

Journalism 630 – In Depth Reporting

Redefining America: Telling the forgotten stories of a diverse people

Fall 2019

M-W 11-12:15 p.m.

Blake 106

Professor: Patricia Weems Gaston

Lacy C. Haynes Professor

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Office hours: M, W 1-3; T, Th 1-4; drop-ins are welcome!

Please call me Professor Gaston...

Course Objectives

This course will focus on a changing America and developing those stories that are often forgotten – the stories about people of color, LGBTQ, women, the disabled, immigrants. In 2013, the majority of babies under three were nonwhite. The Census Bureau projects the whole nation will follow by 2045. Now is the time to become more inclusive in our storytelling, whether it be about immigrant families in the heartland, poverty, or white-working class women and opioids. When we think of forgotten people minorities usually come to mind, but as we saw in the 2016 election, the majority population's white-working class people also felt that they were forgotten, discarded by the body politic. Students will report, write and present stories that look at key social, economic, political and cultural community issues and educate and inform their readers. Students will learn to be better listeners so that they can tell great stories. And most importantly students will behave as an ethical professional journalist, adhering to the Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics.

Coursework

During the semester, students are required to produce four (4) well-written, well-reported in-depth stories. They must be complete and publishable. Being published will be considered in grading. You must also:

- Read assigned materials and be prepared to thoroughly discuss in class, as well as participate fully when guest lecturers present in class.
- Weekly looks at “forgotten stories” in the news; be ready to write a potential budget line for your idea and turn it in by Friday at noon.
- Provide weekly progress reports of work being completed on projects. Progress reports are due at noon each Friday (once we begin working on our four stories).
- Carefully and frequently communicate with the professor, colleagues and industry professionals about issues that may arise while reporting or writing stories.

Grading

Your grade will be based on:

- Class participation and cooperation

- Reporting and newsgathering skills
- Development of story ideas and execution of those ideas
- Meeting deadlines
- Professionalism (attendance, participation in class, completing assignments on deadline, ethical behavior, and people skills in working with colleagues in the newsroom, sources and the public)
- Everyone is required to produce a publishable product.
- Weekly reports, story ideas

Assignment breakdown

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>660 Total Points</u>
In-class exercises/quizzes	160
Story 1	100
Story 2	100
Story 3	100
Story 4	100
Engagement/professionalism	100

* Engagement /professionalism: Includes being prepared for class discussions, meeting deadlines, class participation, and clear communication with professor, classmates and sources.

Your grades

Your final grade will be determined according to this breakdown:

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
93+	90-92	87-89	83-86	80-82	77-79	73-76	70-72	67-69	63-66	60-62	59-

A -- Outstanding. This grade is for work at or very close to professional level (client- or publish-ready). The writing is clear, correct and well organized; it requires virtually no editing. Reporting is complete and well sourced, and leaves no significant questions unanswered. Strategic messages get results, and, when appropriate, feature creative concepts; they are executed with comprehensive research and interesting presentation. The work is turned in by or before deadline, needing only tiny changes before submission to clients or editors.

B -- Good. This grade is for work that could be raised to professional standards without extensive editing. Writing is grammatically correct but may lack the sparkle and fine organization of "A" work. Reporting answers the main questions but may miss the proper emphasis or the best sources. Strategic messages are clear but may lack creative presentation or professional polish. The work is turned in by deadline with little or no prompting and needs minor revisions in such areas as reorganizing, rewriting, reformatting or sourcing. "B" work doesn't necessarily have anything wrong, but it could be better, often with a stronger topic, a more artistic presentation, better information or improved writing. "B" work demonstrates basic style.

C -- Adequate. This grade is for work that indicates a problem in at least one area, such as grammar, structure, format or strategy. It does not measure up to professional quality but could be saved by revision. Work needs more than minor revision before submission to a client or supervisor because of weak ideas, concepts or writing. It draws attention because it doesn't quite do the job. In summary, the work is an adequate first draft but isn't yet ready to show a client or supervisor.

D -- Unacceptable performance. This grade is for work that is clearly unacceptable even in a classroom setting. The writing is confused, unfocused, poorly structured and/or ungrammatical. The reporting is flawed and may contain major factual errors and/or omissions. Strategic messages may show little concept of basic strategic judgment, format and/or tone.

