

# JOURNALISM

## Mission Statement

The Journalism major at Denison teaches students to research, report, and tell important stories in narrative-based ways across the digital media landscape. We emphasize ethics, independence, ascertaining facts, and accessibility in our storytelling. With our roots in both the English and Communication departments, our liberal arts and interdisciplinary approach distinguishes our program. At Denison we value the role of the liberal arts in helping students make connections across disciplines and across communities. Thus, our program emphasizes the transformative power of narrative storytelling, especially within underreported communities. We value writing as well as multimedia formats like audio storytelling and documentary filmmaking which are powerful narrative storytelling tools that have been essential to the democratization of news reporting. Our goal is to prepare students for the ever-transforming field of journalism as well as for lives as active citizens engaged in the burning issues of the day. In the current social and cultural context, we believe it is crucial to support the role journalism plays in fostering and maintaining democratic institutions.

## Learning Goals

- To develop insightful fact-based nonfiction storytelling that explores the depth and breadth of human experiences.
- To foster ethical and robust research and reporting skills in a variety of communities and in digital and analog modes.
- To develop an understanding of the changes in the traditional newsroom and the transformation of the media landscape with an eye toward innovative nonprofit models.
- To privilege the importance of local news and stories for underreported communities.
- To support in-depth longform narrative reporting and writing.
- To develop a facility with storytelling on multiple platforms.
- To gain an appreciation for the role of journalism and a free press for a healthy and vibrant democracy and, ultimately, to inspire and educate our students to become autonomous thinkers, discerning moral agents, and active citizens of a democratic society and a complex global landscape.

### ADDITIONAL POINTS OF INTEREST

The best way to hone your journalism skills is to be involved in the ever-evolving world of journalism. We encourage students to get involved in the many opportunities Journalism at Denison offers students.

**The Denisonian / The Doobie/ Synapse:** Students are encouraged to work for at least two semesters with *The Denisonian*, the college newspaper, *The Doobie*, the college streaming radio station, or the undergraduate science magazine *The Synapse*, either through classwork or on their own.

**The Reporting Project @ Denison** is a nonprofit news source covering Licking County, Ohio, and neighboring regions. We publish work by students, faculty, and community members. In the last year, over 50 of our stories have been published by *The Columbus Dispatch*, *The Newark Advocate*, *The Plain Dealer*, *Matter News*, *100 Days in Appalachia*, and many others. The Reporting Project focuses on nonfiction storytelling that is about our place, the “missing middle” – its people, politics, culture, health, science and environment, and more. Our mission is to share stories, in all media formats, that help us know the world we live in, and to provide a place for all voices to be heard. This is especially important in today’s

media landscape, where national corporate media entities sometimes perpetuate simplistic and divisive narratives, as local outlets dwindle, leaving behind dangerous news deserts. Our work is supported, in part, by a grant from The Mellon Foundation.

**Between Coasts Forums:** Journalism at Denison hosts gatherings for regional and national journalists to explore the pressing issues facing journalism in the middle of the United States.

**Story Magazine:** We have a partnership with *Story Magazine*, founded in 1931 and recently revived, to give students internship opportunities.

**Off-Campus Study:** Journalism at Denison supports short weekend reporting trips in our region. Students wishing to study abroad will be encouraged to attend programs with relevant offerings (e.g., Prague, the Danish Institute for Study, Advanced Studies in England (Bath), HECUA, and American University-Paris).

## Faculty

Jack Shuler, Director

Alan Miller, Journalism; Connie Schultz, Professor of Practice; Doug Swift, Journalism/English; James Weaver, English; Laura Russell, Communication; Mike Croley, English; Sangeet Kumar, Communication; Erik Klemetti, Earth & Environmental Science; Margot Singer, English; Chris Cimaglio, Communication; Jesse Schlotterbeck, Cinema; Peter Grandbois, English; Andy McCall, Biology; Lucy Bryan, English/Journalism.

## Journalism Major

This major is built to allow students to develop a knowledge of the practice of journalism while also staying grounded in the liberal arts. Students should see an advisor early on to begin mapping out their path through the major. In the second semester of their sophomore year, Journalism majors must submit a short proposal detailing the electives they intend to take in order to fulfill their degree requirements based on their interests and learning goals. By the end of the junior year, students will submit a plan for their Senior Research—for at least one semester.

### Core Courses:

Code	Title
JOUR 100/ COMM 108	Introduction to News Reporting and Writing
JOUR 200/ ENGL 221	Literary Journalism
JOUR 201/ ENGL 386	Multimedia Storytelling
JOUR 300	Experiential Reporting (Pre-req: must have completed two courses from the core, or permission of the instructor, can be concurrent)
JOUR 451 or JOUR 452	Senior Research Senior Research

### Communication Ethics and Law (select 1):

Code	Title
COMM 130	Freedom of Speech
COMM 211	Thinking with Ethics
COMM 328	Communication Law

**Critical Media Studies (select 1):**

Code	Title
COMM 126	Media Structures
COMM 227	New Literacy Lab
COMM 229	Mediating Gender and Sexuality
COMM 234	Media Theory
COMM 255	Visual Communication
COMM 307	Media Historiography
COMM 333	Digital Technology and Cultural Change

