

MND 506: Digital News Leadership (Course: 38366)

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Office Hours: In person or via Zoom from Noon-2 p.m. Mondays; 10 a.m.-Noon Thursday; or by appointment

Reaching me: Start with The NewsHouse Slack channel then email. Also, for anything urgent, try my cell at 561-445-0274 (Note: Text messaging is OK as long as you identify yourself)

Meeting Day/Time:

Mondays and Wednesdays from 2:15-3:35 p.m. in 252, Newhouse 3 (Kramer War Room)

Course Description:

Course enables students to determine and effectively manage the editorial direction of TheNewsHouse.com while learning and experimenting with the technical, visual and social media aspects of producing digital content across multiple platforms. Additional work is required of graduate students.

Additional Course Description

Welcome to The NewsHouse lead producer team! You are the team of students charged with making TheNewsHouse.com an actual online operation and vital media outlet at Syracuse University. As the site is moving into its second decade at SU, we're continuing to extend the site's presence in the campus and local communities. You will be an integral part of this process.

From the story ideas and how they're executed to determining new ways to get the campus to participate on the site, you'll develop the strategy and day-to-day workings for an actual news, sports and entertainment website. The site's mission -- to be "an innovative online product that covers, interacts with and engages the SU community" -- should be reflected when making decisions as to what content ultimately appears on The NewsHouse. The site's audience is the SU community, which starts with the students then faculty and school employees, then Syracuse-area residents and then those with ties to or interest in SU.

You will help establish many facets of the operations from how content gets produced to how calendar and restaurant reviews are added to how users can share their photos and videos with the site. Drafting these guidelines and instructions will be among your assignments.

At the same time, The NewsHouse serves as an experimental platform for finding innovative techniques for digital storytelling, social media and technology integration. You will be encouraged to explore tools and devices that will enhance the user experience.

Another of your roles will be recruiting, reviewing and publishing student content

submissions. At a minimum, this would be a text article with a single photo, and you'll be expected to work with student reporters on any style and writing issues, plus determine where the story best fits on The NewsHouse and enhance it with tags and keywords that will benefit search engine optimization. More likely though, a package will include video, audio, interactive or more assets that help "tell the story." You should strive to work with contributors to have robust and complete packages that leverage the wide array of tools The NewsHouse supports.

As lead producers, you will encounter issues related to ethics, diversity, fairness and users wanting to challenge how the site covers or portrays specific issues. As a team, we'll discuss and delve into these specific scenarios as they unfold and make decisions in the best interest of the site.

Most of all, as you publish content on The NewsHouse, remember that the basic principles of good journalism – truth, accuracy, objectivity and fairness – always will be expected.

At some point during the semester, you will each serve a shift of at least a week as the site's content director during which you'll be responsible for nearly all final content decisions, handling user inquiries and helping direct the site's focus.

The NewsHouse's digital producer team is comprised of about a dozen students who meet in the MND 505 course twice a week with Prof. Glass, the site's executive producer. These producers will be responsible for generating content on the site through their class assignments. The professor is responsible for reviewing and grading the producers' work for class, however, you may be called upon to assist with updating, reviewing or enhancing their content before publishing on The NewsHouse.

Just as the web is fluid, this class must be as well. Times and deadlines outlined in the syllabus are tentative and subject to change. The goal is to provide you with as much advance warning as possible. Simply, be flexible.

How will you get the most out of this course – and potentially earn an A? Show creative and original thinking. Work well with your teammates. Make your deadlines. Be a good journalist. Dedicate yourself to making The NewsHouse the best for its audience.

Prerequisite / Co-requisite:

MND 505, or by permission.

Audience:

Undergraduates and graduate students majoring in or with a strong interest in journalism.

Credits: 1

Learning Objectives:

After taking this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate sound editorial decision-making related to news judgment, story development and engagement techniques, specifically as it pertains to "The

NewsHouse” suite of digital products.

