PLNU forward

Fall 2021

Meeting Days: Tues/Thur	**Instructor:** Lynn Walsh
Meeting Times: 5:30-6:45 pm	**Phone:** 614-579-7937
Meeting Location: Bond 151	**E-mail:** LWalsh@pointloma.edu
Office Hours: Upon request using this link	

PLNU Mission

To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Foundational Explorations Mission

PLNU provides a foundational course of study in the liberal arts informed by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In keeping with the Wesleyan tradition, the curriculum equips students with a broad range of knowledge and skills within and across disciplines to enrich major study, lifelong learning, and vocational service as Christ-like participants in the world's diverse societies and culture.

Course Description

As journalists, we have to stop assuming people understand the mission, ethics and processes behind our work. We can't let ourselves be dismissed as a homogeneous group based on perceptions of "the media." Instead, we need to actively work to earn trust from our communities by telling them why we are worthy of their time, trust and support. This course will help you understand the common mistrust of media and gain a better understanding of what trust in news looks like in the U.S. It will also provide you with tips and tools to be more transparent, more engaged and more open with your users.

Course Learning Outcomes

1. **Understand the common mistrust of media and gain a better understanding of what trust in news looks like in the U.S.**

2. **Learn how to be part of the conversation.** In the partisan world we live in you know you will likely receive criticism and accusations about your news coverage. Are you ready to respond?

More importantly, are you prepared to engage with your audience by asking for and listening to their feedback? This class will prepare you to answer these questions.

3. **Learn how to correct the misunderstandings that drive some attitudes toward journalism.** Most non-journalists don't know how journalists do their jobs. And why should they? Historically, we have done a poor job of explaining how it works. In this class, you will learn how to correct misconceptions and assumptions about journalism while building trust in your work.

4. **Learn how to tell your own story.** You're part of "the media," but you don't need to let that define you. Trust in "the media" is low, and in some cases, there may be good reasons for that. But, you're part of "the media" too, right? And you produce honest, ethical, trustworthy content, right? In this class, you will learn how to differentiate your journalism from the rest and build trust in the process.

5. **Learn how to get credit for the ethics and fairness behind your news coverage.** As a journalist, you know how hard you work to be fair and ethical, but do your users? Probably not. In this class, you will learn how you can discuss your standards for ethics and fairness with your users.

6. **Learn how to retain subscriptions and thrive financially.** Journalism costs money. We know that, but do our users? Do they know why supporting you is important to the communities you serve? In this class, you will learn how to talk about your value as a journalist and why it costs money.

Department Learning Outcomes

1. Students will demonstrate the skills necessary for effective research, writing, and oral communication in various genres and media. 2. Students will display interpretive, analytical, and critical skills developed through the close study and analysis of texts. 3. Students will demonstrate knowledge of diverse cultures and literary texts. 4. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the nature, structure, and history of language. 5. Students will develop redemptive social and spiritual engagement through studies of language, text, cultures, and media.

Journalism Program Learning Outcomes

Students who complete the program in Journalism will be able to 1. exhibit effective research and reporting practices. 2. display strong interpretive, analytic, and critical thinking skills. 3. communicate ideas clearly and accurately in forms appropriate to the purpose, medium, and audience. 4. employ appropriate ethical and legal standards and professional codes in their service to their communities and cultures.

Required Texts

Students are also expected to consume news content every day, monitor news websites or news broadcasts and be ready to discuss events and coverage. Subscribing to news apps is a good idea.

Course Credit Hour Information

In the interest of providing sufficient time to accomplish the stated Course Learning Outcomes, this class meets the PLNU credit hour policy for a three-unit class delivered over 15 weeks. It is anticipated

that students will spend a minimum of 37.5 participation hours per credit hour on their coursework. For this course, students will spend an estimated 112.5 total hours meeting the course learning outcomes. The time estimations are provided in the Canvas modules.

ASSIGNMENT VALUES:	GRADE % SCALE:
News Consumption Log (100 points)	A=90-100
News Consumption Log Reflection Paper (100 points)	B-=80-89
Misinformation Assignment (50 points)	C=70-79
Interviewing Assignment (100 points)	D=60-69
Identities and Bias Assignment (50 points) Calling Card (50 points)	F=0-59
Feedback Loop Assignment (100 points)	
About Us Page Assignment (50 points)	
Replying to News Consumer Assignment (50 points)	
Media Literacy Assignment (50 points)	
Participation/Attendance (50 points)	
Extra Credit for Published Work: *Students are encouraged to get news stories published to begin building a professional portfolio. Up to two stories published from the first day of class until the last day of class may be submitted for extra credit in JRN 3050* **IF the stories include a trust element.**	

State Authorization

State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location. Refer to the map on State Authorization to view which states allow online (distance education) outside of California.

Incomplete and Late Assignments

All assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the beginning of the class session when they are due—including assignments posted in Canvas. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances.

PLNU Copyright Policy

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU Academic Honesty Policy

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the University Catalog. See Academic Policies for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy

If you have a diagnosed disability, please contact PLNU's Disability Resource Center (DRC) within the first two weeks of class to demonstrate need and to register for accommodation by phone at 619-849-2486 or by e-mail at DRC@pointloma.edu. See Disability Resource Center for additional information.

PLNU Attendance And Participation Policy

Regular and punctual attendance at all classes is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent from more than 10 percent of class meetings, the faculty member can file a written report which may result in de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation. See Academic Policies in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog.

Assignments

News Consumption Log & Reflection Paper

Description: Students will keep track of the news/media they consume each week.