**Storytelling and Cultural Engagement (select 1):**

Code	Title
ANSO/WGST 210	Sex and Gender in Society
ANSO/BLST 212	Race and Ethnicity
ANSO 318	Public Perspectives on Science and Religion
BLST 235	Introduction to Black Studies
COMM 125	Relating Through Narrating
ENGL 202	Literary Theory and Critical Methods
ENGL 245	Queer Literature
ENGL 251	Survey of Asian American Literature
ENGL/BLST 255	Ethnic Literature
ENGL/ENVS 291	Environmental Literature
ENGL 302/QS 227	Studies in Literary Theory
ENGL 325	African - American Women's Literature
ENGL 326	Native American Literature
ENGL 356	The Narrative of Black America
ENGL 357	Postcolonial Literature and Criticism
ENGL/ENVS 391	Nature's Nation
NJ 250	Documentary Film and Media
WGST 311	Feminist Theory

**Craft (select 2):**

Code	Title
ARTS 117	Introduction to Photography
ARTS 213	Queer Graphix
ARTS 222	Contemporary Comics
COMM 350	Advanced Journalism
EESC 115	Special Topics in Earth & Environmental Science (Rocks, Myths & Legends: Introduction to Geoarcheology)
ENGL 237	Introduction to Creative Writing
ENGL 310	Studies in Literature (Sportswriting)
ENGL 384	Creative Nonfiction Writing
SES 256	Farmscape: Visual Immersion in the Food System
JOUR 310	Special Topics in Journalism
JOUR 220	Science Writing for Everyone

DPR 250	Writing with Data in the Public Interest
WGST 310	Feminist Research Methods

Courses may be added to these lists upon approval of the Journalism chair.

**Experience (at least 1):**

Students will complete at least one internship or summer scholar project or directed study with a Journalism focus after the Sophomore year. While we will require at least one, we will encourage students to take advantage of many and varied internships. These experiences must be approved by the Director.

## Journalism Minor

Students seeking a minor in Journalism must complete six courses:

Code	Title
Four of the core courses:	
JOUR 100/COMM 108	Introduction to News Reporting and Writing
JOUR 200/ENGL 221	Literary Journalism
JOUR 201/ENGL 386	Multimedia Storytelling
JOUR 300	Experiential Reporting

and two electives.

JOUR 300 must be taken during the Junior or Senior year.

Journalism minors are allowed to double count up to one course with a COMM or ENGL major or minor.

**Courses**

**JOUR 100 - Introduction to News Reporting and Writing (4 Credit Hours)**  
This course focuses on the fundamentals of news reporting and writing. Students will explore storytelling and narrative, lead writing, point of view, information gathering, interviewing, ethics, and more. The class aims to help students develop overall research, writing, and thinking skills; questioning, listening, and interviewing skills; and a more sophisticated understanding of the practice and ethics of contemporary journalism.

**JOUR 199 - Introductory Topics in Journalism (1-4 Credit Hours)**  
A general category used only in the evaluation of transfer credit.

**JOUR 200 - Literary Journalism (4 Credit Hours)**  
Surveys literary nonfiction writing in the 20th and 21st centuries and introduces students to the many genres of nonfiction writing, to the creative possibilities of contemporary journalism, and to the ethics of writing about other people. Students read extensively and write in the genres of personal essay, immersion, news, and narrative journalism.  
**Crosslisting:** ENGL 221.

**JOUR 201 - Multimedia Storytelling (4 Credit Hours)**  
This course explores nonfiction storytelling across multiple platforms. Students will learn how to edit audio and video stories using relevant and up-to-date programs. Most importantly, they will learn which is the most effective vehicle for the story they are telling.  
**Crosslisting:** ENGL 386 and DH 230.

**JOUR 210 - (4 Credit Hours)**  
These are special topics courses at the 200 level, distinguished from the 300 level special topics courses because they are survey courses as opposed to specific craft, genre, or issue.

**JOUR 220 - Science Writing for Everyone (4 Credit Hours)**

It is one thing to do science. It is another to write about science in a way that is compelling, understandable and relatable to the public. With our current political and cultural climate, this means science writing is in a vital role in educating people on how science works, how it impacts our daily lives, and how we can defend against misinformation. You don't need to be a scientist to learn how to write about science, you just need to be interested in how we can write effectively about scientific ideas, research, and people. This course will develop your skills in writing about science so that, by the end of the semester, you will have created new science media articles, podcasts, and more that delve into science being done on campus and around the world. We will read examples of excellent science writing, converse with people who are active writers in science media and workshop our writing to hone our stories.

**JOUR 231 - Doing Journalism with Ethics and Empathy (4 Credit Hours)**

In this course we will do research and reporting, and we will advance our skills in writing and self-editing. The larger goal of this course is to understand how our writing affects humanity and our humanity can affect our reporting and writing. We will learn about media law and the difference between ethics and the law. We will work to develop skills that allow reporters to develop a moral compass based on high standards of ethics and empathy to identify, report and write stories that will have an impact in the community.

