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Greetings JMC majors and minors!

This Summer 2016 edition of the JMC Student Review marks the final print version of this publication. You may have noticed that the LinkedIn groups for the JMC Connection and the SPJ at Ashford have also been closed. This is because we want to make it easier for you to find all the content you need related to the Journalism and Mass Communication program at Ashford University. Starting this month, you will be able to find all relevant content on the [SPJAshford.org website](https://spjashford.org/) (https://spjashford.org/).

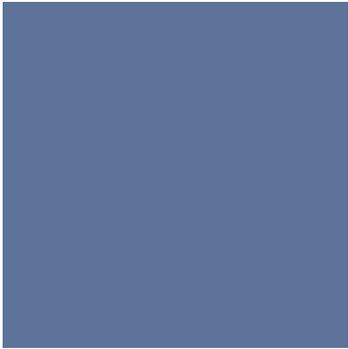
You can easily subscribe to updates by going to any page, scrolling to the bottom, and clicking on "Subscribe." This way, you'll be notified of new and important content without having to search multiple online locations and read through long

newsletters. While you're there, read through the benefits of joining your student chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists and consider becoming an active member of your chapter.

Want to write for the SPJAshford blog and add content to your portfolio? Keep your eyes out for an announcement coming soon on how you can do just that. In the meantime, get started reading the great content already there. You can like, share and comment!

We look forward to continuing to build communities in which you can engage, learn and grow as journalists. If you have any questions, please send them to SPJ@ashford.edu.

■ Dr. Gabriel Scala



JMC Student Review student editor, Elsie Goycoolea, sits down with graduating senior and *JMC Student Review* editor Benjamin Williams.



+ An Interview with Benjamin Williams

You have been an editor for *JMC* newsletter for a couple of issues now. It has been a pleasure to work with you on this project and also to have your voice heard by all of our readers. What was it that motivated you to become an editor for *JMC*? What have you learned from the experience? What would you tell someone that is thinking of possibly joining the team?

The pleasure of working with you and my fellow editors has indeed been all mine! Initially, the motivation to contribute to the *JMC* newsletter was self-serving, as I viewed it as an excellent opportunity to build upon the foundation of my digital portfolio. I did not anticipate enjoying it as much as I have! This issue will mark the third time I have contributed to it, and I am hopeful to

continue to be a guest contributor in the future!

The experience of contributing to the *JMC* newsletter has been so valuable for me. Content creation is the core of what I hope will form the foundation of my career, and having the opportunity to do this for the newsletter has affirmed my career choice in journalism.

For someone looking to join the team, the one piece of advice I would pass on to them is to be unafraid to leave your comfort zone. Accepting the challenge to write different types of articles will serve to embolden the aspiring journalist.

First of all, congratulations on your recent graduation. You have stated

that you would be interested in starting a new career preferably in the sports journalism field. How have you been preparing yourself for this new chapter that you are just beginning? Did you take advantage of any career advice or resources?

To be completely honest, the combination of planned vacation, my daughter's third birthday, and a road trip to Arizona to witness my cousin graduate with his Master's degree, I have not had a whole lot of time to really focus on anything else!

That said, I have put some time and effort into creating an editorial calendar for the blog I intend to start

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this summer. Having a planned agenda will help to keep me disciplined in creating a consistent amount of content.

I do hope to tap into the wealth of resources that are at my disposal within the amazing Ashford alumni community. Any advice or assistance that I can acquire from this network should certainly prove to be a valuable asset to have in my corner.

Many Ashford students including myself are working towards a career change. How have you been balancing this new endeavor with other aspects in your life? Where have you found support and struggles?

It's been an interesting dynamic for me. When I started at Ashford, I was a longtime corporate employee, and the balance was difficult at that time. I stopped working to stay at home with our daughter and focus on my schooling about 18 months ago. Anyone who believes that would make school easier has not had to keep a rambunctious toddler alive!

Regardless of what my situation has been, my wife has always provided such amazing support for me. If not for her, I'm sure that I would not have graduated yet. Whenever things got difficult, she would provide the motivation I needed to keep going. Once I got into my last several classes, I had no problem finishing strong!

Looking back, how would you describe your experience at Ashford? If one of your friends were thinking about joining Ashford what would you make sure they knew beforehand?

