

PJ PROJECTS



436

JOUR 436

Photojournalism Projects
Tuesdays 2:20-5:05pm
MMTH 127

INSTRUCTOR: Josh Meltzer

OFFICE: 130 MMTH
PHONE: 270-745-2070
CELL: 270-799-9839
josh.meltzer@wku.edu

OFFICE HOURS
Monday – 9:30-11:00
Tuesday – 9:30-11:00
Wed – 9:30-11:00

I'll be happy to make an appointment with you if you cannot see me during the above hours.

I'll also be scheduling one-on-one meetings with you during the term for intensive edits on your projects.

ATTENDANCE is vital to success in this class. Each class is equal to one week of regular classes. There will be discussions and critiques that cannot be redone. Please be on time. We are doing a group project and your attendance is vital to the group's success.

CELL PHONES: Do not use your cell phones at all in class. Please leave them in your bag. You will have a break each class to check them.

GOALS

It's time to put it all together. You are nearing the end of your WKU PJ journey, and this class will test your ability to work together on a team multimedia journalism project on current issues facing Kentucky now and in the next decade. Our goal is to produce a project that exceeds our highest expectations of what we're able to do, both individually and as a group.

To do this, we will focus on the following goals:

- Proposal Writing (What are you going to do...sell it to me)
- Research (where is your story, and what should it be about)
- Review and Extension of all shooting skills (surprise yourself)
- Production (Quality, quality, quality - Learn from every mistake you've made in this program so far)

- Teamwork (we will divide up jobs for this project outside of your own story (design, programming, editing, producing, graphics, interactivity, team shooting/second camera)

LONG-TERM PROJECT

Though I'm leaving the story choices up to you, as long as they fall underneath this broad umbrella of Kentucky's challenges, we won't settle in this class for stories that are boring, poorly produced or under reported. You're adults, are on the cusp of being professionals, and I'll treat you all that way. I want you to find something that you're so passionate about, that your interest in the subject and your story drives your passion.

You'll have deadlines throughout the semester for this project and will not be able to pass this class unless you follow through with all of those deadlines along the way. Simply turning in a final project at the end of the semester without meeting the other deadlines will result in a failing grade. You'll also be required to turn in a journal each week. I'll discuss that more on the first day of class.

SMALL CREATIVE PROJECTS

In addition to your long-term project, and to give you a mental and creative break from your semester project, I'll assign you some short weekly creative projects. Some of those you may want to incorporate into your long-term project, and others you'll do completely on the side. You'll be assigned some of the following, but not all.

1. Alexia proposal (assignment sent out before start of semester via email)
2. Plastic Camera
3. Adjective
4. Visual poem
5. One Frame
6. One Lens
7. Portrait Series
8. Written reports on textbook readings

WRITING and GRAPHICS

You will be expected to write short stories to go along with your final project(s), provide captions and story summaries for your work and write project proposals in addition to your shooting and multimedia storytelling. With your final project, you'll also be required to produce a relevant graphic that provides background and/or additional information for your story.

Grade Breakdown

Final Project	65%
Small Assignments	20%
Weekly Journal	10%
Participation	5%

You will receive a letter grade with a plus, neutral or minus for each assignment. Your course grade will be calculated based on the number associated with that letter.

A+ 100 A 98-93 A- 90-92
 B+ 89-87 B 86-83 B- 82-80
 C+ 79-77 C 76-73 C- 72-70
 D+ 69-67 D 66-63 D- 62-60
 F 59 and below

Important dates:

1/31 - Last day to drop a class without a grade
 3/7-3/11 - Spring Break
 3/18 - Last day to drop a class with a W
 4/27 Reshoot Due
 May 9-13 - Final Exams

CRITIQUES AND CLASS PARTICIPATION

One reminder about critiques in class. I want involvement from everyone. The critiques need to be honest and constructive. You can be tough without tearing people apart. A thin line often separates what is perceived to be constructive versus destructive feedback. Find the balance, and when in doubt, take the higher road. As you know from your previous photo courses here, critiques can be painfully boring when no one participates, so do everyone a favor by being an active member in the discussions. Your level of involvement in class discussions will count towards your final grade.

When your work is being critiqued, it's important to be a good listener to your classmates. Don't be overly defensive, but instead use the opportunity to make your project even better. We're going to be producing stories that we want a large sector of the public to receive in a powerful way, and our first line of defense against poor quality or boring work is within this class.

