Cross-cultural reporting
JOUR 4530-004 / JOUR 5760-004
Summer 2020
Mayborn in Fukuoka, Japan
Through the University of North Texas, Denton, Texas, USA

**Instructor:** Professor Todd Bennett
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General class information, assignments, syllabus and readings are available on Canvas through learn.unt.edu. All assignments will be turned in through Canvas except your reflective writing blogs.

**Description**
In this course, we will explore cultural aspects of Japan through journalism. We will create multimedia stories, blogs and other media content to capture the lived experiences of local residents. Instruction includes lectures, discussions, readings, presentations, field trips, and writing. By the end of the class, students should have a multimedia story (text, photos, podcast, video, audio slideshow and/or other multimedia elements) that they have researched and produced.

**Statements of Student Learning Outcomes**
- Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the United States and Japan, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances.
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they will work.
- Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of groups in a global society in relationship to communications.
- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information.
- Work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.
- Think critically, creatively and independently.
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences, and purposes they serve.
- Apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work, and to understand the digital world.

**Email communication and class information**
Electronic communication with students in this class will be through the students’ my.unt.edu accounts rather than personal email accounts. All information for the class will be posted on Canvas at learn.unt.edu.
Disability Accommodation
The University of North Texas and the Mayborn School of Journalism make reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time. However, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For study-abroad courses, students requesting accommodations should notify their faculty leader as early as possible so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Note that while the ADA does not extend beyond U.S. borders, and international accessibility requirements vary broadly from U.S. standards, UNT study-abroad programs will endeavor to provide accommodations wherever practicable. **Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student.** For additional information, see the UNT Office of Disability Access website at [https://disability.unt.edu/](https://disability.unt.edu/). You may also contact ODA by phone at 940-565-4323.

Academic Honesty
When you submit work for this class, that is the same as making a statement that you have produced the work yourself, in its entirety. Plagiarism, fabrication, copyright infringement, and similar uses of other people's work are unacceptable.

Plagiarism, in a nutshell, is using other people’s written words as your own. Some people consider the use of 7-10 words in a row, copied from another source, as plagiarism. Be sure to include citations when using other people’s writing, because plagiarism is a serious offense in any discipline, especially in journalism. It is a firing offense in the professional world.

Mayborn School of Journalism Academic Integrity Policy
The codes of ethics from the Society of Professional Journalists, American Advertising Federation and Public Relations Society of America address truth and honesty. The Mayborn School of Journalism embraces these tenets and believes that academic dishonesty of any kind – including plagiarism and fabrication – is incongruent with all areas of journalism. The school’s policy aligns with UNT Policy 18.1.16 and requires reporting any act of academic dishonesty to the Office for Academic Integrity for investigation. If the student has a previous confirmed offense (whether the first offense was in the journalism school or another university department) and the student is found to have committed another offense, the department will request the additional sanction of removing the student from the Mayborn School of Journalism. The student may appeal to the Office for Academic Integrity, which ensures due process and allows the student to remain in class pending the appeal.

Attendance
One absence in the course is the limit without penalty toward your final grade, unless you have an emergency or an illness. Coming to class late or leaving early may constitute an absence for that day. This is a seminar course, and it requires your attendance and participation each class meeting.

Assignments
The assignments for this class include a personal blog, which you will set up on spark.adobe.com. You must submit the URL (address) to this blog to me BEFORE YOU LEAVE THE U.S., by May 23. Send the URL to this link: https://tinyurl.com/Japanjour Your blog will be public so consider the content accordingly. Your completed blog is due on Monday, June 29.

Your other assignment is a multimedia journalism project. You may complete this project on your own or with a partner. This project is due Monday, June 22.

**No textbook is required, but if you have an Associated Press Stylebook, you should bring it. Or download the app on your phone.**

**Blog assignments**
Part of the class will include visits to media organizations and other important Japan landmarks. You are expected to maintain a blog for this class in which you will reflect on what you are learning and doing. This blog should not only be a travelogue; it should illustrate your evolution throughout the class. You will discuss the knowledge and experiences you are having and how those are enhancing your education and growth. Each blog post should be 300-500 words long and may include photos, video, audio or other multimedia aspects. All outside sources should be credited.

Each week, you will have two blog posts due, one on your choice of topics and the other about an assigned topic.

**Week one:** What are your perceptions of Japanese society in Tokyo? How is it different from home?

**Week two:** From the media organizations we have visited, what do you think is the same or different from what you have observed in the U.S. media?

**Week three:** Now that you’ve lived and studied in Japan for two weeks, write a list of tips you’d suggest for students who may participate in this experience, or those who might be interested in working in Japan. Offer advice about negotiating a cultural situation that you found unique to your experience here (i.e., going out to eat with a business person).

**Week four:** There are plenty of products that link the United States and Japan. Choose one and analyze its flow between the two countries. Are there products you’re surprised to see on local shelves? Is there a product here that has a cult following in the United States? Why? What does this form of consumption say about U.S. and Japanese interests and disposable income?

**Week five:** How will you take what you have learned in Japan and apply it to your life in the USA?

**Guidelines for reporting a multimedia story:**
Your multimedia story about a cultural aspect of Japan can be a video story, photo essay, text story, podcast or a combination of these. You should follow journalistic guidelines for this story: a compelling story told through excellent research, factual information attributed to sources, interviews/observations/interactions and a strong narrative. You should include at least three outside sources for this story. You story should follow the SPJ Code of Ethics (https://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp) and Associated Press style. You should always introduce yourself as a journalist when conducting interviews and research for this story. If you are not a journalism student or have not had many journalism classes, we will be covering journalistic
principles and storytelling techniques in class. You also might consider partnering with another student who has journalism experience.

**Grades**
Your grade for this class will be based on the following:
Class participation (discussion, engagement, initiative): 20 percent
Blog: 30 percent
Multimedia story: 50 percent

Syllabus (Subject to change; all changes will be announced in advance; some field trips will be announced on site instead of in this syllabus):

**Week 1**
Tokyo media visits.

Blogging
Begin writing your blog this week and start to promote it. Blog posts should present an overview of the sites we visit and observations about Japanese media.

**Week 2**
Introduction to Japanese culture and media. Overview of journalistic practices and reporting techniques and strategy.

Blogging
To read and discuss this week:

READ online overview of Japan and the Japanese Media System from the BBC: http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-14918801. Link also is on Canvas. (Click on ALL tabs, including Overview, Facts, Leaders, Media, Timeline and In Pictures.)

Read article, McCargo, D. “The Political Role of the Japanese Media,” posted on Canvas.

Choose topic for reporting project and begin research on the topic.

**Week 3**
Blogging
Work on reporting projects. Meet with professor for guidance and updates.

Twitter scavenger hunt in Fukuoka.

**Week 4**
Blogging
Work on reporting projects. Meet with professor for guidance and updates.

**Week 5**
Blogging
Presentations of reporting projects

**FINAL PROJECT DUE** Monday, June 22

**FINAL BLOG DUE** Monday, June 29