

MIKE IGOE: INCORPORATING JAPANESE STUDIES INTO A JOURNALISM COURSE

Foundations in Journalism is the course I will be incorporating Japanese studies into. Foundations is an overview course which examines many different type of media: television, radio, newspapers, magazines, and online among others. So this is the perfect forum to examine Japanese media outlets in relation to our American ones.

Unfortunately, none of the speakers at our conference spoke on journalism. So this summer will be spent gathering more support materials as I only had a limited amount to time to visit the library. However, I believe I have a clear vision as to how I wish to proceed.

In general, the Foundations course focuses on four main areas: history of media, an examination of how it operates, media ethics, and storytelling.

HISTORY OF MEDIA

From a historical perspective, perhaps one of the most significant relationships between the U.S and Japan was World War 2. At the end of the war was a time when television really started to come into its own. During the battle with worries about loved ones, purchasing a television was hardly a priority. That of course changed in the post war years.

With America in charge, we had a major impact on many aspects of television in the Asian country. Today the situation is reversed with a significant Japanese presence in both programming and equipment.

HOW MEDIA OPERATES

It's rather interesting that in both countries the majority of the media is controlled by just five corporations. I plan on examining the similarities and differences this has had on the industry in Japan and the United States. In our country, critics claim media concentration has lowered journalism standards. I'm curious if the same feeling prevails in japan.

ETHICS

This is an area i feel very strongly about. Not only do I teach them as a whole class. It's also a recurring theme all semester long. American media often get accused of being too aggressive; the Japanese too passive or complacent. Both traits are frowned upon by the Society of Professional Journalists' Code of Ethics. This can open up some interesting class discussions.

STORY TELLING

To teach my studies effective storytelling I do not rely on new stories alone. I often use sequences from movies to show good photography, editing and visual impact among other things. I will find some Japanese movies or TV shows which demonstrate the characteristics in their video presentations that I want students to embrace in their video presentations !

When I find the appropriate materials that will support these four course areas I've identified, I believe Japanese studies will most definitely enhance my course in many ways especially in terms of student response.