

SYLLABUS

1. Information regarding the programme

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| 1.1 Higher education institution | BABEŞ-BOLYAI UNIVERSITY |
| 1.2 Faculty | FACULTY OF POLITICAL, ADMINISTRATIVE AND COMMUNICATION SCIENCES |
| 1.3 Department | JOURNALISM DEPARTMENT |
| 1.4 Field of study | COMMUNICATION SCIENCES |
| 1.5 Study cycle | BACHELOR |
| 1.6 Study programme / Qualification | JOURNALISM |

2. Information regarding the discipline

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| 2.1 Name of the discipline | INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING / ULE3300 | | | | | | |
| 2.2 Course coordinator | Dr. Zoltán TIBORI SZABÓ - Phone: 0722-364789 | | | | | | |
| 2.3 Seminar coordinator | Dr. Zoltán TIBORI SZABÓ - E-mail: tibori@xnet.ro | | | | | | |
| 2.4. Year of study | 2 | 2.5 Semester | 1 | 2.6. Type of evaluation | C | 2.7 Type of discipline | DS |

3. Total estimated time (hours/semester of didactic activities)

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|---|----------|----------------------|----|------------------------|----|
| 3.1 Hours per week | 3 | Of which: 3.2 course | 2 | 3.3 seminar/laboratory | 1 |
| 3.4 Total hours in the curriculum | 42 | Of which: 3.5 course | 28 | 3.6 seminar/laboratory | 14 |
| Time allotment: | hours | | | | |
| Learning using manual, course support, bibliography, course notes | 21 | | | | |
| Additional documentation (in libraries, on electronic platforms, field documentation) | 21 | | | | |
| Preparation for seminars/labs, homework, papers, portfolios and essays | 21 | | | | |
| Tutorship | 15 | | | | |
| Evaluations | 6 | | | | |
| Other activities: | 0 | | | | |
| 3.7 Total individual study hours | 84 | | | | |
| 3.8 Total hours per semester | 126 | | | | |
| 3.9 Number of ECTS credits | 5 | | | | |

4. Prerequisites (if necessary)

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| 4.1. curriculum | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> attending students must have received at least a 5 in Introduction in Reporting |
| 4.2. competencies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of Microsoft Office computer programs (Word, Excel, Access), permanent e-mail address |

5. Conditions (if necessary)

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| 5.1. for the course | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> no conditions; attendance is highly recommended |
| 5.2. for the seminar /lab activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> continuous following of the news active participation to the seminars |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • paper and in-class presentation on one of the well-known investigation journalists of the world • deadlines are treated in the same way they are treated in the real world: very seriously • students having a legitimate reason to miss a deadline will inform the teacher about it before the deadline • academic misconduct (plagiarism, falsification, or other forms of dishonesty): the student will receive a zero for the assignment in question, and will face disciplinary action according to the University regulations |
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6. Specific competencies acquired

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| Professional competencies | <p>Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the specific language of investigative journalism • Mastering the basic skills and techniques of research and writing investigative reports • Knowledge of national and international legal frame of investigative reporting • Knowledge of the ethics of investigative reporting <p>Abilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to design and carry out specific investigations • Capacity to deal with both paper and digital information • Ability to investigate everyday realities in the search for truth • Capacity to select information sources and to work with human sources |
| Transversal competencies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity to analyze, interpret, structure, and synthesize information • Full command of a foreign language • Enterprising initiative in field-related activities • Capacity of appreciation of diversity and multiculturalism • Proof of unconditional respect for private and community property |

7. Objectives of the discipline (outcome of the acquired competencies)

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| 7.1 General objective of the discipline | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The course will introduce the students to the methods and ethics of investigative reporting, and will teach them how to search behind the surface of daily events in order to find stories that will help the public to better understand our more and more complicated world. |
| 7.2 Specific objective of the discipline | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will learn how to think skeptically and critically, but also how to gather information by using different documents, databases and other written sources, by interviewing people more effectively, and by investigating in the field. • Skills like the ability of choosing subjects, of tracing the documentary papers, of analyzing the gathered information, of asking questions that add perspective to their reports will be enforced. • Finally, students will understand how to do in-depth reporting helped by primary and secondary sources (people sources, paper sources, electronic documents and databases), how to track down people and their money and valuables, how to organize their material, how to write an excellent story that goes much further than answering “the five w,” and how to master basic investigative tools and techniques, applying them to everyday reporting, but to major investigation works as well. |

