



CIEE Khon Kaen, Thailand

Course title:	Grassroots Journalism
Course code:	JOUR 3001 TKKU
Programs offering course:	Khon Kaen DG
Language of instruction:	English
U.S. semester credits:	3
Contact hours:	45
Term:	Spring 2020

Learning Objectives

By completing this course, students will:

- Develop basic journalism research techniques
- Use basic interview techniques and learn how to record and compile information to create audience-appropriate work for the public sphere
- Be aware of and effectively create basic composition for journalism-style articles
- How to create a conducive atmosphere for producing photo-essays
- Learn about photographic composition, narrative structure, and how to edit photo essays
- Explore various ways to conceptualize social, political, and environmental issues
- Produce pitches for story or photograph essay and learn how to work with an editor
- Produce publishable and cohesive features and photo-essays

Course Prerequisites

No previous courses are required for this course.

Methods of Instruction

- Lectures and Discussions will cover basic research approaches, interview techniques, writing, etc.
- Skills Workshops from guest lecturers cover basic journalistic techniques (research, interviewing, writing techniques, photography, storytelling, making pitches, etc.), with hands-on experience.



- Consultations gives students to work directly with mentors in improving their work

Our guest journalists:

Marwaan Macan-Markar is a Sri Lankan journalist who covered the South Asian nation's ethnic conflict for local newspapers since 1993 before joining the Inter Press Service (IPS) news agency as a foreign correspondent in 1999. He was first assigned to the agency's World Desk in Mexico City and then assigned to Bangkok, from where he covered Southeast Asia and South Asia. He now writes for Asian-based magazines, most prominently Asian Nikkei Review. He has received awards for human rights reporting (2014) and explanatory reporting (2015) from the Hong Kong-based Society of Publishers in Asia (SOPA). He was the president of the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Thailand (FCCT) in 2009 and 2010. He is a graduate of Hofstra University in New York, U.S.A.

Nic Dunlop is a Bangkok-based photographer represented by Panos Pictures in London. His work has been published worldwide (The New York Times, Time, The Guardian). In 1999, he won an award from the John Hopkins University for Excellence in International Journalism for exposing Pol Pot's chief executioner, Comrade Duch, a story told in his book *The Lost Executioner*. He also co-directed the Emmy nominated *Burma Soldier*, an HBO film which was awarded the Grand Jury Prize at the United Nations Association Film Festival. His latest book, *Brave New Burma*, is an intimate portrait in words and pictures of Burma under military rule that spans two decades. (See www.nicdunlop.com)

Students have a major role in producing or contributing to several publications—the program newsletters, the program blog, the program's Facebook page, and on common ground for those who take that route. We also encourage students to contribute their writing to a larger public sphere, such as the New Mandala, Isaan Record, Prachatai, and other online publications.

The Isaan Record Team comprise Fabian Drahmoune (Managing Editor of IR and coordinator with CIEE), Christopher Burdett (Staff Reporter/Editor of IR), and Mike Eckel (CIEE intern) will be part of your "team" (you, an IR person, a CIEE person) to aid you along the way.

Assignment Guidelines:



The GRJ course runs in conjunction with the Human Perspective on Development and the Environment core course. The assignments for journalistic work (features and photo essays) will be elaborated on in the journalism workshops.

All assignments should be emailed to Mike Eckel at: meckel95@gmail.com.

Assignments must be turned in on time. Grades for late submissions will be lowered one-half letter grade for every 24 hours it is late.

Assignment Descriptions:

For this course, you will be producing:

- Writing up research notes on the topic of your feature
- Writing a faux feature story of at least 1,000 words
- A pitch for a feature and an appropriate lead completed during Workshop I
- A photo essay exercise completed during Workshop I
- A pitch for your feature shared with Marwaan for consultation
- A pitch for your photo essay shared with Nic for consultation
- Drafts of your feature (including photos) and photo essay (that requires written captions)
- A published photo essay (with captions)
- A published feature story (with photos)

Note: An enterprising student can negotiate doing a video piece in lieu of the photo essay and/or the feature, depending on the proposal and scope of project.

