"Multimedia Reporting": Syllabus & Schedule

This 4-week, 3-credit study-abroad summer course introduces students to multimedia online reporting in a foreign setting under guidance of Prof. **Doug Cumming***, Ph.D., a Washington & Lee University journalism professor with 26 years of award-winning experience with newspapers and magazines. Students earn credit from the University of Baltimore. Student fee: $4,995.*

Students in the course will gain basic skills in reporting and writing for the Web, still photography and audio/documentary reporting. They will learn by doing, using the legendary city of Armagh, Northern Ireland, and its surrounding borderland between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland as a laboratory. The course is designed to immerse students in learning about a foreign country and multimedia storytelling by replicating, to some degree, the intensive experience of a foreign correspondent. This experiential learning will be reinforced by readings and classroom visits from Irish journalists and other experts. Students will learn about the history of Armagh, the culture of Ireland, and the politics of the late Troubles. The course is sponsored by ieiMedia and taught in conjunction with a non-journalism course, "The Armagh Project: Playwriting and Creative Writing." Students and faculty from both courses will share living quarters (Armagh City International Youth Hostel), classroom space and technology (The AmmA Center) and other programming support.

OBJECTIVES

In this course you will:
• learn the fundamentals of multimedia storytelling
• learn how to use a digital camera to produce interesting and illustrative photos to accompany your text
• learn how to plan, shoot and assemble a slideshow with audio for the Web
• learn how to live and function as a journalist in a foreign culture
• gain a deeper understanding of the importance of international reporting in today's world
• demonstrate that you have mastered the skills of finding, researching, and producing a compelling and factually accurate multimedia story package

We will achieve these objectives through a combination of lectures, readings, writing assignments, multimedia exercises, publication, and your own reporting (research, interviews and coverage of events). You will also work closely with your instructor for individual consultations, editing and feedback on your work.

FACULTY

[Douglas Cumming](), multimedia journalism
Washington & Lee associate professor of journalism

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Terri Ciofalo, director, Armagh Project
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign faculty

Kimberley Lynne, resident playwright
University of Baltimore faculty

Readings: "Local Heroes," on how local stringers are filling the gap as major news organizations close bureaus, by former CBC correspondent Anthony Borden, in *International News Reporting: Frontlines and Deadlines*, John Owen, Heather Purdey, eds., Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009.
Any good brief history of Northern Ireland or Ireland in general, such as Richard Killeen's *A Short History of Modern Ireland*.
Any good book on Ireland or Northern Ireland for travelers, such as John Scotney's *Ireland – Culture Smart!: The Essential Guide to Customs and Culture.*

Calendar

July 4 (Friday) arr. Dublin; charter bus leaves airport at 2 p.m. for Armagh.
July 4-6: Orientation.

WEEK 1: (starting Monday, July 7) We'll begin with an immersion in local culture and the basics of reporting, writing and multimedia storytelling techniques. Brief assignments will be given as exercises in the various media. There will be a focus on finding stories, and reporting and using photography to tell related stories in appropriate media – such as a Soundslide photo essay with audio. You'll begin to get to know the community of Armagh and start your hunt for compelling stories that lend themselves to multimedia storytelling. (Note: The Orange Institution Parades will be on July 12, Saturday, the biggest of the controversial parades of the Protestant unionists in Northern Ireland, commemorating the Battle of the Boyne.)

WEEK 2: (Monday, July 14) We'll focus intensively on the photography, audio and editing of these elements. On Monday, July 8, students will meet with Prof. Cumming to present story proposals. Once story ideas are approved as multi-media projects, you can start reporting and shooting photos and/or recording audio for your own project. You will also assist a fellow student as a team of two, and will have a fellow student as an assistant for your project. Throughout this week and next, there will be lectures and tours related to local history, culture and politics.

WEEK 3: (Monday, July 21) You'll report, shoot and write your stories and begin the editing process. Some evening sessions may be scheduled for critiques, work sessions and cultural activities.

WEEK 4: (Monday, July 28) This is the week of the John Hewitt International Summer School. You will participate in the afternoon writing workshops, Monday-Thursday, and any other activities of the festival you choose. On Wednesday, you'll participate in the ieiMedia presentation at JHISS, with a chance to show your multimedia work. By

Wednesday, you will have edited your stories (including slide shows) and posted your work to a private website. Final class day and closing dinner is on Saturday, Aug. 2. Our goal is to have these features posted on the ieiMedia website soon after the end of the course. The features, of course, must meet the professional journalistic standards of ieiMedia to be published on the web.

Note: On most weeks, we will be working on a Monday-Thursday schedule, giving you time to travel or visit local sites on Friday-Sunday, provided you have completed your assignments for that week.

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS Students will complete the readings before arriving, and demonstrate an understanding of the challenges facing foreign correspondents today. By the end of the course, each student will be responsible for producing: A multimedia package that includes at least one text feature story of 750 to 1,000 words with hyperlinks and related visual and graphic elements. Students will also team up as pairs to help on another student's project. All work worthy of publishing will be posted on the class website. This is a public website that will be available for all the world to see. Faculty members reserve the right not to publish any work that fails to meet professional standards. If your work is especially strong, we'll help you place it elsewhere professionally.

ATTENDANCE Attendance at all classes and participation in assigned lab and fieldwork is mandatory. The success of the project depends on teams working closely together, learning all the technical/creative aspects, and meeting all deadlines. Only serious illness or disability will be permitted as excuses for absence or lateness. Lackadaisical participation will be considered a serious breach of the professionalism required in this course. Students are expected to come to every class prepared, to be attentive and to participate in all activities.

GRADING Students will receive one grade for the course, an average of the grades for each module as well as grades for professionalism and citizenship. Grades are based on the following standards:
A – Work is excellent in all respects, meeting the highest standards of journalism. It is complete, well done and turned in on deadline. Work could be published in a professional publication with little editing or reworking.
B – Work meets most but not all of the requirements of excellence. Work could be published in a professional publication with editing or reworking.
C – Work meets the deadlines but only barely meets requirements of excellence. The work may lack a strong grasp of the principles of journalism. It could be published in a professional publication only with significant reworking.
D – Work fails to meet most deadlines and/or basic journalism standards. It couldn't be published in a professional publication without a total reworking.
F – Work is not turned in on deadline or breaches basic journalism standards. It is absolutely unpublishable.

PROFESSIONALISM Program participants are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. This includes:
Treating faculty, staff and fellow students with respect and courtesy
Coming prepared to group meetings with suggestions and ideas
Attending all class sessions and showing up on time
Acting respectfully toward interview subjects and interpreters
Using the equipment responsibly
Working through challenges and conflicts in a mature, responsible way.

Final note

What you take away from this course is directly related to the time and energy that you invest. I have many years of experience in the field and in the classroom. I truly believe that journalism is one of the most exciting and important professions that you can work in and I am more than happy to work with you so that you are able to grow as journalists during the month. I am willing to help in any way that we can beyond the normal class hours but it is up to you to pursue this.

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