

# Electronic Information

An overview of -- and practical introduction to --  
new media and modern news delivery systems.

DTC 338, spring semester 2008, Washington State University - Vancouver

## WHAT TO EXPECT IN THIS CLASS

(6 to 9 p.m. Wednesdays in VMMC 111, Jan. 9 through April 23, 2008)

### INSTRUCTOR

**Brett Oppegaard**  
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#### OFFICE HOURS:

Available 30 minutes before and after each class. Also by appointment, via e-mail.

This course will cover a wide range of topics related to new media and modern news delivery systems, including slideshows, podcasts, videos, blogs and forums. There will be a variety of guest speakers from the professional ranks, with networking opportunities, plus hands-on experience that culminates in a final package of material designed to serve as an impressive part of a professional portfolio.

### ATTENDANCE / PARTICIPATION

**Every class counts.** This course meets just 15 times. Students not only are expected to be in class but also to participate. Some of the assignments will be pass / fail components of attendance (if you do them, you are participating and get the points, if not you don't). When a guest speaker comes to class, each student is expected to ask at least one informed and thought-provoking question (which will earn that person the basic participation portion of the attendance component on that day; those who don't ask questions of the guests will be considered absent that day). Blog postings, forum entries and the like will not be graded individually. Instead they will be part of the attendance grade, meaning if not done, points are taken away here. One absence has no penalty. But two and beyond equal 50 points each.

### RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT:

**Digital camera, audio recorder, video camera, computer.** All of these are available for loan at the school, but if you have (or can borrow) equipment, you will be better off

### TEXTBOOKS / FINALS?

**No textbooks / No final exam**

All readings are in the form of copied handouts. It is your responsibility, if you miss class, to get copies of what you need to read. There will be final presentations.

## Guide to your grade

930+ A  
900-929 A-  
870-899 B+  
830-869 B  
800-829 B-  
770-799 C+  
730-769 C  
700-729 C-  
670-699 D+  
630-669 D  
600-629 D-  
599- F

### EXTRA CREDIT:

Any work created for this class (or related to it) that also gets published elsewhere, including in The VanCougar (online or print) receives 10 extra credit points (max 100)

**DEADLINES:** Deadlines are not flexible. Late assignments will not be accepted.

### WRITERS BEWARE

*Even the most minor mistakes destroy the integrity of a piece. Details are extremely important. To emphasize this point, any assignment containing a misspelled name will receive an automatic 30 percent penalty. Each misspelled word will lower the overall score of an assignment 10 percent. Other fundamental errors, including mistakes in grammar and punctuation, significantly will lower scores as well.*

## ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST

### JAN. 16

**DUE:** Oral performance (20 points) \_\_\_\_\_  
**Subject ideas / Forum post**

### JAN. 23

**DUE:** Source list (10 points) \_\_\_\_\_  
**Subject ideas / Forum post**

### JAN. 30

**DUE:** Create blog (20 points) \_\_\_\_\_  
**Forum posts**

### FEB. 5

**DUE:** **Blog**  
Quiz 1 (50 points) \_\_\_\_\_

### FEB. 13

**DUE:** Interview pro / report  
**Blog / Forum posts**

### FEB. 20

**DUE:** **Blog / Forum posts**

### FEB. 27

**DUE:** Perspectives report (50 points) \_\_\_\_\_

### MARCH 5

**DUE:** **Blog / Forum posts**

### MARCH 19

**DUE:** Quiz 2 (50 points) \_\_\_\_\_  
**Blog / Forum posts**

### MARCH 26

**DUE:** Slideshow (150 points) \_\_\_\_\_

### APRIL 2

**DUE:** Storyboard / **Blog / Forum posts**

### APRIL 9

**DUE:** **Forum posts**

### APRIL 16

**DUE:** Podcast (100 points) \_\_\_\_\_  
**Forum posts**

### APRIL 23

**DUE:** Quiz 3 (50 points) \_\_\_\_\_  
News video (150 points) \_\_\_\_\_  
Final presentation (250 points) \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL:** \_\_\_\_\_

+ (attendance, 100 possible) \_\_\_\_\_

+ (extra credit) \_\_\_\_\_

**= (FINAL GRADE)** \_\_\_\_\_

\* Final grade will include 100 points for attendance (50 points deducted for each missed class after one absence). This column's details are subject to change but will only do so with accompanying class notification and posting on the class forum.