- Design, produce and edit content for multiple digital formats including desktop, mobile and tablet displays.
- Utilize management skills for a function media operation based on actual experiences with collaborative work, goal setting and effective communications tactics.
- Learn how to utilize current industry tools and techniques including social media platforms, traffic analytics, content management systems and search engine optimization.

Syracuse University Shared Competencies

MND 506’s learning objectives are aligned with SU’s learning outcomes initiative that was created by a community of practice with faculty, researchers and staff from across campus. Among them are the Communication Skills competency that promotes effective individual, interpersonal, and collaborative presentation and development of ideas through oral, written, and other forms of expression to inform, persuade, or inspire. Also, the Critical & Creative Thinking competency that explores and synthesizes ideas, artifacts, issues, and events to inform and evaluate arguments, develop new insights, and produce creative work while reflecting on and applying divergent modes of inquiry, analysis, and innovation to research, knowledge, and artistic creation. The three learning outcomes are: 1) Demonstrate sound editorial decision-making related to news judgment, story development and engagement techniques, specifically as it pertains to The NewsHouse suite of digital products. 2) Design, produce and edit content for multiple digital formats including desktop, mobile and tablet displays, and 3) Utilize management skills for a function media operation based on actual experiences with collaborative work, goal setting and effective communications tactics. For more information about SU’s Shared Competencies, please see: <https://effectiveness.syr.edu/shared-competencies/>

ACEJMC Values and Competencies

As a member of the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication the Newhouse School is committed to classroom and learning that achieves ACEJMC professional values and competencies. These include the core areas of freedom of speech, ethics, diversity, critical thinking, research, writing, and use of tools and technologies related to the field. For a full list of ACEJMC values and competencies, see <http://www.acejmc.org/policies-process/principles/>

Diversity Principles

The Newhouse School practices inclusivity in student, faculty and staff populations in order to create an academic environment that embraces a diversity of thought and acceptance of all

people regardless of race, gender, age, sexual orientation or societal, political, cultural, economic, spiritual or physical differences.

Texts / Supplies – Required:

- Select articles and guides about digital content and media management will be provided by the professor.
- Subscribe to The NewsHouse Slack channel and notification alerts set during assigned times.
- Social media accounts set to follow **@NewsHouse** on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter/X, plus **@NewsHouseSports**.
- Review and agree to The NewsHouse [Terms of Use](#).

Course Requirements and Expectations:

Assignment	Description	Learning Objective addressed	Undergraduate Value	Graduate Value
Innovation	Develop, test and produce content packages that incorporate new or experimental storytelling techniques.	Design, produce and edit content for multiple digital formats; Learn how to utilize current industry tools	30%	25%
Initiative and Communication	Along with engagement during class times for planning, regularly interact with classmates, professors and student journalists contributing content to The NewsHouse. This includes the Communications Loop System Assignment.	Design, produce and edit content for multiple digital formats; Utilize management skills for a function media operation based on actual experiences	10%	25%
Professionalism	Consistently producing and publishing content on The NewsHouse of the highest caliber reflective of sound news judgement, content choices and editing enhancements.	Demonstrate sound editorial decision-making	30%	25%
Leadership	Ability to supervise a team of at least three contributors, plus serve as the primary Lead Producer for at least one full week during a semester.	Utilize management skills for a function media operation based on actual experiences	30%	25%

Assignment	Description	Learning Objective addressed	Undergraduate Value	Graduate Value
Graduate Work	Actively participate in a special project or initiative that incorporate collaboration, innovation and initiative. Prof. Glass will provide more details about opportunities.	Learn how to utilize current industry tools and techniques	N/A	Included in Professionalism grade

Grading Tables

For 500 level courses

Grade	Value
A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D*	61-69*
F	60 or Below

*Note: Graduate students cannot receive a D.

