



Department of Literature, Journalism, Writing & Languages

## **JRN3050 Special Topics in Journalism: Social Media and Journalism**

3 Units— *Fall 2023*

**Monday and Wednesday 6:30- 7:45 p.m.**

**Bond Academic Center (BAC) 151 (by the lobby/back entrance)**

**Final Exam: Monday, Dec. 11 at 7:30 p.m.**

<b>Instructor title and name:</b>	Dana Williams, Adjunct Professor
<b>Phone:</b>	650-787-9971
<b>Email:</b>	danawilliams@pointloma.edu
<b>Office location and hours:</b>	My office is BAC 123! I am available Mondays from 5:30-6:30 p.m. but I am available via phone or email, as needed.

### **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**

JRN3050 Special Topics in Journalism focuses on current aspects of journalism with a different concentration each time it is offered. The course may be repeated for up to six units, as long as the content is different each time. This semester, JRN3050 will focus on Social Media and Journalism, why it is important and how students can leverage emerging platforms for journalistic purposes both effectively and responsibly.

## **Program and Course Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of this JRN3050 course, you will be able to confidently and successfully demonstrate the following:

- An understanding of how emerging platforms are a part of the shifting media landscape
- An understanding of what the different social media platforms are and how they are different.
- An understanding of how to use social media platforms both effectively and responsibly.
- An understanding of the difference between using social media platforms both as a tool to promote/publish journalism and to gather information.
- An understanding of how to navigate content on social media and identify sourcing, as well as legitimacy

This is just a taste of what you will experience in this course. Our sessions, like social media, will be ever-evolving based on topics that may come up through the course of the semester. Come curious, and ready to learn! If you are reading this syllabus closely, include a smiley face next to your signature when you turn it in and the first three people will receive a special treat.

## **Required Materials**

You will need access to a smartphone with several social media apps (Instagram, Facebook, X, TikTok, YouTube, etc.) and a computer with internet access (also to get on social media platforms).

Please do not hesitate to let me know if this will be an issue for you, and we will find a solution.

## **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 3 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.

## Assessment and Grading

Each assignment in JRN3050 is given a point value based on the importance of the assignment and the amount of time it is anticipated to take. Assignments and their value will be posted in Canvas in advance of being due.

Some examples:

- Interview a Journalist: How Do They Use Social Media? This is a 50-point assignment in which you will research, connect with and interview a journalist about how they use social media for their role. Students will have one week to write an article based on their findings, as well as create a social media post.
- Weekly Reflections: This is a 15-point semester-long assignment in which you will be required to post one thing you learn each week on X. There are 15 weeks, each week is worth one point.
- Guest Speakers: Each time a guest speaker comes to class, you will be required to ask at least one question that is required to be submitted in Canvas the night before. Each guest speaker question will be one point, but over the course of the semester, this will add up!

Overall grades will be based on the following scale:

### Grade Scale Based on Percentages

A	B	C	D	F
A 93-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F Less than 59
A- 90-92	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

## Final Examination Policy

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Class Schedules](#) site. If you find yourself scheduled for three (3) or more final examinations on the same day, you are authorized to contact each professor to arrange a different time for one of those exams. However, unless you have three (3) or more exams on the same day, no requests for alternative final examinations will be granted.

## Content Warning

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive various types of information. In JRN3050, all of the class content, including that

which may be intellectually or emotionally challenging, has been intentionally curated to achieve the learning goals for this course. In this course, you will be asked to be posting and searching on social media and internet platforms consistently. If you encounter a topic on those platforms that is intellectually challenging for you, it can manifest in feelings of discomfort and upset. In response, I encourage you to come talk to me or your friends or family about it. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of journalism, and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

### **Trigger Warning**

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive several types of information. In JRN3050, you will be asked to post and search on social media and internet platforms consistently. During this time, you may encounter something that you find triggering. The experience of being triggered versus intellectually challenged are different. The main difference is that an individual must have experienced trauma to experience being triggered, whereas an intellectual challenge has nothing to do with trauma. If you are a trauma survivor and encounter a topic in this class that is triggering for you, you may feel overwhelmed or panicked and find it difficult to concentrate. In response, I encourage you to take the necessary steps for your emotional safety. This may include leaving class while the topic is discussed or talking to a therapist at the Counseling Center. Should you choose to sit out on discussion of a certain topic, know that you are still responsible for the material; but we can discuss if there are other methods for accessing that material, and for assessing your learning on that material. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of journalism, and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

### **Incompletes and Late Assignments**

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

### **Spiritual Care**

Please be aware PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith.

