

Solutions Journalism

(in the #MeToo era)

"These first nine months have allowed us to start seeing the magnitude of the issue. Now, the months and years ahead have to be focused on solutions." -Tarana Burke, founder of #MeToo movement

"Solutions journalism is rigorous and compelling reporting on solutions to social problems.

When done well, the stories provide valuable insights about how communities may more effectively tackle serious problems. We know from experience that solutions stories engage people differently. They can change the tone of public discourse, making it less divisive and more constructive. By revealing what has worked, they can also lead to meaningful change.

It's not about making people feel good or advocating for a certain policy or balancing out the 'doom-and-gloom.' Instead, solutions journalism is about what journalism has always been about: informing and empowering people. We're just asking journalists to do that in a more complete way, by investigating what has worked just as rigorously and relentlessly as what hasn't."

- The Solutions Journalism Network website

Course Details

What: J463/563

When: M/W 12-1:50 p.m

Where: Allen 302

Office Hours:

Mondays, 10-11:30 a.m.;

Wednesdays, 2-3 p.m. in Allen 309C

Stay connected: Canvas is the place to turn in assignments, for updates, calendar info, assignments and rubrics, readings, and class delays or closures.



I developed solutions journalism classes because my experiences as a journalist led me to question how the stories we tell affect people and communities. Now, I think it's time to focus on #MeToo solutions. Catch me at kthier@uoregon.edu, @KathrynTRex or 541-346-2528.



Why is this course is important?

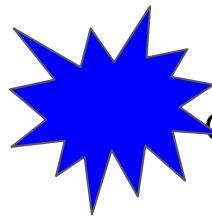
Because you're going to be a professional journalist someday and you need to develop a sense of what mark you want to make.

Those ideas on the first page raise provocative questions about our field.

In this class we're going to learn how to "do" Solutions Journalism (SoJo).

And we're going to explore how the way we frame the #MeToo movement can and perhaps, should be different.

Underlying everything are **deeper questions** that we'll wrestle with all term: What should journalists consider as they cover social movements? Should journalism evolve, and if so, how?



Course Integrating Question:

When a social movement starts, what is the role of the journalist?

Course Outcomes

By the end of this course students should be able to:

Identify what solutions journalism is - and isn't	(Foundational knowledge)
Discriminate between SoJo, advocacy and soft news	(Applying knowledge)
Describe and explain appropriate SoJo frames, structure, sources and interview techniques	(Foundational and Applying knowledge)
See themselves as contributing to the debate about the role of journalism and the journalist in a democratic society	(Integrative, Human and Metacognitive knowledge)
Create solutions journalism by applying knowledge of appropriate structure, sources, frames and interview techniques	(Applying and Integrative knowledge)

In addition to course objectives...

ACEJMC PROFESSIONAL VALUES & COMPETENCIES

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) requires that, irrespective of their particular specialization, all graduates should be aware of certain core values and competencies and be able to:

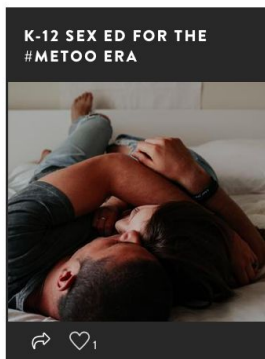
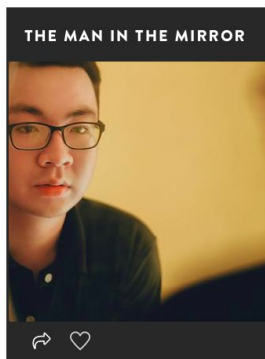
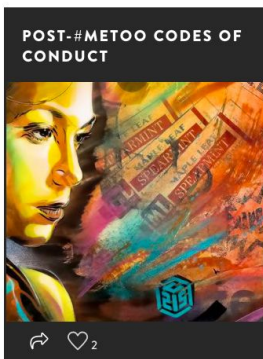
- Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;
- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- Think critically, creatively and independently;
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
- Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

Look for **yellow icons** for these values and competencies on assignments to see how learning in this course relates!

