

# Media and Popular Culture Journalism 803

## Welcome!

In this course we're going to talk about research and writing. And we're going to conduct research and share our findings.

Think of research as exploration. It's a way to learn. Think of it as a conversation. It's a way to share. And think of it as fun. You get to look in-depth at topics that interest you.

Because media are everywhere, the options for research are endless. We can explore traditional and new media. We can look at media production. We can look at how people use media, why they use media, and how they react to media messages. We can learn how people feel connected or disenfranchised by media. We're limited only by our imaginations.

## What we'll learn

Our goals in this class are to:

- Develop an idea for a research project that interests you.
- Conduct qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods research on that topic.
- Write a research paper that includes:
  - a solid literature review justifying the project,
  - a detailed methods section that explains how you conducted your research,
  - a coherent findings section that explains what you learned,
  - and a detailed discussion section that explains the value of your research and what happens next.
- Learn more about applying theory to research projects.
- Learn more about qualitative and quantitative research methods.
- Conduct research ethically.
- Consider how to develop research projects that have meaningful impacts.
- Think about diversity—in terms of the media we analyze, the topics we explore, and the subjects and beneficiaries of our research.
- Consider how the First Amendment affects media work and academic research.
- Improve our writing so that it's clear, concise, and interesting.

## How we'll learn

We'll learn about research by reading and discussing what other scholars have written about a variety of topics, including politics, race, gender, sports, health, celebrity, and international issues. We'll discuss traditional and social media. We'll discuss a variety of theories, including agenda-setting, framing, critical race theories, feminist theories, and more. We'll discuss quantitative and qualitative research, and we'll discuss a variety of research tools, including surveys, experiments, content analysis, interviews, text analysis, and focus groups.

*Discussion* is the key word here. You want to come to class prepared. You want to read course materials before you come and you want to be ready to discuss, share your ideas, and learn from the ideas of your classmates.

There is no textbook for our class (you're welcome). Instead we'll read current research articles. You can access these on the course Blackboard site: <https://courseware.ku.edu> Readings are organized by week, and you'll find a folder with readings for class. You'll also find a folder that includes some additional articles you don't need to read before class but that you can read further if you have an interest in the topic.

## Assignments and grades

I was a student for a long time, so I understand how important grades are. I will make every effort to grade your work fairly and offer constructive feedback.

The assignments for this class revolve around a research project. Your grades will be based on:

- A research proposal that includes a literature review and methods section (100 points). This is due **Feb. 28**.
- Two teaching sessions, in which you read an article and prepare discussion questions (50 points for each session, 100 points total). You can choose the date of one presentation. Everyone will participate on **Apr. 25**.
- A research paper that incorporates your literature review and methods section, but also includes preliminary findings and a discussion section (300 points). You will submit your paper to the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications annual conference, which will be Aug. 7-10 in Toronto. The deadline for AEJMC submissions is **Apr. 1**. Afterward, you can revise, but you'll submit your final project for this class by **May 9**, the last day of KU classes.
- A research presentation, in which you succinctly present and summarize your research project (150 points). You'll do this in class on **Apr. 4**.
- A professionalism grade, which includes a grade based on your attendance and a subjective evaluation of your engagement in class (50 points)

The maximum number of points you can earn in our class is 700. To get your final grade for the class, I'll divide the number of points you earned by the total number in the class. For example, if you earned 600 points, your grade will be 85.7 or  $600/700$ . If you earned 650 points, your grade will be 92.8 or  $650/700$ .

KU requires that your numerical grade be translated into a letter grade. Here's how that will work.

651-700 = A	539-559 = C+
630-650 = A-	511-538 = C
609-629 = B+	490-510 = C-
581-608 = B	420-489 = D
560-580 = B-	419 or below = F

If your grade ends in .5 or above, it will be rounded up. If your grade ends in .4 or below, it stays the same. For example, 89.5 will be rounded up to 90 or A-. A grade of 89.4 will remain a B+.

## Professional behavior

The William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications does not tolerate plagiarism and fabrication. Neither do I.

Plagiarism means that you have taken someone else's work—writing, ideas, images—and presented it as your own. You want to give credit where credit is due and attribute ideas that are not your own.

Fabrication means you made it up. This could include quotes from interview subjects or falsifying statistical data.

If you have questions, see me.

Also, all the work you do for this class must be original to this class. You can build on past work in other classes, but you cannot recycle the work you've done in J801, J802 or any other class at KU or elsewhere. This will earn you a zero on the assignment and will jeopardize earning a passing grade.

To make the class go as smoothly as possible, here are some other guidelines:

- Don't wander in and out of class.
- Don't use social media during class time.
- Don't work on other assignments during class time.
- Respect your colleagues' views. We all bring a lot of different experiences and ideas to this class. We can learn a lot from each other, so keep an open mind.

## **How to contact me**

The easiest way to get in touch with me is by email: [barnettb@ku.edu](mailto:barnettb@ku.edu)

You can also stop by my office, 203-B Stauffer-Flint Hall, during office hours: 11-noon Mondays and Wednesdays, 2-4 on Thursdays. If those times don't work for you, we can make an appointment.

I'll contact you by email, so check your emails frequently. Also, check the course Blackboard site for announcements and directions for your assignments.

## **If you have a special need ...**

The University of Kansas is committed to helping all students learn. If you have an issue that may affect your learning, please contact me as soon as possible. Please be aware that the KU Office of Student Access Services coordinates accommodations and services for all students who are eligible. You can learn more here: <http://access.ku.edu/> Or you can visit the office on the first floor of Strong Hall. The phone number is: 785-864-4064. The email is: [achieve@ku.edu](mailto:achieve@ku.edu). Please contact me privately regarding your needs in this course.

## **Stress happens ...**

If you need to talk to someone, you can contact KU Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS). The office is located at Watkins Health Services, 1200 Schwegler Dr., Room 2100. The phone number is 864-227.

## **Food insecurity**

It's a problem at KU. You can get food at the KU Campus Cupboard, a food pantry open to KU students You can email [cupboard@ku.edu](mailto:cupboard@ku.edu) to learn more or visit the website: <https://hunger.ku.edu/campus-resources>

Also, you can learn about free food on Twitter by following @foodforJayhawks or Instagram's Food for Jayhawks.

## **Some last words**

My goal is to help you do well in this class. Please contact me with any questions or concerns. I'm happy to work with you.

## J803 Tentative Schedule

This is a proposed schedule for our class. We may want to spend more time on one topic, less time on another, so we'll make adjustments as we go along.

You'll find class readings on the course Blackboard site at: <http://coursware.ku.edu>

Readings are grouped by date. Please read articles before you come to class so you can discuss.

Jan. 24 – Introduction to class

Jan. 31 – Media and **politics**

Feb. 7 – Media, **race** and ethnicity (KU Prof. Joseph Erba will visit our class)

Feb. 14 – Media and **celebrity**

Feb. 21—Media, **gender** and sexual identity

Feb. 28 – Media and **health**.

*Turn in your research proposal at the beginning of class today.*

Mar. 7 – Media and **sports**

Mar. 14 – Spring break

Mar. 21 – Media, **international** and intercultural communications

Mar. 28 – Work on AEJMC papers

Apr. 4 – Present AEJMC papers in class

Apr. 11 – From idea to publication—KU professors discuss their work

Apr. 18 – **Engaged** scholarship – making research meaningful

Apr. 25 – What have we missed?

*You prepare today's discussion topics and questions.*

May 2 – Research and **teaching**: How do they fit together?

May 9 – *Turn in final project by 5 p.m.*