Assessment and Final Grade

1. Quiz	5%
2. Research Results	10%
3. Feature Lead Writing Exercise	5%
4. Photography Essay Exercise	5%
5. Faux Feature	5%
6. Feature Pitches	5%
7. Photo Essay Pitch	5%



8. Draft of Feature & Photo Essay	10%
9. Photo Essay	20%
9. Feature	20%
9. Participation	10%
TOTAL	100%

Course Requirements

Quiz

Student will take a quiz on the reading materials that will be handed to them out during the Course Introduction on the first day of class.

Research Results

Students will need to do research on the topic they have initially chosen in order to know if it is feasible (logistically, in terms of safety, etc.) and whether they can make a case for why there should be a story on the topic. In addition, students' analysis should prove whether or not their story is viable. It should be at least two pages long. Students need to bring three printed copies to the consultation--one for themselves, and two for the editorial team. The research notes can be quite broad, helping students to get a sense of the "lay of the land" of their topic. Use accessible media websites like The Isaan Record, Prachatai, Matichon, The Nation, and The Bangkok Post, New Mandala, Reuters. The research should give you (and your editorial team) such things as:

- what has happened/reported on previously on the topic
- why the story matters
- what angles might be taken (as opposed to angles already taken)
- why/how your story can provide something new to public discourse
- what interviews you might need

Feature Lead Writing Exercise

Pitch a feature story along with a lead: During the first writing workshop, students will be required to write a story idea in the form of a story pitch for a potential feature of a newsworthy subject. In addition, students will draw from their pitch to write the first



few paragraphs of a feature, i.e. the lead. This exercise will be based on a mock interview conducted during the workshop.

Photography Essay Exercise

Pitch and Photo Essay: Each student will be required to complete a short photo essay on a subject of their choosing during the first workshop. The expectations and guidelines for this assignment will be described by Nic during the workshop.

Both exercises will provide students ample opportunity to understand the respective expectations of Nic and Marwaan, and to receive constructive feedback on your writing and photography. Both will hand out some sort of matrix by which your work will be graded.

Faux Feature

For this assignment, students will be creating a feature from scratch. Logistics for real stories are hard; sometimes students just can't get the interviews they need. Here is their chance to make everything up, so their story can have the most compelling lead, a perfect background section, perfect quotes from exactly the right people, etc. We'll provide a faux feature as an example in the lead and story organization class. The faux stories need to be at least 1,000 words.

Feature Pitches

Students must submit a pitch for their feature to Marwaan. Students will become part of a publication editorial board at the end of the first workshop to start exploring ideas for their feature story and photo essay. Students will work with Marwan via email (and also by phone), as well as the Isaan Record team to refine their pitches. Consultations help students to sharpen their focus and get suggestions on ways to proceed.

Photo Essay Pitch

Students will submit a pitch for their photo essay as well. Details and examples of good pitches are to be handed out by Nic during the first workshop. Students will be in consultation with Nic to improve and refine their pitches throughout the semester.



Draft of Feature & Photo Essay

Students need to send a draft of these two assignments. At this point, the structure and many details of the drafts should be in place. Nic and Marwaan will go over the drafts with students.

Photo Essay

During the first workshop, students will receive full instructions from Nic on how to complete a coherent photo essay aimed at a public audience. Students should submit between 12-15 photos, each with captions, to tell a compelling story, and the photos must include each of the five types of shots discussed in the first workshop. Students' photo essay must be accepted for publication.

Feature

Marwaan will assign a full-length feature story during the first workshop at which he will go over the components of a feature. The feature should be 1,500-2,500 words and be accompanied by at least two photos, with captions. Students' pieces must be accepted for publication.

