

Senior Capstone: JTC 460-002

Class Syllabus

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Journalism & Media Communication
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Course description

This course is designed to help you prepare yourself for the job market in your field of expertise. The process will involve perfecting your resume and cover letter strategies, and creating a strong portfolio by selecting and refining the work you have completed in previous classes and/or professional gigs. The main challenges will be to focus your materials and efforts, as well as create and polish your professional identity to the point where you can present yourself in a cohesive and strong manner to potential employers. You will also create some new and original materials to strengthen your portfolio.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of this course you will be able to:

- Develop strategies to present yourself in the best possible way to enter the workforce
- Develop a strong job application package
- Develop a professional persona in line with your career goals
- Customize your materials to target specific jobs
- Learn the strengths of social media and creating a positive online persona that will help you land a good job
- Develop four new pieces to strengthen your portfolio and address pertinent gaps

LEARNING RESOURCES

Canvas is where course content, grades, and communication will reside for this course.

- <http://canvas.colostate.edu>
 - Your **username** is your **eID**, and your **password** is your global password (the same one you use for RamWeb or RamMail).
- For [Canvas](#), [Passwords](#), or any other computer-related technical support, contact the [Computing Help Desk](#).
 - (970) 491-7276
 - helpdesk@colostate.edu

CLASS WORK

Capstone Reviews 20%

At the end of the semester you will participate in Capstone Reviews. This process is very valuable for your professional launch. Two external reviewers (media professionals) and one JMC instructor will meet with you virtually to review your portfolio and your resume. They will give you constructive feedback on all your materials. During the semester we will build your portfolio and resume to make it as perfect as possible for the reviews.

Personal Branding 5%

For this class you will develop your personal brand by writing a personal branding statement and a short bio of yourself.

LinkedIn PROFILE 5%

Even if you already have a Linked In profile, we will go through some strategies that will help you refine and enhance your information so you can get the most out of it.

RESUME & COVER LETTER 15%

We will tackle this task until you have a comprehensive resume and cover letter master template that you can tailor and customize for any job you want to apply to. This process will start at the very beginning of the semester. Expect to do lots of revisions.

PORTFOLIO 20%

One of the most important job application tools for careers in the field of journalism and communication is a strong portfolio. The portfolio style and content will depend on your own career focus but it should be visually cohesive and reflect your best work. Each student will present a portfolio proposal that reflects the industry standards that you are aiming to get a job in. Based on this proposal we will work on a final product that meets the highest quality standards and represents your professional goals and identity. Comprehensive specs will vary depending on your focus and will be available on Canvas.

REFINEMENT/INDEPENDENT Project 5%

You will refine ONE project that you have already created for other classes that will help strengthen your portfolio in areas that need a little extra boost.

Project will be presented on the day it is due. Come to class prepared to talk about your project, the process and the results. Presentations will be short and informal, you don't need to have slides, but be prepared to show your finished product to the whole class.

FEATURE SHOWCASE PROJECT 10%

You will create ONE feature project from scratch for this class. This project should address a gap that you have in your portfolio. This project can be done individually or in groups. The project will happen at your own pace and we will establish a project plan for deliverables throughout the semester.

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS & READINGS 10%

There will be a few class assignments, exercises and participation opportunities as well as a couple readings that will be directly applicable to what you are working on.

NETWORKING Contacts 10%

You will have to attend a one-on-one informational interview with a professional in your field you don't know (so not your boss, not a professor, etc.)

You will also have to attend 1 event/networking opportunity during the semester. You can do another informational interview and/or networking event for extra credit.

Attendance at the job fair is be **strongly encouraged** and could count for the event above or for extra credit.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. Research has proven the most important predictor of classroom success is directly linked to attendance. Additionally, surveys indicate the vast majority of students prefer an attendance policy that requires them to attend class on a regular basis. Absences will only be excused if I am notified ahead of time.

Canvas Notification Preferences

Please make sure your Canvas notification preferences are set so that you will receive course announcements [ASAP](#) or [Daily](#) (*click the appropriate link to set your preference*).

Late Work

Please plan to complete everything in a timely fashion and give yourself a cushion to submit assignments online. Sometimes Canvas has glitches when a lot of people access it at once and try to upload files, so please don't leave submissions until the last minute. Dropbox files are time-stamped when uploaded and this will be the official time submission taken into account for grading. There will be a **10% grade deduction PER DAY late** for assignments turned in after the due date/time.

Inform Your Instructor of Any Accommodations Needed

Students with learning, psychiatric, or health disabilities that may impede your full participation in this course are encouraged to see me and the Resources for Disabled Students (RDS). To obtain disability-related academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids, students are responsible to notify the instructor of this need by presenting them with an accommodations letter/memo from RDS (<http://rds.colostate.edu/accommodation-process>, 970-491-6385). Students are not required to use RDS services or disclose disabilities to the instructor, but the instructor is under no obligation to provide any accommodations without an accommodations letter/memo. Students are encouraged to schedule an appointment with RDS as soon as possible since accommodations are generally NOT retroactive and verification may take some time. Once the accommodations letter/memo is obtained by the instructor, it may still be reviewed and adapted in cooperation with your RDS counselor to achieve the same learning outcomes as all students.

