

<b>Name:</b>	Dr. Saskia Sell
<b>Email address:</b>	saskia.sell@fu-berlin.de
<b>Course title:</b>	Contemporary Journalism Studies
<b>Track:</b>	A-Track
<b>Language of instruction:</b>	English
<b>Contact hours:</b>	48 (6 per day)
<b>ECTS-Credits:</b>	4

---

### Course Description

This course explores the role of journalism in democratic societies and media systems in order to understand its current challenges and opportunities as a major element of the public sphere. Students get to know the basic principles of journalism, journalism theory and different contexts of journalistic publication practices. They gain insights into relevant journalism research results, e.g. on the continuing discursive negotiation of press freedom and freedom of information. We address issues from production research, content research and audience research.

The course aims to look at current developments in German journalism in its historical and European context, providing an overview of current television, radio, print and online journalism. In addition to that, we will discuss recent findings of international comparative journalism research.

We will combine research-oriented work with sessions on reporting and writing basics, with a focus on news, reports, interviews, features and commentary. As a practical element, students will conduct interviews with Berlin-based journalists in order to learn more about the everyday life in this profession.

### Learning Outcomes

After taking the *Contemporary Journalism Studies* course, students will be able to comprehend the role of journalism in a democratic public sphere, its contexts and its current challenges. They will know different theoretical perspectives and be able to engage critically with current results from the field of journalism studies. They will have a basic knowledge of current developments in German journalism as well as insights into results of international comparative journalism research. Having conducted an interview themselves and having developed an overview of journalistic reporting and writing practices, they will also have taken first steps towards practical journalistic work.

### Student Profile

All students are welcome regardless of their major or background. You should be interested in journalism and eager to find out more about its current challenges and opportunities. The course is ideal for students majoring in communication, journalism or media studies and students from other subject fields (science and humanities) who aim at pursuing a career in journalism.

**Prerequisites**

Interest, curiosity and willingness to contribute to the course are the only mandatory prerequisites for this course.

**Course Requirements**

The course uses a variety of teaching formats including lectures, seminar discussions, individual assignments, group work and presentations, combined with field trips in Berlin to help students learn about concepts and contexts of contemporary journalism.

Regular attendance in class is required, as well as active participation. It is imperative that students read the literature and prepare the material assigned for each class in order to be able to fulfil the course work and actively engage in discussions. Students will be assessed on their active participation in class, their own presentation, a journalistic article and a final exam.

**Grading**

Regular attendance and active participation: 30%

Journalistic article (interview): 15%

In-class presentation: 20%

Final exam: 35%

**Reading**

A course reader will be provided.

**Course Schedule**

Date	Program*
Monday, July 24, 2017	<p><b>Session 1 (9:00 - 10:30): <i>Journalism in Democratic Societies</i></b></p> <p>The Tradition of the 4<sup>th</sup> Estate</p> <p>The Transformation of the Public Sphere</p> <p><b>Session 2 (11:00 am - 12:30 pm): <i>Patterns of Journalistic Reporting</i></b></p> <p>Journalistic Genres and Formats</p> <p><b>Session 3 (2:00 - 3:30 pm): <i>Investigative Reporting</i></b></p> <p><b>VIDEO:</b> Clips from <i>Spotlight</i> and discussion</p>
Thursday, July 27, 2017	<p><b>Session 1 (9:00 - 10:30): <i>Freedom of the Press and Freedom of Information vs. Censorship</i></b></p> <p>Basic Freedom of Communication Principles</p> <p>The Discursive Negotiation Process: Historical Development and Current Challenges</p> <p><b>Session 2 (11:00 am - 12:30 pm): <i>Journalism in Germany</i></b></p> <p>Mapping the Field</p> <p>Recent Developments in German Journalism: Feminization, Diversity in the Newsroom, Digital Transformation, Audience Engagement</p>

