



- Are you interested in media coverage of the environment and the sciences?
- Are you considering a career as a science writer or an environmental journalist?
- Do you want to specialize in an area of journalism that is expanding?

Jour 4150/Jour 5150 (Fall 2019/20) Environmental and Science Journalism

Open to non-journalism students, both undergraduate and graduate !

Instructor: Dr. Bernhard Debatin / Tu, Th, F 10:30 PM to 11:50 PM in RTV 253.

The course includes 4 to 5 field trips (free of charge) that will be conducted on Friday afternoons

THIS COURSE provides students with practical and conceptual skills of environmental and science journalism. It fosters the learning experience of students and creates a sense of place and awareness of its context and history among students.

STUDENTS WILL WORK on writing assignments of various formats, both conceptual (responses to readings) and practical (news writing). Field trips provide first-hand knowledge of water sheds, waste-water injection sites, abandoned coal mines, power plants, and other environmental locales. A final in-depth article or multimedia project on a science writing or environmental journalism topic concludes the coursework.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SCIENCE journalism is increasingly important in our techno-scientific world. It requires a high level of technical and scientific understanding and the ability to translate complex issues into everyday language without oversimplifying. Journalism means truthfully informing and educating the public.

AN IMPORTANT FOCUS of environmental and science journalism is the interrelation of science, ecology, and risks. It looks at the hidden costs and consequences of techno-scientific action. This implies giving up the ideological fiction of indifferent objectivity that tells both sides of the story regardless of the validity of their truth claims.

A NEW savvy and nuanced approach to reporting is needed: a blend of basic ethical principles—such as informed citizenship, sustainability, and social justice—with a weight-of-evidence approach, and a critical, highly educated perspective on techno-scientific, social and environmental processes and their risks and unintended consequences.

Course objectives:

- To **become familiar** with the basics of environmental and science journalism, and the techniques used to translate complicated matter into everyday language;
- To **learn how to** research, report, and write about the environment and the sciences for a number of different topics and publication formats;
- To **gain understanding** of conceptual/theoretical issues of environmental and science issues, including ethical and theoretical approaches to these areas;
- To **analyze** the socio-political role, ethical challenges, and societal effects of environmental and science journalism;
- To **raise awareness** for the social and ethical responsibility of the environmental and science journalist.

For more information, contact Dr. Bernhard Debatin, Email: debatin@ohio.edu, Schoonover 227A