University Attendance Policy (Including absence notification)

Attendance in classes is expected in all courses at Syracuse University. It is a federal requirement that faculty promptly notify the university of students who do not attend or cease to attend any class. Faculty will use Early-Semester Progress Reports and Mid-Semester Progress Reports in Orange SUccess to alert the Registrar and Financial Aid Office on non-attendance. For more information visit: [Information for Students: Non-attendance or Stopped Attending](#)

If a student is unable to participate in-person or virtually for an extended period of time (48 hours or more), the student may request an absence notification from their home school/college Dean's Office or through Student Outreach and Retention (SOaR) office. Instructors will be notified via the "Absence Notification" flag in Orange SUccess.

Barnes Center at the Arch (Health, Counseling, etc.) staff will not provide medical excuse notes for students. When Barnes Center staff determine it is medically necessary to remove a student from classes, they will coordinate with SOaR case management staff to provide appropriate notification to faculty through Orange Success. For absences lasting less than 48 hours, students are encouraged to discuss academic arrangements directly with their faculty.

Students should also review the [University's religious observance policy](#) and make the required arrangements at the beginning of each semester.

Course-Specific Policies

Attendance

Class time is a key component to our mission of producing and maintaining the NewsHouse site. We'll need to discuss where The NewsHouse is going in the coming weeks and you will be expected to provide updates on your contributions. Make it a priority to be on time to every class. Once it's been determined how to best publish content on a weekly basis, we'll discuss adjusting schedules to ensure the site has coverage throughout the week.

Even if you cannot make class, you are responsible for the work assigned, especially as it relates to The NewsHouse site and course projects.

Use of Your Work

Your work will be used in the class and posted online as part of TheNewsHouse.com. You are required to read the Terms of the Use of The NewsHouse. What you do for this class can be used The NewsHouse site project this semester and in the future, however, you retain full ownership and responsibility for it. **Do NOT** offer or distribute this work to other classes, publications or websites without prior approval from Prof. Glass. Also, packages must receive a grade of **B or higher** in order to be published on The NewsHouse.

Finally, academic work that you complete this semester may be used in subsequent semesters for educational purposes. Before using your work for that purpose, you are required to provide written permission to Prof. Glass or render the work anonymous by removing all your personal identification.

Fabrication, Plagiarism and Other Breaches of Professional Standards

Fabrication and plagiarism are the gravest sins in journalism; they will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Instances of either will result in an academic integrity case; these are considered "Level 3" offenses under the university's [academic integrity rubric](https://class.syr.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Academic-Integrity-Policy-Violation-and-Sanction-Classification-Rubric-Updated-081018.pdf) (<https://class.syr.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Academic-Integrity-Policy-Violation-and-Sanction-Classification-Rubric-Updated-081018.pdf>) because they represent an extreme breach of acceptable journalistic conduct. "Level 3" offenses can result in suspension or expulsion. You will also fail the class.

Examples of fabrication: Making up sources and information for a story (or having a generative AI system do it for you); generating quotes that were never spoken or written by a human source; misrepresenting a source as another person who you didn't interview; etc.

Examples of plagiarism: Copying language, passages and quotations from other works verbatim without proper attribution; including a substantial amount of writing created by a generative AI system in your work; etc. It's also considered plagiarism when you recycle stories that you've already used for another course or previously published in a media outlet such as The Daily Orange, Jerk or CitrusTV.

If you have any questions about how to properly attribute information in your stories, see your professor.

Beyond that, you're required to abide by the principles set forth in the Society of Professional Journalists's [Code of Ethics](https://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp) where applicable: <https://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp>

One More Important Note

The NewsHouse is intended to be challenging and rewarding. The site is intended to make producers and contributors proud of their accomplishments. The project is intended to reflect on the quality and innovative work produced by Newhouse and SU students. A student should get involved with The NewsHouse because he/she/they is passionate about the site's mission and goals, is motivated to learn, attempt (and sometimes fail) when experimenting with new journalism techniques and invest the time and effort into making The NewsHouse a success. Anyone who says it's too much work for one-credit course is correct and should consider an alternative.

