Application for Course Inclusion as a General Education Course (not including FYS)

Course number  JN 2210  Title: Journalism and Society

Catalog description:
This course uses fiction to develop an understanding of how society and societal behavior is affected by journalism and the reporting of events through texts and film: how journalists cover events, different approaches to recording events (broadcast, print), and the history and current state of journalism. It allows students an opportunity to see how they can change social behavior by writing history, one day at a time.

Instructor name(s): (if more than one instructor teaches)
1. Dan Mason

For which area are you requesting your course approval?

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<th>Written Communication</th>
<th>Mathematics</th>
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<td>Oral Communication</td>
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Please include course syllabi and relevant related course documents to support your request for inclusion.

(1) Describe how your course will advance the overall mission of the GE Program.

This class will enable students outside of the Mass Communication program to be introduced to the concept of journalism creating and supporting a democracy.

This course will advance the mission of the GE Program because it will help students make sense of their lives and their world by examining truths about reporting through the auspices of fiction. This course directly advances the GE attributes of fostering an inquiring mind, effective communication, the exercise of civic responsibility, and understanding and evaluating multiple perspectives. This class will emphasize the effect of news, with an emphasis on society’s reliance on information, without regard to its delivery system. We will explore what media is, its importance in maintaining the stability of a healthy democracy, how media affects people’s lives, and how it helps to shape the public’s view of world events.

(2) Describe (when appropriate) how the course will include any or all of the following: a) substantial opportunities for oral and/or written communication, b) encourage active and participatory learning, or c) promote application of general education knowledge, skills, and dispositions to students’ lives outside of and beyond the university experience.

• Substantial opportunities for oral and/or written communication: This course will focus primarily on written responses with substantial in-class discussions.
• Promotes application of general education knowledge, skills, and dispositions to students’ lives outside and beyond the university experience: The course will incorporate current and historic scenarios and implications on democracy and society.

(3) There are a number of goals of the GE Program (see instructions). Which will your course promote?

This course will promote the following goals of the GE Program:
• Acquire knowledge of: the foundations and characteristics of educated discourse, the unity and diversity of humanity, the approaches of the liberal arts disciplines
• Exhibit skills in: critical and analytical thinking, effective written and oral communication, inquiry and research
• Develop dispositions to: value knowledge and continuing growth, form opinions and modify positions based on evidence
(4) Describe how your course meets the relevant course objectives for the chosen area (these can be found in the middle column of the General Education Plan on pages 6 – 21).

- Address theories of individual and social behavior: The course opens with a discussion about how society is effected by who records events and how the events are reported.
- Focus on human and social behaviors and how those behaviors shape and are shaped by institutions, groups, individuals, and the physical world: Following The Truth by Terry Pratchett, students will discuss gossip, sensationalism and information and respond to: why people were upset about the advent of a newspaper and how they came to realize it served a valuable function in their society.
- Employ appropriate methods, technology, and data analysis that social and behavioral scientists use to investigate the human condition: Following Fletch by Gregory McDonald, students will discuss effective size of media outlets and respond to: Who pays for investigative reporting? Is it necessary for the smooth functioning of society? How can we tell investigation from “gossip”?
- Involve description, analysis, and communication of scientific and historical approaches to the study of human behavior: Following Rumor Has It by Charles Dickinson and State of Play, students will discuss the editor’s role, and investigative reporting and respond to: the role of the editor in guiding the production of news, the importance of the editor in creating a publication. What effect does the editor’s role as gatekeeper have on the information available to readers? Also, students will respond to differences between reporting in England and in the United States. Is investigative reporting important in other societies?
- Involve analysis, critical assessment, and examination of potential solutions to social problems: Following The Truth by Terry Pratchett, Basket Case by Carl Hiaasen, and The Shipping News by E. Annie Proulx students will discuss the role of newspapers in small towns and respond to: What happens to Mansfield and the surrounding area when the Wellsboro Gazette goes out of business? Who is going to report on high school sports? The school board? The borough council? How will this change the information available to voters? As well as responding to: How is reporting the news in Florida different from reporting the news in Newfoundland? How are their social functions different?
- Require students read discipline specific texts and engage in writing that totals at least 1500 words: The required primary materials are listed in the new course proposal form and are replicated below:
  * The Truth by Terry Pratchett
  * Trust Me on This by Donald E. Westlake
  * Fletch by Gregory McDonald
  * The Shipping News by E. Annie Proulx
  * Rumor Has It by Charles Dickinson
  * Basket Case by Carl Hiaasen

Further, assignments include nine, 500-word responses to targeted topics.

(5) Describe the types of activities and assignments students will complete to demonstrate the relevant desired student learning outcomes (e.g. in-class discussion, reflection paper, homework assignments, exam, etc). In other words, how will you be assessing students’ competencies in the relevant learning outcomes?

All assignments and activities are included in the course syllabus. They are summarized below:

- Nine 500-word written responses to targeted questions at the conclusion of various topics
- In-class discussion and analysis
- Review quizzes
- Mid-term exam (multiple choice and essay)
- Final exam (multiple choice and essay)

Approved by GES ________ Approved by GES, pending ________ minor change ________ Not Approved by GES

**GES Recommendation Dates and Signatures:**

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<td>Gen’l Education Subcomm.</td>
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