COMM 208 - 202 Technology for Journalists
Fall 2015
Thursdays 4:15-6:45 p.m.
School of Communication Room 003

Professor Lee Hood, Ph.D.

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♦ **Course Goals and Objectives**
   This course is designed to teach you the fundamentals of basic technologies used in today's newsrooms to report events and tell stories. The course will be divided into broad sections focused on blogs; Twitter and other social media; still photography; audio; video; and information graphics. Each section will be presented with a goal of making you feel comfortable and confident using these technologies to produce well-written and well-edited stories across platforms. The aim is to help you brand yourself and your content as a legitimate source of journalism. Ultimately, this course aims to offer you a taste of different mediums and technologies to help you choose how best to tell your stories as well as your own path within journalism.

♦ **You will need:**
-- Flash drive or external hard drive (minimum 4 GB)
-- Access to a smartphone and USB cable (bring cable to every class)
-- Notebook or folder for keeping numerous handouts and instruction sheets
-- No textbook is required, though it will be helpful to have access to an Associated Press Style Book
-- Additional readings will be provided as the semester progresses

The School of Communication has a variety of equipment that we can use for class-related projects (though not smartphones). This equipment may be checked out through Andi Pacheco in SOC 004 (contact apacheco@luc.edu; phone 312-915-8830).

♦ **Assignments and Projects**
   Assignments, both in-class and on your own, will be designed to help you develop your skills using the technologies in a journalistic setting. The major sections will also include a larger project on which to demonstrate those skills. In addition, each person will maintain a blog and Twitter feed highlighting stories you cover, both on a beat of your choice and on general-assignment topics.
   Other small assignments will aim to help you understand more fully the uses of these technologies, both by journalists and by the public.

Additional considerations:

➢ Story Subjects: In the interest of objectivity and in keeping with standard professional practice, you are generally prohibited from doing stories using your own family members, significant others, or roommates as subjects, or doing stories on groups to which you belong. Stories involving any of these will receive a grade reduction.
Please speak to Professor Hood if you have a story idea that would justify first-person involvement, but these should be the exception and not the rule.

➢ Fact error deduction: Facts are of vital importance in journalism. Therefore, fact errors in stories receive an automatic deduction. Take care to make sure names are spelled correctly and that other facts are accurately presented. In the words of the late President Lyndon Johnson, "In the arsenal of truth, there is no greater weapon than fact."

Deadlines: Meeting deadlines is vital in journalism. Assignments not turned in on time will receive an automatic reduction in grade.

Final Project

There will be a final project in lieu of a final exam, which will give you the opportunity to demonstrate the skills you have acquired throughout the semester. The final project will several elements using the various technologies. Details will be distributed later in the semester and on Sakai. We will meet for showing the final projects on the day and time of our scheduled final, Thursday, Dec. 10, 4:15 p.m.

Attendance/Punctuality/Professionalism

You are expected to attend every class, and absences will impact your ability to get the most out of the course. Attendance is *particularly* important since the class meets just once a week. Your attendance and timely arrival in class will be counted as part of your in-class grade. If you have a genuine emergency, please notify me *prior* to class if possible. Assignments missed for unexcused absences may not be made up. In addition, points may be deducted for excessive disruption or obvious disengagement from class sessions (such as Web surfing or phone distractions). Deductions are also given for not returning equipment on time.

At Loyola, we respect that you may miss class due to religious observances. In these circumstances, please notify me ahead of time that you will be gone.

♦ **Grading**

Grades will be weighted as follows:

Web site, Blog, Twitter	30%
Other major projects	30%
In-class and smaller assignments	20%
Final project	20%

Grading scale
Assignments will be graded on a point system. At the end of the semester, accumulated points will be converted into a letter grade based on the following scale:

A 94-100%; A- 90-93%; B+ 87-89%; B 84-86%; B- 80-83%;
C+ 77-79%; C 74-76%; C- 70-73%; D+ 67-69%; D 64-66%
Loyola does not recognize a grade of D-, so a grade below 64% is failing.

♦ Rules and Responsibilities
Academic Dishonesty
Loyola University and the School of Communication expect academic integrity and have policies regarding academic dishonesty. Specifically for the SOC:

1. Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. Plagiarism in your work will result in a minimum of a failing grade for that assignment. The case may carry further sanctions from the School of Communication or the University, the most serious being permanent expulsion. Avoid turning in work that could be interpreted as plagiarism or academically dishonest (e.g., failing to properly credit a source or using someone else's ideas without clarifying that they are not yours). This is an academic community; being uninformed or naïve is not an acceptable excuse for not properly referencing sources.