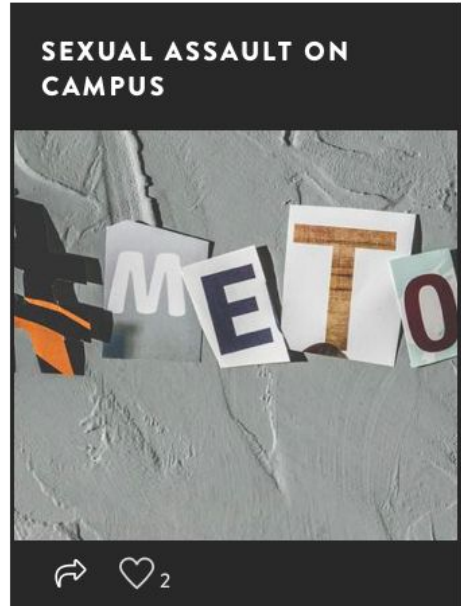
#ME TOO

How do we create workplaces, schools, families, and communities that are healthier and safer for people of all genders? These stories center on responses to sexual harassment and assault, particularly surfaced in the era of brave truth-telling and unprecedented accountability of the #metoo era.

FEATURED COLLECTIONS



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Readings and Student Engagement Hours

There is no textbook for this class. I suggest signing up for the **Solutions StoryTracker** (solutionsjournalism.org) and a **NYT online subscription** (nytimes.com/passees) to read weekly Fixes columns and news about #MeToo. The majority of readings will be solutions journalism articles about #MeToo solutions to help you complete the Class Journal or prepare for class discussions. Page counts are not uniform and vary because they're Web articles. Sometimes the readings will be short book chapters. Expect to spend **1-2 hours a week reading**. All readings are on **Canvas** under **Modules**. Expect to spend **4-6 hours outside of class** on assignments.

Final Reporting Project

Students will collaboratively publish a website of three to four local #MeToo multimedia solutions stories. We'll decide on roles and story ideas in **Week Four**. In **Week Five**, you'll turn in an extensive Story Pitch and meet with me to discuss it. Your first draft is due **Week Nine**. The final stories and website are due **Wednesday of Finals Week**.

Assignments and class exercises throughout the term will prepare you to complete these stories so give each assignment your all. This is your "final" for the class and is worth **30 percent** of your grade.

Assessment

Everything we do in this class should prepare you to meet the learning goals. I believe grades should reflect a student's level of achievement on key assessments, not how you perform before you have learned a concept or how often you raise your hand in class.

All assignments, graded or not, must be completed to pass the class. Because the final stories are team stories assessment for story assignments include individual and team categories.

This class involves heavy doses of inquiry and collaboration. That can't succeed unless everyone participates every day. But **there's no grade for "participation."** It takes extroverts, introverts and ambiverts for creativity to flourish.

I'm counting on each of you to contribute to our class community in your own style. We are all responsible for our individual and group learning this quarter.

**Final grades for the course
will follow this scale:**

Grade	Points
A+	970-1,000
A	930-969
A-	900-929
B+	870-899
B	830-869
B-	800-829
C+	770-799
C	730-769
C-	700-729
D+	670-699
D	630-669
D-	600-629
F	599 or lower

* Master's students can earn up to 1,300 points. The percentage grade of their total points out of 1,300 will be mapped to the above scale to determine a course grade.

A word about writing...

Because this is a “topics” class about a specific area of journalistic practice writing is not a course objective. However, as this is a 400/500-level class, I will assess the writing mechanics of all written assignments at the standard of clear communication detailed on the right.

FRAMEWORK FOR WRITING MECHANICS GRADING

A (4.0 or 90-100): Excellent

You can make between zero and three advanced edits.

Edits: 0=100, 1=96, 2=93 and 3=90

B (3.0 or 80-89): Above Average

You can make four to seven advanced edits. Your work does not have basic errors.

Edits: 4=89, 5=86, 6=83 and 7=80

C (2.0 or 70-79): Meets Minimum Standards

You can make eight to 11 edits (basic, advanced or both). If the work has a basic edit, it starts at a C. In the real world, a major edit jeopardizes a quick promotion and often leads to a formal correction.