F -- Failing. This grade is for work that is not completed, either not done at all or not done completely in a professional way. For whatever reason, it has the appearance that the student did not take the assignment seriously. Such performance is often the result of personal or time-management problems that extend beyond a lack of skills or understanding of the research, writing or production processes.

Assignment, Reading and Conversation Schedule for Fall 2019

Week 1 Storytelling

M 8/26 Course intro; introductions; coverage survey; Read: What I learned about writing from listening to Aretha Franklin: <https://www.poynter.org/news/what-i-learned-about-writing-listening-aretha-franklin>

W 8/28 Coverage survey; weekly story idea discussion; news quiz; read New York Times's 1619 project piece: "America wasn't a Democracy, until Black Americans made it one." <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/14/magazine/black-history-american-democracy.html?action=click&module=Top%2520Stories&pgtype=Homepage&auth=login-email>

Week 2 Storytelling

M 9/2 Labor Day No class

W 9/4 Sourcing, etc.; Read: I'm Not Quoting Enough Women <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/13/opinion/women-sexism-journalism-conferences.html> ; weekly story idea; news quiz

Week 3 Economics/Poverty

M 9/9 Conversation: Annie Gowen, reporter for the Washington Post; Down Home on the Farm – How the trade war is affecting American farmers.

W 9/11 Hunger, homelessness; Read: Waiting for the 8th (Part of Washington Post series Food Stamps) https://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/national/2013/12/15/waiting-for-the-8th/?utm_term=.b9fce502d74d; weekly story idea discussion; news quiz

Week 4 Poverty/Storytelling

M 9/16 Read: "Looking for a Home," by Karen Russell. Can be found in KU's Common Book: "Tales of Two Americas", edited by John Freeman; weekly story idea discussion

W 9/18 News quiz; weekly story idea discussion; watch and discuss FX's documentary-style TV special *Peabody Presents: Stories of the Year*.

It features a roundtable discussion with recent Peabody Award winners about important social issues (race, the LGBTQ Experience, rape culture) and the power of media representation. The special will include 2019 Peabody award winners Steven Canals, co-creator of FX's *Pose*; ESPN investigative reporter Paula Lavigne, who won for "Spartan Silence: Crisis at Michigan State"; Terence Nance, who created HBO's *Random Acts of Flyness*; and writer-director Tracy Heather

Strain, who won for PBS/WNET documentary *Lorraine Hansberry: Sighted Eyes/Feeling Heart*. Two-time Peabody winner Hasan Minhaj will moderate the discussion.

Week 5 The Midwest

M 9/23 STORY 1 DUE; Conversation tbd; weekly story idea discussion

W 9/25 Changing demographics; Read: NYT's Stop pretending black Midwesterners don't exist: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/16/opinion/sunday/black-midwesterners-trump-politics.html>; weekly story idea discussion; news quiz

Week 6 Women and politics

M 9/30 STORY WORK DAY; weekly story idea discussion

W 10/2 Conversation: Vanessa Williams, reporter for the Washington Post; black women: the candidates and voters; weekly story idea discussion; news quiz

Week 7 Immigration and our view of the world

M 10/7 Conversation: tbd; weekly story idea discussion

W 10/9 Weekly story idea discussion; news quiz; Read and discuss: "The Media Erased Latinos from the Story" <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/08/we-must-recognize-hispanics-were-targeted/595783/>

Week 8 Our community

M 10/14 Fall break

W 10/16 STORY 2 DUE; weekly story idea discussion, news quiz; Read and discuss pieces on white privilege; <https://www.axios.com/new-culture-war-meaning-white-privilege-7d3a1744-b03b-4a3c-a30a-9741e0974bf0.html>; NYT magazine: I Wanted to Know What White Men Thought About Their Privilege. So, I Asked. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/17/magazine/white-men-privilege.html?action=click&module=Editors%20Picks&pgtype=Homepage>

Week 9 Our community

M 10/21 Read: "The case for Reparations" by Ta-Nehisi Coates of The Atlantic <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/>