2. It is dishonest to:
  ➢ Turn in the same work for two classes*;
  ➢ Turn in a paper you have not written yourself; or
  ➢ Copy from another student or use a "cheat sheet" during an exam.

Specifically for this course:
*--You are not allowed to copy someone else's audio, video or visuals from the Internet, DVD, or any other source without proper attribution – and any use of such work in your stories should be limited to a few seconds and with a <u>very clear purpose</u> (e.g., YouTube video). You **cannot** use content from another journalist or organization in your work.*

Turning in work that is not your own and representing it as yours will result in failure on the assignment and possible dismissal from the class.

*If you are in two courses that generate news stories (for example, this class and Mosaic), it may be permissible to cover the same story for both courses if: 1) <u>the stories are in different formats</u> (such as broadcast and print), and 2) <u>both professors know about and approve of the arrangement</u>.

You can find Loyola's policies regarding academic integrity at:
http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml.

Special Needs
If you have a special circumstance that may impact your course work and for which you may require accommodations, please contact me early in the semester so arrangements can be made with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD). We will accommodate your needs in the best way possible, given the constraints of course

content and processes. Loyola's policy is that it is the student's responsibility to plan in advance in order to meet their own needs and assignment due dates.
Additional information about the services available at Loyola, including eligibility for services, is on the SSWD website: http://www.luc.edu/sswd/index.shtml.

Cell phone and computer use
As this is a technology course, we will be using phones and computers for many class-related activities. However, you will be expected to show discretion and *not* use them for purposes unrelated to class. If you use a computer to take notes during lecture or instruction portions of the class, you may be asked to send your notes to Professor Hood at the end of the session.

♦ Electronic Communication & Information
Sakai: Course information and assignments will be available on Sakai, and you will be able to submit some assignments there. Please notify me if you have any problems using the class Sakai site.

Email: I will answer email within 24 hours on weekdays but will not always access it on weekends. You may not receive a response to a late Friday email until Monday.

♦ About your professor
This is my seventh year at Loyola, after moving from the University of Colorado. I have 18 years of experience in television news, including 10 years as a full-time producer. I worked at four TV stations in Denver, and before that produced and anchored newscasts in Huntsville, Alabama. My newscasts earned regional Emmy awards for hard news and spot news and a Colorado Broadcasters Association best newscast award. I also have experience in reporting (both news and sports), photography and editing, and worked in radio and newspapers before starting my television career. I hold a Ph.D. in Communication from the University of Colorado. My research interests are local news and the audience relationship to it, journalists' use of technology, as well as corporate and consolidation influences on local news and local news outsourcing. I have a master's degree from the University of Colorado and a bachelor's degree in broadcast journalism from the University of Missouri.

Thurs Aug. 27   General introduction and expectations; role of technology in journalism; blogging styles and purposes; journalistic writing; setting up blogs and Twitter accounts

Thurs Sept. 3   Beat reporting; headlines and SEO basics; posting photos and videos to your web site; legalities and ethics of using images (Creative Commons, etc.)
Due: "Blog Log"*;* professional-style blog site and Twitter account set up by this date

Thurs Sept. 10   Using Twitter in real time; other uses of social media in journalism; bit.ly's and related tools; using RSS feeds
   ➢ Guest speaker: Rianne Coale, Social Media Manager at RedEye and SOC alum
Due: First blog posts and tweets, beat names and ideas

Thurs Sept. 17   Photography unit: Uses, tricks and techniques; digital photo editing

Thurs Sept. 24   Photography unit continues: more photo editing, building slide shows
Due: Photo assignment #1, Twitter event "watching" assignment

Thurs Oct. 1   Broadcast writing and audio story types; gathering and using effective sound; non-linear audio editing   *Due:* Photo assignment #2

Thurs Oct. 8   Audio unit continues: audio newsgathering on deadline

Thurs Oct. 15   Photography and audio wrapup
Due: Photo slide shows and audio wraps (in-class viewing of work)

Thurs Oct. 22   Video unit: Uses, how-to; Vine basics

Thurs Oct. 29   Video unit continues: basic video story types; non-linear video editing
Due: Video sequence shot (to edit and upload in class)

Thurs Nov. 5   Combining video and mobile: Videolicious and mobile editing

Thurs Nov. 12   Video newsgathering on deadline: quick interviews, editing, uploading
Due: Videolicious package; Vine variations

Thurs Nov. 19   Information graphics: maps, timelines, polls; final project expectations

Thurs Nov. 26   THANKSGIVING, NO CLASS

Thurs Dec. 3   Semester wrap-up; last day of class; final project help as needed
Due: Information graphics assignments

Thurs Dec. 10   Final Projects due; showing in class 4:15 p.m.
Expect additional assignments and due dates as the semester progresses.