JOURNALISM

medill.northwestern.edu/journalism/undergraduate-journalism

The Medill undergraduate journalism program offers students a variety of exclusive opportunities, including:

Journalism Residency (Domestic and Global)
In the Journalism Residency program, students immerse themselves in a media outlet in Chicago, across the country or around the world.

They report, write and produce content on multiple media platforms for companies that range from news outlets to public relations and marketing companies. A faculty mentor will work with students to ensure their time in the program results in development of your career.

Medill in San Francisco
At the intersection of media and technology lies the Bay Area Immersion Experience, a groundbreaking, quarter-long program that gives you the opportunity to learn from and contribute to San Francisco’s booming entrepreneurial scene. The program mixes journalism, engineering, design and innovation and includes students from Medill and the McCormick School of Engineering.

Medill Investigative Lab
Through real-time, on-the-ground reporting in Chicago, Washington, D.C. and beyond, students in the Medill Investigative Lab probe power brokers and programs that promise to provide a safety net to tens of millions of vulnerable Americans. Through this high-profile program, students learn to think, research and write like an investigative reporter, publishing groundbreaking social justice stories from the ground up.

Medill on the Hill
Events in Washington, D.C., drive much of the nation’s news, and the Medill on the Hill program offers select students the rare opportunity to cover Congress, the White House, federal policy and U.S. politics from our Washington newsroom.

Students uncover news and engage in real-time deadline reporting, updating their stories throughout the day using Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram and other social media tools before filing their final stories for the Medill on the Hill website. The most interesting and newsworthy stories are shared with Medill’s professional media clients for publication in local newspapers, national outlets and trade publications throughout the country.

Global opportunities
Medill offers students both quarter-long and short term opportunities to study and report from another part of the world. From weeklong trips sophomore year to places like Israel, Panama or London, to quarter-long opportunities in places like South Africa or Medill’s campus in Qatar, Medill students can report from across the globe.

Program of Study

- Journalism Degree (https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/journalism-media-integrated-marketing-communications/journalism/journalism-degree/)

JOUR 190-BR Bridge Program (1 Unit) This course will introduce you to the fundamentals of reporting and writing while simultaneously considering the role of news reporting in the midst of COVID-19 and civil unrest across the U.S and beyond.

JOUR 201-1 Reporting & Writing (1 Unit) This course emphasizes the critical practices of ethical journalism, deadline reporting and writing and builds a strong foundation for all Medill classes. It introduces students to the essentials of accurate journalism regardless of platform or storytelling format.

JOUR 201-2 Multimedia Storytelling (1 Unit) This course continues on the strong foundation created in JOUR 201-1 and significantly expands the base of multi-platform tools needed for effective, relevant and engaging storytelling for specific audiences. Instructors will guide students in the continued development of reporting, interviewing, writing and researching with a more sophisticated audience understanding. Prerequisite: JOUR 201-1.

JOUR 202-0 Philosophy of Modern Journalism (1 Unit) This course focuses on the evolving relationship between today’s news media landscape and its consumers. Students learn fundamental theories of human behavior and media consumption in order to understand new technologies, content opportunities, and relationship-building with journalism audiences.

JOUR 290-0 Building a Visual Brand (Non-Majors) (1 Unit) This course explores the fundamental tools of design, typographic contrast and color theory. Design is approached through writing and editing as a single process in which the written and visual aspects of journalism are given equal attention. This course is divided into lectures, research, sketching, computer lab time, and critiques. Prerequisite: Medill sophomore standing.

JOUR 291-0 Intro to Podcasting (1 Unit) This course will focus on helping students become engaged interviewers, critical listeners, and adept storytellers. Each student will produce several audio pieces for this class. Students will give and receive feedback to each other and work in teams. The course involves significant reporting outside of class.

JOUR 292-0 Sports Marketing for Non-Majors (1 Unit) Students will develop an understanding of marketing through the lens of sports and will consider the spectrum of sports marketing, from brands that use sports to capture the attention of customers to teams who want fans to buy season tickets. No journalism or marketing experience required.

JOUR 301-0 Journalism in Practice (1 Unit) Practice of reporting, editing, and storytelling skills through topical writing and research assignments. Learning to develop diverse sources and incorporate audio, visual, and multimedia elements for news, magazine, and other audiences. Readings, discussion, and experiential opportunities. Prerequisites: JOUR 201-1, JOUR 201-2 and Medill sophomore standing.