Syracuse University Policies: Syracuse University has a variety of other policies designed to guarantee that students live and study in a community respectful of their needs and those of fellow students. Some of the most important of these concern:

Diversity and Disability (ensuring that students are aware of their rights and responsibilities in a diverse, inclusive, accessible, bias-free campus community) can be found [here](https://www.syracuse.edu/life/accessibilitydiversity/), at: <https://www.syracuse.edu/life/accessibilitydiversity/>.

Religious Observances Notification and Policy (steps to follow to request accommodations for the observance of religious holidays) can be found [here](https://policies.syr.edu/policies/university-governance-ethics-integrity-and-legal-compliance/religious-observances-policy/), at: <https://policies.syr.edu/policies/university-governance-ethics-integrity-and-legal-compliance/religious-observances-policy/>

Orange SUccess (tools to access a variety of SU resources, including ways to communicate with advisors and faculty members) can be found [here](http://orangesuccess.syr.edu/getting-started-2/), at: <http://orangesuccess.syr.edu/getting-started-2/>

Disability-Related Accommodations: Syracuse University values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to a climate of mutual respect and full participation. There may be aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion and full participation in this course. I invite any student to meet with me to discuss strategies and/or accommodations (academic adjustments) that may be essential to your success and to collaborate with the Center for Disability Resources (CDR) in this process.

If you would like to discuss disability-accommodations or register with CDR, please visit Center for Disability Resources. Please call (315) 443-4498 or email disabilityresources@syr.edu for more detailed information.

CDR is responsible for coordinating disability-related academic accommodations and will work with the student to develop an access plan. Since academic accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact CDR as soon as possible to begin this process. <https://disabilityresources.syr.edu/>

Academic Integrity

Syracuse University's [Academic Integrity Policy](#) reflects the high value that we, as a university community, place on honesty in academic work. The policy holds students accountable for the integrity of all work they submit and for upholding course-specific, as well as university-wide, academic integrity expectations. The policy governs citation and use of sources, the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments, and truthfulness in all academic matters, including course attendance and participation. The policy states that any work a student submits for a

course must be solely their own unless the instructor explicitly allows collaboration or editing. The policy also requires students to acknowledge their use of other peoples' language, images or other original creative or scholarly work through appropriate citation. These expectations extend to the new, fast-growing realm of artificial intelligence (AI) as well as to the use of websites that charge fees or require uploading of course materials to obtain exam solutions or assignments. Students are required to ask their instructor whether use of these tools is permitted – and if so, to what extent – before using them to complete any assignment or exam. Students are also required to seek advance permission from instructors if they wish to submit the same work in more than one course. Failure to receive this permission in advance may violate the Academic Integrity Policy. Under the policy, instructors who seek to penalize a student for a suspected violation must first report the violation to the Center for Learning and Student Success (CLASS). Students may not drop or withdraw from courses in which they face a suspected violation. Instructors must wait to assign a final course grade until a suspected violation is reviewed and upheld or overturned. Upholding Academic Integrity includes abiding by instructors' individual course expectations, which may include the protection of their intellectual property. Students should not upload, distribute, or otherwise share instructors' course materials without permission. Students found in violation of the policy are subject to grade sanctions determined by the course instructor and non-grade sanctions determined by the School or College where the course is offered, as outlined in the Violation and Sanction Classification Rubric. Students are required to read an online summary of the University's academic integrity expectations and provide an electronic signature agreeing to abide by them twice a year during pre-term check-in on MySlice.

The Violation and Sanction Classification Rubric establishes recommended guidelines for the determination of grade penalties by faculty and instructors, while also giving them discretion to select the grade penalty they believe most suitable, including course failure, regardless of violation level. Any established violation in this course may result in course failure regardless of violation level.

