

Reporting Live Syllabus

UNST 421: 579

Fall 2012

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Online office hours: By appointment

Course Description

Reporting Live is a Portland State University capstone course that connects Portland middle and high school classrooms with study abroad students while you are overseas via an interactive blog. The course is grounded in peace journalism, engaged pedagogy and intercultural competence theory, and consists of four main components: a pre-departure orientation, ten weeks of interactive blogging, online coursework, and a final celebration in which you visit your middle school classroom in person upon re-entry.

Course Objectives

There are two capstone objectives. The first is to partner with Portland middle school classrooms to supplement social studies curriculum and support State learning standards with a fun and easy-to-use social media tool. The goal is to maximize experiential learning while minimizing outside teacher prep time.

The other course objective is to enrich the overseas experience of the participating study abroad students. By framing you as a peace journalist and providing you a readership of young learners, you are poised to approach your new context with a keen sense and critical mind. Observation, asking questions, suspending judgment, building relationships and seeking out voices that are missing from the dominant discourse are all attributes of peace journalism, the practice of which will enable you (and the middle schoolers back home) to meaningfully connect across cultural difference.

Course Content and Grading

- Pre-departure prep 5%
- Blogging assignments and secondary posting 60%
- Reading, reflection and responses 25%
- Final celebration 10%

Pre-departure prep – Due September 14th

You are expected to connect with your assigned middle school teacher over the summer (either by phone or in person) to discuss the details of your Reporting Live partnership. The form “Reporting Live Partnership Strategy” is provided to help facilitate this conversation and should be filled out and turned in by September 14th. Additionally, you are expected to create a Wordpress blog according to the guidelines provided (see “Reporting Live Blog Guidelines”). Please email me a link to the blog.

Blogging assignments – Due every Monday by 7am (PST) for ten weeks, beginning September 24th

Secondary posting – Due every Friday by midnight (PST) for ten weeks, beginning September 28th

Minimum requirements for blogging include one substantive post (see “Reporting Live Assignments” for details) and at least 15-30 minutes of secondary posting every week. Secondary posting must consist of one “Photo of the Week” post, and should also include responding to middle school student questions and comments when applicable.

Reading, reflection and responses – Due every Friday by midnight (PST) for ten weeks, beginning September 28th

In addition to maintaining Reporting Live blogs, you are expected to participate in the D2L online forum, where you will be reading, reflecting and responding to one another - a reflexive process designed to support and complement your experience abroad.

Every week, you will be expected to post a thoughtful reflection in response to the assigned reading prompt by Friday. You will have one week to read through each other's reflections and provide feedback

to at least two other students. Also, there will be a space for you to post a link to your latest blog assignment. You are required to give blog feedback to at least one other student weekly. See "Reporting Live Online Forum Guidelines" for further instruction.

Final celebration – Due in December or January. Exact date is to be arranged by the study abroad student and his or her assigned middle school teacher.

The final celebration is an opportunity for you to visit your middle school classroom upon re-entry. This face-to-face assembly brings closure to the journey, and allows for final questions and group reflection. Regional music, dance, food or a cultural activity might be incorporated into this final gathering, as well as a review of the Reporting Live blog and perhaps additional sharing of poetry, artwork, a play, or research essays prepared by the class. A template of final celebration ideas will be distributed towards the end of the year, however you and your middle school teacher are ultimately responsible for working out the specific details of this event. You are expected to provide documentation of the final celebration as the final closing Reporting Live blog post (see Assignment #3 in "Reporting Live Assignments").

Late Work Policy

I do not accept late work unless an alternative arrangement has been discussed previous to the assignment deadline. Please contact me in advance if you foresee late submission. Grace periods will be granted at my discretion according to individual circumstance, and are not guaranteed.

Final Grading Scale

93-100% A, 90-92% A -, 87-89% B+, 83-86% B, 80-82% B-, 77-79% C+, 73-76% C, 70-72% C-, 67-69% D+, 63-66% D, 60-62% D-, <60% F.

Required Reading

Book of choice

Over the summer, you are expected to select and read a book authored by someone from your host country. The object is not to straddle yourself with two thousand pages of opaque classic literature, but rather to become acquainted with a voice and a story that originated in the place you will be traveling. I suggest selecting a thin volume (or excerpt) of a notable yet assessable text that will provide a compelling and *emic* entrance into the world you are about to experience. The book can be either fiction or non-fiction. Check with librarians, the PSU World Literature Department or online forums to discover what book might be appropriate. Please email me the title you select by July 1st. I will be compiling a list of possible books, so let me know if you would like assistance in selecting one.

Clean Copy packet

Adichie, C. (July 2009). The danger of a single story. Retrieved from http://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story.html

LeBaron, M. (2003). Mindful awareness as a path to cultural fluency. In *Bridging cultural conflicts: A new approach for a changing world*, 83-109. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass

Lynch, J. & McGoldrick, A. (2005). Prologue. In *Peace Journalism*, xv-xxii. Gloucestershire, UK: Hawthorn Press.

Massey, D. (1994). A global sense of place. In *Space, place and gender*, 146-156. Minneapolis, MN: MIT Press.

Odede, K. (2010, Aug. 9). Slumdog tourism. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/10/opinion/10odede.html>

Williamson, W. (2010, December 9). In study abroad, simple is sophisticated. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from <http://chronicle.com/article/In-Study-Abroad-Simple-Is/125672/>

Ting-Toomey, S. & Chung, L. C. (2005). What are the essential cultural value patterns? In *Understanding intercultural communication* (pp. 55-81). Los Angeles, CA: Roxbury Publishing Company.

PSU Code of Conduct

It is strongly encouraged that you read the Student Conduct Code (see <http://www.pdx.edu/dos/conduct.html>). It details your rights and responsibilities as a student and as a member of Portland State Community.

Students with Disabilities

Students with accommodations approved through the DRC are responsible for contacting the course instructor prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through the DRC should contact the DRC immediately (see <http://www.drc.pdx.edu/>).