My collegiate career actually started

at the University of Phoenix. I finished 1.5 years there, and by the end of it, I was beyond frustrated with their system of teams and team projects. Having to rely on people that you don't really know for your grade, or even worse, having to take over for an unreliable teammate near a deadline was very stressful. I took a long break of a few years, thinking that I was not ever going to earn a degree.

My drive returned, and I started looking around for a school that would allow me to work by myself and set my own schedule, in terms of participation. Ashford fit my criteria perfectly. When I pitch Ashford to my friends and family, I strongly emphasize these aspects. In today's world, a career student needs to have total control of their school schedule and workload.

What would you say have been some of your favorite Ashford classes? Were there any classes particularly challenging for you? What is a valuable new concept that has shaped the way you think of journalism?

This might sound a bit sadistic, but the classes I enjoyed the most were the toughest. At the top of this list was *JRN 497 Journalism & Mass Communication Capstone*. Ironically, it was the one course that did require some teamwork. I was a lot less worried about having flaky teammates, as it was safe to assume that anyone getting so close to graduation was going to have sufficient motivation to put in the time and get it done.

Anyways, the workload was challenging, but I was prepared and ready for it, and eagerly anticipated

it.

This might not come as a surprise for my fellow JMC students, but the one class that I struggled with the most was *MAT 221 Introduction to Algebra*". Math beyond basic algebra was always a struggle for me, and I literally filled up an entire notebook with the most meticulous notes I've ever taken in my life! That was one

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of the most relieving B+ grades I've ever earned!

You wrote a feature article for the Spring 2016 issue of JMC covering explanatory journalism. There is no doubt that journalism is always evolving and one way that it is doing so is by shifting from "telling" the news to "explaining" the news. Given your interest in sports journalism, do you see explanatory journalism in sports coverage? In what other areas do you see it appear more often?

There is not a lot of explanatory journalism in sports just yet, however there is one site that is leading the way in this recent trend, and that is *FiveThirtyEight*. This is a site that I check on daily, and they don't simply focus on sports, either. Quite simply a great site for those seeking facts and hard statistics.

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By Benjamin Williams

As the world of journalism continues its evolution from print to digital, the priorities and desires of the reader base evolve with it. A greater emphasis has been placed upon user-created content, forcing the hand of major news conglomerates to examine what's important to their business model. One aspect of the news media that should withstand this scrutiny is investigative reporting. Investigative reporting remains the most important aspect of journalism, and will continue to be a crucial component of the media, as it is needed as much today as ever before.

The *Global Investigative Journalism Network* provides a concise definition of what investigative reporting is, which is systematic, in-depth, and original research and reporting, often involving the exposure of corruption and focusing on social justice and accountability. Some of the most well-known examples of investigative reporting are Watergate, the Pentagon Papers, and the Catholic Church scandals, the latter of which inspired the critically celebrated movie "Spotlight" in 2015. Investigative reporting occurs locally as well as nationally. As published by *Reveal*, local reporters in small towns like Crystal City, TX can unearth corruption in their local city council in which city officials were awarding permits and contracts in exchange for financial compensation.

As important as investigative reporting has been in the past, is it still needed in today's world? One can certainly argue that it is necessary more than ever before. With the continued migration towards digital platforms, transparency is both needed and demanded by the public. As *Exposing the Invisible* explains, hackers and whistle-blowing platforms such as WikiLeaks have created the foundation of the movement for demanding greater transparency from corporations and governments at local, state, and federal levels.

With the diminished capacities of traditional newspaper conglomerates, the ability to provide the necessary resources to investigative reporting creates a genuine concern for the public. *The New York Times* cited claims that newspaper staffs are down by 40 percent since 2003. Additionally, support from major corporations can create a conflict of interest for these media outlets if their sponsors are rumored to be involved in some form of corruption (hence the "don't bite the hand that feeds you" phrase).

If championing the cause of investigative reporting cannot be maintained by established media, than other types of organizations must answer the call. This process is beginning to happen as, according to *The New York Times*, nonprofit news organizations, digital start-ups, university-based centers and public radio stations are increasing their respective investigative reporting outputs. The continued need for investigative reporting is demonstrated by this transition, which should create the desired outcome of securing the ongoing efforts of exposing the corrupt and protecting the vulnerable.

