

Search for news through an Instagram lens

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IDEA? JRNL1000 (introductory) students must post 15 images on Instagram with corresponding texts throughout the semester. This helps the students understand the basic concepts of news values, journalism, photojournalism, and how journalism relates to social media. This also helps them get engaged by talking with peers about what works and what doesn't work when trying to find newsworthy events to post. Students also turn in a one-page reflection paper, which helps them reinforce and articulate what they learn from making the posts as well as from each other.

GOALS? We engage introductory journalism students where they spend much of their time - on social media. This makes them think about what makes for newsworthy information in their daily lives and reinforces what they learn in class about journalism basics related to fact-checking, media law and ethics and digital media.

HOW DOES IT WORK? Students learn about the seven news values of proximity, timeliness, impact, prominence, bizarreness, conflict, and currency (Galtung and Ruge 1965). They discuss whether or not those news values are still current today. Students also discuss the five Ws of news-gathering (who, what, when, where, why) as it relates to the texts of the Instagram posts. We also discuss general upcoming events and their relative newsworthiness.

Examples from Spring 2020 semester on the CU Boulder campus:

