

Module 14: News Media Production and Investigative Journalism

Stage				II			
Semester				2			
Module Title				News Media Production and Investigative Journalism			
Module Number				14			
Module Status				Elective Stream - Journalism			
Module NFQ level				7			
Pre-Requisite Module Titles				None			
Co-Requisite Module Titles				Reporting & Editing, Radio Journalism			
Capstone Module?				No			
List of Module Teaching Personnel				Alan Gill, Ryan Brennan, Barry Finnegan			
Contact Hours				Non-contact Hours			Total Effort (hours)
Lecture	Practical	Tutorial	Seminar	Assignment	Placement	Independent Work	
18	24			48		30	120
Allocation of Marks (Within the Module)							
	Continuous Assessment	Project	Practical	Final Examination			Total
Percentage Contribution	100						100%

Intended Module Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this module, the learner will be able to:

1. Show a competency in industry standard production tools, and have an understanding of the technical issues involved in modern print production.
2. Show an insight into newspaper and magazine design principle and techniques, and plan and produce print layouts to a high standard.
3. Exercise appropriate judgement to initiate and complete an investigative journalism news report and critically analyse same.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of what investigative news reporting journalism is and the differences between it and other genres of news production.
5. Demonstrate an understanding of the ethical issues which arise for investigative journalists within a critical awareness of how new media technology and new media-production business models are effecting news media production, particularly investigative journalism.

Module Objectives

This subject aims to provide learners with the necessary skills to find employment in print publications. To do this, the module covers both contemporary publication design and advanced news gathering and

reporting. Learners obtain an understanding of visual communication principles and technical issues involved in producing a print publication. This involves considering design as a process and the role of visual elements in creating meaning. Additionally, the module imparts a theoretical understanding of the genre of investigative news reporting and its critical role in democratic societies, it develops learner's genre-specific media production skills, while it also contextualises the unique difficulties investigative news media experiences within a broader political and economic context.

Module Curriculum

Indicative Syllabus

Topic: Role of visuals in design and communication:

Principles of visual journalism. Visual culture and the reader. Design as a process. Developing ideas and concepts for a defined audience. Building meaning into design. The role of infographics.

Topic: Elements of design:

Typography, image, shape, texture, space and colour. How we use these elements together to create a unified, coherent visual system in print publications. Type as a visual element.

Topic: Design principles.

Theory and application of balance, contrast, unity, alignment. Rules and conventions in print design. Differing audiences and design considerations; tabloid and broadsheet design. Use of space in design.

Topic: Techniques and implementation.

Application of design principles in Adobe InDesign and Photoshop. Digital imaging and quality management. Producing press quality output in a digital environment.

Topic: Developing investigative techniques:

What is investigative journalism? Its relationship to the news agenda; its moral impetus and essentiality for democratic societies. How and why it is different from standard news media production. Exploring methods and techniques: sources, structures, people, documents, government publications & offices, company reports, NGO reports, internet, other media publications, the insider, contacts, your growing database, brainstorm.

Topic: Historical Background and Case Study Analysis:

Starting with mid-nineteenth century England we examine the evolution and development of news media consumer demand, and journalism characterised by rational observation and moral empathy. Analysis and critique of investigation journalism case studies from Ireland, the US and the UK.

Topic: Ethical Issues and Dilemmas in Investigative Journalism.

Making further distinctions between standard news production and investigative journalism, we examine how and why problems of an ethical nature are so prevalent in the work of investigative journalism. In particular we look at regulation, cheque book journalism, confidentiality, anonymity, sources, deceit and privacy.

Topic: The Changing Context for Investigative Journalism.

We examine the historical resilience and financial viability of investigative journalism as a consumer product in advanced capitalist societies and in particular examine opportunities for news production presented by, for example, the growing not-for-profit sector's journalistic output, crowdsourcing, and crowdfunding.

Reading Lists and other Learning Materials

Essential reading:

Berry, John, 2007. *Contemporary Newspaper Design.: Shaping the News in the Digital Age*. Mark Batty Publisher.

Berry, Stephen J., 2009. *Watchdog journalism: the art of investigative reporting*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

DeBurgh, Hugo, 2008. *Investigative Journalism*. Abingdon, Oxon.: Routledge.

Evans, Harold, 1994. *Good Times, Bad Times*, 3rd Edition. London: Phoenix.

Frost, Chris, 2011. *Designing for Newspapers and Magazines*. Routledge.

Lee, George & Charlie Bird , 1998. *Breaking the Bank*. Dublin: Blackwater.

Samara, Timothy, 2007. *Design Elements: A Graphic Style Manual*. Rockport.

Shapiro, Bruce (Ed), 2003. *Shaking the Foundations: 200 Years of Investigative Journalism in America*. New York: Thunder's Mouth Press.

Secondary Reading

Goodman, Amy, and David Goodman, 2005. *The Exception to the Rulers: Exposing Oily Politicians, War Profiteers, and the Media That Love Them*. New York: Hyperion.

Harrower, Tim, 2007. *Newspaper Designer's Handbook*. McGraw-Hill.

Lupton, Ellen, 2010. *Thinking with Type (2nd Revised Edition)*. Princeton Architectural Press.

Moser, H. 2011. *The Art Directors' Handbook of Professional Magazine Design*. Thames and Hudson.

Palast, Greg, 2002. *The best democracy money can buy: an investigative reporter exposes the truth about globalization, corporate cons, and high-finance fraudsters*. London: Robinson.

Pilger, John, 2004. *Tell Me No Lies: Investigative Journalism & Its Triumphs*. London: Jonathon Cape.

Prall, Kevin, 2011. *Rupert Murdoch & the Hacking Scandal*. Prall: (Kindle).

Randall, David, 2000. *The Universal Journalist. 2nd Edition*. London: Pluto Press.

Module Learning Environment

The learning environment is designed to both engage the learners and to encourage their critical thinking. This is achieved through lectures which are designed to stimulate discussions and questions.

Learners are also supported with resources to offer structure and guidance. This includes lecture notes, reading materials as well as a detailed module curriculum which includes the learning outcomes, a class schedule, the necessary reading material and the assignment strategy. Participants also have access to Moodle, the College's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

Module Teaching and Learning Strategy

This module is supported with structured web-based resources and applies the use of the programme Teaching Learning and Assessment methodologies. Specifically, the module is delivered using:

- Case Studies
- Formal Lectures
- Workshops / Tutorials

The module is taught through a mixture of formal and participative lectures, allowing learner interaction and questioning. Case studies are presented to the class in order to highlight the practical ramifications of the subject matter.

Module Assessment Strategy

Through weekly lecturer-facilitated in-class group discussion, learners outline the ongoing developments in their investigative article assignments. Theory and practice is brought to bear in this editorial-style group dynamic. Constructive critical analysis of each other's investigation techniques is encouraged. Essay titles are discussed each week in class as to how they relate to lecture material.

As this module covers practical aspects of the media, lectures are delivered both in a lecture room and a computer lab. Learners' design skills are assessed not only on the final design work, but also on their progress through the design process. This is done by requiring the learners to keep a logbook of the process.

Element Number	Weighting	Type	Description
1	30%	Investigative news report	Initiate and complete an investigative journalism news report and critically analyse same
2	40%	Page design	Using the investigative news report from this module, learners will plan and layout a spread in an appropriate visual style.
3	30%	An academic essay	A choice of essay on one of three topics covered in lectures related to the historical, ethical and production issues of investigative journalism.