Respect, Inclusivity, Sympathy, and Encouragement

There may be times that we will talk about some controversial topics, and it is imperative that we all trust and respect each other. To that end, I would like for everyone enrolled in this course to consider the following guidelines for dialogue in the class:

- Our primary commitment is to learn from each other: We will listen to each other and not talk at each other. We acknowledge differences amongst us in backgrounds, skills, interests, and values. We realize that it is these very differences that will increase our awareness and understanding through this process.
- We will not demean, devalue, or put down people for their experiences, their lack of experiences, or difference in interpretation of those experiences.
- We will trust that people are doing the best they can: We will try not to freeze people in time, but instead leave space for everyone to learn and change through our interactions with one another.
- Challenge the idea, not the person: If we wish to challenge something that has been said, we will challenge the idea or the practice referred to, not the individual sharing this idea or practice.
- Speak your discomfort: If something is bothering you, please share this with the group. Often our emotional reactions to this process offer the most valuable learning opportunities.

- Take space, make space: Be mindful of taking up much more conversational space than others, and be willing to make space for others. On the same note, however, empower yourself to speak up when others are dominating the conversation.

The discussions in this class may be difficult, and therefore the classroom - both in person and via online materials - is sacrosanct. Original class materials (lectures, handouts, assignments, tests, etc.) and recordings of class sessions are the intellectual property of the course instructor. You may access these materials for your use in this course. However, you may not provide these materials to any other party in any format without permission of the course instructor. Doing so is a violation of intellectual property law and the Code of Student Conduct."

If you ever feel that comments or actions made by myself or others in class are targeting you or others in a hostile manner, please do not hesitate to bring it to my attention so we can figure out the best way to address it. It is very important to me that all students feel included and respected in my class. Additionally, if you experience or witness a bias-related incident in or outside of class and wish to report it to the university, you can report the act of bias by going to the following site, also provides information about other resources related to recognizing and reporting bias-related incidents:

<https://www.syracuse.edu/life/accessibility-diversity/stop-bias/>

The University strives to create an environment of inclusion and diversity. We expect students to be aware of their rights and responsibilities in a diverse, inclusive, accessible, bias-free campus community. You can read more about campus efforts here: <https://www.syracuse.edu/life/accessibility-diversity/>

Pronouns/Names

Syracuse University encourages, but does not require, community members to share the pronouns they use for themselves. In My Slice "My Profile," all students may choose from a list of pronouns or designate "no pronouns" if they prefer only the use of their names. Students may also share a preferred name there. For information on designating personal pronouns and preferred names, go to answers.syr.edu/PronounFAQ or answers.syr.edu/PreferredNameFAQ

Course Schedule: Much like The NewsHouse itself, the class has infinite possibilities to cover in a mere 15 weeks. The following is a starting point. We'll expand or re-direct topics when necessary.

Week/Lecture	Topic	Required Reading and Assignment
Week 1 – Jan. 17	Welcome to Digital News Leadership Lecture: Introductions, syllabus, ground rules and objectives, plus what The NewsHouse is all about; Train on The NewsHouse CMS and workflow processes; Discuss and determine initial assignments, issues and	Reading(s): Poynter: <i>With its new, speedier article page, Reuters wants to reimagine how news sites are designed</i> Assignment(s): Set up NewsHouse profile and format sample story page with multiple elements; Develop 3+ potential story proposals for publication during the first month of the semester.

