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SAMPLE COURSE OUTLINE

Course Code, Number, and Title:

JOUR 2420: Data Journalism

Course Format:
[Course format may vary by instructor. The typical course format would be:]

Lecture 1 h + Seminar 0 h + Lab 1 h

Credits: 1.5   **Transfer credit:** For information, visit bctransferguide.ca

Course Description, Prerequisites, Corequisites:

Students learn and practice a specialty that is increasingly in demand in the journalism industry, addressing the increased role that numerical data plays in the production and distribution of information. They learn where to find data, how to interpret it, as well as how to use current digital tools and techniques to tell a complex story through engaging infographics.

Prerequisite(s): JOUR 1122, 1128, 1224 and 1244

Registration in this course is restricted to students admitted to the Diploma or Certificate in Journalism.

Learning Outcomes:
Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify what makes a good data story
- Collect and analyze data from open data sites, CVS files, web scraping, FOI requests and elsewhere
- Organize and store data collected
- Use spreadsheets, build interactive graphics and digital maps
- Identify the best ways to tell a story through visualization
- Produce a relevant story based on collected data and anchored by an interactive graphic or map

Instructor(s): TBA
Office: TBA   Phone: 604 323 XXXX   Email: TBA

Office Hours: TBA

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Textbook and Course Materials:
[Textbook selection may vary by instructor. An example of texts and course materials for this course might be:}

For textbook information, visit https://mycampusstore.langara.bc.ca/buy_courselisting.asp?selTerm=3|8

Note: *This course may use an electronic (online) instructional resource that is located outside of Canada for mandatory graded class work. You may be required to enter personal information, such as your name and email address, to log in to this resource. This means that your personal information could be stored on servers located outside of Canada and may be accessed by U.S. authorities, subject to federal laws. Where possible, you may log in with an email pseudonym as long as you provide the pseudonym to me so I can identify you when reviewing your class work.*

Assessments and Weighting:
Final Exam %
Other Assessments %
(An example of other assessments might be:) %

Quizzes/Tests: 60%
Assignments: 10%
Project: 30%

Journalism education consists largely of having students complete weekly assignments that reproduce the pace, rhythm, and content of newsroom operations. Courses do not have final exams because of the constant assignment and feedback cycle that is characteristic of journalism programs.

Proportion of individual and group work:
Individual: 60%
Group: 40%

Grading System: Letter grade
Specific grading schemes will be detailed in each course section outline.

Passing grade: C-

Topics Covered:
[Topics covered may vary by instructor. An example of topics covered might be:]

Week 1 – What data can do: Exploring data journalism examples that rocked the world and the kinds of stories make good data stories. How not to get lost in the weeds.
Week 2 – Computing basics: Computer basics and different types of storage. What is an algorithm? Students begin to explore the kind of data they are interested in researching.

This generic outline is for planning purposes only.

Week 3 – Where data comes from: Quiz: computing basics. Sourcing data, downloading from open data sites, CSV files, basic web scraping, Freedom of Information, publically available election results, pinging servers.

Week 4 – Introduction to spreadsheets and graphs: Handy spreadsheet tricks, sorting and filtering in spreadsheets, graphing inside spreadsheets, making interactive spreadsheets.

Week 5 –Spreadsheets – more functions, basic interactivity: Learning more advanced functions. Students will take what they have built and make it web-ready.

Week 6 – Interactive graphics: Spreadsheets and graphs digital test. Introduction to building interactive graphics.

Week 7 – Introduction to digital mapping: Introduction to mapping, why it works, how to do it digitally.

Week 8 – Class project work day: Interactive graphics and digital mapping test. Class project work day. Students present data they have collected and explore stories they can tell with it.

Week 9 – Introduction to programming language: Basic coding.

Week 10 - More programming: Web scraping.

Week 11 – Quiz and work day: Programming quiz. Project work day.

Week 12 – Project presentations: Presentation of interactive graphic or map and conclusion based on data that students have found and analyzed.

Week 13 - Moving beyond data: Grounding a scoop in the real world and converting data into emotionally relevant stories.

As a student at Langara, you are responsible for familiarizing yourself and complying with the following policies:

College Policies:

E1003 - Student Code of Conduct
F1004 - Code of Academic Conduct
E2008 - Academic Standing - Academic Probation and Academic Suspension
E2006 - Appeal of Final Grade
F1002 - Concerns about Instruction
E2011 - Withdrawal from Courses

Departmental/Course Policies:

This generic outline is for planning purposes only.