J202 Fall 2012
Culver
Professional Practices and Extra Credit
Week 2

A key part of your training in journalism or strategic communication is adapting to professional practices. If you want to work in these fields, you need to steep yourself in the culture. That includes everything from reading key trade journals to learning how to build a resume and write an effective cover letter.

Ways J202 introduces you to professional practices:
1. extra credit
2. recommended reading

1. Extra Credit
To encourage you to engage in professional practices, we will offer you two kinds of extra credit:
• Professional Practices events and resume reviews
• participation in research projects

Each of these offers different points credited to different segments of your grade. You are not barred from participating in any one of them, regardless of whether you’ve done another. For instance, you can earn all five Professional Practices points, as well as points for every research project offered.

Professional Practices Extra Credit
When: continuing
Points: 1 per event attended
Cap: 5 points maximum
Credit assigned to: Segment E (quizzes)

We offer you extra credit for attending professionally oriented events in the J-School. For each event or activity you attend, we’ll add one point to your second-lowest quiz score (the lowest is dropped automatically), with a cap of five points total.

You must attend events or activities sponsored by the J-School to get this credit and sign in to record your attendance. These opportunities can be used to earn extra credit:
• speeches or panels that I announce to you and note as Professional Practices opportunities
• participating in mock interviews set up by the J-School’s adviser
• seeing the adviser for resume and cover letter review (have form signed)

We strongly advise you to participate in the following professional activities, but they cannot be used for J202 extra credit:
• work on a student newspaper or at WSUM
• membership in a student organization (SPJ, AdClub, PRSSA or WIC) or attendance at meetings
• participation in media activities of other campus organizations, such as WUD or Greek houses
• internships or jobs

Participation in Research Projects
When: usually a one-week window, announced via email
Points: announced with the opportunity
Cap: none (you can participate in as many projects as I announce, usually three in a semester)
Credit assigned to: Segments A, B and C, as needed
J-School faculty and graduate students often conduct surveys and experiments to study communication. Students receive extra credit for participating in these studies. I offer about three studies each semester if they have a reasonable fit with our course. All participants have the option to do an alternate experience if they want credit but don’t choose to do the study. Researchers coordinate this experience.

To get this extra credit, watch for emails from me, announcing opportunities and telling you how to participate. These most often begin midway through the semester.

2. Recommended Reading
We’d suggest you digest content in the following areas, depending on your professional interests. Many are as easy as browsing online or subscribing to an email distribution list. This list is by no means exhaustive. It’s merely a few ideas to get you going.

All fields:
- subscribe to a daily email news alert, such as The New York Times or CNN
- read a hard-copy newspaper or magazine and watch or listen to a news broadcast every day
- subscribe to the UW’s news release service (www.news.wisc.edu/releases)
- follow social media thinkers, e.g. Mashable (mashable.com and @mashable on Twitter)

Strat Comm:
- review leading trade journals, AdAge (www.adage.com) and AdWeek (www.adweek.com)
- read media stories in the New York Times most days but especially Mondays
- subscribe to Stuart Elliott’s “In Advertising” email column from the New York Times
- follow blogs and tweets by trade groups, e.g. American Association of Advertising Agencies, @4as
- read PR industry news online at the Public Relations Society of America (www.prsa.org) and PR Week (www.prweek.com)
- subscribe to press release email distribution from UW-Madison (www.news.wisc.edu/releases)
- review latest news on PR Newswire (www.prwire.com)

Journalism:
- review leading trade journals, Columbia Journalism Review (www.cjr.org) and American Journalism Review (www.ajr.org)
- visit the Poynter Institute online, a leading resource for journalists (www.poynter.org in general and click link to sign up for free email newsletters)
- read the Wisconsin State Journal, The Capital Times or the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel every day
- read latest news online at Radio and Television News Directors Association (www.rtnda.com)
- follow blogs, using tools such as technorati.com (a blog search engine) or hunting out specialized content that interests you (for instance, if you’re a political junkie, read politico.com’s bloggers)
- use social sharing tools like Reddit or Delicious to collect, share and find interesting content
- navigate multiple online news sites every day, seeking out content in addition to what you find in the hard copies you should be reading daily
- set up Google news alerts for people or issues of specific interest
- follow interesting journalists and sources on Twitter (two of my favorites are Andy Carvin from NPR and Nick Kristof from the New York Times)