Week/Lecture	Topic	Required Reading and Assignment
	coverage plans for first weeks of semester such as basketball, lacrosse, UU concerts and more.	
Week 2 – Jan. 22 & 24	<p>CMS systems including ours.</p> <p>Lecture: How best to assign, produce and package NewsHouse content; Start plotting content assignments and needs for the early semester; Recruiting talent.</p>	<p>Reading(s): CJR.org: <i>Managing a 21st-century newsroom workforce: A case study of NYC news media</i></p> <p>Assignment(s): Refine sample page in The NewsHouse CMS; Develop work-flow procedures; Review story proposals. Host Open House for contributors.</p>
Week 3 – Jan. 29 & 31	<p>Soliciting content and recruiting talent</p> <p>Lecture: Tactics for recruiting talent from individual students and classes.</p>	<p>Reading(s): College Media Review: <i>Research spotlight: Peer-to-peer mentoring works in the college newsroom</i></p> <p>Assignment(s): Establishing submission policies and procedures; Weekly content planning, scheduling and review of communications loop system</p>
Week 4 – Feb. 5 & 7	<p>Managing content and workflow</p> <p>Lecture: Updating and maintaining a regular flow of The NewsHouse content</p>	<p>Reading(s): Content Marketing Institute: <i>How a Newsroom Approach Helps Teams Produce Quality Content on a Deadline</i></p> <p>Assignment(s): Weekly content planning, scheduling and review of communications loop system</p>
Week 5 – Feb. 12 & 14	<p>Assessing Analytics and Performance</p> <p>Lecture: Reviewing Google, Parse.ly and analytics resources for making better content decisions.</p>	<p>Reading(s): Neiman Lab: <i>Five tips for using analytics in the newsroom</i></p> <p>Assignment(s): Analytics assessment and recommendations for channels and homepage based on first month of traffic; Weekly content planning, scheduling and review of communications loop system.</p>
Week 6 – Feb. 19 & 21	<p>Social Media and Journalism</p> <p>Lecture: Social media strategy, tactics and analytics for a digital media product. Discuss the ethics of user-generated content, plus verification tips and tactics.</p>	<p>Reading(s): Medium: <i>The Social Media Reporter</i> American Press Institute: <i>Journalism as a discipline of verification</i></p> <p>Assignment(s): Weekly content planning, scheduling and review of communications loop system.</p>

Week/Lecture	Topic	Required Reading and Assignment
Week 7 – Feb. 26 & 28	Site management and production Lecture: Review current coverage plan and issues, plus weekly content director responsibilities.	Reading(s): N/A Assignment(s): Weekly content updating; Start content director rotation shifts, which requires each Lead to manage all homepage and social updates from Monday to the next Sunday.
Week 8 – March 4 & 6	No Class Meeting	Assignment(s): Manage and update The NewsHouse as needed. Coordination will be handled remotely.
March 11 & 13	SPRING BREAK	None
Week 9 – March 18 & 20	Site management and production Lecture: Review coverage plan and issues.	Reading(s): N/A Assignment(s): Weekly content planning, scheduling and review of communications loop system; Shift content director rotation.
Week 10 – March 25 & 27	Site management and production Lecture: Review weekly coverage plan and issues.	Reading(s): N/A Assignment(s): Weekly content planning, scheduling and review of communications loop system; Shift content director rotation.
Week 11 – April 1 & 3	Site management and production Lecture: Review coverage plan and issues.	Reading(s): N/A Assignment(s): Weekly content planning, scheduling and review of communications loop system; Shift content director rotation.
Week 12 – April 8 & 10	Site management and production Lecture: Review coverage plan and issues.	Reading(s): N/A Assignment(s): Weekly content planning, scheduling and review of communications loop system; Shift content director rotation.
Week 13 – April 15 & 17	Site management and production Lecture: Review coverage plan and issues.	Reading(s): N/A Assignment(s): Weekly content planning, scheduling and review of communications loop system; Shift content director rotation.

Week/Lecture	Topic	Required Reading and Assignment
		Due: Content review and publishing based on deadlines during the week.
Week 14 – April 22 & 24	Site management and production Lecture: Review coverage plan and issues.	Reading(s): N/A Assignment(s): Weekly content planning, scheduling and review of communications loop system; Shift content director rotation.
Week 15 – April 29	What We Accomplished Lecture: Review plans and content updates for The NewsHouse before winter break	Reading(s): N/A Assignment(s): Integrate final projects from Digital News class; Reflection: Your NewsHouse experience and recommendations.
Final – Date – May 2, 12:45-2:45 p.m.)	<i>No Final Unless Needed</i>	