COM3203: DATA JOURNALISM

Effective Term
Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title
Data Journalism

Subject Code
COM - Media and Communication
Course Number
3203

Academic Unit
Media and Communication (COM)

College/School
College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration
One Semester

Credit Units
3

Level
B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

Medium of Instruction
Other Languages

Other Languages for Medium of Instruction
English [For practicum component: English and Chinese]

Medium of Assessment
English

Prerequisites
Nil

Precursors
Nil

Equivalent Courses
Nil

Exclusive Courses
Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course aims to train students to deliver a wide range of data-driven journalistic works. It emphasizes a hands-on approach to practicing data acquisition, data analysis, and producing news content with multimedia data visualization.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

	CILOs	Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Describe the various communication channels on the Internet	20		x	
2	Perform data acquisition and data analysis for news content	40	x	x	
3	Produce audio, video or graphic elements for data visualization in the news content	20	x	x	
4	Write publishable data-driven on-line news stories	20		x	x

A1: Attitude
Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability
Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments
Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

	LTAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lectures	Engage in formal lectures to gain knowledge on various channels on the Internet	1	2 week
2	Lectures & exercises	Engage in formal lectures and exercises to gain knowledge on data acquisition and analytics for news content	2	6 weeks
3	Lectures & exercises	Engage in formal lectures and exercises to gain knowledge on data visualization for news content	3	3 weeks

4	Tutorials	Engage in tutorial activities to use data analytics tools and programming languages for data manipulation	2, 3, 4	Throughout the course

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("-" for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Assignments: - Data acquisition - Data analysis - Data visualization	2, 3, 4	30	-	Yes
2	Project: A publishable news story with data analytics elements	1, 2, 3, 4	70	Integrate GenAI tools into projects can help students brainstorm ideas, draft sections of their work, learn new technologies, and analyse data.	Yes

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)

Assessment Task

Assignments

Criterion

Ability to handle data using programming skills

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Excellent demonstration of creativity and techniques

Good (B+, B, B-)

Good demonstration of creativity and techniques

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Adequate demonstration of creativity and techniques

Marginal (D)

Fair demonstration of creativity and techniques

Failure (F)

Inadequate demonstration of creativity and techniques

Additional Information for AR

Grading Criteria for Data Journalism Project

Grade A:

1. Relevance & Significance:
 - The data selected is highly relevant and significantly supports the story or argument being made.
2. Depth of Analysis:
 - Comprehensive understanding of the data sources, methods, and findings.
 - Thorough and advanced analytical techniques applied, resulting in nuanced insights.

3. Data Visualization:
 - Visuals are highly effective, aesthetically pleasing, and appropriate for the data type.
 - All charts, graphs, and tables are clearly labeled, with accurate interpretations provided.

4. Storytelling & Narrative:
 - The story is compelling, well-structured, and adds significant value to the data.
 - There's a clear narrative arc with an interconnected beginning, middle, and conclusion.

5. Originality:
 - Provides a fresh perspective or sheds light on an underreported aspect of the topic.

6. Ethics & Accuracy:
 - All data sources are clearly cited.
 - No evidence of data manipulation or bias in the presentation.

Grade B:

1. Relevance & Significance:
 - The data is relevant and mostly supports the story or argument, though there might be minor gaps.

2. Depth of Analysis:
 - Good understanding of data sources and methods.
 - Sound analytical techniques applied, leading to clear insights.

3. Data Visualization:
 - Visuals are effective and clear, with minor aesthetic or appropriateness issues.
 - Most visual elements are labeled with accurate interpretations.

4. Storytelling & Narrative:
 - The story is clear and structured but may lack the compelling nature of an 'A' project.

5. Originality:
 - Offers a new perspective but may overlap with existing narratives or analyses.

6. Ethics & Accuracy:
 - Most data sources are cited, with minor oversights.
 - Minimal signs of unintentional data discrepancies.

Grade C:

1. Relevance & Significance:
 - Data is somewhat relevant but may not fully align with or support the narrative.

2. Depth of Analysis:
 - Basic understanding of data sources and methods.
 - Rudimentary analytical techniques with surface-level insights.

3. Data Visualization:
 - Visuals are present but may lack clarity or appropriateness.
 - Several visual elements may be unlabeled or misinterpreted.

4. Storytelling & Narrative:
- Story exists but may lack strong structure or compelling elements.

5. Originality:
- Largely covers the well-trodden ground with limited new insights.

6. Ethics & Accuracy:
- Some data sources are not cited or have questionable integrity.
- Potential signs of data inconsistencies or unintentional bias.

Grade D:

1. Relevance & Significance:
- Data is only tangentially related or does not support the story or argument.

2. Depth of Analysis:
- Limited or poor understanding of data sources and methods.
- Little to no meaningful analysis presented.

3. Data Visualization:
- Visuals are confusing, inappropriate, or missing.
- Numerous visual elements are unlabeled or misrepresented.

4. Storytelling & Narrative:
- Lacks a clear narrative or structure.

5. Originality:
- Repetitive or borrowed insights without a fresh angle or perspective.

6. Ethics & Accuracy:
- Many data sources are uncited or come from questionable origins.
- Clear signs of data inconsistencies, manipulation, or bias.

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Data journalism; Data analytics; Data visualization; Computer-assisted journalism.

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

	Title
1	Liliana Bounegru and Jonathan Gray (2021). The Data Journalism Handbook: Towards a Critical Data Practice. Amsterdam University Press

Additional Readings

	Title
1	Mike Ward (2002). Journalism online. Oxford; Boston: Focal Press.
2	Jeffrey S. Wilkinson, August E. Grant, Douglas J. Fisher (2009). Principles of convergent journalism. New York: Oxford University Press.
3	Paul Bradshaw (2017). Scraping for Journalists. Amazon Digital Services LLC
4	The Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual (current edition)