

OFFICIAL UNDERGRADUATE COURSE OUTLINE FORM

Note: The University reserves the right to amend course outlines as needed without notice.

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|---|-----------|---|----|---------------------|----|--|--|--|--|--|--|--------------------|-----------|---|--|
| Course Code and Number: CMNS 311 | | Number of Credits: 3 Course credit policy (105) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Course Full Title: Investigative Reporting Course Short Title: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Faculty: Faculty of Humanities | | Department (or program if no department): Communications | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Calendar Description: Provides students with skills they need to enhance their journalism practice. Using the storytelling techniques of award-winning journalism, students learn how to gather primary and secondary data from a variety of sources and analyze them using journalistic tools and computer-assisted reporting. Emphasis is on Fraser Valley-based fieldwork resulting in a semester-long, publication-quality investigative project of the student's choosing. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Prerequisites (or NONE): | | CMNS 201/JRNL 201. Note: Students who have taken ENGL 215 or MACS 235, or who have experience in journalistic writing, can request instructor's permission. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Corequisites (if applicable, or NONE): | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Pre/corequisites (if applicable, or NONE): | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Antirequisite Courses (<i>Cannot be taken for additional credit.</i>) Former course code/number: Cross-listed with: Equivalent course(s): <i>(If offered in the previous five years, antirequisite course(s) will be included in the calendar description as a note that students with credit for the antirequisite course(s) cannot take this course for further credit.)</i> | | Course Details Special Topics course: No <i>(If yes, the course will be offered under different letter designations representing different topics.)</i> Directed Study course: No <i>(See policy 207 for more information.)</i> Grading System: Letter grades Delivery Mode: May be offered in multiple delivery modes Expected frequency: Annually Maximum enrolment (for information only): 25 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Typical Structure of Instructional Hours <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Lecture/seminar</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tutorials/workshops</td> <td>25</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total hours</td> <td>45</td> </tr> </table> | | Lecture/seminar | 20 | Tutorials/workshops | 25 | | | | | | | Total hours | 45 | Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) PLAR is available for this course. | |
| Lecture/seminar | 20 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Tutorials/workshops | 25 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| Total hours | 45 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Scheduled Laboratory Hours Labs to be scheduled independent of lecture hours: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | | Transfer Credit (See bctransferguide.ca .) Transfer credit already exists: No Submit outline for (re)articulation: Yes <i>(If yes, fill in transfer credit form.)</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Department approval | | Date of meeting: December 3, 2021 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Faculty Council approval | | Date of meeting: January 13, 2023 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Undergraduate Education Committee (UEC) approval | | Date of meeting: March 24, 2023 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Learning Outcomes *(These should contribute to students' ability to meet program outcomes and thus Institutional Learning Outcomes.)*

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Examine the history of investigative reporting and its role in a democratic society.
2. Identify story topics with high potential and formulate frameworks for investigation.
3. Improve planning ability in all aspects of producing journalism materials.
4. Polish writing skills needed in in-depth reporting projects.
5. Use research techniques and strategies to find information from a variety of sources, including public access, government, business and individuals.
6. Perform in-depth interviews with emphasis on directing conversations to extract story-specific details.
7. Employ analytical methods and multi-level verification.
8. Demonstrate journalistic values, including accuracy, fairness and balance.
9. Recognize the ethical and legal boundaries investigative reporters must observe.
10. Analyze data using computer-assisted reporting techniques.

Recommended Evaluation Methods and Weighting *(Evaluation should align to learning outcomes.)*

| | | | | | |
|----------------------|-----|--------------|-----|----------|-----|
| Quizzes/tests: | 15% | Assignments: | 30% | Project: | 45% |
| Holistic assessment: | 10% | | % | | % |

Details:

NOTE: The following sections may vary by instructor. Please see course syllabus available from the instructor.

Texts and Resource Materials *(Include online resources and Indigenous knowledge sources. [Open Educational Resources](#) (OER) should be included whenever possible. If more space is required, use the [Supplemental Texts and Resource Materials form](#).)*

| Type | Author or description | Title and publication/access details | Year |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|---|------|
| 1. Online resource | Konrad Adenauer Stiftung | Investigative Journalism Manual. https://www.investigative-manual.org | 2021 |
| 2. Online resource | Al Jazeera Media Institute | Investigative Journalism Handbook. https://institute.aljazeera.net/sites/default/files/2020/Investigative%20Journalism%20Handbook_0.pdf | 2020 |
| 3. Online resource | Craig Silverman | Verification Handbook for Investigative Reporting. https://datajournalism.com/read/handbook/verification-2 | 2020 |
| 4. Online resource | Jonathan Gray and Liliana Bounegru | The Data Journalism Handbook. https://datajournalism.com/read/handbook/two | 2021 |
| 5. | | | |

Required Additional Supplies and Materials *(Software, hardware, tools, specialized clothing, etc.)***Course Content and Topics**

- The process of investigative reporting: preliminary steps, research, analysis, publications
- Kinds of investigative reporting
- Giving voice to the voiceless as a primary paradigm
- Working with confidential sources
- Cultural and inclusivity considerations
- Ethical dilemmas and lapses
- Working with secondary sources. FOI, ATI
- Raw data - analysis, algorithms, common approaches
- Computer-assisted data interpretation
- Search and data gathering techniques
- Generating primary source dataset (MsExcel)
- Human subjects and information gathering: network building, maintenance and responsibilities
- In-depth interview techniques
- Journalistic writing – stylistic features, genres of investigative reporting
- Newsroom routines – editorial hierarchy and collaboration, co-authorship, team work, collaborative investigations
- Building relationships with government sources, judiciary, law enforcement, corporate/business sources, individuals