Final Project J2150 – Spring 2011
Final due at the beginning of the first lab the week of April 25th
Turn in a URL, printout of your main story
and make a CD or DVD of your complete website.

Week of March 21 – 2nd Lab: Three researched story ideas presentation
Week of April 4 – 2nd Lab: Headline, two-paragraph budget due
Week of April 11 – 1st lab: Final detailed budget due

Give each component a slug on your budget, for example:
(Required)
Mule logging, Text story
Mule logging, Video
Mule logging, Gallery
(Choose 1)
Mule logging, NPR-style audio
Mule logging, Audio slideshow

Goal
This project combines a written piece, video, gallery of still photo images, and either an audio slideshow or an NPR-style audio piece presented on a Wordpress Web page. Your team will research; collect data, interview, photograph and shoot video of a news event or feature story. Break the larger story down into smaller pieces using text, still photos, audio, audio slideshow and video.

Each piece of the story must add new and interesting information to the project and make the best use of the media type. Then present the package on a Web page, the multimedia pieces must communicate a unified story with no redundancy.

The goal of this assignment is to give your team a real-world journalistic experience. As professional journalists you may report, capture video, produce a TV package and submit visuals for a Web version – all on the same story. These skills are now required in almost all traditional newsrooms in all size markets.

Required elements
- Text story 600-700 words with headline
- Video (1:15) With headline and summary paragraph written in AP style
- Photo gallery (15 non-redundant still images with headline, summary paragraph written in AP style but with no sound) or an audio stand-alone piece (1:15) with headline and summary paragraph written in AP style.
- Well-designed website.
- Each student should contribute to the writing and editing of the text story. Divide the video, audio slideshow and gallery or audio as you see fit.

Brief summary
Each team will present three researched project ideas to the class during the 2nd lab the week of March 21. Your lab instructor will then assign you the story(s)he thinks will result in the most successful project.
Create a budget for your story

Due: Headline and two paragraphs before the 2nd lab during the week of April 4 and final budget is due before the 2nd lab during the week of April 11.

Here’s what your budget should contain:

Three word headline
For each element in the story do the following:
Your Slug (story name), Text story: Describe the story in one or two sentences. Length: 600-700 words
Writer: Who’s going to be responsible for writing the story?
Editor: Who’s going to edit the story?
Due date: April XX by 5 p.m. (This is your due date, not the final projects due date)

Your Photo Gallery Slug: Describe the photography situation in one or two sentences.
Photographer: Who’s going to be responsible for photography?
Editor: Who is going to help with the edit?
Assignment date or dates: Cindy Jones, CEO, Responsible Media Agency, in her office at 9 a.m. April 3.
Due Date: April XX by 5 p.m.

Your Video Slug: Describe the video story in one or two sentences.
Video: Who’s going to be responsible for videos?
Assignment date or dates: Cindy Jones, CEO, Responsible Media Agency, in her office at 9 a.m. April 3.
Photographer: Who
Editor: Who
Due Date: April XX by 5 p.m.

Final Deadline: April XX
Copy Editor: Whose going to do the final read on all the elements (Can be every member)?
Web page designer: Who’s going to be responsible for creating the Web page and putting all the elements on the page?
Usability Testing: April XX, as a group you need to have one final read and test of the page. Do all the links work? (Test it on more than one computer and in more than one browser!!!!!!)
Finish Date: April XX by what time?

Find sources
After you identify the theme, write a three-word headline, and your two paragraphs, you need begin contacting sources. Ask yourself: What do I need to know to tell a good story and what will make good visuals? Make a list of questions. Who might have some answers? Here are some possibilities.

Try to conduct the interviews in the source’s work place or home. You can often learn a lot from someone’s “natural” surroundings. When going to the source is not possible, conduct the
interview at another location, e.g. coffeehouse or by phone, as a last resort. Always conduct the interview in a place where you will be safe.

Review the information you’ve gathered. Do you have enough material to write a story? Do you have information for each of the steps on the story organization chart? If you do not, figure out what the holes are and who might fill them. Look for sources who will confirm or add detail to the person you interviewed story. Will they confirm or refute what was said. Make sure to ask if they can be photographed or do a video interview.

Find data
Ask yourself these questions before you begin looking for documentary information:
  • What do I think I want to know? What are the possible issues involved in the theme I’ve selected?
  • How many people might be involved with this issue that I propose to write about?
  • What are their characteristics—size of the group, demographics, special or unusual circumstances or trends?
  • Which government office or private organization would keep statistics on what I want to know?

Sometimes those you interview will be able to direct you to some of the data you need. They may be members of an association that tracks the information you seek. Ask everyone you speak to whom they think you need to speak to next. That could lead to finding the “perfect” source.

Accuracy check
You must complete an accuracy check of your story before submitting the final draft. Call the sources and without reading the story, check that the information you are using is correct.

Assessment
Each student will be required to turn in an updated budget at the conclusion of the project to outline each partner’s contribution to each component turned in. The purpose of this final budget is to provide evidence of teamwork and may impact your individual grade on the final project.

Grading
This assignment is worth 200 points.