JOUR 301-1 Journalism in Practice (0.5 Unit) Prerequisites: JOUR 201-1, JOUR 201-2 and Medill sophomore standing.

JOUR 302-0 Media History (1 Unit) This course will explore how media history has influenced the world we live in today. Students will examine who has had the power and ability to tell the stories that shape people’s lives, who has consumed those stories, who has been affected by the stories and whose stories have been neglected or distorted.

JOUR 303-0 Framed: Media and the Marginalized (1 Unit) Through discussion of principles of media professionalism and ethics, and an examination of some of the hot topics featured in today’s headlines, this course will set a framework for recognizing and analyzing media narrative framing, as well as the representation of traditionally marginalized groups within that narrative frame. Ultimately, we will develop a deeper appreciation of media responsibility.

JOUR 310-0 Media Presentation: Newspaper/Online (1 Unit) This course teaches the essentials of editing content for newspaper and for the Web. Students will learn how to edit for grammar and Associated Press style;
achieve accuracy, clarity and objectivity; think critically and exercise news judgment; write headlines and captions for print and online; edit photos and graphics; and design pages for newspapers. Prerequisite: Medill sophomore standing.

JOUR 311-0 Media Presentation: Magazine Editing (1 Unit) This course will help students develop the fundamental editing skills required of an entry-level magazine editor working on print, digital and mobile platforms. Students will gain insight into the magazine business and hone the analytic discipline useful for a variety of career paths within media or without. Prerequisite: Medill sophomore standing.

JOUR 312-0 Media Presentation: Video Producing for Broadcast & the Web (1 Unit) Writing and producing broadcasts for television, the web, and alternative digital platforms, using the appropriate computer and editing equipment, news wires, and video feeds. Emphasis on the editorial decision-making process. Prerequisite: Medill sophomore standing.

JOUR 319-0 Entrepreneurial Approaches to Media Innovation (1 Unit) In this course, students will study the pros and cons of locating an innovative new business in the Chicago area; examine products and services that are being built and tested here today; analyze the choices that are being made by media companies, tech entrepreneurs, and investors; and observe how the general public learns about these businesses. By application.

JOUR 320-0 Storytelling: Interactive News (1 Unit) This course explores how newsrooms are using technology in innovative ways to engage their audiences and examines how a digital news presentation evolves across multimedia platforms. This course builds on the foundations of audio, photo, and video storytelling and adds interactivity and engagement techniques enabling students to design dynamic, creative, digital narratives for news and feature reporting. Prerequisite: JOUR 301-0 or JOUR 301-1.

JOUR 321-0 Storytelling: Magazine & Feature Writing (1 Unit) This course introduces students to feature and magazine storytelling. Students will read and deconstruct an array of non-fiction stories and will report, write, re-write and edit short pieces and one long-form story. The course aims to inspire students to deliver memorable works of narrative, explanatory and service journalism, with particular emphasis on expanding reporting methods and sharpening prose. Prerequisite: JOUR 301-0 or JOUR 301-1.

JOUR 322-0 Storytelling: Video Reporting, Shooting, & Editing (1 Unit) This class is designed to teach video storytelling in preparation for journalism residency placement and beyond. The course will emphasize a variety of research, writing and field reporting techniques that will prepare students for the challenges of freelance and a professional workplace where video is emphasized. Prerequisite: JOUR 301-0 or JOUR 301-1.

JOUR 323-0 Reporting & Producing Social Media Video (1 Unit) This class is about the things in your social media timelines that move and make noise—the news clips, explainers and engaging video stories that populate the various social media platforms. But it’s also about the trends, algorithms and business models behind those posts.

JOUR 332-0 Coverage of Gender and Sexual Minorities (1 Unit) Examination of social science research on LGBT communities and translating it for specialized and general audiences. Topics include research aims and limitations; reporting on underrepresented groups; finding fresh angles and credible sources; contextualizing stories of local, national, and international reach. Prerequisite: Sophomore standing.

JOUR 333-0 Bilingual Reporting (1 Unit) This is a bilingual course that explores the history, current state and future of the English, Spanish and bilingual audiences and the media outlets that seek to reach them. Students will get to know Chicago's vibrant and diverse LatinX communities and practice research and interviewing, reflection and story production in Spanish and in English. Spanish proficiency required. Prerequisite: Medill sophomore standing.