GUEST SPEAKERS and FIELD TRIPS

I will bring in some guest speakers to talk about their work and to critique yours. Whenever possible, I will schedule these during our class time, but if this isn't possible my expectation is that you will make every effort to still attend.

We will almost certainly make a trip to Frankfort to speak with state government leaders as we figure out this project, and may have other field trips. I will make every attempt to do these during class time, but expect that some may not be able to coincide with class day, time or duration. I can work with you to be as flexible as possible in the hopes that everyone can attend.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Digital Camera(s), lenses, shotgun microphone
- One ream (500 sheets) of HP® Premium Choice Laser Paper, Smooth, 8 1/2" x 11", 32 lb.
- At least two 8GB or higher compact flash cards
- Portable external hard drive (recommended 500GB minimum)
- A journal (you'll turn in photocopies of your entries each week)
- Plastic, high quality cell phone camera or other alternative camera (you may share these if you want, but the deadline won't be adjusted)

OTHER THOUGHTS

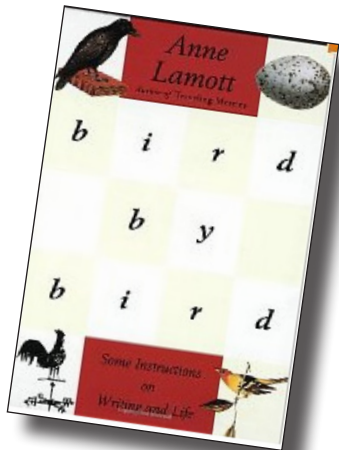
Preparation is key to your success in this class. Spend the time up front researching your story and finding subjects who are open to a long-term project. This will not only result in a more complete and powerful project, but will be less likely lead you to burnout.

Preserve your subject's dignity. Treat yourself and others with respect. There will be challenges. There will be obstacles. There will be setbacks, but remember that all of these will help you grow and become the photographer I know you all can. I expect you to work harder and with less excuses and complaints than ever before. I will ask you all to work hard, participate and take this project seriously. We're entering uncharted territories to some extent, which both excites and scares me at the same time. I can't wait to see what you'll produce and the impact it will have on its audience.

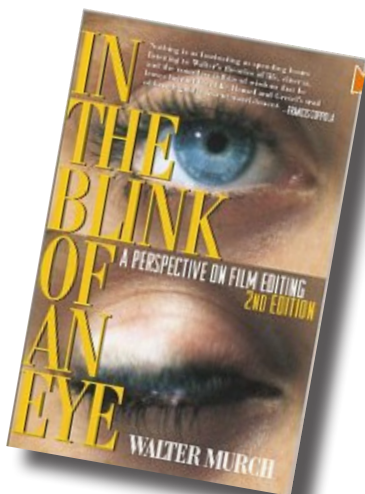
I am looking forward to working with you this semester!

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

(not in bookstore)



"Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life"
by Anne Lamott



"In the Blink of an Eye"
by Walter Murch

PORTFOLIO REVIEW

Because this is your final course here in the PJ program, you'll be required to present your portfolio to a group of visiting professionals who will be reviewing your final project and your portfolio from a working professional point of view. This can be a print or online portfolio, but should contain elements of multimedia. I'll discuss this more as the semester goes on.

LAB FEE

There is a \$65 lab fee that covers some of the costs of making use of any of the xerox quality printers in the lab and to cover the hours of lab operation, care and maintenance of the computers and software updates. Please use our printers only for class generated assignments. **THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT.**

EMAIL

I will communicate with you all via email quite often for updates to assignments and feedback. Make sure that Topnet has your preferred email on record, and that you check that account at least once a day. Please respond to my email requests as soon as you can, and I'll do the same for your emailed requests. If I neglect to get back to you within a day or so, don't hesitate to send me a reminder.

PLAGIARISM

All work should be yours and completed within the time frame of each assignment. Plagiarism will result in an Zero grade in the class and other possible action according to university policy.

DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who require accommodations for this course must contact the Office for Student Disability Services, GCC Room 101. The OFSDS telephone number is (270)745-5004 V/TDD. Per university policy, please do not request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services.

ACEJMC

This class will cover in part the values and competencies outlined in the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications accreditation guidelines. They are: understand and apply First Amendment principles and the law appropriate to professional practice; demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications; demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of groups in a global society in relationship to communications; understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information; work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity; think critically, creatively and independently; conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which you work; write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes you serve; critically evaluate your own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness; apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which you work.