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## IN GENERAL

*(Other information about this course that you should know)*

### DEPARTMENT (AND CLASS) GOALS

- \* Demonstrate competency with computers for designing, distributing, retrieving, and preserving digital works in various mediums for effective human-computer interactions.
- \* Synthesize media forms for multimedia contexts.
- \* Employ the principles of visual form for sophisticated image manipulation.
- \* Understand the production and assessment of media objects.
- \* Know the basics of information architecture and knowledge management along with ways digital information can be structured for retrieval and archival purposes for different audiences.
- \* Question the way digital media functions in multiple cultural contexts.
- \* Recognize various forms of language processing and their implications for media authoring.
- \* Appreciate the history of technological development, from local to global perspectives, and its implications for a variety of mediums.
- \* Utilize an interdisciplinary perspective in order to understand the basics of social, economic, and education changes brought about by digital media.
- \* Be practiced and capable communicators in all mediums.

### ASSESSMENT

A detailed assessment form will be provided for each graded component of this course to ensure our goals are aligned and expectations are met.

### ACADEMIC HONESTY / PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism (claiming another person's work as your own) and fabricating interviews or research will not be tolerated. Anyone who submits false work or cheats in any other way, will fail the assignment in question and possibly the course.

### METHODOLOGY

This course will offer its material in a combination of hands-on activities, small and large group sessions, one-on-one interactions, independent study and lectures.

### SPECIAL EVENTS

Several top professionals working in local media will be guest speaking during this term. It's our job to engage in discussion with them and create a dynamic learning environment fueled by their expertise and our energy to learn. See calendar on right.

### STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

WSU Vancouver seeks to provide appropriate academic adjustments for all individuals with disabilities. This university will comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines, specifically Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), with respect to providing appropriate academic adjustments to afford equal educational opportunity. It is the responsibility of the student to register with and provide medical verification and academic schedules to Student Services at the beginning of each semester and no later than the second week of school unless otherwise determined by the coordinator. The student also must contact the faculty member in a timely manner to arrange for appropriate academic adjustments.

### Guest speakers this term

\* **John Canzano**, staff writer at The Oregonian, Jan. 23 -- Blogging, a new way to think about instantaneous and tangential news. Canzano is a prominent sports writer at The Oregonian who writes a well-read blog that often breaks news about regional sports issues. His talk will be about the power of blogging as well as the challenges of maintaining such a feature.

\* **Jonathan Nelson**, staff writer at The Columbian, Jan. 30 -- How to dig up stories (and news) and turn those into digital gold. A veteran reporter, who worked at The Oregonian and The Bakersfield Californian before joining The Columbian, Jon shares tips on how to find and develop the compelling stories of our community and transform them for a web audience.

\* **Staci Tucker**, online manager at The Columbian, Feb. 6 -- Tucker has been drastically turning The Columbian's web site around with her inventive approaches to modern media delivery, ranging from e-mail news to R.S.S. feeds to cellphone updates. The focus of her talk will be what's ahead in the industry, looking five to 10 years in the future.

\* **Troy Wayrynen**, photo editor at The Columbian, March 5 -- Taking a news story beyond words. Wayrynen has been a regional leader in developing news stories into multimedia masterpieces. He will talk about the many options available, and show examples, primarily focusing on videos and slideshows.

\* **Matt Wastradowski**, staff writer at The Columbian, April 9 -- Here's a recent WSU Vancouver graduate who worked on The VanCougar and has parlayed that experience into a staff position at The Columbian. He's been thrust into this ever-changing (and super intense) media environment and brings that fresh perspective to the industry. His talk will be about the kinds of jobs out there right now, including information about his stint as an ad copywriter at Fred Meyer, and what it takes to make it in the modern media industry.

### DISCLAIMER:

Dates, assignments and other information contained in this syllabus could change with the flow of the class. Therefore, I reserve the right to make alterations.