Participation

Students' participation score is determined by:

- Coming to class and consultations on time
- Preparedness at lectures and workshops
- Constructive contributions in lectures and workshops

Attendance is required at all lectures and workshops. There is also time specified in the schedule for you to meet with staff throughout the semester. Arriving more than 15 minutes late will be considered an absence. One unexcused absence is allowed. Each subsequent unexcused absence will result in a 20% reduction of your class participation grade.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1



Class Orientation

Week 2

Class 2.1 Course Introduction

The Entire Process

Readings:

- Eng & Hodslen, 2009
- Hodslen & Watts, 2010

Class 2.2 Intercultural Communication and Language Session

Global Citizen Quiz and Discussion

Reading

- Zemach-Bersin, 2008

Class 2.3 The Key Skill of Research (and Quiz)

Reading:

- Achenbach, 2015
- Pollan, 2002
- Szep & Marshall, 2013
- The Isaan Record, 2016
- Donlawat, 2016
- McKibben, 2005
- Marcum, 2014
- Schulz, 2015

Week 3

Class 3.1 Individual Consultation

Week 4

Class 4.1 Journalism Workshop I (part I)

Basic research approaches, interview techniques, writing, etc.

Creating A pitch for a profile and an appropriate lead

Readings:

- Blaming Villagers for Global Warming, 2012
- Cambodia's land-grab 'cancer' keeps spreading, 2010
- The Isaan Record, 2015
- Jensen, Peter, 2013
- Macan-Markar, 2013
- Macan-Markar, Marwaan, 2016
- Motlagh, 2012
- Mydans, 2010
- Orwell, 1931

Class 4.2 Journalism Workshop (part II)

Basic photography

A photo essay exercise

Week 5

Class 5.1 Individual Consultations

Preparing interviews questions for assignments: Photo Essays, Feature, and Profile

Week 6

Class 6.1 The Lead and Story Organization

Write a story idea in the form of a story pitch for a potential profile of a newsworthy subject

Class 6.2 Intercultural Communication and Language Session



Stereotype and Generalization and D.I.E.

Class 6.3 Intercultural Communication and Language Session

Anti-Oppression: Privilege Walk

Week 7

Class 7.1 Individual Consultations

Preparing interviews questions for assignments: Photo Essays, Feature, and Profile

Due date for submitting pitch

Week 8

Class 8.1 Individual Consultations

Preparing interviews questions for assignments: Photo Essays, Feature, and Profile

Class 8.2 Intercultural Communication and Language Session

Cultural Spectra

Week 9

Class 9.1 Individual Consultations

Preparing interviews questions for assignments: Photo Essays, Feature, and Profile

Week 10

Class 10.1 Journalism Workshop II

Reading:

- Dunlop, n.d.



Class 10.2 Individual Consultations

Preparing interviews questions for assignments: Photo Essays, Feature, and Profile

Due date for feature, profile, and photo essay drafts

Week 11

Class 11.1 Individual Consultations

Preparing interviews questions for assignments: Photo Essays, Feature, and Profile

Week 12

Class 12.1 Journalism Workshop III

Readings

- Macan-Markar, 2016
- Streckfuss, 2010

Class 12.2 Intercultural Communication and Language Session

Cultural Detective

Week 13

Class 13.1 Individual Consultations

Preparing interviews questions for assignments: Photo Essays, Feature, and Profile

Week 14

Class 14.1 Individual Consultations

Preparing interviews questions for assignments: Photo Essays, Feature, and Profile



Week 15

Class 15.1 Final Output Consultation

Class 15.2 Individual Consultations

Preparing interviews questions for assignments: Photo Essays, Feature, and Profile

Class 15.3 Course Summary

All assignment due: Photo Essays, Feature, and Profile

Course Materials

Readings

Basic Texts

Eng, Peter and Hodsen, Jeff, Reporting and Writing News: A Basic Handbook (second edition) (Bangkok, The Indochina Media Memorial Foundation, 2009).

Hodsen, Jeff and Watts, Graham, Beyond the Basics: An Advanced Journalism Manual (Bangkok: The Indochina Media Memorial Foundation, 2010).

For Background Lectures and Student Selections

Achenbach, Joel, "Why do many reasonable people doubt science," National Geographic, March 2015

[<http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2015/03/science-doubters/achenbach-text>]

Pollan, Michael, "Power Steer," The New York Times Magazine, 31 March 2002.

[<http://michaelpollan.com/articles-archive/power-steer/>]

Szep, Jason and Marshall, Andrew R.C., "Thailand secretly supplies Rohingyas to trafficking rings," Reuters, 4 Dec. 2013.