W 10/23 Community coverage:: Read Washington Post's White, and in the Minority: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/local/wp/2018/07/30/feature/majority-minority-white-workers-at-this-pennsylvania-chicken-plant-now-struggle-to-fit-in/?utm_term=.f01cee1fe46a; and a rebuttal Why WaPo's piece is so dangerous: <http://www.latinorebels.com/2018/08/01/washingtonpostwhiteandintheminority/> , and this from CJR: A litmus test for inclusivity at WaPo <https://www.cjr.org/analysis/washington-post-chicken-factory.php>; weekly story idea discussion; news quiz

Week 10 Our community

M 10/28 Bring two examples of community coverage; Read: "In one unusual Virginia neighborhood, roots stretch to some of the earliest Africans in America" by Gregory S. Schneider of the Washington Post https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/virginia-politics/in-one-unusual-virginia-neighborhood-roots-stretch-to-the-first-africans-in-america/2019/08/21/3fb8cc48-c28b-11e9-b5e4-54aa56d5b7ce_story.html?wpisrc=nl_lclheads&wpmm=1

W 10/ 30 Conversation: Melinda Henneberger, editorial writer The Kansas City Star, women and violence and how columns looked at its effect on the Catholic Church, the Missouri governor's office as well as the Kansas City Chiefs; weekly story idea discussion; news quiz.

Week 11 Crime and punishment

M 11/4 Conversation: Wesley Lowery of the Washington Post, national correspondent covering law enforcement, justice and their intersection with politics and policy. In 2015, he was lead reporter on the Pulitzer-Prize winning project "Fatal Force."

W 11/6 Conversation: Patricia Gaston, co-editor of Pulitzer Prize-winning series "Violence Against Women: A Question of Human Rights."

Week 12 Our community

M 11/11 Conversation: John Watson on disabilities

W 11/13 STORY 3 DUE; Read: "To the Man Asleep in our Driveway who might be named Phil," by Anthony Doerr. Can be found in KU's Common Book: Tales of Two Americas, edited by John Freeman; weekly story idea discussion; news quiz

Week 14 Race, culture and sports

M 11/18 Conversation: Soraya Nadia McDonald of The Undefeated. Wrote recent piece on Toni Morrison – how she meant different thing to her at different times. She will also discuss how she decides what to write – pop culture, fashion, the arts, literature; weekly story idea discussion. <https://theundefeated.com/features/reading-toni-morrison-throughout-the-years/>

W 11/20 Conversation: Joel Anderson (tentative), Slate staff writer, previously worked as writer for ESPN. The intersection between race and sports. Example the recent controversy over Colin Kaepernick, Jay-Z and his joining forces with the NFL. Weekly story idea discussion; news quiz.

Week 15

M 11/25 STORY WORK DAY

W 11/27 Thanksgiving break; no weekly idea discussion or news quiz this week

Week 16 Health, the environment

M 12/2 Conversation: Lenny Bernstein, reporter of the Washington Post, on the opioid crisis and the white working class (tentative either 12/2 or 12/4)

W 12/4 Read: “How do countries cover climate change? Depends how rich they are.” By Kate Yoder; news quiz; weekly story idea discussion

https://grist.org/article/how-do-countries-cover-climate-change-depends-how-rich-they-are/?utm_source=KU+Today+Newsletter+List&utm_campaign=82515db67e-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2019_08_15_02_02&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_ec834ed00f-82515db67e-301422045

Week 17 The last week...

M 12/9 STORY 4 DUE; last news quiz; Read: “The ‘follow-up appointment’ by Eli Saslow of the Washington Post.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/the-follow-up-appointment/2019/08/17/1be5ded6-b936-11e9-a091-6a96e67d9cce_story.html

W 12/11 STOP DAY!

Your instructor: Patricia Gaston

Patricia E. (Weems) Gaston (j’81) comes to KU from The Washington Post, where she was an editor who has worked on several desks including National, Foreign and Editorial. Before coming to the Post in 1997, Gaston worked at the Dallas Morning News, where she was an assistant foreign editor and was co-editor of the 1994 Pulitzer Prize-winning series on violence against women.

She grew up in Kansas City, Kansas, and graduated from the University of Kansas in 1981. She has a master’s degree in sports management from The George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

In 2013, she was a Leadership Institute Fellow with the Center for American Progress, a progressive public policy program. In her spare time, Gaston has worked as a kitchen, case management and advocacy volunteer at Miriam's Kitchen and served on the agency's Volunteer Advocacy Advisory Committee.

