Investigative Journalism Programme 2016

Investigative Journalism (A) for MA and Certificate Students

Convenor: Jeff Kelly Lowenstein, Taco Kuiper Visiting Fellow in Investigative Journalism, jkellylowenstein@gmail.com.

Investigative Journalism (A) is intended to equip a journalist with a knowledge of investigative journalism in South Africa and the world, a knowledge of related ethical issues and a range of investigative skills. It will provide context and practical skills applied in a project for those wishing to develop an investigative perspective.

Class times

This class will meet on Wednesdays from 4pm to 6pm, from 18 May 2016. Venue: Journalism Department, 12th floor seminar room.

Requirements

To complete the course, students need to fulfill the following requirements in attendance, seminar preparation, essay and portfolio.

Attendance

Students are required to attend all weekly seminars and sign the register. Students who cannot attend a seminar for reasons beyond their control must make this known in advance of the class and discuss with the tutor how to make up the work. Students missing more than two classes will not be allowed to complete the course.

Seminar preparation

Each student will prepare and present one seminar (during weeks 3 – 7) about investigative journalism in South Africa or the world, from a list of possible topics (20% of the mark). (List of topics will be sent when you sign up for the course.)

Essay

Each student will write an essay on a question about the ethics of investigative journalism that has emerged during the course of the semester, to completed by Monday 18 July (30% of the mark). (List of topics will be sent when you sign up for the course.)

Assignments/Portfolio
We will go through the stages of a semester-long project about the South African Lottery. During the course, a number of practical assignments will make up a portfolio. This will include the following:

- A basic database of your own creation – using either downloaded information or survey results
- Data analysis, using Excel, to form the basis of possible stories – with outline pitch for story
- A first and final draft of a story
- A graphic element based on your analysis
- An access to information (PAIA) request plus related research leading to the request
- A company search or individual profile

The portfolio should be completed by the end of the third week in July (deadline for delivery is Wednesday 27 July). There will be specific deadlines along the way. (50% of the mark)

Communication

Notices, changes to seminars or readings, additional material, key documents, etc are all posted on Basecamp (https://witsjournalism.grouphub.com/login) on a regular basis. Students are required to visit the site regularly to check for information on the course.

Course outline

Weeks 1

**Week 1: Wednesday, May 18, 4pm**
An introduction to South Africa’s history of investigative journalism
Anton Harber
Guidelines for the course and investigative journalism in the world.
Explanation of investigative process.
Jeff Kelly Lowenstein
Review previous coverage of South African Lottery and other lotteries.

**Week 2: Monday 23 May**
**Ethical issues in investigative journalism**
Franz Kruger

Wednesday 25 May
Data journalism – finding the story in the figures
Define story angle for project.

**Week 3: Wednesday 1 June**
Student presentation
Field Reporting
Week 4: Wednesday 8 June
Student presentation, plus invited speaker tbc
First Draft Due

Week 5: Wednesday 15 June
Student presentation, plus invited speaker tbc
First Draft of Graphics, Map

Week 6: Wednesday 22 June
Student presentation
Second Draft of Story Due.

Week 7: Wednesday 29 June
Student presentation
Multi-media Piece Due

Week 8: Wednesday, July 6
Start Fact Checking Process

Week 9: Wednesday, July 13
Continue Fact Checking
Week 10: Monday, July 18
Polish Work, Prepare Presentations

Wednesday, July 20
Ethics Essay Due

Week 11: Wednesday, July 27
Final Presentations