8. Content

| 8.1 Course | Teaching methods | Remarks |
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| <u>1st week:</u> - The basic goals and requirements of the course, of the mandatory and recommended bibliography, and of the principles of grading | lecture by teacher | |
| <u>2nd week:</u> - What is investigative journalism? - Journalism and investigative reporting. The healthy skepticism, the critical thinking | lecture by teacher with class discussion | |
| <u>3rd week:</u> - The history of investigative journalism. Muckrakers. The Watergate-case. - The role and challenges of investigative journalism by the beginning of the 21 st century - Historical and sociological investigation | lecture by teacher + film projection | Students are choosing individual topics for their investigative reports. During the month of November they will conduct individual researches in order to identify the paper sources related to their topics. |
| <u>4th week:</u> - Handling paper (written) sources, building databases. - Computer-assisted investigation - Newspapers. Library sources. Research techniques - Official and unofficial documents. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Romanian Law on the Free Access to Information of Public Interest. Secret documents | multimedia presentation + lecture by teacher | |
| <u>5th week:</u> - Choosing a subject (topic) for investigation. Research Hypothesis. Building the story - Techniques used by investigative reporters | lecture by teacher | |
| <u>6th week:</u> - People (human) sources. Relation of the reporter with the people sources - Tools for locating and keeping human sources | lecture by teacher | |
| <u>7th week:</u> - Conversations, interviews, and their techniques. Interactions with policymakers - Working with anonymous sources - Use of bluffs and tricks, and the inherent dangers of these tools | lecture by teacher with class discussion | |
| <u>8th week:</u> - Investigating the law enforcement and the judicial system - Making speak the executive branch of the government and the local authorities | lecture by teacher | Delivery deadline of the first individual paper: the summary of the paper sources on the subject. |
| <u>9th week:</u> - Investigating private sector, financial institutions, licensed professionals, and NGO's - Identifying gaps in the health care system. Investigating insurance - Investigating environmental projects | multimedia presentation + lecture by teacher | |
| <u>10th week:</u> - The frontiers of privacy. Conflicts of interest. - Wealth and privacy of politicians, and members of the central and local governments | lecture by teacher | |
| <u>11th week:</u> - Asking for the help of professionals | lecture by teacher | |

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| - International investigations | | |
| <u>12th week:</u> - The ethics of investigation journalism. Using hidden cameras/microphones, lying, breaking the law. Censorship and self-censorship - Working with the editor. Literary journalism | lecture by teacher | Delivery deadline for the second individual paper: the investigative report. |
| <u>13th week:</u> - Weighing the information, writing the story - Writing techniques, story structures and proportions. Using chronology or outline? - Avoiding clichés and stereotypes, finding the appropriate tone and perspective - What is objectivity? | lecture by teacher | |
| <u>14th week:</u> - In-class presentation of the individual investigative reports | student reports + debate | |