Materials used to evaluate performance includes

E-Portfolios: You are required to develop an electronic portfolio of all your work. Your electronic portfolio will be evaluated at the end of the two-week experience. The portfolio should include:

Short bio. On your website, you should provide a bio page with a picture and some basic information. Keep it professional and informative. This isn't your Facebook page.

J630 work. This webpage should include all the work produced during this course. Anything published or broadcast should be included.

Other work. This webpage should include other work you would like prospective employers to see. It can be from other classes, internships or other media opportunities. It should be the "Best of..." page. It obviously also should include some work from this class. It would seem reasonable that what you produce here would be among your best work.

Ethics and academic misconduct

As reporters, you are expected to adhere to the Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics. For example, you should:

- Inform interview sources that you are a University of Kansas media reporter;
- Avoid using family or friends as sources, and avoid writing about issues or entities with which you have a personal connection and thus a conflict of interest;
- Never include the work of others in your story without proper attribution and credit for their contributions;
- Never fabricate or fictionalize facts, sources or quotes;
- Always clearly attribute source of information presented in your stories.

NOTE: Ethics violations will lead to a failing grade in the course. If you have questions, please seek advice from the instructor.

Journalism School Policy on Classroom Attendance

No student may add a journalism class after the 20th day of a semester.

Students must attend their classes and laboratory periods. Instructors may take attendance into account in assessing a student's performance and may require a certain level of attendance for passing a course. Instructors may choose to drop students from a course, based on attendance, without consent.

The School of Journalism reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of students who fail to attend the first class or laboratory meeting.

Financial Aid Policy

The KU Office of Student Financial Aid is required by federal law to determine whether students who receive aid are attending each class in which they are enrolled. Instructors are required to

report to that office absences of students who have stopped attending and names of those who have enrolled but never have attended. Students who do not attend classes may be required to repay federal and/or state financial aid.”

Students who receive any form of financial aid should learn all requirements including minimum hours of enrollment and grades to qualify for and retain that aid.

Misconduct

You are bound by the university rules on academic misconduct. If you have any questions about what constitutes cheating, please ask BEFORE your endeavor.

Policy on Plagiarism and Fabrication/Falsification

The William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications does not tolerate plagiarism, fabrication of evidence and falsification of evidence. Penalties for plagiarism, fabrication or falsification can include a failing grade for the course and expulsion from the School of Journalism and Mass Communications. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, please consult the professor of the course. *The following definitions are from Article II, Section 6, of the University Senate Rules and Regulations, revised FY98.*

Plagiarism: Knowingly presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgement of the source). The sole exception to the requirement of acknowledging sources is when the information or ideas are common knowledge.

Fabrication and Falsification: Unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

Students with Special Needs

The Office of Disability Resources (DR), 22 Strong Hall, 785-864-2620 (V/TTY), coordinates accommodations and services for KU students with disabilities. If you have a disability for which you may request accommodation in KU classes and have not contacted DR, please do so as soon as possible. Please also contact me privately in regard to this course.

Copying or Recording

Course materials prepared by the instructor, as well as content of all lectures presented by the instructor, are the instructor's property. Video and audio recording of lectures without instructor consent is prohibited. On request, the instructor usually will permit students to record lectures, on the condition that these recordings are only used as a study aid by the individual making the recording. Unless the instructor gives explicit permission, recordings of lectures may not be modified and must not be transferred or transmitted to any other person, whether or not that individual is enrolled in the course.

News you can use

The Career and Outreach Office at Stauffer-Flint, Room 120, provides services for all students at the William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications. If you need assistance with resume and cover letter development, job search strategy, internships, mock interviews and LinkedIn profile, schedule an appointment with Steve Rottinghaus

at steve_rottinghaus@ku.edu. Make sure to follow job and internship postings on Twitter at [@Rhaus90](https://twitter.com/Rhaus90).

JSchoolTech provides technical training through workshops, small-group training and online tutorials. We offer support for class assignments, as well as opportunities to apply learning in new ways. View and sign up for events at jschooltech.org.