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AP Style



Guidelines for Proper in-text citations

By Benjamin Williams

The rules for In-text citations are complex and tricky to master. *The University Center for Writing-based Learning* conducted a study in which 84% of papers contained in-text citation errors. Here's a few tips to help to avoid mistakes:

- Ampersands - These should always replace the word 'and' within a citation.
 - Incorrect - (Jones and Thompson, 2011)
 - Correct - (Jones & Thompson, 2011)
- Wrong order of multiple citations - authors should be listed alphabetically.
 - Incorrect - (Williams, 2015; Kinsler, 2011; Fulton, 2014)
 - Correct - (Fulton, 2014; Kinsler, 2011; Williams, 2015)
- Multiple authors
 - Three to five - for the first citation, all authors are listed out. Following citations can be listed as this - (Author one et al., year).
 - Six or more authors - All citations can follow this format - (Author one et al., year).
- Spelling inconsistencies
 - This occurs more often than one might believe. A great tip for avoiding this issue is to utilize the Manage References feature within Microsoft Word. This tool makes it easy to insert in-text citations anywhere in the paper.

For more information regarding in-text citations and other AP style rules and tips, visit [Top 5 Mistakes of AP Style](#) [HERE](#)

STEP UP YOUR GAME OR STEP DOWN

5 Tools to Step up Your Journalism Game

By Elsie Goycoolea

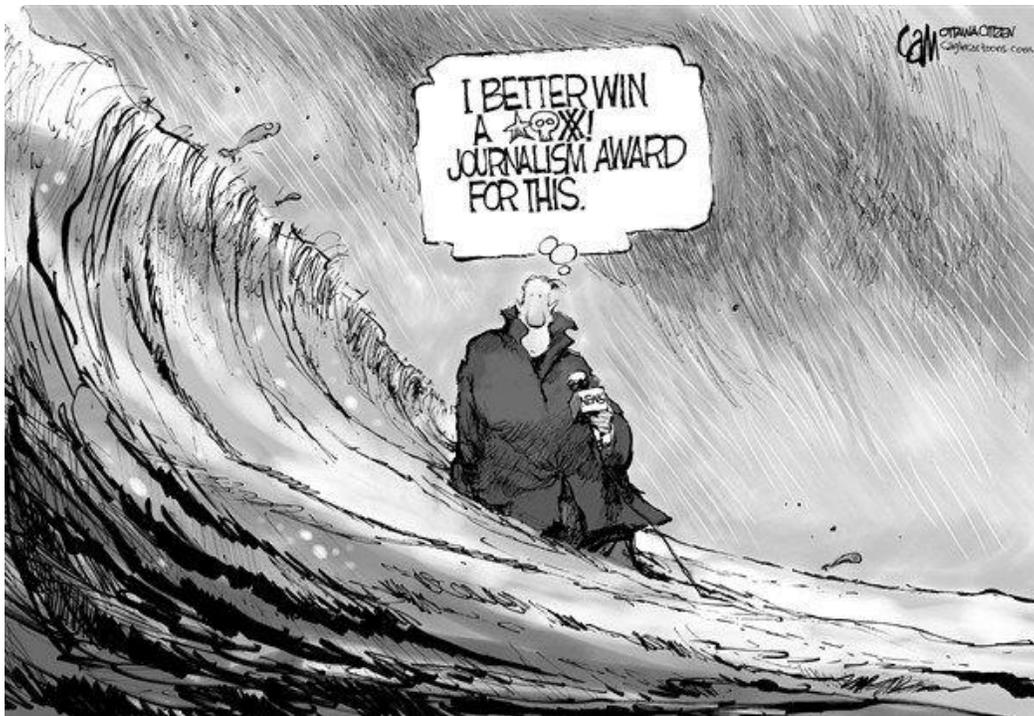
Ulysses (iOS) - News strike 24/7 and a journalist must be ready to craft the story at anytime. Ulysses offers a clean, integrated and distraction free platform to record all necessary details. The stories can be then exported to PDF, Word documents and many other formats across through all connected devices.

Newsmap (Website) - Language is no more a problem if you strive to stay up-to-date with the latest news. This website enables you to find any newspaper from anywhere in the world and then translate it into your language of choice.

Newsbeat (iOS, Android) - While driving, waiting in line or even when you are working out, now you can keep up with the news. This app pulls in some of the best stories published across the web and converts them into audio. You can easily listen to the news on the go with Newsbeat.