Bibliography

A. Mandatory

- Melvin Mencher: *Basic Media Writing*. Brown&Benchmark Publishers, Madison-Dubuque-Indianapolis-Melbourne-Oxford, 1993.
- Melvin Mencher: *News Reporting and Writing*. Brown&Benchmark Publishers, Madison-Dubuque-Indianapolis-Melbourne-Oxford, 1994.
- David Anderson, Peter Benjaminson: *Investigative Reporting*. Indiana University Press, Bloomington-London, 1976.
- Shaking the Foundations. 200 Years of Investigative Journalism in America*. Bruce Shapiro (ed.), Thunder's Mouth Press-Nation Books, New York, 2003.
- William Gaines: *Investigative Reporting for Print and Broadcast*. Nelson-Hall Publishers, Chicago, 1994.
- David L. Protess et al.: *Journalism of Outrage*. The Guilford Press, New York-London, 1991.
- Christopher Callahan: *A Journalist's Guide to the Internet. The Net As a Reporting Tool*. Allyn & Bacon, Boston, 1999.
- Paula LaRocque: *The Book On Writing. The Ultimate Guide to Writing Well*. Marion Street Press Inc., Oak Park, 2003.
- Paul LaRocque: *Heads You Win. An Easy Guide to Better Headline and Caption Writing*. Marion Street Press Inc., Oak Park, 2003.
- William E. Francois: *Mass Media Law and Regulation*. Waveland Press Inc., Prospect Heights, Illinois, 1994.
- James A Jaksa, Michael S. Pritchard: *Communication Ethics, Methods of Analysis*. Wadsworth Publishing Company, Belmont, California, 1993.

B. Optional readings

- Cristian Grosu, Liviu Avram: *Jurnalismul de investigație*. Polirom, Iași, 2004.
- Monica Macovei, Dan Mihai, Mircea Toma: *Ghid juridic pentru ziariști*. Agenția de Monitorizare a Presei – Academia Cașăneanu, București, 2002.
- Norm Goldstein (ed.): *The Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual*. The Associated Press, New York, 2011.
- Paula LaRocque: *Championship Writing. 50 Ways To Improve Your Writing*. Marion Street Press Inc., Oak Park, 2000.
- Paul LaRocque: *The Concise Guide To Copy Editing. Preparing Written Work For Readers*. Marion Street Press Inc., Oak Park, 2003.

| 8.2 Seminar / laboratory | Teaching methods | Remarks |
|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| 1. Famous muckrakers | debate on students' readings | |
| 2. The Watergate Case | film projection + class discussion | overall assignments |
| 3. Conclusions of the Watergate Case | presentation of assignments + debate | |
| 4. Building and using databases | multimedia + practice + class discussion | |
| 5. Handling paper sources | presentation of progress reports on the | |

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| | first individual paper + discussion + coaching | |
| 6. The investigative reporter and the Law | class discussion on the jurisprudence of different domestic and international courts of law | |
| 7. Class discussion on the individual investigative reports | debate on students' readings | |
| Bibliography 1. Investigative Reporters and Editors: www.ire.org 2. International Consortium of Investigative Journalists: www.icij.org 3. Centrul Român pentru Jurnalism de Investigație: www.crji.org 4. International Journalists' Network: www.ijnnet.org 5. Global Investigative Journalism: www.globalinvestigativejournalism.org 6. International Center for Journalists: www.icfj.org 7. Freedom of Expression and Investigative Journalism: www.article19.org | | |

9. Corroborating the content of the discipline with the expectations of the epistemic community, professional associations and representative employers within the field of the program

- Beside the theoretical knowledge offered by the course, the seminar practice will teach the students how to go in-depth reporting, how to interview more effectively, how to organize their material, and how to write a compelling story. And more, they will acquire the skills to do the research in archives and in databases, and to put together investigative reports of a good quality. All these are today basic requirements of the communities, professional associations and employers.

10. Evaluation

| Type of activity | 10.1 Evaluation criteria | 10.2 Evaluation methods | 10.3 Share in the grade (%) |
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| 10.4 Course | knowledge of the lectured material | written test | 30% |
| | Course attendance and active participation will be quantified together with seminar attendance | | |
| 10.5 Seminar/lab activities | delivery of individual papers before deadlines | evaluation of the papers by teacher | first paper – 20% second paper – 30% |
| | Attendance, participation | attendance is mandatory, active participation to the discussions and debates is highly recommended | 20% |
| 10.6 Minimum performance standards | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ delivery of the two individual papers ➤ at least a 5 out of 10 at the test ➤ missing no more than two seminars | | | |

Date

September 15, 2022

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Signature of course coordinator

Tibor Szabó Zoltán

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Signature of seminar coordinator

Tibor Szabó Zoltán

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Date of approval

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Signature of the head of department

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