

Web Journalism Model Course

Digital news production for a real audience

Selection criteria: Students produce and publish digital news for a local audience in a realistic editorial environment

*University of Nordland, Norway
Senter for Journalistikk*

Website: Journalism BA curriculum: <http://bit.ly/uin-ba-journo>
The web journalism course: <http://bit.ly/uin-webjournalism>

Study program:	Level	ECTS:	Weeks/Topics	Students
Bachelor in Journalism	BA	10	6 weeks	35

Keywords: multimedia, group/team, ethics, production, practical

Short description: The course is on 3rd semester of the Journalism BA. It lasts 6 weeks with 4-7 hours of daily work. Purpose of the course: To acquire competencies in producing online news journalism:

- Using text, photos, audio and video
- Understanding opportunities and challenges doing multimedia production
- Conducting web-based research (database research and more basic research)
- Using and understanding tools for monitoring user behavior
- Understanding routines and the organization of editorial teams
- Producing for a real audience

Reach – and monitoring: According to Google Analytics: 400-600 unique daily users. Main source of new users is probably students' use of Facebook and Twitter for sharing news.

Editorial teamwork: Students work individually and in editorial teams of 9-10 students. One student shall be editor-in-chief, and one shall be news editor. The students mainly produce local news stories. They will use their own photos, slide shows and video. Students are supposed to do local news stories. They cannot rely only on desk research but must meet people face to face and also take their own photos on location.

Topic	Practical exercise / application	Learning outcome
Web Journalism	12 published and assessed news pieces during the course and a final one-week assignment.	<p>Students must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain broad knowledge of themes, theories and processes connected to online news production • Have insight in ethical problems connected to online news production • Be capable of planning and conducting online journalism • Be able to exchange experiences and opinions through active participation in editorial processes • Have knowledge about current innovation and state of the developments in online news production

Suggested readings

Author	Title/Description of content	Year
Dalen, Ove	Effektiv nettskriving. Oslo: Cappelen Akademiske Forlag (240 pages in Norwegian). The book is about how to write for the Web using insight into user behavior, marketing, search engines, law, imagery, marketing, statistics and web analytics.	2009
Indahl, Nils G.	Nettjournalisten. Kr.sand: IJ-forlaget (151 pages in Norwegian). The book is about online journalistic workflow using elements such as graphic design, interaction design and programming - from idea to research, presentation and evaluation.	2007
Eide, Martin a.o.	Nytt på nett og brett: Journalistikk i forandring. Oslo: Univ.forlaget p. 85 -288. (203 pages in Norwegian). The book is about business models, experiments on new distribution platforms, and about various attempts to form alliances between media and users. The authors discuss, among other ideology, media criticism and journalism in a multi-cultural society.	2012

Assessment criteria: For each practical exercise, the students choose whether they want to create a news piece or a feature. The case/story should be topical. When choosing a feature it cannot be a portrait of a person.

The story shall address a local matter (it can also be of national interest, but this is not a requirement). The case/story will therefore deal with a topic or an event (large or small) at the physical place where the student is during the exam period. The student is supposed to have direct access to oral sources (interviewees).

During the research phase, students can of course use both oral and written/online sources. Text, images, video and audio should be produced by the student. When such material is produced by others, this must be justified in the reflection report.

Assessment criteria:

The case/story must include

- Title
- Lead/entry
- Lead/entry image
- Body text
- One or more visual and/or audio elements in the body text field: Photos, video, graphics/illustrations, or audio sequences.

The case/story should be publishable, that is, it shall comply with the Code of Ethics.

Production examples

Students produce and publish news for a local audience (in Norwegian) at <http://nettopp.uin.no/>

Contact:



Instructor/Contact person:

Bengt Engan, e-mail: bengt.engan@uin.no

Bonus material:

Short quote from instructor

What works well?

- News production in a realistic editorial environment (mirroring). Routines such as mandatory participation in editorial morning meetings, use of editorial chiefs (vaktstjef) (which changes every week).

- Quality assurance: Journalists (students) send their news pieces to the editorial chief for adjustments and feedback. Then it goes to the front chief (frontstjef) (a student who is responsible for the front page).

- Mandatory editorial considerations and discussions of best ways of presentation for each single news piece: would video or photos add important information to the story or improve the end user experience significantly?

Teaching environment:

Testimonial from a student

The most thrilling about the course is that we get to work like "real" journalists. The work flow is similar to what you meet in the media today. In my opinion, however, we could have produced even more articles during the course.

Kjetil R. Anda