Heatmap (Website) - When you are sleeping, the world keeps reporting. Heatmap keeps a worldwide track of the places where news is trending. By clicking on a highlighted area of the map it will direct you to the stories that have millions of people commenting about.

News360 (iOS, Android, Windows) - Now you can build a system to never miss a story. News360 offers a personalized news reading app that allows you to select and customize your interests, save news for offline reading and follow your favorite journalists.

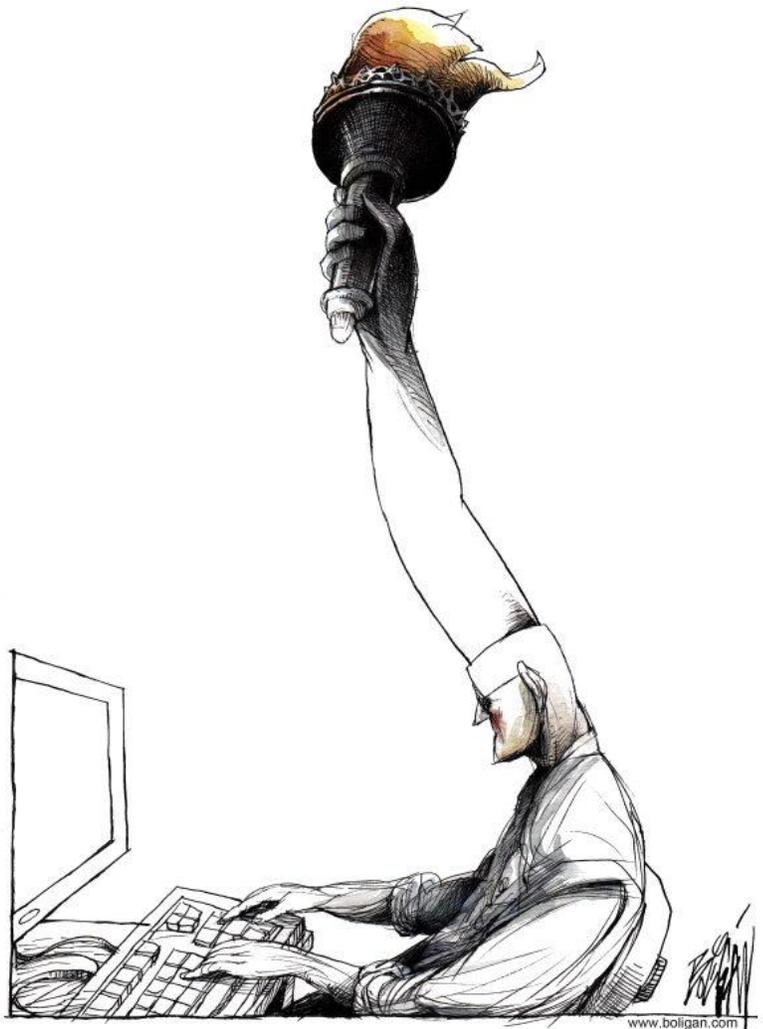


(Benjamin Williams Interview continued)

The other area that they are strong in applying explanatory journalism in is with politics. Given the sheer volume of political opinion sites that exist for the sole purpose of promoting specific agendas, this is certainly a topic that is in dire need of greater application of explanatory journalism.

I always like to finish my interview with a bold statement. If you were to create a headline that summarizes your journey of working up towards a new career path at Ashford, what would it be?

Gosh, there are so many words I can use to describe the trials and tribulations of my scholastic escapades. I would have to go with this: "Overcoming adversity has its rewards."



GET TO KNOW YOUR JMC FACULTY

Dr. Teresa Taylor Moore is an Associate Professor and Chair of the Journalism and Mass Communications Program. Contact her at Teresa.TaylorMoore@ashford.edu



Dr. Gabriel Scala is an Assistant Professor and the Faculty Advisor for both the *JMC Student Review* and the SPJ at Ashford. Contact her at JodiGabriel.Scala@ashford.edu



EDITORS



Elsie Goycoolea is a Spanish student pursuing a career in journalism and psychology to help connect news and people together. She is the editor-in-chief of the *JMC Student Review*.



Benjamin Williams is trying to start up a new career in the realm of Journalism. Ideally, a sports writing career would be his dream job, but anything that allows him to apply his writing ability is something that he enjoys doing.