Requirements: Students will use this log to keep track of the news and information they consume throughout the semester. At the end of the semester, the students will reflect on that consumption. While reflecting on the news they consumed you are consuming, they should consider the following questions:

- Did you feel the news was trustworthy and unbiased? Why/Why Not?
- What was the purpose of the news you consumed? Was it meant to inform? Persuade? Make you feel good? Get you to take action? Uncover something?
- Did you change your news-consuming habits throughout the semester? Why/Why not?

● Did anything about your log and consumption habits surprise you? Why/Why not?

Misinformation Assignment

Description: Students will learn how to tell if the information is misleading or created to deceive the public.

Requirements: Complete the following online course and to test your knowledge of misinformation/disinformation and gain a better understanding of how to report on conspiracy theories and incorrect information shared online.

● [Identifying and Tackling Manipulated Media](#)
● [Geolocation Challenge](#)
● [Observation Challenge](#)

Interviewing Assignment

Description: Students will interview five classmates, family, friends, community members, professors, etc. to understand their concerns about journalism/news/media.

Requirements: Write about who you interviewed and what they said when you asked them about their concerns about the news media. The class will discuss the assignment in class and students should be prepared to talk about:

● What did you find? (While they're doing this I can create a map on the board of overlapping concerns)
● What was most concerning to you?
● What surprised you the most?
● Do you agree with the concerns raised?

Examining our Identities and Biases Assignment

Description: Our experiences and personal biases can impact how we consume, interpret and feel about the media. What are your biases?

Requirements: Write about what your biases are and how you are working to consume news despite these biases. Or maybe you are not. Explain.

Create a student calling card.
In this assignment at the beginning of the semester as part of their work on knowing their identities and places of bias in relation to their specialty, they create a 300-word calling card to hand out to sources stating:
● Name
● Pronouns
● Phone number
● Email

- Topic reporting on and why
- Which of their identities may influence how they think about the topic and the process they will take to consider those influences and perhaps counteract them
- Their relationship with the community and topics they cover.

(This could also be attached to an email, shared on social, texted as an image, or printed as a handout.)

Feedback Loop Assignment

Pick a news organization and based on their feedback loop (comments on social media, website) answer the following questions:

- What are some common threads? Identify two or three themes. Describe the nature of each assumption, complaint or attitude. Screenshot or quote examples from each one.
- What two or three things do you wish your specific audience or community understood about what you do?
    - If the audience understood those things, how would that benefit the journalists? How would *your* job be easier if you were better understood?
    - What would the benefits be for the audience? How would their news consumption be improved if they understood you better?

Score "About Us" pages and ethics policies

Analyze and improve student media or another news outlet. Each person in a class could pick an outlet to score.

Which of these elements are findable?

- ❏ Mission statement and values (And do they address who the journalists work on behalf of?)
- ❏ Ethics policies
    - ❏ Corrections and accuracy
    - ❏ Financial independence
    - ❏ Political independence
    - ❏ Commitment to diversity
    - ❏ Photo and video editing and ethics
    - ❏ Conflicts of interest
- ❏ Ownership and funding
- ❏ History
- ❏ Staff list
- ❏ Submission instructions (for story tips, corrections, breaking news photos, etc.)
- ❏ Contact information that answers questions such as:
    - ❏ How to submit a news tip or a correction request
    - ❏ How to contact a specific newsroom department/journalist
    - ❏ Who to ask about delivery of your product (subscriptions, mobile app, website)
    - ❏ Who to ask about community sponsorships or placing an ad

Responding to News Consumers Assignment

OPTION ONE: Practice responding to your own news consumers. Take a look at the assignment "Understand mistrust in your own journalism," above. Pick three sample comments.

- Screenshot or paste the comment here, and summarize what the commenter was responding to, if applicable.
- Identify what "information gap" is present. What do you wish this person knew about journalism overall or this piece of journalism specifically?
- Draft a response, considering both the facts and tone of your message.
- Consider collecting the best responses in a document for the staff to refer back to and use as related issues appear in real time.

OPTION TWO: Read the following scenarios a newsroom could face, and draft responses. Each scenario represents a break in trust and an opportunity to demonstrate credibility and actively earn trust. Think critically about what the problem or misunderstanding really is. How could you respond in the moment, and what could the newsroom do proactively moving forward. Imagine you are speaking on behalf of the brand, not just yourself.

Media Literacy Story Assignment:

You've learned that people do not know a lot about how journalism and "the media" work. Pick something related to journalism and what you know about how it works and explain it to your community. For this story, you can write something, create a video or digital news piece to be used on social platforms. All written pieces should be 500 words or less.

The story should be written and produced for a digital audience using AP style. All stories should include the following:

- Story text
- Image with caption
- Social media post (Twitter thread or Tweet, TikTok video, Instagram post or story, Facebook post or Facebook LIVE, etc.)

Criteria for grading includes accuracy, completeness, newsworthiness and significance of information, reader interest, fairness, organization of story, clarity, conciseness, precision of language, grammar, punctuation, spelling, proper use of style and production value.

Examples from other news organizations:

https://www.wcpo.com/about-us/trust/wcpo-9-newsroom-staffers-break-down-the-life-cycle-of-a-news-story

https://www.cpr.org/2020/08/28/how-cpr-news-plans-to-cover-the-2020-election/#sources

https://pen.org/how-to-talk-to-friends-and-family-who-share-misinformation/

https://j-source.ca/article/globe-and-mail-tests-new-in-article-explainers/