

SEMESTER IN WASHINGTON
SUMMER 2009
SYLLABUS

WASHINGTON MEDIA

The changing role, shape and influence of the media through the prism of coverage of the nation's capital.

Professors Amos Gelb/Susan Morrison

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OFFICE HOURS – BY APPOINTMENT

CLASS MEETS EVERY FRIDAY 2:00 PM - 5:30 PM
TUESDAY 6 OR 7PM.

The Semester in Washington Journalism Program is a unique, experiential course designed to bring together the theory and practice of journalism in today's new media environment through the perspective of the unique media here in the nation's capital. The class will explore the unprecedented change reshaping the media industry today.

COURSE GOALS:

By the end of the course you will begin to:

- 1) Understand Washington media, its multiple forms, roles, methods and audiences.
- 2) Understand the interaction between journalism and the pr/politics that define Washington.
- 3) Be introduced to complex and evolving issues such as business and ethics that are reshaping today's journalism.
- 4) Be better prepared to make decisions about a career in the media.
- 5) Read and watch the news/information more critically.
- 6) Improve/develop writing, producing and story telling abilities.

COURSE MAKE UP:

The seminar will meet for eight Fridays and occasional Tuesdays. It has five components:

1. Lectures/Class Discussions
2. Speakers
3. Off-site Visits
4. Assignments

5. Readings

The lectures will comprise formal lecture and class discussion sessions where you will be introduced to and discuss the key issues the course will address. Those lectures and discussions will be complemented each week by guest speakers/site visits. The speakers are leading experts from across the media who will bring their experiences to you, offering candid, and often surprising, insights into the issues raised throughout the course. In addition to practicing journalists, you will hear from those whose work directly impacts journalism as it is practiced in Washington, including public relations professionals and politicians.

The key to getting the most out of the Semester in Washington is exploiting these speakers to give a practical perspective on the academic issues we discuss. To do that you need to engage the speakers with relevant and probing questions. Please challenge the speakers, but always remain composed and polite. If you have a question, several of your classmates are wondering the same thing. So ask!

Finally, to understand Washington journalism fully, we need to visit those places where Washington journalism takes place such as Capitol Hill, the White House, and the Pentagon.

In addition to the topical lectures and speakers, there will be hands on practical training offered to make you proficient in the technology upon which journalism is increasingly dependent.

GRADING:

The grade for the journalism seminar is based on the formula below.

PARTICIPATION/ATTENDANCE	30%
ASSIGNMENTS	30%
FINAL PROJECT	30%

SCHEDULE:

Since much of the schedule is dependent on speaker and site visit availability, it is subject to change.

WEEK 1:

TUESDAY, MAY 26 10:00AM

Orientation

- **Introduction**
- **GW Welcome**
- **Course review**
- **Tour/Orientation to GW facility**
- **Lunch**
- **DC Welcome Activity**

WEDNESDAY – FRIDAY, MAY 27-29
SEMESTER IN WASHINGTON BOOT CAMP
See separate schedule.

WEEK 2

TUESDAY JUNE 2

PROJECTS/ Gelb - view from the belly of the beast – internships

FRIDAY, JUNE 5 – 2PM

SEMINAR

Screen videos

Gelb – WHAT IS JOURNALISM TODAY

GUEST SPEAKER – JOHN DONVAN – ABC NEWS NIGHTLINE. John is, to many minds, the best writer and interviewer on television. Having worked around the world in just about every type of news, he is perennially the favorite speaker for classes past.

WEEK 3:

TUESDAY, JUNE 9TH

Nite out at the Movies: State of Play – the new Washington Journalism Movie
(subject to change)

FRIDAY, JUNE 13TH

2pm – Capitol Hill (details to follow)

MEET THE PEOPLE WHO COVER AND ARE COVERED AT THE CAPITOL

Including: Jesse Holland – AP reporter/Author and congressional staff.

WEEK 4:

TUESDAY, JUNE 17TH

Caroline Little – GM Guardian-US.

Caroline is the former President/CEO of Washington Post/Newsweek Interactive. Little known outside professional circles, she is one of the handful of executives who should be credited with helping legacy media move to the web. She is now working for the Guardian newspaper and we will be producing content for them this summer.

FRIDAY, JUNE 19

SEMINAR:

ETHICS – what do they mean today? – Gelb/Morrison

SPEAKER – JEFF DUFOUR – DC EXAMINER. Jeff is the current writer/editor of the Examiner's Gossip page. He will talk not just about the Examiner but also about how he goes about gathering the news and separating gossip from usable journalism.

WEEK 5:

NEW MEDIA WEEK

TUESDAY, JUNE 23RD

6pm - New Media Introduction - Michnick.

WEDNESDAY JUNE 24TH

BASEBALL OUTING

THURSDAY JUNE 26TH

2PM - New Media continued - speakers tba

WEEK 6:

THURSDAY, JULY 2ND

6:30pm

LONG FORM – REALITY TV AND DOCUMENTARIES.

David Royle – VP of the Smithsonian Channel.

WEEK 7:

TUESDAY JULY 8TH

ADVERTISING/PR

Gelb – Public Relations and the Media – why we miss so often

Speaker: Jaya Bohlman – VP Sodexo Corporate Public Relations

FRIDAY, JULY 10TH

Morrison – WRITING AND DECODING PR.

Thomas Cook - Cook is one of the foremost practioners of the art of the network and PR. He has worked for the Pentagon, and Fortune 500 corporations and will tell you how it really works.

WEEK 8:

TUESDAY, JULY 13TH

Investigative journalism – Mark Feldstein – Associate Professor, GW University – former investigative reporter/producer – CNN and NBC.

FRIDAY, JULY 17

Visit XM radio. – Radio the forgotten Medium

WEEK 9:

TUESDAY, JULY 22

TBA

FRIDAY, JULY 24TH
White House visit.

WEEK 10:
TUESDAY JULY 27
Finish Projects

Friday July 31

10am – War and the Media – Susan Morrison

12pm – Tour the Pentagon – escorted by Admiral Steve Pietropali

2:30pm – Final Words

3pm – Evaluations

4pm – Graduation/Reception

ASSIGNMENTS:

There will be between five and six assignments. The assignments will be done in teams of four that will be assigned each week. Reflecting the changing nature of journalism each assignment will require three elements: video, web, and print. More details will be explained in class.

READING:

READINGS WILL BE HANDED OUT.

As part of the required reading, please also review at least one newspaper each day (online is fine) and set your radio alarm to NPR or 88.5 FM, WAMU.

ATTENDANCE AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The George Washington University takes academic integrity very seriously. As such you are expected to familiarize yourself with, and obey, the academic code set down in the following url: <http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html>. Violation of this code may result in penalties up to and including expulsion from the Semester In Washington.

Moreover, the credit you earn for this program transfers back to your schools. As a result, I have heard directly from a number of schools that their greatest concern is that no matter how rigorous the academics, you will simply not turn up. In the course evaluation note above, attendance is noted as part of the grade. However, our policy is that you lose a grade for every class you miss without discussing with, and seeking permission from, the professors.