If students have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain or have prayer requests you can contact your professor or the [Office of Spiritual Life and Formation](#).

### **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.

### **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.

### **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy**

For the most part, you are allowed to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g, ChatGPT, iA Writer, Marmot, Botowski) to generate ideas, but you **are not allowed** to use AI tools to generate content (text, video, audio, images) that will end up in any work submitted to be graded for this course. If you have any doubts about using AI, please gain permission from the instructor.

### **PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy**

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities. Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center ([EAC@pointloma.edu](mailto:EAC@pointloma.edu) or 619-849-2486). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will issue an academic accommodation plan ("AP") to all faculty who teach courses in which the student is enrolled each semester.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course and/or if they do not wish to utilize some or all of the elements of their AP in that course.

Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC.

## **Language and Belonging**

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe and hospitable learning environment for all students. As Christian scholars we are keenly aware of the power of language and believe in treating others with dignity. As such, it is important that our language be equitable, inclusive, and prejudice free. Inclusive/Bias-free language is the standard outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and it is the expected norm in university-level work. Good writing and speaking do not use unsubstantiated or irrelevant generalizations about personal qualities such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status, parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation. Inclusive language also avoids using stereotypes or terminology that demeans persons or groups based on age, disability, class, ethnicity, gender, race, language, or national origin. Respectful use of language is particularly important when referring to those outside of the religious and lifestyle commitments of those in the PLNU community. By working toward precision and clarity of language, we mark ourselves as serious and respectful scholars, and we model the Christ-like quality of hospitality.

You may report an incident(s) using the [Bias Incident Reporting Form](#).

## **Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination**

In support of a safe learning environment, if you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that accommodations and resources are available through the Title IX Office at [pointloma.edu/Title-IX](http://pointloma.edu/Title-IX). Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, faculty and staff are required to disclose information about such misconduct to the Title IX Office.

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact Counseling Services at [counselingservices@pointloma.edu](mailto:counselingservices@pointloma.edu) or find a list of campus pastors at [pointloma.edu/title-ix](http://pointloma.edu/title-ix).

## **PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy**

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university withdrawal date or, after that date, receive an "F" grade.

## Course Modality Definitions

- 1. In-Person:** Course meetings are face-to-face with no more than 25% online delivery.
- 2. Online:** Coursework is completed 100% online and asynchronously.
- 3. Online Synchronous:** Coursework is completed 100% online with required weekly online class meetings.
- 4. Hybrid:** Courses that meet face-to-face with required online components.

## Asynchronous Attendance/Participation Definition

A day of attendance in asynchronous content is determined as contributing a substantive note, assignment, discussion, or submission by the posted due date. Failure to meet these standards will result in an absence for that day. Instructors will determine how many asynchronous attendance days are required each week.

## Use of Technology

In order to be successful in the online or hybrid environment, you'll need to meet the minimum technology and system requirements; please refer to the [Technology and System Requirements](#) information. Additionally, students are required to have headphone speakers, microphone, or webcams compatible with their computer available to use. Please note that any course with online proctored exams requires a computer with a camera (tablets are not compatible) to complete exams online.

Problems with technology do not relieve you of the responsibility of participating, turning in your assignments, or completing your class work.

## Assignments At-A-Glance

Assignments will be posted in-advance of class sessions on Canvas (see 'Assessment and Grading' section for a few). If you have any difficulty finding these, please let me know.

---

**Overall, I am excited to be on this journey with you all this semester! Please sign and return this portion of the syllabus to acknowledge your understanding of it by our next class session, Aug. 30.**

X \_\_\_\_\_