Cross-cultural reporting
JOUR 4520.003 / JOUR 5xxx.003
Summer 2018
Mayborn in Fukuoka, Japan
Through the University of North Texas, Denton, Texas, USA

Instructor: Dr. Tracy Everbach
Email: Tracy.Everbach@unt.edu

General class information, assignments, syllabus and readings are available on
Blackboard through learn.unt.edu. All assignments will be turned in through Blackboard
except your reflective writing blogs.

Required texts
International News in the Digital Age: East-West Perceptions of a New World Order,

Description
In this course, we will explore media systems in the United States and Japan, including
the press, magazines, broadcasting and online media. We will create blogs and podcasts
to capture the lived experiences of local residents. Instruction includes lectures,
discussions, readings, presentations, field trips, guest speakers and blogging. By the end
of the class, students should have a firm grasp on the media system in Japan and its
differences and similarities to the United States of America’s media. Concentration is on
news media, but entertainment media and sports media also will be discussed.

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 Blackboard at learn.unt.edu.

**Disability Accommodation**
The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of 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 accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of 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 Office of Disability Accommodation website at http://www.unt.edu/oda. You may also contact them 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.

Office Hours
I’m available to you in the classroom and on campus at many different hours. My virtual office is always open; just email me, and I will respond within 24 hours, except on weekends.

Attendance
One absence in the course is the limit without penalty toward your final grade, unless you have communicated with me from the beginning about an extraordinary problem. 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
In this class you will have assigned, mandatory readings. Class discussion is a large part of this seminar class. You are expected to come to class prepared (with the readings completed) and ready to discuss the topics for that day. 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. You also are expected to conduct research and make class presentations on your findings. Since this is a class on the Japanese media, students are expected to read and watch the media on a daily basis and be prepared to discuss issues and current events.

Each student will be assigned a media outlet for which that student will be responsible for the course. That student is expected to keep up with the media outlet on a daily basis, become an expert on that media outlet, and make a presentation on it at the end of the course.

The media outlets to be examined are below. You will choose ONE:

Daily and weekly newspapers:

- The Japan Times
- The Asahi Shimbun
- Mainichi Daily News
- The Japan News

Press Club:
• Japan National Press Club

Blogs:
• Shingestu News Agency (SNA)
• Shisaku
• Tokyo Reporter
• Japan Subculture Research
• Tofugu
• What Japan Thinks

Magazines:
• Kyoto Journal
• Nikkei Asian Review

If you know another media outlet you’d like to explore, you may suggest it to me.

Guidelines for media presentation/paper

You should study your assigned media outlet in depth. You should produce a 5- to 7-page double-spaced paper that includes the history, current state, political or social influence, audience and circulation or reach of your media outlet. You also should include a section on the main stories or issues that your media outlet covered and how it covered those issues. Examples and links are encouraged. This report should include citations and references to all sources where you obtained information. You will turn in your paper on Blackboard and it is due by midnight on the last day of class. You also will make a 7- to 10-minute presentation to the class on your media outlet the last week of class. You will share with your classmates and instructors what you discovered about the Japanese media during this program. You are welcome to make a multimedia presentation involving video, audio, still photography, PowerPoint or any other elements.

Graduate students: Instead of a 5-to 7-page paper, I expect a 10- to 12-page paper written in APA or Chicago style with in-depth analysis of the media outlet put in context comparatively with the U.S. media. You may choose a subject-area focus to narrow the scope of your research. You may also choose to write a historical analysis of U.S.-Japan media relations.

Blog and podcast episodes
Your personal blog and team podcast episodes will be the biggest grading component for the class. You should post at least TWO 300- to 500-word blogs and one podcast per week we are in Japan. Posts with multimedia elements (embedded links, photos, videos) are encouraged. You should set up your blog on the Internet. You need to e-mail me (Meredith.Clark@unt.edu) the address to this blog the first week of class. I will check your blog periodically throughout the semester. I may post comments on your blog throughout our time in London. You will receive a blog grade at the end of the course in
the form of a comment on the blog; therefore, you need to enable the blog to receive comments. The grade will be based upon your analysis, facts, evidence and self-reflection. You are expected to reflect on the material we discuss in class and write critically and intelligently about it. Links, hyperlinks and citations are expected to verify your work and let readers know where they can find further information. Photos and video are strongly encouraged. Specific topics may be assigned in class. You can set up a blog for this class at either www.blogspot.com and www.wordpress.com or another format of your choice, but the account must be unlocked so people will have access to it.

Each week has a specific podcast assignment. Your podcast should run at least 15-20 minutes and include material related to the week’s topic. Use your podcast to give color to your blog entries, bringing in the sounds of Japan and the voices of people who live and work here. We will work in class to produce our podcasts, including writing scripts. You will use time outside of class to conduct interviews, gather audio and edit your podcast. These entries will be posted on our study abroad project site.

Grades
Your grade for this class will be based on the following:

Class participation (discussion, engagement, initiative): 20 percent
Blog: 25 percent
Podcast: 25 percent
Media presentation: 30 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
Ongoing travel through sites in Japan.

To read and discuss this week: ICFJ’s Journalism Ethics: The Global Debate, (PDF and link also available via Blackboard).

Blog assignment: Create your blog this week and start to promote it.
Podcast assignment: “On the ground in Tokyo.” Blog posts and podcast episode should present an overview of the sites we visit, with a focus on one media outlet and its contribution to international news. Interview at least one local person about their media consumption habits.

Week 2
Introduction to Japanese culture and media: How history, diplomatic relations and culture cues impact approaches to reporting

To read and discuss this week:

Due TUESDAY: 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
Blackboard. (Click on ALL tabs, including Overview, Facts, Leaders, Media, Timeline and In Pictures.)

Due THURSDAY: Read Chapter 1 in “Closing the Shop: Information Cartels & Japan’s Mass Media” by Laurie Anne Freeman. Document is posted on Blackboard. Discuss the Japanese media system, notions of objectivity, concentration of media, debate about utility and function of press clubs.

By THURSDAY: Claim the media outlet you want to research for the semester. Blog address emailed to me at Meredith.Clark@unt.edu.

Blog assignment: Media in Transition. Write a brief historical profile of your chosen media outlet.
Podcast assignment: “A Closer Look at Japanese Culture.” In-depth field observation of an aspect of Japanese culture. What are the hobbies, habits and interests of people in Fukuoka?

Week 3
Freelance journalism as an expat

MONDAY & TUESDAY: Discuss legal and ethical constraints of freelancing in respective countries.

DUE WEDNESDAY: In-class construction of code of ethics for reporting in the United States and Japan.

Watch “Page One: Inside the New York Times.”

THURSDAY: Solidifying your beat.

Blog assignment: Freelancer’s guide. Now that you’ve lived and studied in Japan for a year, 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).

Podcast assignment: “Everyday People in Japan.” Interview an expat. Using online resources, locate a non-Japanese national living and working in the country about their experiences, particularly where they get news and information about the country.

Week 4
More discussion of beat work, source development, using digital tools as a mobile journalist.

Start presentations of final projects.

**Blog assignment:** Follow the Dollar. 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?

**Podcast assignment:** “The Ties that Bind” This podcast will explore common links between the United States and Japan in business and economy. What trends should companies doing business in one or both countries be on the lookout for in the next five to 10 years? What advice do stakeholders have for companies with a presence in the United States and Japan?

*Week 5*

Presentations

*FINAL PROJECT DUE ON LAST DAY OF CLASS*