

MODULE DESCRIPTOR

Module Title

Investigative Journalism

Reference	CB4326	Version	3
Created	February 2024	SCQF Level	SCQF 10
Approved	June 2018	SCQF Points	15
Amended	April 2024	ECTS Points	7.5

Aims of Module

To enable students to critically interrogate the concept of investigative journalism and the practical, ethical and legal affordances and constraints within which practitioners operate; develop a detailed understanding of its evolution and role in social and democratic sustainability over time; appreciate the relative merits, limitations and criticisms of recent developments in the field; and work 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, purpose, and social sustainability role of investigative journalism in today's world, and on how journalistic investigations are 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, global sustainability, and other issues and dilemmas it poses for practitioners. The module aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions by developing students' understanding of journalism as an institution that is a pillar of social sustainability, democracy, global human rights, and public deliberation. It engages students with UNESCO's Education for Sustainable Development Anticipatory, Critical Thinking, Systems Thinking, Self-Awareness, Collaboration, and Integrated Problem-Solving competencies in terms of: a) evaluating and anticipating the ramifications, risks and challenges of one's own reporting; b) reflecting on one's own values, biases and place in the world in search of ethical, objective and impartial reporting practice; c) understanding systems, structures and relationships in the realities one reports on; d) listening and learning from others, and understanding and respecting the needs, perspectives and actions of others (empathic leadership); and 5) facilitating collaborative, engaged and participatory problem-solving with the view to providing quality public interest journalism.

Module Delivery

This module 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:	Practical Assessment: Investigation				

MODULE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTOR**Explanatory Text**

The calculation of the overall grade for this module is based on 100% weighting of C1. An overall minimum grade D is required to pass the module.

Module Grade	Minimum Requirements to achieve Module Grade:
A	The student needs to achieve an A in C1.
B	The student needs to achieve a B in C1.
C	The student needs to achieve a C in C1.
D	The student needs to achieve a D in C1.
E	The student needs to achieve an E in C1.
F	The student needs to achieve an F in C1.
NS	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.