	<p><b>Session 3 (2:00 - 3:30 pm): News and Reports</b>          Choosing the News: News Values and Social Relevance          Characteristics of News and Reports</p>
Monday, July 31, 2017	<p><b>Session 1 (9:00 - 10:30): Journalism Production Research</b>          Contemporary Newsroom Organization          Foreign Correspondence</p> <p><b>Session 2 (11:00 am - 12:30 pm): Audience and Reception Research</b>          Credibility, Selectivity and Appropriation          Including the Audience: Attitudes and Expectations</p> <p><b>Session 3 (2:00 - 3:30 pm): The Interview</b>          Forms and Characteristics          The Question of Authorization</p>
Thursday, August 3, 2017	<p><b>Session 1 (9:00 - 10:30): Analyzing Journalistic Content</b>          Journalistic Discourses on Political Conflict Issues</p> <p><b>Session 2 (11:00 am - 12:30 pm): Journalism and Information and Communication Technology (ICT)</b>          The Politics of Technological Artifacts: Deconstructing the Myth of “Neutral” ICTs          Media Convergence, Interactivity and Interdependence between Technological and Discursive Developments</p> <p><b>Session 3 (2:00 - 3:30 pm): FIELD TRIP (TBA)</b></p>
Monday, August 7, 2017	<p><b>Session 1 (9:00 - 10:30): Comparative Perspectives from the “Worlds of Journalism” - Study I</b>          Student Presentations (1)          Introduction: <a href="http://www.worldsofjournalism.org/">http://www.worldsofjournalism.org/</a></p> <p><b>Session 2 (11:00 am - 12:30 pm): Comparative Perspectives from the “Worlds of Journalism” - Study II</b>          Student Presentations (2)</p> <p><b>Session 3 (2:00 - 3:30 pm): Features and Commentary</b>          Forms and Characteristics</p>
Thursday, August 10, 2017	<p><b>Session 1 (9:00 - 10:30): The Future of Journalism – Risks, Threats and Opportunities I</b>          Student Presentations (3)          Introduction: Karin Wahl-Jorgensen et al. (2016): The Future of Journalism. In: <i>Digital Journalism</i>, 4:7, 809-815.          Journalistic Credibility and the Public’s Responsibility</p>

	<p>Democratization and Polarization of the Public Sphere          Personal and Institutional Threats  <b>Session 2 (11:00 am - 12:30 pm): <i>The Future of Journalism – Risks, Threats and Opportunities II</i></b>  <i>Student Presentations (4)</i>          Blurring Boundaries: Journalism vs. Propaganda, PR, Corporate Publishing, Advertising          The Integration of Citizen Journalism and User Generated Content          New Successful Digital News Organizations  <b>Session 3 (2:00 - 3:30 pm): <b>FIELD TRIP (TBA)</b></b>  <u><b>ASSIGNMENT DUE: Interview Article</b></u></p>
<p>Monday, August 14, 2017</p>	<p><b>Session 1 (9:00 - 10:30): <i>Patterns of Journalistic Research Practices</i></b>          Acquiring Information          Fact Checking          Research Ethics  <b>Session 2 (11:00 am - 12:30 pm): <i>Focus: Informants and Whistleblowers I</i></b>          Securing Information Transfer          Dealing with Anonymous Sources  <b>Session 3 (2:00 - 3:30 pm): <i>Focus: Informants and Whistleblowers II</i></b>  <b>VIDEO:</b> Clips from <i>The Most Dangerous Man in America</i> and discussion</p>
<p>Thursday, August 17, 2017</p>	<p><u><b>Sessions 1 and 2 (9:00 am - 12:30 pm): FINAL EXAM</b></u>          In-class essay on one of two given topics related to the course discussions  <b>Session 3 (2:00 - 3:30 pm):</b> Wrap up session and final discussion</p>

\*Field trips may be subject to change depending on the availability of appointments and speakers. On field trip days, it may be necessary to adjust the class meeting times.