COMM 320
MULTIMEDIA FOR JOURNALISTS
Syllabus, Fall 2016 (revised 9/6/15)

Instructor: Dr. Steve Hill (shill@uwsp.edu), CAC 303, 346-3887
Office Hours: Monday 11-noon, Thursday 1 p.m.-2 p.m., and by appointment.

Required Texts and Readings:
- *Journalism Next* by Mark Briggs (Third edition, CQ Press, 2015). Available as a rental from the university bookstore.
- *Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law*. Available for purchase from the university bookstore or by annual subscription at www.ap.org for slightly more. If you do not already have a copy of this book, you might be better off buying it online (i.e., from Amazon – probably cheaper and often easier to find than at UWSP, which usually orders too few copies).
- Lynda.com tutorials on Wordpress 3.x ("WordPress.com Essential Training" – free at UWSP)

The **purpose of the course** is to help you learn and practice fundamental skills needed to produce multimedia content for journalism web sites – a set of skills that news organizations value highly. I expect you to have a basic understanding of good grammar, syntax and diction; Associated Press style; the fundamentals of news gathering and analysis; and both familiarity with basic computer functions and a willingness to learn new and relatively simple computer and multimedia journalism skills; and the difference between journalism and fiction. **Please note:** this is not a fiction-based course. All work will be journalistic.

Among the basic computer functions you are expected to have mastered before this class are use of D2L and all its components; file and directory management (including naming conventions); file and program types; URLs and path names; and the fundamental purposes of, differences between, and interactions among operating systems, web browsers, data storage approaches, and physical devices. It is critical that you are able to understand these things because, when producing multimedia content in an Internet environment, you will run into numerous issues that require a basic level of problem-solving ability. If you don't know how to figure out the path name of a file, you're not going to be able to post it to the cloud and make it accessible, and your lack of functional understanding may even make it difficult for you to seek proper help. Shortcomings in these areas are no excuse for poor class performance, and you are responsible for making up any shortcomings in these areas. Understanding D2L is obviously important for keeping up with class requirements and knowing where you stand in the class.

Your primary activities will center on developing your own blog and producing content for it, but you'll also spend some time evaluating your colleague's blog sites. Your site will be a multimedia content destination of the type you'll be expected to know about and contribute to as a future member of the communications profession, or as a concerned and actively involved citizen in your community.

Our **projected course learning outcomes** are that students will be able to:

➢ Understand and appreciate basic issues facing news media in reaching current and future audiences with news content
➢ Understand and appreciate issues related to production and use of content on news Web sites
➢ Demonstrate an ability to work with independence and self-direction,

> ➢ Demonstrate ability to independently solve problems to overcome technical and other issues in journalistic multimedia content production
> ➢ Gather and convert journalistic content into appropriate multimedia formats (including podcasts, blogs, slide shows and online video) and using appropriate journalistic conventions
> ➢ Plan and develop a blog site on WordPress.com and post your content to the site

We'll measure these outcomes through the skills and knowledge you demonstrate on regular assignments that you produce and post online; quizzes over readings and AP style that you'll complete online; and other assignments, including attendance, discussion and peer evaluation of online postings by your classmates. More information on **assignments and grading** can be found on the D2L content page. *Note that attendance is mandatory and you will lose points as detailed in the assignments document*.

Basic Grading Policy

Your grade will be based on the number of points that you earn. Point totals required are:

A: 930 or more   A-: 900-929   B+: 870-899   B: 830-869   B-: 800-829

C+: 770-799   C: 730-769   C-: 700-729   D+: 670-699   D: 600-669

F: Fewer than 600 points

There will be a minimum of 1,113 points you can earn during the semester, but it is the point values above that determine your grade. Regardless of how many points are ultimately available during the semester, you'll still need only 930 points (which is only 83.5 percent of 1,113) to reach an A, not 93 percent of 1,153 or some other total. For more detailed grading information, visit the D2L class site.

Deadlines are critical to journalists. **If any of your multimedia work is late, you'll lose 25 percent** of the assignment's potential value for each 24-hour period that it's late. The clock starts ticking at the time that it's due. All work is turned in electronically. If a 100-point assignment is due on Tuesday at 11 p.m., it loses 25 points at 11:01 p.m. Tuesday and another 25 at 11:01 Wednesday. ***The ONLY possible exception to this rule will be in cases of legitimate and officially documented medical or family emergency issue .*** Surveys, discussion posts, quizzes, exams and other work may <u>not</u> be turned in late. Please see the **policy on late work** on D2L for more details.

My teaching philosophy is based on concepts of community, excellent language skills and relevance. A short explanation of this philosophy is posted on D2L. Please read it and understand how respecting this philosophy will contribute to a positive learning experience for you and your colleagues. I try to keep **class rules** to a minimum and post those I have in the D2L content area.

<u>**Statements of University Policy**</u>

Students with Disabilities: Any student with a disability who needs an accommodation or other assistance in this course should make an appointment to speak with me as soon as possible.

Plagiarism, like other incidents of academic misconduct, will result in action under UWSP 14 and likely will cause failure of the student engaging in such misconduct.

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UWSP 14.01 STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES.

The board of regents, administrators, faculty, academic staff and students of the University of Wisconsin system believe that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental to the mission of higher education and of the University of Wisconsin system. The university has a responsibility to promote academic honesty and integrity and to develop procedures to deal effectively with instances of academic dishonesty. Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work, for the appropriate citation of sources, and for respect of others' academic endeavors. Students who violate these standards must be confronted and must accept the consequences of their actions.

UWSP 14.03 ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT SUBJECT TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION.

(1) Academic misconduct is an act in which a student:
      (a) Seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation;
      (b) Uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise;
(c) Forges or falsifies academic documents or records;
(d) Intentionally impedes or damages the academic work of others;
(e) Engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of a student's academic performance; or
(f) Assists other students in any of these acts.
(g) Violates electronic communication policies or standards as agreed upon when logging on initially (See uwsp.edu/it/policy).