JOUR 342-1 Knight Lab (1 Unit) Each quarter, multidisciplinary teams of students, faculty, and professionals come together to collaborate in the Knight Lab Studio to produce cutting-edge digital work, research, and thought, innovating across every part of the media-making process. By application only. Prerequisite: Medill sophomore standing.

JOUR 343-0 The Googlization of American Media (1 Unit) In this course students use recent books, news stories, and other reportage to understand how major tech enterprises are changing journalism, the media business, and democracy itself. Readings, research and writing assignments, group exercises in and outside class, and guest speakers.

JOUR 345-SA Journalism Residency: Argentina (2 Units) By application only.

JOUR 346-SA Journalism Residency: Argentina (2 Units) By application only.

JOUR 347-0 Journalism Residency (1-2 Units) By application only.

JOUR 348-0 Journalism Residency (2 Units) By application only.

JOUR 350-0 National Security (1 Unit) Relationship between the media and the military, especially since 9/11, and impact on public opinion. Topics include field reporting, ethics of reporting classified material, and issues facing the military. Prerequisite: Sophomore standing.

JOUR 352-0 Politics, Media and The Republic (1 Unit) This seminar will explore such themes as polarization, political image-making and advertising, voting rights and voter suppression, as well as campaign rhetoric and policy issues. Prerequisite: Medill sophomore standing.

JOUR 353-0 Dilemmas of American Power (1 Unit) This course uses an engaging set of case studies and materials to chart one of the most intriguing stretches of international engagement in U.S. history. Students will work collaboratively to understand why decisions were made, how policies were implemented and sold, and what it all may mean in the end. Prerequisite: Medill sophomore standing.

JOUR 354-0 Sports and Society (1 Unit) Prerequisite: Sophomore standing.

JOUR 355-SA Journalism Residency: Qatar (2 Units) By application only.

JOUR 356-SA Journalism Residency: Qatar (2 Units) By application only.

JOUR 357-0 Sports Commentary (1 Unit) Students will develop a distinctive voice that stands out from the cacophony of opinions in the sporting world, to create commentary that is informative, thought-provoking and entertaining and to adapt those messages for delivery across multiple media platforms. Students will learn to coalesce their observations, opinions and experiences into compelling arguments. Prerequisite: Medill junior standing.

JOUR 358-0 Evolution of Sports Media (1 Unit) From the foundational elements in the days of typewriters and telegraphs that are still in use today to the technological innovations that will shape the way we watch sports in the future, Sports Media History examines the evolution of this multibillion-dollar field.

JOUR 359-0 Media History and the Native American Experience (1 Unit) In this media history class, we will generate multimedia content for an "Indigenous Tour of Northwestern." Students will research Native American people, places, policies, and historic social movements that intersect with locations on the Northwestern campus.
JOUR 360-0 Sports Reporting (1 Unit) This course is a dive into the world of sports journalism and how sports reporters do their jobs on a daily basis, utilizing all the fundamentals of good journalism while recognizing that it is also a unique endeavor.

JOUR 365-SA Journalism Residency: South Africa (2 Units) By application only.

JOUR 366-SA Journalism Residency: South Africa (2 Units) By application only.

JOUR 367-0 Native American Environmental Issues and the Media (1 Unit) This course introduces students to indigenous issues, such as treaty-based hunting, fishing, and gathering rights; air and water quality issues; mining; land-to-trust issues; and sacred sites. We will focus on how the media cover these issues and how that coverage contributes to the formation of public opinion and public policy. Prerequisite: Medill sophomore standing.

JOUR 368-0 Documentary (1 Unit) This course will provide students with a comprehensive overview of HD video production specifically geared towards producing short documentaries that tell human stories. Emphasis is put on the use of character, conflict, drama and surprise in telling these documentary stories. We will also look at different documentary styles and how narrative structures like story arcs are implemented. Prerequisite: JOUR 301-0 or JOUR 301-1.

JOUR 369-0 Audio Documentary (1 Unit) This course explores different forms of audio documentary production for radio broadcast, as well as web-based multi-media distribution. Emphasis is on radio reporting techniques including interviewing, writing to tape, compelling story-telling, as well as integration of sound and music. Prerequisite: JOUR 301-0 or JOUR 301-1.

JOUR 370-0 Media Law & Ethics (1 Unit) This course will review the myriad laws, legal cases and ethical standards essential to being a journalist in the 21st Century – not only for what you report and publish, but also for what you post on social media – including defamation, privacy, information access, protecting sources, and copyright. Prerequisites: Medill sophomore standing.

