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## MODULE DESCRIPTOR

### Module Title

Investigative Journalism

|           |               |             |         |
|-----------|---------------|-------------|---------|
| Reference | BS4326        | Version     | 3       |
| Created   | February 2019 | SCQF Level  | SCQF 10 |
| Approved  | June 2018     | SCQF Points | 15      |
| Amended   | May 2019      | ECTS Points | 7.5     |

### Aims of Module

To enable students to critically interrogate the concept of investigative journalism and the practical, ethical and legal constraints within which practitioners operate; develop a detailed understanding of its evolution over time; appreciate the relative merits, limitations and criticisms of recent developments in the field; and work independently to write an essay focusing on an ethical or other issue/debate relating to investigative journalism and independently or collaboratively to produce a professional investigative journalism project.

### Learning Outcomes for Module

On completion of this module, students are expected to be able to:

- 1 Demonstrate a detailed knowledge and understanding of the nature, scope and purpose of investigative reporting, and the ethical, practical and public interest issues underpinning it.
- 2 Utilise a range of primary and secondary sources and engage with different journalistic tools, methods and approaches to develop their investigative reporting practice.
- 3 Show an ability to work independently and to manage time effectively while researching and producing practical investigations.
- 4 Display an ability to engage in in-depth, self-reflective journalistic practice and handle primary sources ethically and appropriately in researching and producing their final investigations.

### Indicative Module Content

This module focuses on exploring the nature and purpose of investigative journalism and how it is carried out. It will seek to discriminate between the various types of investigative reporting - from forensic document-trawling to undercover exposes to risky reportage to 'crusading' or 'campaigning journalism'. Formal teaching will be minimised in the second half of the semester, with students expected to work alone or in small teams to develop their own assessed project ideas, under their tutor's supervision. While later sessions will be given over to self-directed project work, earlier ones will be directed by the tutor to explore the meaning of the term 'investigative journalism'; its scope and limitations; and the legal, ethical, risk management and other issues and dilemmas it poses for practitioners.

### Module Delivery

This module is delivered in Semester 2 and involves a mixture of lectures, discursive seminars, practical workshops and one-to-one/group supervisions. Students are expected to prepare for seminars, and contribute to, and occasionally lead, discussion of topics, based on a mix of set reading and wider research into the issues covered. Where possible, specialist practitioners in the field will be invited to lead seminars and/or offer practical advice and training.

In later weeks, the module will become more self-directed, with lectures replaced by 'problem-solving' workshops and practical lab sessions designed to help students progress their investigations.

### Indicative Student Workload

|  | Full Time | Part Time |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| Contact Hours  | 33        | N/A       |
| Non-Contact Hours  | 117       | N/A       |
| Placement/Work-Based Learning Experience [Notional] Hours                    | N/A       | N/A       |
| TOTAL  | 150       | N/A       |
| <i>Actual Placement hours for professional, statutory or regulatory body</i> |           |           |

### ASSESSMENT PLAN

*If a major/minor model is used and box is ticked, % weightings below are indicative only.*

#### Component 1

|              |                            |            |      |                    |            |
|--------------|----------------------------|------------|------|--------------------|------------|
| Type:        | Coursework                 | Weighting: | 100% | Outcomes Assessed: | 1, 2, 3, 4 |
| Description: | Group Practical Assessment |            |      |                    |            |

### MODULE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTOR

#### Explanatory Text

The Module is assessed by two components: C1 - Coursework - 100% weighting. Module Pass Mark = Grade D (40%)

| Module Grade | Minimum Requirements to achieve Module Grade:                                  |
|--------------|--|
| <b>A</b>     | At least 70% on weighted aggregate and at least 35% in each component          |
| <b>B</b>     | At least 60% on weighted aggregate and at least 35% in each component          |
| <b>C</b>     | At least 50% on weighted aggregate and at least 35% in each component          |
| <b>D</b>     | At least 40% on weighted aggregate and at least 35% in each component          |
| <b>E</b>     | At least 35% on weighted aggregate   |
| <b>F</b>     | Less than 35% on weighted aggregate  |
| <b>NS</b>    | Non-submission of work by published deadline or non-attendance for examination |

### Module Requirements

|                          |       |
|--------------------------|-------|
| Prerequisites for Module | None. |
| Corequisites for module  | None. |
| Precluded Modules        | None. |

**INDICATIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- 1 BAUSUM, A., 2007. *Muckrakers: how Ida Tarbell, Upton Sinclair, and Lincoln Steffens helped*. Washington: National Geographic Society.
- 2 BURSTINER, M., 2017. *Investigative reporting: from premise to publication*. Oxford: Routledge. Kindle edition.
- 3 CAPOTE, T., 2002. *In cold blood*. New York: Random House
- 4 DE BURGH, H., 2008. 2nd edition. *Investigative journalism: context and practice*. London: Routledge. Kindle e-book.
- 5 GAINES, W.C., 2007. *Investigative journalism: proven strategies for reporting the story*. Washington: CQ Press.
- 6 PALAST, G., 2016. *The best democracy money can buy*. New York: Seven Stories Press.
- 7 PILGER, J., 2011. *Tell me no lies: investigative journalism and its triumphs*. New York: Vintage. Kindle edition.
- 8 WOODWARD, B. and BERNSTEIN, C., 2012. *All the president's men*. New York: Simon and Schuster. Kindle edition.