[<http://www.pulitzer.org/winners/jason-szep-and-andrew-rc-marshall>]

The Isaan Record, “Khon Kaen’s monument to consumerism – the landfill, the scavenger, and the conundrum of ethical disposal,” 6 May 2016.

[<http://isaanrecord.com/2016/06/05/khon-kaens-monument-to-consumerism-the-landfill-1>]

Donlawat Sunsuk, “Sugarcane boom in Nong Bua Lamphu, a bitter pill for public health experts,” The Isaan Record, 29 July 2016.

McKibben, Bill. “A Cuba Diet.” Harper’s Magazine, Sept. 2005.

Marcum, Diana, “Dreams die in Drought,” Los Angeles Times, 30 May 2014.

[<http://www.pulitzer.org/files/2015/feature-writing/marcum/01marcum2015.pdf>]

Schulz, Kathryn, “The Really Big One,” The New Yorker, 20 July 2015.

[<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/07/20/the-really-big-one>]

For Global Citizen Quiz and Discussion

Zemach-Bersin, Talya. “American students abroad can’t be ‘global citizens.’” Chronicle of Higher Education 54, no. 26 (2008): A34.

Journalism Workshop I with Marwaan Macan-Markar

“Blaming Villagers for Global Warming” (several drafts and published form). CIEE Students. May 2012.

“Cambodia’s land-grab ‘cancer’ keeps spreading,” The Bangkok Post, Web, 19 Dec. 2010.

“The interrupted lives of the ‘Khon Kaen Model’ families.” (Drafts 1, 3, 5, and final published form). CIEE students. The Isaan Record. 16 December 2015.

Jensen, Peter, “French cartoonist finds niche in Asia,” The Nation, 14 Jan. 2013.

Macan-Markar, Marwaan, “Rural Debt drives Thai to foreign fields.” The Irawaddy. Web. Dec. 2013.

Macan-Markar, Marwaan, “Water shortages spread misery along the Mekong,” Nikkei Asian Review, 28 April 2016.



Motlagh, Jason. "In a world hungry for cheap shrimp, migrants labor overtime in Thai sheds." *The Washington Post*. 20 Sept. 2012.

Mydans, Seth, "Crusader Rowing Upstream in Cambodia," *New York Times*, 21 Feb. 2010.

Orwell, George. "A Hanging." (1931),
http://orwell.ru/library/articles/hanging/english/e_hanging

Journalism Workshop II with Nic Dunlop

Dunlop, Nic, "Guidelines to Storytelling through Images."

Journalism Workshop III with Marwaan Macan-Markar

Macan-Markar, Marwaan, "Thai youth push universal message but junta is not listening," *Nikkei Asian Review*, 21 Jan. 2016.

Streckfuss, David, "Life under Abhisit's Thumb," *The Wall Street Journal*, 14 July 2010.

Online Resources

- New Mandala: <http://asiapacific.anu.edu.au/newmandala/> - a good source for academic analysis of mainland Southeast Asia politics and culture in English.
- Prachatai: <http://www.prachatai.com/english/> - The best source for NGO news. Civil society and Prachatai have a close relationship. Sadly, the website was shut down by the ruling government during the crisis in April, 2010. It's now up and running again.
- The Isaan Record: <http://isaanrecord.com/> - Covers both community profiles that examine the social movements in the Northeast and hard news story reports on recent developments in the region. A good source for more recent updates on some of the communities you will visit.
- Bangkok Pundit: <http://asiancorrespondent.com/author/bangkokpundit/> A good source of analysis and an expatriate favorite.

- Al Jazeera English: <http://english.aljazeera.net/> - When you want international news but CNN leaves you wanting. Al Jazeera English has a fair analysis of the Thai conflict as well as a treasure trove of archived videos and stories for those who want a Thai politics crash course.
- Voice of America: <http://www.voanews.com/english/news/asia/> - Up to date news on major events in Asia. Funded by the US government, this station has an obvious tilt, but frequently offers a more robust and fair analysis than many other news outfits doing the same job.
- Ratchaprasong News: <https://www.facebook.com/rajprasong>- A handy Facebook page which aggregates news articles on Thai politics and democracy. This page is sympathetic to the United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship (UDD) or Red Shirt movement.