

New York University
Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute
Syllabus
GRAPHIC JOURNALISM; USING LIVE-DRAWING, VISUALS AND COMICS
Summer 2021

Professor: Eckstein, Bob
Monday, 6 p.m.— 8 p.m.
Thursday, 6 p.m. — 8 p.m.
Remote by Zoom

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Office hours: by Zoom by appointment

Course Description

Journalism now encompasses more than words and video today. Graphic journalism—using cartoons, comic strips, illustrations and animation—is now embraced on all mediums and can be a powerful way to effectively tell a story. This course will introduce and give students the tools to expand their professional arsenal, giving them a competitive edge as well as instruct them to become better story tellers and reporter.

Taught by an award-winning *Times* bestseller and master cartoonist for *The New Yorker* and *The New York Times*, who has been published hundreds of times, the course, through assignments and multi-media lessons, will train students to create visual stories that accurately report and capture the essence of news events from cultural events to politics to social issues to sports and lifestyles.

Learning Objectives

In this course, students will:

- Foremost, improve their story-telling skills
- Lessons will concentrate on how to be more creative, especially during these unique times
- Learn to draw and create visuals even if they are inexperienced
- Write clear, accurate and engaging prose in an audience-appropriate manner
- Demonstrate critical thinking, independence, and creativity appropriate to the role of journalism in a democratic society
- Work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness, and diverse perspectives

- Use technological tools and apply quantitative concepts as appropriate
- Learn how to expand their journalism toolbox using illustrations and cartoons
- Learn to develop their own voice regardless of medium
- Learn how to land gigs in graphic journalism
- Learn how to professionally keep current within a changing journalistic landscape

Course Structure

The class will meet remotely as a group and be an open discussion. Discussions will help guide students as to what assignments they should take on. Every class will include a Keynote presentation teaching different ways to live draw as well as exercises and lessons about graphic journalism in general. We will also share student work with an open critique by all students.

Readings

There is no required reading for this course. Students will be doing research for the specific events they are covering. A big part of live-drawing is preparation and this may mean even practicing drawing principles of the event or the location ahead of time and collecting photo references.

Course Requirements

Students' live-drawing assignments will be presented to the whole class for critique. Students need to prepare to perform live-drawing with necessary research and supplies. Students will need to be able to explain their work during the Zoom sessions and attempt to promote it online.

Students will need electronic drawing devices. This can be anything that can create digital files including iPad Pros with Apple pencils, Wacom Tablets with laptops or any computer that accommodates a stylus or electronic pen. These supply requirements will be discussed the first class and could possibly include other methods like video equipment or traditional art supplies as out-of-the-box options. **But at minimum, a smartphone and/or iPad will be necessary.** Students will also use social media to promote their work. Weekly assignments are due each Tuesday by 10 a.m. and emailed as digital files.

Grading

Final grades will be based on five live-drawing assignments my assessment of their understanding of the course, signs of growth, attendance and class participation. Meeting assignments deadlines will be a top priority, as it is at any newsroom.

Weekly assignments	40%
Attendance	20%

Participation in Class	10%
Understanding of the Lessons	30%

5/24/2021 Topic of Class 1: Introduction

- Presentation explaining the medium, its goals and how these skills can be utilized in other disciplines.
- Introduction to me and each other to fully understand each other's experience and skills to determine what their first assignment should be.
- A discussion regarding sharing one's work publicly (and in the classroom), expectations and responsibilities (share the accomplishments of the past class and the paying gigs on the school blog will be discussed).
- Supply requirements will be discussed including what's fair game and not regarding what is live and what can be almost-live.
- A transparent summary of grading
- Determination and explanation of first assignment, which will not be live drawing but reporting and illustrating afterwards. This will be a media event from TV.

5/27/2021 Topic of Class 2: In Class Exercises

- First drawing lesson
- First writing lesson
- First drawing exercise
- First writing exercise
- Determination and explanation of first assignment, which will not be live drawing but reporting and illustrating afterwards. This will be a media event from TV.

5/31/2021 Topic of Class 3: First Survey and First Live-Drawing

- Full critique of everyone's live-drawing efforts of Assignment #1 with discussion of what works and doesn't work.
- In class drawing and writing exercise.
- Students will learn how to find jobs and events to live draw.

6/3/2021 Topic of Class 4: Creativity

- Discussion on creativity. How to bring out the best in one's self
- In class drawing exercise.
- Discussion of Assignment #2

6/7/2021 Topic of Class 5: Finding Your Voice

- Full critique of everyone's live-drawing efforts of Assignment #2
- Class discussion in the decision-making
- In class exercise determining everyone's strengths and weaknesses.
- Careful examination at this point as to each person's "voice", how to maximize each person's "toolbox" and how to polish one's drawing and visual skills.

- In class drawing exercise.

6/10/2021 Topic of Class 6: Marketing

- Class discussion in the decision-making
- In class drawing exercise
- Lesson on marketing this live-drawing gig: who is our audience, finding that audience, crafting a pitch for employment and the nuts-and-bolts of the transaction with a publication. We will also at this time coordinate the ability for the class to all follow and support each other's gigs. At this point it will be optional as to how public the work will be. Students will be sharing their efforts online, if they wish. Students are encouraged to support each other's efforts by retweeting, liking and sharing.
- Discussion of Assignment #3, the last assignment. Student's choice.

6/14/2021 Topic of Class 7: Marketing

- Critique of everyone's live-drawing efforts so far at half way point of Assignment #3
- An exploration of writing and reporting for the business sector to exponentially increase your income and how to follow and document business meetings for money.
- In class drawing exercise.
- Synchronize everyone's assignments so that everyone can support each other.

6/17/2021 Topic of Class 8: Last Class Survey and Personal Plans

- Full viewing and review of everyone's Assignment #4 combined with each students previous 4 assignments. At this time all missed assignments can be made up and folded in to the class presentation.
- Discussion of how anything is possible regarding what journalism will be tomorrow and making sure you stay ahead of the curve. How to monetize our efforts. Promoting our whole career and understanding wearing multiple hats to weather the ebbs and flows of journalism and where live-drawing can fit in.
- Specific leads are shared to help students make best use of their new skills
- All unfinished business.

Accommodations

Students with disabilities that necessitate accommodations should contact and register with New York University's Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at [212-998-4980](tel:212-998-4980) or mosescsd@nyu.edu. Information about the Moses Center can be found at www.nyu.edu/csd. The Moses Center is located at 726 Broadway on the 2nd floor.

Diversity & Inclusion

The Institute is committed to creating an inclusive learning environment. The Institute embraces a notion of intellectual community enriched and enhanced by diversity along a number of dimensions.