**JOUR 250 - Documentary Film and Media (4 Credit Hours)**

This class is an introduction to the study of documentary filmmaking. We will cover this subject as a topic of film analysis (attending to the formal characteristics of film), history (examining landmark films and film movements in the development of documentary), and theory (exploring larger, more philosophical questions raised by non-fiction films). Students will work in a variety of formats (short and long writing assignments, in-class exercises, and oral presentation), as we address the following questions. Who are the most vital documentary filmmakers both historically and of our time? What defines a documentary as opposed to other film genres or modes? What are the subjects that are particularly suited to exploration through documentary filmmaking? How variously do documentarians define truth and by what ethical contracts do they consider themselves bound? Feature-length films are the central focus of the class, but we will also work with television series, radio programs, and non-fiction writing.

**JOUR 299 - Intermediate Topics in Journalism (1-4 Credit Hours)**

A general category used only in the evaluation of transfer credit.

**JOUR 300 - Experiential Reporting (4 Credit Hours)**

Experiential Reporting gives students a better understanding of the ethics of reporting in communities other than their own. Each class will focus on a specific geographic location. This class will include significant on-the-ground reporting trips. Students will develop ethical and effective ways of finding stories within communities, conducting interviews, connecting and building relationships with interviewees, and networking with community experts.

**JOUR 302 - Audio Storytelling / Podcasting (4 Credit Hours)**

This course will help students learn how to make nonfiction character-based audio stories, as well as making them comfortable with the technical elements of sound recording and editing. Students will also learn the ethics of telling stories about and with people.

**Prerequisite(s):** JOUR 201 or permission of instructor.

**JOUR 303 - Journalism and Documentary Filmmaking: A Workshop (4 Credit Hours)**

In this course we will learn how to make nonfiction character-based short films, as well as become comfortable with the technical elements of image and sound. We will also explore the ethics of telling stories about and with people.

**Prerequisite(s):** JOUR 201 or permission of instructor.

**JOUR 310 - Special Topics in Journalism (4 Credit Hours)**

These are special topics courses at the 300 level, distinguished from the 200 level special topics courses because they are focused on a specific craft, genre, or issue, and are not survey courses.

**JOUR 320 - Opinion Writing (4 Credit Hours)**

In this course you will learn how to write your own editorials and columns. We will examine this style of essay writing and the ethical expectations and obligations that it carries through close readings of contemporary practitioners. We will have spirited discussions in the classroom. This is all part of the process – and one that will test your abilities to present reasoned arguments. This is a good thing because the goal is to help you become better and more confident opinion writers.

**JOUR 360 - Telling Stories about Place (4 Credit Hours)**

Place is fundamental to storytelling, and therefore to good reporting. Understanding where a story takes place means knowing which descriptive details to put in and leave out. Place is reflected in and shapes the people we write about. Good reporters need to understand that someone from a small rural village is going to have a different worldview that someone from a city, and they need to understand why, and how it affects their motivations and shapes the institutions that govern their lives. Understanding and respecting the places where we report from helps us produce authentic and compelling stories with depth and insight. This course will explore "places" that are easily accessible to students and faculty—Rural America, Appalachia, the City, the Suburbs, Rust Belt America—for example.

**JOUR 361 - Directed Study (1-4 Credit Hours)****JOUR 362 - Directed Study (1-4 Credit Hours)****JOUR 363 - Independent Study (1-4 Credit Hours)****JOUR 364 - Independent Study (1-4 Credit Hours)****JOUR 380 - Advanced Topics in Journalism (4 Credit Hours)**

This is a special topics course crosslisted with ENGL 310.

**JOUR 381 - The Future of News (4 Credit Hours)**

This is a special topics course crosslisted with COMM 381.

**JOUR 382 - Beyond Good Intentions (4 Credit Hours)**

This is a special topics course crosslisted with ENGL 310, EDUC 283.

**JOUR 399 - Advanced Topics in Journalism (1-3 Credit Hours)**

A general category used only in the evaluation of transfer credit.

**JOUR 401 - The Reporting Project practicum (1 Credit Hour)**

Students work as reporters and/or editors for The Reporting Project (a platform for community-focused media) under the supervision of a faculty advisor. Students participate in editorial meetings at least once a week, pitching, reporting, and producing written and/or multimedia stories. The experience of working in an organized and collaborative storytelling project is invaluable. Course will include written reflection on the experience throughout the semester. Requires permission of the instructor.

**Prerequisite(s):** Permission of instructor.

**JOUR 451 - Senior Research (4 Credit Hours)**

Individually designed projects on selected topics in Journalism.

**JOUR 452 - Senior Research (4 Credit Hours)**

Individually designed projects on selected topics in Journalism.

**JOUR 453 - Journalism Senior Project (4 Credit Hours)**

Journalism majors must complete at least one semester of senior research. This semester you'll write a deeply reported and substantial work of narrative journalism or a portfolio of shorter works (in any medium). This is an opportunity to work on something that you care about deeply within a supportive environment. We meet weekly as a group and one-on-one. Class will be a mix of workshops, discussions, and guest speakers.

**Prerequisite(s):** Must be a Senior Journalism major.