Edits: 8=79, 9=76, 10=73 and 11=70

D (1.0 or 60-69): Does Not Meet Standards

You would need to make 12-15 edits (basic, advanced or both). If the work has at least two basic edits, it starts at a D.

Edits: 12=69, 13=66, 14=63 and 15=60

F (1.0 or 59 or below): Unacceptable

You would need to make 16 edits (basic, advanced or both). The work demonstrates unsatisfactory writing mechanics for a 300-level journalism course.

Edits: 16=59 (and so on)

Graded Assessments . . .

1 | Class Journal
(10 points each -
100 total)

Weekly, short reflections posted to Canvas about readings, class visitors and activities to extend your learning.

2 | Contemporary
Issues Journal
(25 points each
100 total)

Two posts and two reflections about news stories you relate to class.

3 | Progress updates
on Slack
(50 points each -
200 total)

Detail your reporting as a team and an individual for four weeks to keep you and your team on track and me informed.

* Master's students will complete an additional assignment: an extensive outline of a follow-up story to the final project story, worth 300 points.

4

Story Pitch &
Multimedia Plan
(200 points)

The more you put into this assignment the better off you'll be. Good reporters pre-report. Rewrite optional.

5

First Draft of
Final Story
(100 points)

Real writers draft and rewrite. It takes time to get the story right, written well and the multimedia elements honed.

6

Final Story
(300 points)

It's worth a lot, but along the way are building block assignments (Story Pitch, Final Story Draft) to prepare you to succeed.

A "Typical" Week in This Class

First half of term: Direct instruction and guided learning on SoJo, reporting and writing concepts and activities to solidify learning

Second half of term:
Refining our understanding of SoJo and #MeToo

Second half of term:
Bringing your stories to fruition

Throughout: Weekly "Class Journal" entries to encourage your reflection about your learning and to provide feedback to me about your learning

**As we move toward the end of the term, more time will be spent in class on developing your final stories. But please be flexible! As you know, the reporting process is never cut and dry. Because of that and other factors, we may also need to adjust the course schedule sometimes. But I promise to be fair if changes are needed. And please keep in mind that some days we will have in-person or virtual guest instructors or speakers, so there is no "typical"*

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Week One	Mon (Jan. 7)	Wed (Jan. 9)	Readings (see dates)
WHAT?	-Sexual violence, #MeToo, coverage and solutions -SoJo's Four Qualities	Unpacking the Four Qualities and Media frames, solutions and #MeToo	Jan. 9: One #MeToo SoJo story and Framing module (Page Center - Media's Agenda Setting Role through Episodic vs Thematic) Jan. 10: Case Cleared 2
DUE: Four Qualities on Jan. 9; Personal Bio draft and story role survey by Jan. 13			
Week Two	Mon (Jan. 14)	Wed (Jan. 16)	Readings
HOW?	Media frames, solutions and #MeToo continued	Finding and Sourcing SoJo stories (and Class Guest SOJC Alum and Scripps Howard Fellow Kenny Jacoby)	Jan. 14: Three #MeToo SoJo stories TBA), Framing module (two Dart Center framing articles and rape culture coverage effects)
Week Three	Mon (Jan. 21)	Wed (Jan. 23)	Readings
WHAT? HOW?	NO CLASS - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Research in reporting (Class Guest Assistant Professor Autumn Shafer)	Skim Research module for Jan. 23
DUE: Bring initial story idea to Jan. 23 class			
Week Four	Mon (Jan. 28)	Wed (Jan. 30)	Readings
HOW?	Source & Story Storming	Story Pitch and Multimedia Plan group work	
DUE: Story Pitch & Multimedia Plan on Feb. 4			

In addition to other assignments, **Class Journal** entries are **due by noon Thursday** each week unless otherwise noted on Canvas.

Readings are related to assignments, for the Class Journal, or related to a class speaker.

*The class and reading schedule and *may change* due to class speakers' schedules or to assist your learning, but I promise to communicate any changes clearly.

