

## Fall 2022

<b>AP/WRIT 3011 A 3.0</b>	<b>Reading the News</b>
<b>Course Director:</b>	<b>Andrea McKenzie</b> acmckenz@yorku.ca <b>Office Hour:</b> Office Hours: Email for an appointment, or drop in to my virtual office hours on Tuesday afternoons.
<b>Time &amp; location:</b>	ONLN <b>There are no Zoom lecture times or tutorial times. The work to do each week is already online, and you can do it according to your own schedule, as long as you finish any required discussion questions or assignments by the due dates. Modules begin on Wednesdays and end on Tuesdays. (Module 1 begins on the first day of classes, and throughout the term, you will never have a deadline fall on a weekend.)</b>
<b>Delivery Format: (Check one)</b>	<input type="radio"/> ONLN
<b>Description</b>	<p><b>Course Description:</b> The aim of this course is to engage with key issues of mass media, new/digital media and alternative media within the context of critical and cultural studies. What is the news? Who can we trust to provide us with information about events that are happening in the world? The professional and organizational culture of journalism has changed dramatically in recent decades in the wake of the changing technologies of news gathering, editing and publishing. Yet the old media is embedded in the new, twisting it, informing it, shaping its future. What are the current trends and practices from which that future may evolve: An increasingly fragmented audience of personalized media niches? Comedy and parody as the new journalism? The prevalence and shrillness of conflict rhetoric? What of the old is culturally valued? What of the new speaks to hope for an informed, critical citizenry?</p> <p><b>Course Learning Objectives:</b>          The purpose of this course is to assist students in developing a critical view of the goals, common practices, and processes in the production and consumption of the news across a range of media, including mainstream and alternative media.          Students will learn to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ critically examine various forms of cultural production and reception</li> <li>▪ apply theoretical perspectives to various media purposes and processes</li> <li>▪ practice comparative analysis and qualitative analysis</li> <li>▪ apply sophisticated research skills in the production of the major paper</li> </ul> <p>NOTE: To succeed at WRIT 3011, Reading the News, you must read the news about events that are happening in the world DAILY.</p> <p><b>Course Structure</b></p> <p>This course is divided into 12 weekly modules. Each one begins on Wednesday and ends the following Tuesday. Each week, you'll find the "Running Order" for the week posted. Read it first and follow the</p>

order. You can expect readings each week, interspersed with mini-lectures to explain new concepts and terminology, plus examples of analysis. You can also expect exercises where you analyze news reports using the examples and concepts, plus requests to post to discussions of current news. You will get the fullest education from this course by doing the work set out for you each week.

### **Required Reading, Listening, Watching**

Reading, watching, or listening to only one news source, or obtaining news only from social media, limits your perspective about events in the world. Therefore, I ask that you read news from at least two actual news organizations DAILY, one a traditional Canadian news organization, and one from an alternative news organization.

To succeed at Reading the News, you must read the news about events that are happening in the world DAILY.

### **Category 1: CBC News (Canadian)**

The CBC is Canada's public broadcaster, paid for by the taxes of Canadian citizens. It is supposed to be non-partisan in its news reporting. It also isn't perfect. Read, watch, or listen to it daily and critically. What events does it choose to display or make prominent in its international news? National news? Local news in your area? What events does it omit that you feel should be represented or placed more prominently? You can have a summary of top new events emailed to you, use the CBC app on your phone (the best option in many ways), or visit [cbc.ca](http://cbc.ca) and select "News" from the menu.

### **Category 2: BBC News (International)**

The BBC is also a public broadcaster, this time from the UK, though it reports globally. Skim its headlines and read/watch/listen to its stories for a grasp of what happening around the world. Read critically, just as you should for any news org. The BBC isn't perfect, either. Go to [bbc.com](http://bbc.com), or use the app on your phone and tailor the sections to your taste. Include news from each international sector.

### **Category 3: Alternative news organization**

Read, watch, or listen to at least one alternative news source daily. You must choose a reputable organization with a website that posts primarily news stories daily. (Remember that most news sites also include sections such as Health, Life, Entertainment, and Sports. That's fine; just make sure the main section includes news about events in the world, country, or region, not about celebrities or lists.) I suggest that you choose a site that focuses on a specific cultural or ethnic or gender identity, so that you experience reading the news from that perspective. For instance, you may choose a site run by Indigenous people that focuses on news events that are important to Indigenous people (APTN). In essence, the people that do the news reporting should be part of the group they're reporting on and to. Do some research and choose carefully, because part of your work will be to compare news stories as they're reported (or omitted) on the CBC, and the same news stories as they're reported on the alternative site.

	<p>We haven't learned it yet, but many alternative news sites are activist. That means they have a definite objective – to overturn systemic inequities, for instance – but they don't focus on a single issue. An LGBTQ2+ site that covers a range of news from an LGBTQ2+ perspective works well for this course, for instance. A site that focuses on promoting anti-vaxxing is not acceptable at all; not only is it a single-issue site, but it's spreading disinformation (false stories). So look for an alternative site that may or may not be activist, but that posts thoughtful, accurate news stories on a range of events about a specific community or group.</p> <p><b>What is NOT appropriate to choose:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Alternative” does not mean political sites. There are plenty of sites across the spectrum of political views, so political sites aren't considered alternative. Please avoid political sites.</li> <li>• Any site that promotes discrimination, hatemongering, or disinformation.</li> <li>• Any site that's mostly entertainment with a sprinkling of news.</li> <li>• Any site that is government censored.</li> </ul> <p><b>Course Evaluation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assignment 1. Safe to share or not? Analysis of a news article: 10% Due Oct 4</li> <li>• Assignment 2. Alternative news article: 15% Due Oct 25</li> <li>• Assignment 3. RESEARCH PROJECT</li> </ul> <p>a. Research Proposal: 15% Due Nov 8  b. Recorded Powerpoint narration of interim research findings: 10% Due Nov 22  c. Research Paper 40% Due Dec. 6</p> <p><b>4. Discussion Forum Responses: 10% Ongoing.</b>  3% bonus if you submit thoughtful work to all 6 forums over the term</p>
<b>Historical Requirement:</b>	Course credit exclusions: AP/WRIT/EN 4752. PRIOR TO FALL 2009: Course credit exclusion: AS/EN 4756 3.00.
<b>Requirements:</b>	N/A
<b>Reading List:</b> (Subject to change – please check with Instructor/York Bookstore before purchasing)	<b>Required Reading:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided in course syllabus in e class</li> </ul>
<b>Open To:</b>	PRWR/ENPR 3 yr and 3 and 4 yr non majors