JOUR 371-0 Journalism of Empathy (1 Unit) Exploration of writing and reporting about people and places neglected and misunderstood by mainstream America. Prerequisite: JOUR 301-0 or JOUR 301-1.

JOUR 372-0 International Journalism: South Africa (1 Unit) This course covers the contemporary history of South Africa with a special focus on the role of media in one of the world’s newest constitutional democracies. Speaking directly with journalists, publishers, executive producers and media executives we’ll explore the state of independent journalism. Required for South Africa Journalism Residency. Prerequisites: JOUR 301-0 or JOUR 301-1.

JOUR 373-0 Medill Investigative Lab (2 Units) In this dynamic course grounded in real-time investigative reporting, students will expose a problem of significant national importance and chronicle its effects on the lives and livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people across the country. Prerequisite: Medill junior standing and instructor consent.

JOUR 374-0 Intro to Investigative Journalism (1 Unit) In this course, we’ll focus on the basics of investigative reporting that you can apply to any reporting course, as well as prepare for advanced investigative courses if you so choose. We’ll explore the history, ethics, challenges and successes of investigative reporting and learn the tools used by top investigative reporters.

JOUR 376-0 Media Design (1 Unit) In this course students will be introduced to creating and developing a visual response to communication problems, including understanding of hierarchy, typography, aesthetics, composition and the construction of meaningful images. Prerequisite: Medill sophomore standing and JOUR 301-0 or JOUR 301-1.

JOUR 377-0 Data Analysis and Visualization (1 Unit) In this course, students will learn techniques and theory for analyzing, visualizing, and communicating structured data for journalism contexts. Students will be exposed to ideas and techniques from diverse fields like cognitive science, statistics, and perceptual psychology, and learn how to take an empirical approach to the design and evaluation of data representations like visualizations.

JOUR 378-0 Introduction to Photojournalism (1 Unit) This class will provide students with an introduction to digital photography with an emphasis on photojournalism. Emphasis will be put on using images to portray human stories – ones that surprise, break stereotypes, and capture emotion in dramatic and intimate situations. This class will also focus on basic picture editing and how proper picture selection enhances the total journalistic package. Prerequisite: Medill sophomore standing.

JOUR 381-0 Business Reporting (1 Unit) In this course, students will learn how to write compelling, informative articles on personal finance, small business, entrepreneurship, Fortune 500 companies, and the economy. Prerequisite: Medill sophomore standing.

JOUR 382-0 Health and Science Reporting (1 Unit) In this combination writing workshop and seminar, students will read some of the best science and health journalism; meet with expert scientists on campus; and meet the editors and writers from leading scientific journals and publications. Students will learn what makes good science writing, how to find sources, how to evaluate information and how to sort out science from pseudo-science. Prerequisite: Medill sophomore standing.

JOUR 384-0 Covering Washington, D.C. as a Mobile Journalist (2 Units) This class will give students hands-on experience covering the nation's capital as a mobile journalist on a beat, producing up-to-the-minute political stories for the Medill on the Hill website. The primary focus of the course, instant newsgathering and multi-media reporting, will enhance innovative story-telling and deadline skills. Prerequisite: By application only.

JOUR 388-0 Internship (0 Unit) Student-initiated internships in journalism. Supervised by Medill Career Services. Prerequisites: Sophomore standing and consent of Medill Career Services.

JOUR 390-0 Special Topics (1 Unit) Specialized experimental courses offered from time to time by faculty. Topics may include journalism in a networked world and depth reporting using documents and databases. Prerequisites: Vary depending on the course.

JOUR 391-0 Special Topics (0.5 Unit) Courses, such as Strategies for Career Success, offered for one-half of a quarter.

JOUR 391-1 Special Topics (0.5 Unit)

JOUR 391-2 Special Topics (0.5 Unit) Special Topics.

JOUR 394-0 Politics and Presidential Elections (1 Unit) Students will learn and apply Gestalt theory to design problems and expand their visual lexicon. Photo history will be brought into context with the larger visual narrative and explore how light, shape, form and composition help communicate complex thought and emotion.

JOUR 399-0 Undergraduate Independent Study (0.5-1 Unit) Academic work sponsored and supervised by a faculty member working one-on-one with the student. By application.