Week Five	Mon (Feb. 4)	Wed (Feb.6)	Readings
HOW?	Trauma-informed interviewing with Guest Speaker UO School of Law Domestic Violence Civil Clinic Supervisor Kathryn Moakley	SoJo Impostors and story rigor	Read Interviewing module for Feb. 4; watch "The Hunting Ground" movie; read three articles in Impostor module for Feb. 6
FYI: Story conferences this week.			
Week Six	Mon (Feb. 11)	Wed (Feb. 13)	Readings
HOW? WHY?	Language choices, #MeToo and solutions	Story structure	Feb. 13: Howdunit story Feb. 14: Believing/Doubting module
DUE: Progress update on Slack by Feb. 17; Howdunit assignment for Feb. 18			
Week Seven	Mon (Feb. 18)	Wed (Feb. 20)	Readings
HOW?	Diversity, ethics and #MeToo solutions	Catch-up Day/TBD	
DUE: Progress update on Slack by Feb. 24			
Week Eight	Mon (Feb. 25)	Wed (Feb. 27)	Readings
How?	Pro-action Café of reporting project	Final story rubric co-creation	
DUE: First Draft Final Story on March 4			

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Week Nine	Mon (March 4)	Wed (March 6)	Readings
HOW?	Peer editing	Tutorials by project role	
DUE: Progress update on Slack by March 10			
Week Ten	Mon (March 11)	Wed (March 13)	Readings
HOW?	Story coaching and team work	Story coaching and class wrap-up	
DUE: Progress update on Slack by March 10			
Finals Week	Mon (March 18)	Weds (March 20)	
HOW?	No class - work on final project	FINAL STORIES AND WEBSITE DUE AT NOON	
Enjoy Spring Break!			

Our Classroom Environment

All viewpoints expressed through respectful commentary are welcome.

Journalism operates in diverse environments globally and requires maintaining the trust of the public. Growing as a writer requires learning from others. Therefore, respecting diversity of all kinds is an intrinsic part of this course. *Additionally, this theme of this course may raise strong feelings at times for class members so it is important to approach each member of our class community with respect.*

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is mandatory on the first day. Students who do not attend will be dropped from class, barring exceptional circumstances.

Throughout the term, if something comes up and you will have to miss a class (illness, accident, etc.), contact me by email before class to arrange for an excused absence. We have a lot to accomplish this quarter and your classmates are depending on you to co-create our class community. An *unexcused absence = a half grade off* your final grade. If something is keeping you from participating fully in this course, let's talk. I can't help you if I don't know what's going on.

DEADLINES

Assignments are due at the START of class in the format requested. (Late assignments will be penalized at 1/2 of a grade for each day, except in documented, extraordinary hardship circumstances.) Assignments will **NOT** be accepted more than two days after deadline.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

You are entrusted with protecting the pact that journalists have made with the public. For this reason, plagiarism or fabrication of any kind will result in penalties that may include failing the course. If you're not sure how to attribute information you've gathered, please ask me. All work submitted must be original to this course.

If you need additional resources...

And don't forget about SOJC's Writing Central,
where trained student coaches, coffee and
cookies can help you with assignments.

Details/schedule an appointment:
<http://writingcentral.uoregon.edu>

ACCESSIBILITY

Please notify me if there are any aspects of this class that are raising barriers to your participation. If you have a documented disability or medical condition that might affect your work or require special arrangements in the event of an evacuation, please make an appointment to speak with me no later than the end of the first week of the term.

SEXUAL ASSAULT AND HARASSMENT SERVICES

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you would like to share information about harassment of any form, here is a list of resources: <https://safe.uoregon.edu/services>.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Several options are available to you to resolve conflict. First, follow the chain of command: (1) the instructor, (2) Sr. Associate Dean Leslie Steeves, (3) Dean Juan-Carlos Molleda. Outside the School, you can contact the UO Bias Response Team (346-1139), Conflict Resolutions Services (346-0617), or Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity office (346-3123).

BASIC NEEDS

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Dean of Students Office (346-3216, 164 Oregon Hall) for support.

MENTAL HEALTH/SUBSTANCE USE

There are many campus resources, such as <https://dos.uoregon.edu/helping-friend> and <https://counseling.uoregon.edu>. Furthermore, if you are comfortable doing so, please let me know about your situation so I can help point you in the right direction for assistance.