Academic Integrity

We take academic integrity seriously. At minimum, academic integrity means that no one will use another's work as their own. The CSU writing center defines plagiarism this way:

Plagiarism is the unauthorized or unacknowledged use of another person's academic or scholarly work. Done on purpose, it is cheating. Done accidentally, it is no less serious. Regardless of how it occurs, plagiarism is a theft of intellectual property and a violation of an ironclad rule demanding "credit be given where credit is due."

Source: Writing Guides: Understanding Plagiarism.

<http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/researchsources/understandingplagiarism/plagiarismoverview.cfm>.

If you plagiarize in your work you could lose credit for the plagiarized work, fail the assignment, or fail the course. Plagiarism could result in expulsion from the university. Each instance of plagiarism, classroom cheating, and other types of academic dishonesty will be addressed according to the principles published in the CSU General Catalog (see page seven, column two: <http://www.catalog.colostate.edu/FrontPDF/1.6POLICIES1112f.pdf>).

A NOTE ABOUT AI: Generally speaking, you are not authorized to use artificial intelligence engines, software, or artwork generating programs (or similar) to produce work for this class without explicit permission from the instructor, following a discussion on whether it is appropriate for the use of such technologies on SOME assignments. You should not, however, construe this limited use as permission to use these technologies in any other facet of this course.

GRADES

Assignments and projects have a set due date. You are responsible for delivering the materials in the specified format to the instructor at the BEGINNING of the class when the assignment is due. I treat this class as a real-world production pipeline, be professional and you will get very good grades.

You can always work on your projects to fix and improve the original and work on getting a higher grade but you have to turn in the original project ON TIME when it's first due. Also please make sure you READ DIRECTIONS CAREFULLY for projects and assignments.

It is ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY to complete, turn in and present your final Portfolio during Capstone reviews in order to pass the class. Even if you have full credit for all the other assignments and projects, you will not be able to pass the class if you don't complete and present the Portfolio.

Some assignments will be collected using the Blackboard Assignments Tab and some others will be printed and handed in, please follow directions.

Your grade is based on the following:

- Capstone Reviews 20%
- Personal Branding 5%
- LinkedIn Profile 5%
- Resume/Cover Letter 15%
- Portfolio 20%
- Refinement Project 5%
- Feature Project 10%
- Class Assignments 10%
- Networking Contacts 10%

Grading Scheme

A+	100%	to 98.00%
A	< 98.00%	to 93.33%
A-	< 93.33%	to 90%
B+	< 90%	to 86.67%
B	< 86.67%	to 83.33%
B-	< 83.33%	to 80%
C+	< 80%	to 76.67%
C	< 76.67%	to 70%
D	< 70%	to 60%
F	< 60%	to 0%

Grading Criteria

- Accuracy, functionality, appeal, focus, clarity, organization, readability
- Spatial organization and element structure for design pieces
- Effective use of type and color
- Creativity and originality
- Completion & Timeliness
- Following directions
- Attention to detail
- Going above and beyond assignment specs

Extra Credit

There may be a couple opportunities throughout the semester to complete certain activities for extra credit. Your instructor will let you know what these activities are and when they are due. These are great opportunities for extra practice and to make up for some points should you miss an assignment or quiz.

University Diversity Statement

Colorado State University is committed to embracing diversity through the inclusion of individuals reflective of characteristics such as: age, culture, different ideas and perspectives, disability, ethnicity, first generation status, familial status, gender identity and expression, geographic background, marital status, national origin, race, religious and spiritual beliefs, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, physical appearance, medical diagnosis, documentation status, and veteran status with special attention given to populations historically underrepresented or excluded from participation in higher education. The University's commitment to diversity is a longstanding one that reflects our role and mission as a land-grant institution.

Student safety & community practices

- CSU's Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Stalking, and Retaliation policy designates faculty and employees of the University as "Responsible Employees." This designation is consistent with federal law and guidance, and requires faculty to report information regarding students who may have experienced any form of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, stalking or retaliation. This includes information shared with faculty in person, electronic communications or in class assignments. As "Responsible Employees," faculty may refer students to campus resources (see below), together with informing the Office of Support and Safety Assessment to help ensure student safety and welfare. Information regarding sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, stalking and retaliation is treated with the greatest degree of confidentiality possible while also ensuring student and campus safety.

- Any student who may be the victim of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, stalking or retaliation is encouraged to report to CSU through one or more of the following resources:
- Emergency Response, call 911
Deputy Title IX Coordinator/Office of Support and Safety Assessment, call (970) 491-1350
Colorado State University Police Department (non-emergency), call (970) 491-6425
- For counseling support and assistance, please see the CSU Health Network, which includes a variety of counseling services that can be accessed at: <http://www.health.colostate.edu/>.
- And, the Sexual Assault Victim Assistance Team is a confidential student resource that does not have a reporting requirement and that can be of great help to students who have experienced sexual assault. The web address is <http://www.wgac.colostate.edu/need-help-support>.

This course meets the following professional values and competencies as outlined by The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications . This JMC course will help you:

- 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;
- write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes you serve;
- critically evaluate your own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which you work, and to understand the digital world.