

MEJO 390 & 490 Course Descriptions (Fall 2020)

“MEJO 390.1: Advanced Data Reporting”

Similar to the data journalism “boot camp” at the University of Missouri or Columbia University, this course would give students the advanced skills and experiential education needed fill the unmet needs of top journalism outlets around the country. Students would go beyond spreadsheets and get hands-on experience using statistical analysis in R, mapping data to find and report real stories.

JRN Level 2 or APR Level 3

Credits: 3

Instructor: Ryan Thornburg

“MEJO 490.1: Career Exploration and Preparation”

This course will provide detailed information about all communications careers; help discover which careers best suit you; make sure your brand matches your career choice; help you maximize mentor relationships while becoming more effective networkers; and help you better understand all available job search resources. This will essentially be the final step in making sure you look and sound impressive while your portfolios maximize the magnitude of your experiences, are polished and guaranteed to impress (and help you get a job)!

APR Level 3, Conceptual or JRN Choice

Credits: 3

Instructor: Livis Freeman

“MEJO 490.2: Media, Information & Digital Literacies”

Media, broadly construed, are a primary source of information about the world, contributing to the formation of knowledge about important issues, about ourselves and others. Media messages can shape our attitudes and behaviors for good and ill, can bring people together and drive them apart (Koltay, 2011; McArthur, 2016; Watt, 2012). And while the routine consumption of media content has become ‘natural’, media messages are cultural products informed by the norms, practices, values and experiences of the organizations and individuals from which they originate— thus, they are deserving of close interrogation. As the media landscape becomes more complex (what Hess (2018) calls an “economy of attention”), new forms of literacy become vital aids to acknowledge and negotiate this complexity. Media, information and digital literacies “offer empowerment through education and an opportunity to equip all citizens with the skills they need to become lifelong learners who are maximally prepared to navigate and leverage the

power of media for their own benefit and that of others” (Jolls & Johnsen, 2018). Accordingly, the emphases in literacy training range widely, “including informed citizenship, aesthetic appreciation and expression, social advocacy, self-esteem and consumer confidence.” A goal of media literacy is the development of a “critical autonomy relationship with all media” (Aufderheide, 1992).

APR Level 3, Conceptual or JRN Choice

Credits: 3

Instructor: Barbara Friedman

“MEJO 490.3: Producing for Advertising”

This class is designed to enhance your understanding and appreciation for the Producers’ role in the advertising process. Students will be introduced to terminology, roles, shooting fundamentals, and interpreting the written word, as they explore the three stages of filmmaking—preproduction, production and post-production. Students will also learn what goes into bidding, scheduling and delivering a completed campaign while also delving into client interfacing, legal and union/nonunion rules.

APR Level 3, Conceptual or JRN Choice

Credits: 3

Instructor: Naomi Newman

“MEJO 490.5: Business and the Future of Journalism”

To succeed in the current media marketplace, journalists are finding more frequently that they must understand business fundamentals. This course will provide students with a foundation in the core principles of finance, strategy, marketing and other business basics.

The basic framework of the course will be similar to the broad topic areas encompassed by an MBA program, overlaid on top of case studies of new journalism business models. Often, we will call on the entrepreneurs of these new entities to meet with the class. This will give students a strong background in the new media environment and help prepare them for their own ventures upon graduation.

The major project of the course will be the development of a business plan for a new journalism company. The new business could be a non-profit, a for-profit or a hybrid. By the end of the semester, students will have a basic understanding of the principles of business as they apply to organizations of various sizes.

JRN Level 2, Conceptual or APR Choice

Credits: 3

Instructor: Lee Meredith