



## SYLLABUS

### Instructor:

Dr. Ayleen Cabas-Mijares

**Office:** 410-C Johnston Hall

**Office phone:** (414) 288-3497

### Email:

ayleen.cabasmijares@marquette.edu

### Student hours:

### THE USE OF STUDENT HOURS

Set up meetings with me to address the following situations:

- Solve issues with class topics, sources, writing, research.
- Talk over issues and ideas raised in readings and in class.
- Discuss a grade on an assignment and/or challenges you are facing with assignments.

NOTE 1: When you take advantage of student hours you are not imposing. It is part of my job to be available to meet with you. You are encouraged and welcome to talk to me about your experience in this class.

### REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Textbook: [Cross-Cultural Journalism and Strategic Communication Storytelling and Diversity](#). Edited by Maria Len-Rios and Earnest Perry.

Additional materials and resources will be available to you in our D2L site.

## *JOURNALISM 4---*

# Social Justice Reporting Seminar

### ABOUT THE COURSE

In this course, students will engage in a critical examination of the role of journalism in (re)producing, challenging, and enabling social issues in the United States. Specifically, the seminar will survey historical and current journalistic constructions of race, gender, sexuality, disability, and class as well as the practices that reify hierarchies within and across these categories of difference both in and outside American newsrooms. The course develops an interdisciplinary approach, drawing from the fields of journalism studies, critical/cultural media studies, queer and disability studies, and sociology to help students articulate how journalism structures our understanding of ourselves and the world around us.

Students will examine journalistic epistemologies and practices that have either enabled or disrupted patterns of misrepresentation and erasure of minoritized identities and issues such as poverty, police brutality, the prison industrial complex, redlining and gentrification, environmental injustice, pay inequity, and more. Students will work collaboratively to critically analyze existing journalism practices and content. Moreover, students will develop original guidelines to effectively incorporate a social justice lens to reporting.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Identify and discuss how journalism helps shape social perceptions of gender, race, sexuality, age, disability, and class.
- Recognize how journalistic content is produced by mainstream and alternative media and how audiences make use of those messages.
- Cultivate self-reflection of one's role and impact as potential journalism practitioners.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of journalism in a global society.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping journalism.
- 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.

## GRADING SCALE

A	93 - 100
A-	90 - 92
B+	87 - 89
B	83 - 86
B-	80 - 82
C+	77 - 79
C	73 - 76
C-*	70 - 72
D+	67 - 69
D	60 - 66
F	< 59

\*While C- is a passing grade, the GPA value of C- grades is less than the 2.0 value required to maintain satisfactory academic standing.

## ASSESSMENT

Attendance & participation	10%
Journal reflections	20%
Discussion Forums	30%
Social Justice reporting guides	40%

## GRADE APPEALS

Appeals of grades for assignments or exams are accepted 24 hours **after** receipt of the grade unless otherwise notified. The appeal must be in written form and outline the reasons why the grade should be reconsidered. Appeals will not be accepted prior to the 24-hour waiting period.

## COURSE MODULES

- **Defining social justice journalism.** This module traces the genealogy of social justice journalism and evaluates how the term helps us reframe journalism as a practice for liberation.
- **The shortcomings of traditional journalism.** Students will learn about the epistemologies and practices that undermine journalists' comprehension and reporting of the issues that affect poor people and people of minoritized backgrounds (i.e., BIPOC, LGBTQ people, disabled people, etc.).
- **Media activism and social movement media.** In this module, students learn about how activists have engaged media to achieve their political goals. Furthermore, we will see how alternative media has addressed the shortcomings of traditional journalism to produce stories that accurately represent and empower communities. U.S. and international cases are discussed.
- **Social justice newsrooms.** This module presents case studies about the history, victories, and struggles of newsrooms that have prioritized social justice reporting in the U.S., including the [Milwaukee Neighborhood News Service \(NNS\)](#).
- **Finding the (social injustice) story.** Students will obtain guidelines to identify the social justice angle of news stories. This module will also provide resources for students to work through their – and their potential editors' – blind spots.
- **Cultivating diverse sources.** To produce fair and accurate reporting about minoritized communities, journalists need to gain their trust. This module teaches students how build a diverse pool of informants by developing meaningful and non-exploitative relationships with poor and minoritized communities.
- **Interviewing diverse sources.** Students will learn best practices to interview people from minoritized backgrounds.
- **Reporting social justice IRL.** In collaboration with [O'Brien Fellows](#), students will learn how journalists plan and execute reporting on a variety of social justice issues. The fellows will showcase their work and answer students' questions.

## ASSIGNMENTS

- **Journal Reflections:** Students will complete two brief journal reflections at the beginning and end of the semester. Students will reflect on the experiences they have regarding the topics of the class.
- **Discussion Forums:** In these online discussions, students will engage in conversation with their classmates to get a better understanding of class concepts, to apply these concepts to real-life examples, and/or to create media artifacts that consolidate their collective knowledge.
- **Social Justice reporting guides:** Students will team up to develop and present two best-practices guides to report on (1) a minoritized community, and (2) a social justice-related issue of their choice.