created: 1/2/2020 3:12:53 PM

Form version: 1

Responses

Recommended Prefix JOU

Course Level 4

Course Number xxx

Category of Instruction Advanced

Lab Code None

Course Title Science Journalism

Transcript Title Science Journalism

Degree Type Baccalaureate

Delivery Method(s) On-Campus, Online

Co-Listing No

Effective Term Earliest Available

Effective Year Earliest Available

Rotating Topic? No

Repeatable Credit? No

Amount of Credit 3

S/U Only? No

Contact Type Regularly Scheduled

Weekly Contact Hours 3

Course Description This seminar-style course introduces the art and craft of producing well-written, engaging science news and feature stories for print, online and broadcast media. Students learn how to find science story ideas, interview sources, simplify complex concepts, sharpen their science storytelling skills, write publication-ready stories and pitch to editors.

Prerequisites JOU 3101 or permission of instructor

Co-requisites None

Rationale and Placement in Curriculum We request a dedicated course number for Science Journalism, a course that is already a valuable part of the UF College of Journalism and Communications curriculum. Taught by Dr. Czerne Reid, this science journalism/writing course has already been offered successfully for several semesters under the special topics course code JOU4930. The course also was cross-listed at one point with the Public Relations Department under the special topics course code PUR 4932. Assigning Science Journalism a dedicated course number will make this important course more visible and accessible to students, and demonstrate more readily the diversity and strength of the academic offerings of the College and the University. The course diversifies the department's and university's academic offerings, and is an important part of the stable of electives that journalism majors are required to take; majors must take a minimum of 16 credits of JOU electives, and an additional nine credits of electives from within the College of Journalism and Communications. The course is also a valuable elective for students in other colleges that require that students earn a specified number of credits at the 3000+ level outside of their major or major department.

Course Objectives On successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

Write a science news story for a general audience

Write a science feature story for a general audience

Write clear, accurate explanatory prose about a scientific topic

Find news ideas in published research and laboratories

Interview scientists and other sources for articles about science
Revise science articles in response to editing
Pitch a story idea to an editor
List and discuss career options for science writers
Name practicing science writers and discuss their work
Develop contacts with professional science writers and begin building a network in the field

Course Textbook(s) and/or Other Assigned Reading COURSE TEXTBOOK(S) AND/OR OTHER ASSIGNED READING

The books listed below are on Course Reserve in the library. View course reserve information at <https://ares.uflib.ufl.edu/>.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

The Science Writers' Handbook: Everything You Need to Know to Pitch, Publish, and Prosper in the Digital Age (2013 paperback), Editor: Michelle Nijhuis

The Science Writers' Essay Handbook: How to Craft Compelling True Stories in Any Medium (2016, paperback), Editor: Michelle Nijhuis

Science Blogging: The Essential Guide (2016, paperback), Editors: Christie Wilcox, Bethany Brookshire, Jason C. Goldman

A Field Guide for Science Writers, Second Edition (2005, paperback), Editors: Deborah Blum, Mary Knudson, Robin Marantz Henig

Ideas into Words: Mastering the Craft of Science Writing, (2003, paperback), By Elise Hancock

The Best American Science and Nature Writing (2019, paperback), Editor: Sy Montgomery

Topical handouts provided throughout the semester

Weekly Schedule of Topics WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF TOPICS

WK1: Introductions and syllabus review. Review of major assignments, course schedule and course policies. Overview of science journalism. Careers in science communication

WK2: What is science news? How the media covers science. Explanatory writing: How to describe a scientific process to a lay reader.

WK3: News writing: Converting a scientific paper and a news release into a story for the general public. Creative story ledes.

WK4: Narrative story structure. Interviewing: How to ask questions about a scientist's work. How to cover a scientist talk/panel. How to quote sources. Other elements of successful science reporting: Preparation, site visits, observations

WK5: Critiquing science writing

WK6: Overcoming challenges when writing science stories. Science essays, features and long-form science writing

WK7: Pitching science stories to an editor.

WK8: Scientist talk. In-class presentation of major research stories

WK9: Additional reporting, fact-checking, perfecting the news feature

WK10: Revising for brevity, impact and style. What editors expect from science writers

WK11: Science journalism/writing for broadcast and multimedia

WK12: Photography and science journalism

WK13: Science journalism online: blogs and social media

WK14: Misinformation about science (vaccines and autism, climate change), Controversy in science and science journalism (e.g. ENCODE Project-Junk DNA, Jonah Lehrer fabrications)

WK15: The Big Picture: The past, present and future of science journalism (Employment, readership trends, changes in coverage of science and medicine, science journalism on the Internet)

Grading Scheme Course assessments include written assignments and in-class activities.

Assignments and percentage of grade are as follows: Explanatory writing exercise 5%, news story 10%, pitches 25%, research feature 45%, writing critique 5%, in-class activities 10%, extra credit

0.5%.

Rubric criteria for written assignments include structure, flow, submission format, accuracy and detail, sources, opinion and attribution, grammar and syntax. The following general factors will be taken into account for your final grade: Quality and effort of first drafts, effectiveness of revisions, completion of assignments and readings, and participation in class discussions, in-class assignments, and peer editing.

A 93% A- 90-92.99% B+ 87-89.99% B 83-86.99%
B- 80-82.99% C+ 77-79.99% C 73-76.99% C- 70-72.99%
D+ 67-69.99% D 63-66.99% D- 60-62.99% E 59.99%

View the current UF Grading Policy at
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>.)

Instructor(s) Czerne Reid
Attendance & Make-up Yes
Accomodations Yes
UF Grading Policies for assigning Grade Points Yes
Course Evaluation Policy Yes