

## ABSTRACT

**CREATIVE PROJECT:** Staying Relevant: Learning Print Journalism in a Digital World

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Journalism has changed drastically over the last decade – there is no denying that fact. A combination of the Great Recession and the Digital Revolution seriously undercut the print industry, forcing newspapers to cut resources and reevaluate their business models in order to stay viable. Many of these decisions are made by print journalism executives who work in the administrative and advertising departments. But reporters also play a crucial role in helping the print industry remain viable in the age of digital news, and it is critical that up-and-coming journalists understand there is still a place for them in a traditional newspaper newsroom.

The problem, though, is that today's journalism undergrads have grown up in the digital era and, thus, may see little value in pursuing a job in print journalism. These students get their news from social media or on the Internet, and many have likely witnessed their parents make the decision to stop taking the local paper. Thus, to them, print journalism may have little significance. This project aims to help journalism undergrads understand the continued importance of newspapers by demonstrating how traditional news techniques are still valuable in the digital news era, with a specific emphasis on how print journalism and social media can complement each other.

To help undergraduate journalism students see the value of pursuing a career in print journalism, if they choose, I have created a three-part lesson plan. The first part of the plan

includes a discussion about how journalism has evolved since the 18<sup>th</sup> century, from the early days of newspapers to today's digital news framework. The first lesson also includes an introduction to the uses and gratifications theory. Then, the second lesson looks at examples of high-quality print journalism and social media reporting as complementary storytelling tools. Finally, the students apply this knowledge in an "in-class" project that tasks them with developing a plan for telling a news story using print and social media techniques. I developed these lessons using traditional and modern learning techniques, including a lecture and discussion during the first lesson, in-class examples in the second, and hands-on learning in the third.