Course description: Political revolutions, economic upheaval, environmental catastrophe – it’s a troubled era for the planet, but a great time to be an international journalist. Not only world events, but dynamic changes in the speed and flow of information have created unprecedented opportunities to present history as it’s happening to a global audience. This course offers a hands-on experience in doing exactly that. Building on the fundamentals of journalism and following models developed by some of the world’s finest contemporary reporters and writers, students will have an opportunity to learn the tools of the trade and put them to use in creating their own stories and publication.

International Reporting is an interactive course – students will have a strong hand in shaping its content and direction, exploring topics and issues that interest them in Prague while learning the skills they need to take ideas from conception to publication. Particular attention will be devoted to writing, with individual instruction focused on helping young writers learn to craft compelling stories and develop strong, authoritative voices. Class sessions devoted to reading and critiquing each other’s work will also provide students with feedback from their peers.

There is no textbook for this class, which is keyed to current events. Readings and guidance will be provided by the instructor, who lives for the thrill of a good story. By the end of the course, so will the students.

Grading policy

Stories (News, Profile, A&E, publication): 40%
Quizzes: 30%
Presentation: 10%
Final project: 20%

Schedule of classes

Week 1
February 14
Course overview and planning
Goals
February 16
Special Issues: Value and Function of International Reporting
Overview and discussion of Czech media
Week 2
February 21
Models of International Reporting: The French connection
Discussion and evaluation of news ideas
February 23
How to Write: News
Progress reports/refinement news ideas

Week 3
February 28
Discussion and critique of news stories
Presentation planning
March 1
MIR: Apple’s dirty secret in China
Individual consultation and finalization of presentations

Week 4
March 6
MIR: Silencing the press in Afghanistan
How to Write: Ledes and nut graphs
March 8
Special Issues: U.S. Elections

Week 5
March 13
MIR: Fighting organized crime in Japan
How to Write: Quotes and attribution
March 15
How to Write: Profiles

Week 6
March 20
Discussion and critique of profile stories
March 22
MIR: Environmental activism in Ecuador
Presentation: Digital Media

Week 7
March 27
MIR: The perils of humanitarian aid
Presentation: Social Media
March 29
MIR: The royal wedding
How to Write: Arts and Entertainment
Week 8
April 3
Discussion and critique of arts and entertainment stories

April 5
Guest speaker
Midterm evaluations

Week 9
Spring Break

Week 10
April 17
Special Issues: Freedom of information, transparency and Wikileaks

April 19
MIR: Inside the Greek economic collapse
Presentation: Citizen/Community Journalism

Week 11
April 24
MIR: The killing of bin Laden
Presentation: Advocacy Journalism

April 26
Special Issues: U.S. Elections
Publication planning

Week 12
May 1
MIR: Gaddafi’s final days
Presentation: Global Freedom of the Press
Publication planning

Week 13
May 8
Final publication planning, design and story reviews

May 10
Publishing date: Release, distribution and promotion

Week 14
May 15
Publication critique, evaluation and feedback

May 17
Final project planning and approval
Class evaluations